

SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Message Series: Life Hacks for Tough Times & Rough Relationships

Message Title: When Tempted

Speaker: Kevin Myers

Date: November 8-9, 2014

Icebreaker:

Almost everyone has that one food that they can't walk away from. Whether it's potato chips or chocolate or ice cream (or chocolate ice cream!), what tempts you?

Message Overview:

Today's message is the fifth in the series LIFE HACKS. Life hacks are free or inexpensive tips and tricks to make your life simpler and easier (see series promo: <http://vimeo.com/108359527>). The Bible is full of practical ways that we can improve our lives. This week, Pastor Kevin Myers (PK) shared a lesson from the Book of James about what we need to know and do when tempted.

The two life truths we need to know:

You can know the right thing, but do the wrong thing.

You can choose if you fall, but you can't choose the fallout.

The three life hacks that we need to do:

1. Resist it!
2. Own it!
3. Confess it!

Discussion:

(Leaders: The questions that follow are designed to stir reflection and discussion on this week's primary message points. Please read through them prior to your meeting, so you can be prepared to prayerfully pace your group well. And remember, as leader, your goal is to promote increased *biblical* awareness, as well as individual *self*awareness – a combination that, with the help of the Holy Spirit, results in revelation and...transformation!)

- In his message, PK admitted that he is selfish; that we are all selfish (read James 4:1-3). It is our own selfish desires that cause us to make bad choices. We know the right thing to do, but we still do the wrong thing. PK used the illustration of a fish going after the bait on a hook. The word *tempt* means *to entice*. We see the bait, and because of our own selfish desires, we enter sin's trap. In that moment of temptation, we are enticed by the bait so that we only see it, blind to the trap of the hook. We were made to have desires; the challenge is when we fulfill a godly desire in an ungodly way. Have you ever seen 'bait' that looked like it was just what you always

wanted, but then you discovered that there was a hook attached? (Example: no payments for 2 years)

- PK used a clip of comedian Jim Gaffigan (<http://vimeo.com/40843163> – unedited, PG version) to illustrate this first life truth. He humorously describes how we know McDonald's isn't good for us but we go there anyway. Gaffigan says maybe your McDonald's is not McDonald's—maybe yours is *US Weekly* or Starbucks or a TV show. Gaffigan jokes that it's all McDonald's of the soul. It's a joke, but it is a serious thing to ask ourselves, "Where do I know the right thing to do, but still do the wrong thing?"
- Read James 1:13-18. The second life truth is that we make the choice to fall to sin—to take the bait—but we can't choose the fallout. James says sin leads to death. When the fish sees the bait, he grabs it, and is satisfied for a moment. And then the hook sets (v. 15). The good news is that we do not have to give in. Are there things you choose not to be a part of, because you know it could result in sin for you?
- The Life Hacks this week, the things we need to do, are first to RESIST temptation. PK told us the best way to resist McDonald's French fries is to not go into McDonald's. We need to NOT YIELD to temptation. Read James 4:7. We must submit to God and resist the devil—not give in to our selfish desires. In what ways can you understand and focus on what God's will is for you?
- Read James 4:8. PK told us that we can have the right information and still do the wrong thing. We can't put ourselves into the place where we will be tempted, and then be surprised at the results. The second life hack is to OWN it when we do fall. Do NOT EXCUSE temptation and failure. Own it. Read 2 Samuel 12:1-23. Did David choose to fall? Who chose the fallout? What did it take for David to own his failure and to wash his hands before God?
- Read James 4:9-10. Even though David had to be pushed to own it, once he did, he accepted the consequences. Like Jake, who wished he hadn't played the game of flag football when the consequences were not being able to play golf at Pebble Beach, we know the consequences of sin. God has already told us that if we sin, something will die. The good news is—He is the God who resurrects life. He can bring our relationship with Him back to life, if we only follow Life Hack #3: CONFESS it. Be humble. Do NOT HIDE your failure, but humbly confess it to God and ask forgiveness. He can bring our relationships back to life as well. Is there someone you need to confess to, and ask forgiveness of?

Wrap-Up/Close:

Talking about temptation and sin is not easy. It is difficult to admit that we have fallen and we can't get up. One of the reasons we have small groups at 12Stone is that they provide a place where we can be honest with one another in a non-judging, safe environment. We also want to be a place of accountability, where we help one another resist temptation. We can invite others to be Nathan to our David. If we cannot be honest here, we can hide our issues and never move toward a right relationship with God and with others. Let's commit together to being a place where we can be honest and help one another see resurrection in our relationships.

Throughout the Week: (Optional)

- PK said that he was told, regarding golf, “If you always blame the club, you’ll never change your swing.” This week, think about what God would have you change, and thank him that he is able to change you.