

TAKING IT HOME

Temptation is a struggle for most of us every single day. Unfortunately it never goes away totally, but it does get easier to do the right thing. Just like the discipline of exercise gets easier the more you do it, so does living the way God has called us to live. It might not seem like it at the time, but it does. And just like exercise the initial decision is often the hardest. We have to deny ourselves, and live like Jesus would. And then do it again. And again.

The best news of all, though, is that we don't have to do it alone. God created us to live life in community, to have a group of people around us to cheer us on when we succeed, or help us up after we fail. This week as you struggle to not give the devil a foothold in your life, try to touch base with someone in your Community Group. Encourage them over the phone, or through a text message, or a handwritten note. Maybe during your encouragement of others, you too will find some encouragement.

PRAYER REQUESTS

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Loosening the Foothold: Cain & Abel

Genesis 4:1-10

Foothold 1: Satan turned worship into a _____.

Foothold 2: Cain's _____ went unchecked.

Foothold 3: Satan gave Cain an _____ for evil.

Community Group Study Guide

For the week of May 19, 2013

QUICK REVIEW

Review your notes from Larry's sermon. What stuck out to you? What story or point resonated the most?

MY STORY

1. Everyone has something that tends to drive them crazy. What is your biggest pet peeve?

2. When was the last time you had to make a hard decision? What were the options? What was the outcome?

DIGGING DEEPER

On Sunday we looked at the life of Cain who gave Satan a foothold, and it ended up ruining him. Today we're going to look at someone else who struggled with Satan trying to get a foothold in his life. King David is someone who had his share of ups and downs, but today we're going to focus on two distinct stories in his life. In the first passage Saul is trying to kill David.

David had grown popular with the people of Israel and been anointed the next king. Obviously this made the current king (Saul) very angry, which is why he was hunting David.

Read 1 Samuel 24:1-4.

1. David is given the perfect opportunity to end Saul's life. He could have easily been done with the running and hiding that he had been doing for years. Saul would be dead, and David would be king. Yet, David chose not to kill Saul because Saul was still God's anointed. Today's Christians might not face the temptation of killing a king but we all face various temptations in our lives. What temptations do you think Christians in the modern American church face most often? What difficult challenges do modern Christians have to face?

2. David felt pressure from his men to kill Saul. They too were probably tired of living life on the run constantly, yet David made his own decision. Often as Christians, we have to make decisions that go against what our friends or family might be telling us. How do you deal with pressure from others to do something that you don't think is right? How do you know you made the right decision?

3. Can you imagine the confused looks on the faces of David's men when he crept up on Saul, only to cut off the corner of his robe? They probably wondered what on earth he was thinking. Yet, David was refusing to give Satan a foothold in his life. He didn't waste time, or talk himself into killing Saul, but rather acted on what he knew was right. When you make the right decision to not give Satan a foothold, what are the steps you go through that normally get you to that conclusion?

Read 2 Samuel 11:1-17.

4. Throughout this passage are countless examples of when David slowly gave in to his temptation. He gave Satan foothold after foothold that eventually brought him great pain and grief. What are some of the things David did in this passage that were poor decisions? In what ways did David give Satan a foothold?

5. David's poor decisions in this passage seem to pile up as the passage goes on. In these verses he gives in to Satan a little bit at a time, always following up one sin with another. In times when you give Satan a foothold in your life, what is the mental process you normally go through in giving in to that temptation? When you make a wrong decision, what normally motivates you?

Read Ephesians 4:26-28.

6. In the above passage Paul is in the middle of a section on instructions for basic Christian living. It's in verse 27 that we see the phrase "do not give the Devil a foothold." In what ways have you tried to practice this in your life? What would you tell a new believer if they asked how to not give the devil a foothold?