

Dodging Satan's 3-Step Path to Destruction

One of the first-used and most effective weapons in the devil's arsenal against us is temptation. Who doesn't know its power? Temptation is a daily visitor that lures us into wanting—craving—something that we shouldn't have. Its bait is a promise of fame, fortune, wisdom or pleasure. But as we all have learned at some level, temptation never delivers on its promise. Rather, it deceives you and gives you something else—often intense guilt and shame.

Watch Your Step

Your victory in life hinges upon resisting temptation. But to do so, you must know that the best time to beat temptation isn't during temptation, but before temptation. In other words, if you know you struggle with a particular issue, it's wise to avoid whatever or wherever causes it. This is the gist of what Paul wrote to the Ephesians: "See then that you walk carefully, not as fools, but as wise men, make the most of the time because the days are evil" (Eph. 5:15–16).

Yes, to resist temptation, it's crucial for you to watch your step so you don't enter places and situations that tend to trigger it. Some obvious ones might be certain stores, restaurants, movies or websites.

The Path to Destruction

But there's something more to beating temptation than not stepping into its den. You should be aware that if the devil can't get you into a place of temptation, he will try to get you close to one. In the Old Testament, this is the trap that Lot fell into. The cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were known for their paganism and debauchery. At first, Lot knew better than to live inside of such a place, so he decided to live on the

outskirts instead (Gen. 13:12). But living just outside of Sodom kept him within reach of its influence, which eventually lured him in (Gen. 19:1–3).

As I explore in my book, *Activating the Power of God's Word*, I've observed that the devil leads people into destruction through three steps, which I call the "three D's of the devil": dabble, deceive and destroy. When we begin to dabble in unwise situations—especially those that don't initially appear sinful—he then presents arguments as to why we should move in closer. These might include more influence, more money, more wisdom or more pleasure. Eventually, like Lot, we are deceived to believe that the ends justify the means, and we move into what will later destroy us.

So watch your step. As a wise person once said, "He who will play with Satan's bait will quickly be taken by Satan's hook."

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Kyle Winkler equips people to live in victory. His mobile app, *Shut Up, Devil!*, is the #1 spiritual warfare app; and his book, *Activating the Power of God's Word*, uncovers 16 strategic declarations to transform your life. Kyle holds a Master of Divinity in biblical studies from Regent University. Get daily encouragement from Kyle on Facebook and Twitter.