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FLIPPED

Flipped

Small Group Material

Leader Guide

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Bottom Line: *What if we flipped our sinful desires into opportunities to worship God?*

Study Verses: *Romans 7:15-19, Matthew 4:1-11, John 15:3-4*

Define The Win: *Participants would be able to pinpoint their core sin struggle and why they are susceptible in this area. They would also be able to articulate what they hope giving into the temptation will bring them (freedom, love, respect, comfort, etc.) but fails to do so. Group members would begin to consider how they can flip those moments of temptation as an opportunity to worship and experience God.*

Key Points

- *We live in a culture of "just one more."*
- *We all struggle with something. Each one of us has a core sin we can't seem to get away from.*
- *Recognize your design. Resist the temptation. Remain in relationship with Christ.*
- *If you need to change the Bible in order to justify your behavior, you are going without God.*
- *Our behaviors are manifestations of choices we've already made.*
- *Sin is going without God. He allows us to go, but when we pursue our own desires, we go alone.*

ENCOUNTER

- We live in a culture of “just one more.” How have you seen this mindset play out in your life and the lives of those around you? How does having this mindset leave us vulnerable?
- In the midst of the struggle, how does one know when they are justifying their behavior? What are some justifications you have used in the past to reconcile your behavior?
- Describe a time when you felt “stuck” spiritually or when a temptation seemed to constantly get the better of you. What emotions and thoughts did you experience? How have you typically responded to feeling stuck in the past? How did this wrestling with temptation influence the perspective you had of yourself?

FORMATION

- Read Romans 7:15-19. Describe the level of vulnerability Paul (the author of the passage) exhibited to his readers. What leads one to feel safe enough to be as transparent as Paul? In this passage, Paul speaks of two natures being inside each of us. How do they wage war against one another? How do you relate to this internal struggle?
- Read Matthew 4:1-11. How did the enemy attack Jesus by tempting Him to go against His physical, psychological and emotional design? How did Jesus respond to each temptation? In what ways did He flip the conversation and focus?
- Read John 15:3-4. How is our ability to experience victory in our struggle with temptation tied to our willingness to stay connected with Christ? How can you own your struggle and take personal responsibility while at the same time relying on God?

EXPRESSION

- Each of us struggles with something. What is your biggest struggle or core sin (lust, fear, pride, jealousy, greed, lying, gluttony, anger, laziness)? Why are you vulnerable to this struggle?
- If every longing at its core is a longing for God, what are you trying to find in the midst of the struggle with your core sin?
- How could you flip your sinful desires into an opportunity to worship God? What would it look like to repurpose your struggle?

LEADER INSIGHT: We all wrestle with sin. Each one of us has a core sin we can't seem to get away from. For some it's lust and jealousy while for others it might be gluttony and greed. We all are enticed to take our eyes off Christ and look around us to find fulfillment, love, purpose, freedom and comfort in lesser things.

Contrary to how we might feel when we are struggling, no one is immune to falling to the allure of temptation. The enemy does everything in his power to make us feel isolated and alone. If the enemy can convince us that our struggles with temptation are unique, he knows we will continue to hide and fight our battle all by ourselves. When our struggle remains in the dark, we rely on pure self-will to fend off temptation or we begin to walk down the slippery slope of justifying our behavior.

This improves the devil's chances of overpowering us and making us feel helpless. We wave the white flag in surrender believing our only option is to give in to the temptation. This creates a vicious cycle. We feel guilty, frustrated and ashamed of our behavior. Because we feel "stuck" we indulge in more sin which just creates more guilt. The cycle continues. If we reside in this place, we will never experience change and miss out on the greatness God designed for us.

In 1 Corinthians 10:13-14 the Apostle Paul states that God will "show us a way we can endure" temptation. Other translations say God provides "a way out." We are not victims, but people who choose the world's second best and doubt that God truly knows best when it comes to our needs and desires.

Yet, the reality is God knows us intimately, even the things which pull at our heart strings and tempt us. Not only does He know these things, but He understands our struggle with temptation because He experienced it first hand. For forty days, the devil did his best to attack Jesus at His core. The enemy tempted Jesus to go against his physical design (stones into bread), psychological design (challenged His ego) and emotional design (fall down and worship). Every single time Jesus flipped the conversation and used the temptation as an opportunity to honor and worship God. He took the attention off himself and placed it on God.

What if we could do the same? What if we flipped our sinful desires into opportunities to worship God? This can only happen if we recognize our design, resist temptation and remain in relationship with Christ. The individual who has knowledge of the typical traps set by the enemy is the one who avoids stumbling blocks. The first step for all of us is evaluating where we are most susceptible to fall for temptation and avoid these areas.

How do we respond when we are tempted? How can we flip the conversation? We seek strength in community by being transparent about our struggle. We pray for God to provide us with eyes to see the escape route He provides us when facing a test or temptation. Most importantly we follow the wisdom found in Psalm 119:11 by "hiding your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you." Turning away is

difficult, yet very necessary if we are to experience victory, pursue purity and take a stand against temptation.