

Ready to Run

So it was, as she spoke to Joseph day by day, that he did not heed her, to lie with her or to be with her. But it happened about this time, when Joseph went into the house to do his work, and none of the men of the house was inside, that she caught him by his garment, saying, "Lie with me." But he left his garment in her hand, and fled and ran outside.

--Genesis 39:10-12

Potiphar's wife had been telling Joseph for some time that she wanted to sleep with him, but he had forcefully turned her down and was refusing to even be alone with her. He was wise enough to know that even his deep devotion to God didn't make him immune to sexual temptation. So he gave her no opportunity to proposition him.

He was doing everything right. But sometimes even doing everything right doesn't keep the tempter away. One day, through no fault of his own, Joseph found himself tempted by her. And he had to make a split-second decision. Continue doing what's right and pay a price, or do what feels good and dishonor God.

Sexual temptation is so alluring that it can take down even men who walk closely with the Lord if they're caught off guard. So we need to determine that we, like Joseph, will avoid sexual temptation by staying away from people, places, or situations that will entice us to be immoral.

Unfortunately, though, we can't always prevent tempting situations even though we try. So we need to be ready for those situations. We need to be ready to do what Joseph did. We need to be ready to run.

When the temptation came that day, Joseph was so quick to "flee youthful lusts and pursue righteousness" that he didn't even risk pausing long enough to get his garment back. Wise choice.

There is nothing more important in the life of the believer than holy conduct and consistent moral character. So don't wait until temptation blindsides you to make your decision. Make it now.

You know what situations tempt you the most, so avoid them at any cost. Don't lie to yourself about being so spiritual that you're strong enough to say no. Some temptations are stronger than you are. That's why Jesus taught us to pray, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one."

Avoid temptation whenever possible. But recognize that sometimes it is going to happen anyway, and decide now that when that moment comes, you will be ready to run.