

# 6 Guidelines to Protecting Yourself from Sexual Temptation

Abstain from all appearance of evil. -1 Thessalonians 5:22

So, you think that you could never succumb to moral temptation, do you? Paul didn't apparently think so or else he wouldn't have given the advice he did to the effect that we are to guard against temptation by not allowing ourselves to be in a position of being vulnerable. In other words, you prevent the possibility by closing the door ahead of time and pushing the furniture against it and leaving the lights on.

To safeguard against sexual temptation, put into effect the following:

**Guideline #1: Never think it couldn't happen to me.** None of us is invulnerable. Proverbs 16:18 (NIV) says, "Pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall." Rick Warren says, "The morning I say, 'I've conquered that problem,' that's the morning I'm open for temptation. It's like the person who believes he's never going to be robbed, so he never locks his doors, never bolts down his windows, and leaves his money lying all around." To prevent theft, you lock your door—maybe with several locks. You bolt your windows or put bars on them. You get a mean dog and turn him loose at night. You take no chances. Jeremiah 17:9 (NIV) says, "The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?"

**Guideline #2: Guard your thought life.** Proverbs 4:23 (NIV) says, "Above all else guard your heart for it is the wellspring of life." Every act of indiscretion begins with a thought. That's why what you watch, what you look at, and what you listen to influence your life. Everything you expose yourself to affects your behavior, though you never consider the consequences between what you see and what you do. Writing to the Corinthians, Paul said, "We have renounced secret and shameful ways," and that was long before the Internet brought all sorts of things into focus with the click of a mouse. The battle for sin always begins in the mind. Feed your mind what is wholesome. As one man put it, paraphrasing and modernizing what Joshua wrote, "As for me and my mouse, [as in computer mouse] we will serve the Lord" When you struggle with your thought life, do what Paul advised: "Bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Jesus Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:5).

**Guideline #3: Keep your relationship with the Lord vibrant and alive.** This means keeping touch on a daily basis—in the Word, opening your heart to Him in prayer, confessing your sins and your inadequacies. Maintaining that daily walk with the Lord is absolutely imperative. The Devil says, "No one will ever know." But you do, and if you're smart, you'll also know that eventually your sin will find you out. A credit card slip, a phone message, something you leave behind—whether it is the fragrance of perfume or a note—will tell the story.

**Guideline #4: If you're married, keep it alive and vibrant.** Like the old saying, "The grass is not greener on the other side of the fence. The grass is greener where you water it." It's very important that we maintain our own marriages.

**Guideline #5: Never ignore the tragic consequences of moral failure.** Infidelity results in broken homes 85% of the time. Of course, there can be forgiveness and restoration, but it's risky at best.

**Guideline # 6: Don't allow yourself to be vulnerable.** Don't put yourselves in situations where you'll ever be tempted. 1 Peter 5:8 (LB) says, "Be careful, watch out for the attacks from Satan your great enemy. He prowls around like a hungry, roaring lion looking for some victim to tear apart." We've got to take precautions. It's the only way to stay safe.