

How to Fight the Temptation to Steal

1. Consider the Gospel again. Jesus died for you when you had nothing to offer Him. Now, you are His ambassador wherever you go. (Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:20)
2. Agree with God that stealing, no matter how small, is sinful and dishonoring to God. (Romans 13:9; 1 John 1:9)
3. Avoid the situations where you are most tempted to steal. (1 Corinthians 10:13)
4. Theft often demonstrates a failure to trust God to provide in His time and ways.
 - Pray and ask God to help you trust Him in the moments when you're most tempted. (Matthew 6:13)
 - Pray and ask God to show you examples of times in the past where God has provided for those who entrusted themselves to His care and provision. Then search the Scriptures for examples of these people and times. Write them down. Share them with others.
 - Pray, and ask God to remind you of ways that He has been faithful to you in the past. (Hebrews 13:5)
5. Theft is a failure to love the one we steal from. (Romans 13:9)
 - Pray and ask God for His compassion for the people your theft would injure.
 - Write out a list of all the ways your theft would injure the person(s)/company you're stealing from (including wasted time at work).
 - Confess your theft to the appropriate authorities. It is better to have our sin dealt with on earth than to precede us into the judgment room where God sits.
 - Ask a person has been robbed how they felt when they were robbed. Listen to them.
 - Conduct an interview with an employer or manager and ask them about how much labor is lost through wasted time. Ask them how much prices are affected by lost inventory through theft.
6. Sin is strengthened through isolation of the person committing the sin. It is weakened by Biblical fellowship. Seek out authentic, Christ-centered connections with a discipleship-group or spiritual mentor. (Hebrews 3:13)
7. One time where it is most tempting to waste time at work is when we're bored. Some ways to fight this urge to waste time at work are:
 - Find other parts of your job to focus on when you are bored.

-If you work at a desk, instead of loading up a time-waster website, pull up a project that you know will need lots of time to finish it and work a little bit today.

-If you work at a restaurant and there's a lull, don't give in to boredom and waste time, find a way to be productive like washing tables or organizing menus. Take initiative yourself during these times, and you will likely gain favor with your employers. (Proverbs 18:9)

-We are saturated with electronic devices that give us lots of opportunities to waste time when there's other things we should be / could be doing. Invite friends to help you resist the temptations to spend too much time or spend the wrong time playing these games / texting / focusing on these distractions.

-Consider fasting from electronic devices and games so that you can regain a sense of how much time you have in your day where other, more productive things could be happening.

8. Theft and waste are ultimately stealing from those for whom we could reflect God's grace if we had the resources to do it. Make a list of the people, causes and charities you'd love to give to if you had more money. (For example: soup kitchens, homeless care, widows, orphanages, elderly, sick, lonely people, outreach to _____.)

9. Bad company corrupts good morals (1 Corinthians 15:33). Are you in a committed relationship (married, family, dating, friendships, co-workers) with people who are repeat offenders in the area of theft or time-wasting?

-Take a hard look at these relationships and take active steps to

a) Share what you're learning about how God wants us to be done with theft and how fruitful people have more to give others

b) Invite the person(s) to join you in cleaning up their behaviors too

c) Make some prayerful and hard decisions about whether or not you should continue to spend time with these people who are not helping you to walk with God in this area