



The STRENGTH

to CHOOSE

By Chris Deaver
(Based on a true story)

*Be faithful, and yield
to no temptation*
(D&C 9:13).

When the bell
rang at the end

of class, Brian turned around in his desk. “Hey, Chris, have you seen the ads for the latest video game?”

Chris grinned. “Yes, it looks awesome!”

“Do you have it?” Brian asked.

Chris shook his head. “It’ll take me forever to save enough money. But I wish I could play it right now!”

Chris *really* wanted the new video game. His mom had seen the game and said it was OK for him to get, but he had to buy it himself. But he knew it would be months before he could afford it.

“Guess what?” Brian said. “I got it yesterday!”

Chris’s jaw dropped. “No way!”

Brian nodded. “Do you want to come over tomorrow and play it?”

Chris nearly jumped out of his chair. “Sure I do! That’d be great!”

As soon as Chris got to Brian’s house the next day, they settled in front of the TV. Chris couldn’t stop smiling as he earned points and advanced level after level.

But after a while, Brian put down his controls. “Let’s go outside,” he said.

Chris reluctantly put down his own controls and followed Brian out the back door. They played tag and then hide-and-seek. Chris was hiding behind some bushes when he realized that Brian was taking a long time to find him.

“Where is he?” Chris thought.

Chris left his hiding place. After a minute, he smelled smoke. Was something burning? He followed the smell around the corner of the house and stopped in his tracks. Brian stood in front of him, smoking a cigarette.

Brian smiled and held out a cigarette toward Chris. “Here. It’s fun,” Brian said.

Chris stared at the cigarette. “No,” he said.

Brian puffed on his cigarette. “Tell you what,” he said. “If you smoke with

me, we’ll go back in and play the game some more.”

Chris felt like time had slowed down. He thought about how much he wanted to play the game and then he thought about the long months it would take him to save his money for his own copy.

But then Chris thought about the cigarette and what it would mean to smoke it. He thought about the promise he had made to the Lord to never smoke.

Chris stood up straight. “No. I won’t do it for anything.”

Brian looked stunned. But Chris turned away and walked home. When he got there, he sat down on the sidewalk in front of his house. He felt a little sad, but he was proud that he had the strength to make the right choice. ♦



“I will not partake of things that are harmful to me.”

My Gospel Standards

