

“One of my friends wants to try something bad just once so she can relate when people talk about it. How can I help her understand that’s not a good idea?”

One of the best things you can do is help your friend remember why we have commandments. Heavenly Father gives us commandments because He loves us and knows they will make us happy and help us become like Him.

In the New Testament, the Savior said, “If ye love me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15). Help your friend realize that choosing the right shows love for Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ and gratitude for His Atonement and gospel.

You can also remind her that doing bad things leads to bad consequences, even if it’s just once. We can’t experience sin and avoid its effects. Willfully disobeying the commandments is like stepping away from Heavenly Father and telling Him that He doesn’t matter as much as our friends or other people do.

Heavenly Father loves us, and He will bless us with the Spirit’s guidance when we keep His commandments. If we are obedient, the Spirit will teach us more than we could ever learn by experimenting with sin. **NE**



We Don’t Need to Experiment

I would teach your friend that “whatsoever is good cometh from God, and whatsoever is evil cometh from the devil” (Alma 5:40). I would also explain that every act has consequences and that we should not do anything that could harm us. We don’t need to experience evil. There is already so much evil around us, and it’s easy to see that many people live in misery because they don’t keep the commandments.

Vinicius S., 17, São Paulo, Brazil



Tell How You Overcome Temptation

Tell your friend that what’s really important is her standing before the Lord. We must not give up our eternal salvation in exchange for a temporal experience. Also, you’ll be much more helpful to your friend if you can tell her how you overcame temptation.

Emily G., 19, Puerto Rico

We Have Divine Potential

You can kindly explain to your friend that while one bad choice might seem harmless, it can lead to more serious sins. You could also share this scripture: “I the Lord cannot look upon sin with the least degree of allowance” (D&C 1:31). Remind your friend that



even one experience with sin can desensitize us to the voice of the Spirit. Most of all, let her know that you love her and that making right choices is part of her divine potential as a daughter of God.

Adriana F., 17, Arizona, USA

Just Once Will Hurt

All bad things, even if you do them just once, will drive away the Spirit. If the Spirit leaves, it will be easier for Satan to tempt you to do more bad things. Also, you will need to repent of all your sins no matter how many times you commit them, and repenting of serious sins can be a long and painful process.

Emily L., 14, Utah, USA



Stay Strong

Reassure her that you love her and want to help her choose the right. I know from personal experience that we don't need to make the same choices as someone to identify with that person. As we live the gospel, the Spirit will help us know how to relate to people. Remind your friend that she needs to stay strong so she can help others obey the commandments. Pray that you'll be able to help and serve her.

Vanina P., 19, Buenos Aires, Argentina

You Might Not Be Able to Stop

I would tell my friend to not even

think about it. It's not a good idea to do something bad one time because you might not be able to stop once you've started. Heavenly Father gave us commandments to help keep us safe and happy.

Douglas B., 13, California, USA

It Starts Small

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland once said that "a journey of a thousand miles begins with one step, so watch your step" ("Place No More for the Enemy of My Soul," *Ensign*, May 2010, 45). I would help my friend understand that Satan uses small temptations to start us down an evil path. When you try something bad even once, you are allowing Satan and his followers to start tempting you to do it again and again.

Similoni F., 18, Utah, USA



WHY NOT TRY IT?

"Years ago, one of our sons asked me why it wasn't a good idea to try alcohol or tobacco to see what they were like. . . . I replied that if he wanted to try something out, he ought to go to a barnyard and eat a little manure. He recoiled in horror. 'Ooh, that's gross,' he reacted.

"I'm glad you think so,' I said, 'but why don't you just try it out so you will know for yourself? While you're proposing to try one thing that you know is not good for you, why don't you apply that principle to some others?'"

Elder Dallin H. Oaks of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Sin and Suffering," *Ensign*, July 1992, 73-74.

Responses are intended for help and perspective, not as official pronouncements of Church doctrine.

UPCOMING QUESTION

"My parents **swear**, listen to **loud music**, and watch **inappropriate TV shows**. What can I do to **feel the Spirit at home**, especially on Sundays?"

Send your answer and photo by July 15, 2015.

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Responses may be edited for length or clarity.