

Let your students know you have “walked a mile their Nikes (*Reeboks, Adidas*). As often as possible allow your students into your life. Become a transparent friend who is not afraid to share failures as well as victories. Too often, those who are struggling in their walk with the Lord, are under the impression that the temptations they face are unique. They don’t realize we all face difficult decisions—not the same circumstances or precise conditions—but all of us are susceptible to _____ [*you fill in the blank*]. failures, disappointments, sin

Quote I Cor:10:13

You and I have found it helpful to see the stressful situation of many Bible characters. We are told that Elijah was a man with a nature just like ours (*James 5:17*). And we have all struggled with the good and bad decisions of men and women like Mary, Saphira, Abraham, David, Paul, Joseph, Daniel, Jacob, Peter, and others. God has given us the examples of about 100 men and women so we would understand how they handled pressure. Counselors tell us that when people choose to sin, they often say, “I had to do it. I had no other choice.” They are not correct. God always gives a choice to do what is right. But it is sometimes hard. Here’s a story I’ve told many times to children about honesty.

Steve and Mike were my friends. We were in the same grade at school. They knew I was a Christian, but I never had witnessed to them. They were not believers, and had pretty filthy mouths. We walked to school together and enjoyed goofing around. One day we were in Hobbyland Toys and I noticed Steve got very quiet and began looking around as though he were scared. Then I saw Mike snatch a Matchbox car and stuff it into his pocket. Mike served as the lookout and Steve did the same. Now it was my turn. I couldn’t remember stealing anything, and certainly never from a store, what should I do? We stood in front of a toy pistol and a cap gun display. Without saying anything they let me know I had to steal something. I was scared and after several long minutes, I slipped a silver bullet out of the Lone Ranger’s holster. I could feel the satisfaction they knew as we strolled out the door.

I think the bullet actually started to smolder and began to burn a hole in my pants pocket as I remembered the verse, “Thou shalt not steal.” When they became busy doing something else, I sneaked back into Hobbyland, put the silver bullet back, and quickly rejoined Mike and Steve. I never told them, but I knew I had done the right thing.

Pressure from friends can be positive or negative. This time it was—negative.