

## Just One M&M®

By Christine Anderson

*Temptation comes from the lure of our own evil desires. These evil desires lead to evil actions, and evil actions lead to death. So don't be misled, my dear brothers and sisters. (James 1:14-16 NLT)*

My family really likes M&M's. We eat them as dessert; we put them in popcorn, cookies, even in pancakes. I started buying the giant 56 oz. bag from Costco because we like M&M's so much. Our M&M obsession wouldn't be such a big deal if I wasn't trying to lose pregnancy weight from our fourth child. (Never mind the fact that he's almost three...I'm a procrastinator.)

Did you know that you would have to walk the length of a football field to burn off one M&M?

One lousy M&M.

Did I mention that is a plain M&M, not peanut or peanut butter or pretzel...no - one plain M&M. I could eat an entire bag in less time than it would take to walk the length of a football field.

Of course, I easily rationalize my M&M habit, even while trying to lose weight. I tell myself, "It's just one M&M, what is the big deal?" Well, one M&M isn't really a big deal – especially if you live near a football field. But the craziest thing happens when I open a bag of M&M's - one leads to two, leads to three, leads to four and before I know it I'm staring at an empty bag! Now I'll have to walk 3.61 miles to burn off the calories of "just one" M&M.

Much like eating M&Ms, it is also easy to rationalize our sin. What's the big deal if I watch that show just this one time? It's not like it will affect the way I think. What does it matter if I share someone's "prayer request" that they told me in confidence...I'm just concerned for her. So what if I flirt a little with my co-worker; he knows I don't mean anything by it and my husband doesn't pay attention to me anymore. One compromise leads to another. The next thing we know we are knee-deep in sin and we have no idea how we strayed so far. We didn't mean for it to happen, but it did. The fact is our intentions may have been good, but unless we put some safeguards in place to keep from crossing the line, our flesh **will** lead us there. Guaranteed.

Every day we stand on a line between God's will and the world. We think we can step on the world's side every once in a while as long as it is "just one time." The problem is: it is rarely just one time. Once you've sinned in an area it only gets easier to sin again and again and again.

God doesn't tell us to stay away from certain things to spoil our fun. He tells us to stay away from certain things because he knows what the consequences are going to be. We may not experience immediate consequences, but we **WILL** face consequences. The fact is the things we choose to watch and read **DO** affect the way we think. Gossip is gossip no matter how much we pretty up the name. And I'm guessing that most affairs begin with a little "harmless" flirting. The truth is when we do those things that God warns us against we are **willfully** choosing to gratify our flesh over following God's Word.

My flesh will always lead me away from God - always. Like the M&Ms in my pancakes, my flesh wants whatever feels good, whatever looks good, whatever will make **ME** happy, **right now**. And my flesh is an expert at rationalizing – after all, it's just one M&M, what's the big deal?