

How To Trap A Monkey



Place a few small beans in a narrow-necked jar at the edge of a jungle clearing. When a monkey passes by, he will stop, peek at the beans, stick his hand in the jar, grab the beans, and Gotcha!

It works every time!

*respond
(let go/release)*



*resist
(hold on/withhold)*



Create thirst (Isa. 55:1; John 7: 37)
COME



*Offer something better
(Eph. 3:20; I Cor. 2:9)*
RELINQUISH (voluntary)



Inflict pain (Heb. 12:11)
YIELD (mild compulsion)



Break the jar (Psa. 118:18)
**SURRENDER
(stronger compulsion)**

*O taste and see that the Lord is good
(Psa. 34:8)
... the goodness of God leads to repentance
(Rom. 2:4)*



He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him **FREELY** give us all things? (Rom. 8:32; Gen. 22:12)

See also: Acts 13:38,39
Phil. 2:5-8

Gal. 5:1
Gal. 4:9

John 8:32,36
Rom. 8:2

Isa. 61:1

THOU SHALT HAVE... ME
(Exod. 20:3)

Freedom / Liberty

Ho! Every one who thirsts, come to the waters... (Isa. 55:1, NASB).

...Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If any man is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink..." (John 7:37, NASB).

Now to Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us (Eph. 3:20, NASB).

But just as it is written, "Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man, all that God has prepared for those who love Him" (1 Cor. 2:9, NIV).

Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby (Heb. 12:11, KJV).

The Lord has disciplined me severely, but He has not given me over to death (Ps. 118:18, NASB).

O taste and see that the Lord is good; how blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him (Ps. 34:8, NASB).

Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance? (Rom. 2:4, NASB).

Those who cling to worthless idols forfeit the grace that could be theirs (Jonah 2:8, NIV).

Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty (2 Cor. 3:17, KJV).

He that spared not (withheld not) His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him FREELY give us all things (Rom. 8:32, KJV).

GRACE for the Rest of Your Life

MONKEY

FREEING GRACE: Desire vs. Welfare; Lessons in Discipline; Resistance vs. Response; Liberty/Freedom

Desire vs. Welfare: How to Trap a Monkey

One of the oldest methods of catching monkeys is still used in India today. The trappers search out the trails that the troops of monkeys frequent or they may find a small clearing in the jungle. Next, they strategically place specially made clay jars with narrow openings. They then place beans or nuts in these jars in order to lure the monkeys. As an unsuspecting monkey roams the jungle, he happens upon these jars that contain some of his favorite delicacies. The monkey looks inside first, then puts his hand in and grabs a fist full of goodies. As he tries to lift his hand out of the jar, he finds he cannot free himself. To his dismay, he realizes that he is trapped, but he does not want to let go of his precious treasure. He could be free if only he would let go. What he does not know is that the very thing that he loves so well will cost him his freedom. What he **desires** so badly is the very thing that threatens his **welfare** and places him in bondage. *Added note: Many times the monkeys change hands to see if one or the other is successful.*

Discuss what would be some of the things that we hold onto in our lives—things we treasure, things we think that we need, or things we think that we cannot live without.

Lessons in Discipline: How to Free a Monkey (Freeing Grace)

We will address four ways to free a monkey: On the card, the first suggestion comes from Africa (salt) and the other three come from India. We will address the suggestions from India first.

- **Offer Something Better** – If a young girl wanted to free one of the trapped monkeys to keep as a pet, what could she do to entice the monkey to come with her? Offer it something better! What could that be? Yes! A banana! As the monkey desires the banana more than the other goodies in the jar, he drops what he is holding onto and reaches for the banana. The monkey voluntarily relinquished what he was holding onto in exchange for something better. *“O taste and see that the Lord is good”* (Ps. 34:8). *“The goodness of God leads us to repentance (to change our mind about our situation)”* (Rom. 2:4). *“Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor even entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him”* (1 Cor. 2:9). Let’s adapt a familiar slogan: **There is a banana-shaped vacuum in every monkey’s heart. God is** waiting to fill our ‘vacuum’ with *“more than we can ask or think”* (Eph. 3:20)—with Himself!

In South America there is an interesting place called Monkey Island. Monkeys do not naturally live on islands due to a lack of a food source. Monkeys became trapped there when an experiment went awry. When some visitors brought in a bunch of ripe bananas, monkeys jumped on their arms and hung around their necks. They were so hungry for their favorite food. This sad commentary represents the hunger in the world for Jesus. **“Give them something better!”** They are hungry for Him; they will come to Him!

- **Inflict Pain** – If the monkey will not respond to the banana, the young girl may try the following scenario. As one of his hands is trapped in the jar, the girl comes along and strikes the free arm. The immediate pain of the monkey's free arm makes him extract the trapped hand to pat or comfort the injured part of his body. The pain he felt took priority over the sense of gratification for the moment. A little more pressure was put on him to cause him to release his hold, but he is now free! *"No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby"* (Heb. 12:11). The inflicted pain produced a mild compulsion that caused him to yield*. Sometimes God inflicts such 'wounds' on us to get our attention and to draw us away from that which had enticed us and is now enslaving us.

*Yield means ceasing to struggle

Yield means ceasing to withhold

Yield means ceasing to resist

- **Break the Jar** – What if the monkey still failed to respond to the young girl and be set free? The girl could grab the trapped monkey and break the pot to release the frightened creature into her own grasp. All that the monkey was holding onto is now scattered and in ruins. But he is free! What a picture of the Lord. He breaks our fetters to be in turn fettered to Him. *"The Lord has disciplined me severely, but He has not given me over to death"* (Ps. 118:18). This is surrender due to a strong compulsion. *"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise"* (Ps. 51:17). *"I learned God-worship when my pride was shattered"* (Ps. 51:17 The Message).

A word of caution here: *A person who has surrendered in this extreme situation may have a tendency to place the same requirements on others who may have responded to the Lord with less resistance. The inference is that they need an experience of like kind so they can relate to others who have gone through hard times. The criterion seems to be, "How can you relate if you have not been there, done that!" (See 'Encounter' story, at the end of this lesson.) Then, those who responded to the Lord quicker begin to wonder if something is wrong with them. They do not have an exciting testimony of a shattered life to share. They want to apologize because they just responded to the Lord without being 'broken.' We all want our children to come at first call. So does God. He finds no special delight in breaking our jars (brokenness). But, He does want us to come to Him, whatever it takes.*

- **Create Thirst** – This by far is the best option. *"Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be satisfied"* (Matt. 5:6).

In Africa, if a traveler is lost in the jungle, trapping a monkey is his way to get out. He will drill a hole (no jars available) in the side of a tree trunk and place goodies in the hole. Hopefully an unsuspecting monkey will venture out and be curious enough to put his hand in the hole. When he is caught, the lost traveler then places a pile of salt on the ground by the free hand. The monkey then begins to eat the salt. What happens when you eat a lot of salt? You become VERY thirsty. The monkey's thirst now has made him let go and he runs to the nearest water source. The traveler now follows the monkey to the tributary out to freedom. *"Ho! Every one who thirsts, come to the waters..."* (Isa. 55:1). *"If any man is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink"* (Jn. 7:37). Remember the hymn:

**Out of my bondage, sorrow and night
Jesus I come, Jesus I come,
Into thy freedom, gladness and light
Jesus I come to Thee.** (Wm. T. Sleeper)

“HE EMPTIES OUR HANDS SO HE CAN FILL OUR HEARTS”

Resistance vs. Response

Note the box in the right hand corner of the card. The **pain of resistance**—and the **peace of release**.

Trying to pull a monkey’s arm out of the jar by force would only cause more pain. Our goal should be to release (relinquish) as quickly as possible so as not to incur a greater compulsion to cause us to yield.

Note the bamboo pole in the middle of the card. Which end would you like to be tapped with—the “light” end or the “heavy” end? We would all choose the ‘lighter’ end. It is best to **respond** readily—*let go or release* as soon as possible without needing ‘heavy’ compulsion.

The word **responsive** is described in the dictionary as, “The rapidity with which an instrument (person) comes to rest after a change of any kind.”

Someone once asked a mature believer, “Does Christianity get any easier the older you get?” She thought for a minute and replied, “No, but I **respond** quicker!”

The difference in the words REST and RESIST is that RESIST has two more letters in it: “I” and “S.” Let’s say that “I” stands for the perpendicular pronoun meaning ego; and “S” stands for SELF. Now if we take “I” (ego) and “S” (self) out of RESIST, we do have REST.

R-E-S-I-S-T
R- E- S- T

Liberty/Freedom

Discuss the one “last thing” that we hold onto (withhold) in our lives. We may argue that it is hard to let go (entrust) because we “love” it so much. But, because we still hold on, we lose out on intimacy with the Lord—something much better.

Abraham passed the test of love. *“Now I know that you love me, because you did not withhold your one and only son”* (Gen. 22:12). God fulfilled the test of love, *“He that spared not (did not withhold) His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him FREELY give us all things?”* (Rom 8:32).

“So long as liberating truth does not penetrate their minds, he (Satan) will be able to hold them captive. His plan is to keep them unconscious of the seriousness of their condition.”
(J. Oswald Sanders)

“In a gentle way He must discipline those who put themselves in opposition, in the hope that God may grant repentance that leads to acknowledgment of the truth, and that they may come to their senses and be freed from the snare of the devil under whom they had been taken captive, to do His will” (2 Tim. 2:25-26 Berk). *“But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how is it that you turn back again to the weak and worthless elemental things, to which you desire to be enslaved all over again?”* (Gal. 4:9).

*“Stand fast therefore in the **liberty** wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage”* (Gal. 5:1).

“And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. If therefore the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed” (Jn. 8:32, 36).

“For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death” (Rom. 8:2).

“To the Christian, revival speaks of a new appreciation for God and His will for one’s life. Revival occurs when the people of God abandon their cherished idols whether they be carved images or carnal attitudes. In essence, revival means to obey the first commandment, that is, not to permit anything to come between God and our hearts.”
(Thomas Nelson Bible Note)

At the bottom right of the card we see, “THOU SHALT HAVE....ME” (Exod. 20:3). What do those four dots represent?—“no other gods before.” Take out those words and “THOU SHALT HAVE....ME!” When we have Him we need nothing else.

“El Shaddai” means “God is Enough!”
“When you have nothing left but God, you find that God is enough!”

***“Those who cling to worthless idols
forfeit the grace that could be theirs” (Jonah 2:8).***

“God nowhere tells us to give up things for the sake of giving them up. He tells us to give them up for the sake of the only thing worth having: Life with Himself.”
(Oswald Chambers)

Illustration from Dottie Connor Bingham:

On the island where we served as missionaries, we had a little pet monkey. His collar was fastened around his waist, and a long chain was attached to a pole that rested against a tree trunk. This afforded him a lot of freedom to roam on the sandy beach and the ability to climb the tree in front of our house. As my friend Sabina and I were conversing one day, the monkey crawled up and sat on my lap. I just picked him up, cradled him in my arm and held him like a baby. As I chatted I started stroking its tiny face. My friend Sabina started laughing and said, “Look, you put that little monkey to sleep!” I gently raised its arm and let it drop to confirm that indeed it was asleep! Well, she thought that was great, and spread the news to the villagers that night.

The next day people started coming, saying, “So you put that little monkey to sleep?” I said, “I didn’t do anything, I just picked him up, cradled him in my arm and went like this a few times (stroking his tiny face).” While I was explaining, the monkey fell asleep again! I was amazed and pondered why he went to sleep so fast. Well, the monkey was less than a year old. I discovered that baby monkeys stay with their mothers for two years before they are on their own. When I held him closely, he felt protected and safe and secure. He really rested! I was the most surprised of all! That little guy just wanted to rest and he felt so safe in my arms. It reminded me of a chorus:

**Leaning, leaning,
Safe and secure from all alarms;
Leaning, leaning,
Leaning on the Everlasting Arms.**
(Elisha A. Hoffman)

Review and reinforce this lesson by incorporating the following notes and quotes pages and by reading the Scriptures.

Encounter with Flora and Anastasia

This story starts on a small island in the South China Sea. At one end of a long sandy beach stands a bamboo thatch house on wooden poles nestled next to a mountain. This was the missionaries' house where the villagers came every day either to visit or if they had a special need.

One day, two lady friends came and sat on the front porch. The missionary took note that both of them had carried tremendous heartaches. They both had lost their husbands and eleven of their twelve children. Each had just one living son left. In their culture, the widow's social security and provision was all bound up in their family. The situation of these widows was even more precarious—they were totally dependent on their one remaining son. If that son would die, so would the widow, because the people (at that time before they knew the Lord) did not look after one another if they were not "family." The widow would eventually starve to death.

Flora and Anastasia were talking among themselves reminiscing the sorrows and griefs in their lives. This particular day was the one-year anniversary for one of their son's deaths. Flora patted her heart as if to relieve the pain she was experiencing. Then at one point in their conversation, they turned to the missionary with sadness in their eyes as if to say, "Do you have anything to say about our dilemma?"

In her heart, the missionary thought, "Lord, what can I say to them? How can I relate to them? I still have my family. There is no way I can identify with them." Instantly the Lord, in His own gracious way, rebuked the missionary, "***You did not come 12,000 miles to tell them about you, did you?***" (Caution: Satan uses the fact that we have not had the same hurts and experiences as someone else to keep us from sharing with others.)

The missionary accepted the rebuke and was immediately reminded of John 3:16 in the native language and how it was translated. With a calmness from the Lord, the missionary then shared with the ladies the truth of that verse. "*God's love was so ripe towards us (like a fruit at just the right time), that He did not withhold His one and only Son, but let Him pass through death, so that all who believe in Him will live with Him in the place of knowing Him forever.*"

The Lord met the ladies' hearts and calmness came over them. They realized that the one and only Son that God had, had given His life for them. They excused themselves and went "on their way rejoicing." Watching them walk down the sandy path back into the village, the missionary was amazed at the peace the Lord gave them.

Ten years later (1987) the missionary asked Flora about the porch incident and whether or not she had believed at that time. Flora responded with the biggest smile and said that that was when she first started believing. Since then, her son has also believed and has become the evangelist on that island. Her grandchildren also love the Lord.

In later reflections, the missionary had reviewed the lesson:

It's not about me; it's about HIM!

By missionary Dottie Connor Bingham

He Empties our hands so He can fill our hearts!

“What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us... and the most portentous fact about any man is not what he at a given time may say or do, but what he in his deep heart conceives God to be like... that our idea of God corresponds as nearly as possible to the true being of God is of immense importance to us.”

A. W. Tozer

“All that he takes I will give; All that He gives I will take.”

**“Will my will to will God’s will, then willing will be well.
The willing will that wills God’s will within God’s will will dwell.”**

(John 7:17; Phil 1:6; 2:13; Heb. 13:21)

Tom Baird

“He who has seen me has seen the Father” (John 14:9)

God is trying to show us His heart.

**“If you have not
the courage to
give, at least let
Him take.”**

Fenelon

*“I dare not hold too
tightly to the things I
love dearly, lest the
Lord would have to pry
them from my hand.”*

Corrie Ten Boom

**“Our heavenly Father
never takes any earthly
thing from His
children, unless He
means to give them
something better
instead.”**

George Mueller

***Say not my soul, “From
whence can God relieve
my care?”***

***Remember that
Omnipotence hath
servants everywhere!***

J.J. Lynch

***“El Shaddai”
When you have
nothing left but God,
you find that God is
enough.***

Relinquish – Release

We must relinquish control, must hold with an open hand all those relationships and activities and possessions God has so graciously given us, but that we are sorely tempted to cling to as substitutes for God Himself. E Stanley Jones, *Victory Through Surrender*

Is it not possible for us to testify that we have given our “all” to Jesus, to sing “All for Jesus” or “All to Jesus I Surrender”, when the contrary truth is that we hold on to a whole list of unsundered items? Footnote P. 1374, Thomas Nelson Publisher’s Bible

As for me, I am in your hands; do with me whatever you think is good and right. Jeremiah 26:14

I remembered my daughter, who was a little willful and loved her own way. I thought to myself as I knelt, “Supposing that she were to come and say ‘Father, from now on I am going to put my life into your hands, do with it what you will.’ Would I call her mother to my side and say, ‘Here is our chance to torment her. What would mortify her? What color dress does she hate? What companion does she detest? What method of spending her life does she abhor? Tell me, and I will put her through them’.”

I knew I would not say that. I knew I would say to my wife, “Our child is going to follow our will from now on. Do you know of anything that is hurting her? Does she love it much? She must give it up, but we will make it as easy for her as we can; we must take from her the things that are hurting her.” F. B. Meyer

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* “Those who cling to worthless idols forfeit the grace that could be theirs.” (Jonah 2:8, NIV)

** “Thou shalt have no other gods before me.: (Exodus 20:3, KJV)

If my life is once surrendered, all is well,
Let me not grab it back, as though it were in peril in His hand,
but would be safer in mine!

Elisabeth Elliot

Able

Able to do

Able to do what we think

Able to do what we ask or think

Able to do all that we ask or think

Able to do above all that we ask or think

Able to do abundantly above all that we ask or think

Able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think

“Now unto Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.”

(Ephesians 3:2)