



Avoiding the Devil's Throat

BY PRESIDENT JAMES E. FAUST
Second Counselor in the First Presidency



President Faust teaches us to be cautious and stay as far away from temptation as we can.

As a young man I served a mission to Brazil. It was a marvelous experience. One of the wonders of the world in that great country is Iguacu Falls. In the flood season, the volume of water spilling over the brink is the largest in the world. One part of the falls, where the deluge—the overflow of water—is the heaviest, is called the Devil's Throat.

Years ago, reckless boatmen would take passengers in canoes to stand on rocks and look down into the Devil's Throat. The water above the falls is usually calm and slow moving and the atmosphere tranquil. Only the roar of the water below forewarns of the danger lurking just a few feet away. A sudden, unexpected current could take a canoe into the rushing waters, over the cliff, and down into the Devil's Throat. Those foolish enough to leave the canoes to stand on these treacherous wet rocks could so easily lose their footing and be swept away into the swirling currents below.

Some of you think of yourselves as dare-devils, ready to take on almost any challenge. But some activities will take you down into the Devil's Throat. The only safe

course is to stay well away from danger. President George Albert Smith (1870–1951) strongly cautioned, “If you cross to the devil's side of the line one inch, you are in the tempter's power, and if he is successful, you will not be able to think or even reason properly, because you will have lost the spirit of the Lord” (*Sharing the Gospel with Others*, sel. Preston Nibley [1948], 43).

Some of Satan's most appealing messages are: everyone does it; if it doesn't hurt anybody else, it's all right; if you feel there is no harm in it, it's OK; it's the “cool” thing to do. Satan is the master deceiver. His disguise is so perfect that it is hard to recognize him or his methods.

You young people will need to become stronger spiritually and morally in order to withstand the temptations and snares of the world. Perhaps this is why such special spirits have been reserved for this time.

We are living in a challenging time, and it is a time for us to stand firm. We should go forward in a spirit of faith and not be fearful of anything except being too close to the Devil's Throat. We will be strengthened and preserved if we follow the counsel and direction of President Gordon B. Hinckley, our prophet, seer, and revelator. ●

From an April 2003 general conference address.

