

How to Catch a Monkey

Ever wonder how people catch monkeys in some parts of the world?

First, they take a gourd, cut a small hole in it, then put some rice inside. Next, they tie the gourds down securely and wait for the monkey. The monkeys fall for the gourd trick every time.

Here's what happens: The monkey sticks his hand into the gourd to get the rice. He grabs a handful—but then he can't get his hand with the rice out of the gourd. His closed fist won't go through the small hole.

The monkey is so greedy that he won't let go of the handful of rice. He just waits there with his greedy fist wrapped around the rice until the people come and capture him. Now let's play a game.



The Monkey Trap Game

Place a large bowl of candy, such as Skittles, on a chair on one side of the room. Give each person a plate and have them place it on the opposite side of the room—be sure to indicate whose plate belongs to who.

Each player should stand next to his/her plate to begin the game. At your command, have them race to pick up one piece of candy from the bowl, then race back to their plate and place the candy on it. Players can only take one piece at a time.

They will continue this until a timer goes off, or a whistle is blown. The trick is, they do not know when the timer is going to go off, and if they are not touching their plate when the timer goes off they will have to give up all the candy they have collected. (It's interesting to see them risk all their candy so they can have more! The longer they wait to hear the timer go off, the more they will understand the lesson.)

When the timer goes off the players must give back all their candy if they are not touching their plate.

While playing the game we were concerned for ourselves and getting more candy—just like the monkeys wanted the rice. Some of you got to keep the candy, because you weren't as greedy as those who lost their candy.

Life doesn't seem fair when others have more than you but God tells us in the 10th commandment to be content with what we have. God wants us to be thankful for what we have and to trust Him, instead of trusting in what we have to make us happy.

Discuss:

- ◆ Was it hard to be happy for someone who gets to keep the candy?
- ◆ Why do you think it is easier to be greedy rather than content?
- ◆ Talk about a time when you (or someone else you know) was greedy?
- ◆ How can being greedy be bad for you?
- ◆ What are the benefits of being content (being happy with what you do have)?