

Make Church a Part of Your Life

WEEKLY SERMONETTE

“Heart of Temptation”

By Preacher/Teacher Terry Laughlin, CrossRoads Ministries

“When tempted, no one should say, ‘God is tempting me.’ For God... does [not] tempt anyone; but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.” (James 1: 13-15)

Flip Wilson made the saying, “The Devil Made Me Do It” famous. Some cling to the sin God calls detestable (Leviticus 18: 22) and they claim He made them that way. Others label a life of drunkenness a disease (alcoholism) but the Bible says it is an act of the sinful nature. (Galatians 5: 19-21) All three scenarios are an attempt to make excuses for desiring sins that bring physical, spiritual, and eternal death.

From the very beginning when original sin came into the world man has always tried to blame someone else for indulging sin. Adam blamed Eve, and Eve blamed the serpent. Today people look to godless organizations to help them explain their bondages to willful sin. Some have actually blamed God for supposedly making them a certain way.

God is omnipotent, pure and holy. There is not the slightest sin or moral depravity that may appeal to or tempt God. It is inconsistent to think that God could be the author of temptation to sin. God does not cause sin nor does He

tempt people to sin. The source of temptation lies within man himself. The desire to sin lies within the heart of man, and it is through this that Satan can tempt man.

James presents two pictures here. First, as attracting man’s attention and persuading him to approach the forbidden thing; and second, as luring him by

means of bait to yield to the temptation. Robertson has the perfect title for the man who yields to sinful temptation, “Snared by One’s Own Bait.” The man who yields to sin is like a man who steps into the very bear trap that he himself set. Sin in the heart draws man away from God as surely as a baited hook can draw a hungry fish and

crush him as powerfully as a bear trap. When you yield to sin, neither God nor the devil is responsible. You are.

Please note, James uses the terms “conceived” and “gives birth.” Conception is the joining or union of two. Temptation in the heart must be fed by another source before it can grow into full-grown sin. Sinful temptation defeats you only when you feed it through outside sources.

The first step in defeating sin is to confess that its source lies within you. Stop blaming someone or something else and justifying your desire to sin. Compare yourself only to God’s Holy Word. You can save yourself from a great many problems (for which you are blaming someone else) if you would just say to the living Jesus Christ, “I’m a sinner. I’m guilty. Please forgive and cleanse me of all my sin.” Many have come to know His complete forgiveness and know victory over the sins that formerly kept them from enjoying God’s presence and intervention in their lives.

Jesus is the only One who can truly help you. For your sake, “...He has been tempted in every way, just as we are - yet was without sin.” (Hebrews 4: 15) Bondage to sin lies first within your own heart. Jesus can set you free! “So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.” (John 8: 36)



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A New Father

Through the amazing miracle of birth, the father of a newborn is entrusted with an innocent spirit - what a great responsibility! Proverbs 22.6 says, “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.” A father doesn’t have to do it alone; God is there with His sustaining guidance, He will be right alongside all along the way. Worship with your Heavenly Father this week, be thankful for His presence.

Weekly Scripture Reading

Acts	Acts	Acts	Acts	Acts	Acts	Acts
2.1-21	2.22-47	3.1-26	4.1-22	4.23-37	5.1-16	5.17-42

Scriptures Selected by The American Bible Society

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