

The Road to Destruction

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Mike Miller

Straight Paths Bible Church

James 1:12-16 Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. Do not err, my beloved brethren.

Matthew 7:13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

- I. It all happens in your mind, out of the view of others.
 - A. An object is presented for your consideration.
 - B. While considering the object a desire is born in your heart.
 - C. We begin to pursue the desire.
 - D. One of two things happens at this point:
 - 1. Eventually desire takes control and truth about the matter becomes irrelevant.

James 1:15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

- E. Then a way is made, and the gate is opened, and you walk through it never to be the same again.
 - F. The other possibility is that the mind holds to truth and the desire is denied.
 - 1. This is the rarer of the two, and seldom happens with carnal people.
 - 2. But with the help of God and the guidance of the Spirit of God upon a heart and mind that is yielded to Him, it does happen.
- II. This pattern applies to all of life here on earth.
 - A. It is the way all men make their choices.
 - B. The way itself is God's design, so there is nothing wrong with the way God set us up in this world with physical senses and emotional feelings and natural desires.
 - C. Every matter in life is first presented to our mind to consider; both good and bad.
 - D. The problem is with our desire; we fail to control it, to keep it subject to truth and righteousness.
 - 1. We let it out of its cage before we have secured everything else, and it takes over quickly.
 - E. The reason we fail to control it is because there are so many voices speaking to our mind justifying our desire and speaking in favor of it.
 - F. As we have said so many times, the battle is in our mind and if we do not guard our mind from the spirits of evil we will be deceived by them very easily.
- III. This strategy, or game plan of Satan is visible in every enticement to sin, and in his schemes to derail us in life from serving God.
 - A. Satan has two goals: to lead us into sinning against God and others, and to ruin our testimony and usefulness to God.

- B. The depths of sin he leads people into varies greatly.
 1. Some he can lead into fornication, adultery, murder or stealing.
 2. Some he can ruin by simply keeping them confused and stumbling.
 3. In either case, Satan wins, and God loses, and so do husbands and wives, and fathers and mothers, and children and friends.
 - C. We can usually discern whether the object presented for our consideration is from God or from Satan by what that object is.
 1. For example, would the Spirit of God present to the mind of a married man a woman to consider besides his wife?
 2. Would the Spirit of God suggest to our mind that we consider drinking alcohol? Or drugs?
 3. Would God suggest to our mind the idea of going to spend some time in a gambling casino or any place where everyone is drinking and dancing and being immoral?
 4. Would Satan suggest to our mind that seek out some truth in the Word of God?
 5. Would Satan try to guide our mind to consider others instead of ourselves?
 6. Would Satan try to convince you to give your life to the service of God and the salvation of souls?
 - D. All these things may seem very obvious, and they are, but be aware that the devil is more subtle than all the beasts of the field and he can present things to your mind in such a way that you actually think you are doing right when you are not.
 1. By the time anyone crosses the line into fornication or adultery they have already reasoned it out in their mind that they are justified in what they are doing.
 2. By the time anyone enters into any sin they have constructed, with the devil's help, a whole argument in their mind that proves they are doing the right thing for themselves.
- IV. What we have to do if we are going to live in victory here is keep our desires under control.
- A. We do that by seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.
 - B. We do that by denying ourselves and following Christ.
 - C. We do that by realizing that Christ is Lord of our life and that He gives me what He deems best for me, and I have no right to go after what I want on my own.
 - D. We do that by learning (like Paul) to be content with such things as we have, and in whatsoever state we are in.
 1. We seek peace with what we have, and not imagine that something we do not have will make us happy or give us peace.
 - E. This will curb our appetites for the things of this world that look so appealing and are presented to us so cunningly by the forces of evil.
 - F. All this is accomplished in a person who is truly born of the Spirit of God.

Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

Matthew 5:6 Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

Ephesians 5:15-17 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.