

LEE FROM LUST WHEN TEMPTED

JAMES 1:13-16

LUST: THE GIANT THAT SLEW DAVID

Did you know that one of the greatest events in history has an equally tragic sequel? First there was David and Goliath, when David kills Goliath in one of the greatest moments in history.

But there is a horrible sequel, David and Bathsheba, when David was killed by another giant. You say wait, didn't David kill Goliath? Yes, wonderfully by God's power this humble teen aged David slew God's enemy Goliath. But later in life a proud David

- ignored God's word and
- allowed another giant to come right into God's city Jerusalem, and
- welcomed God's enemy into the presence of this man after God's own heart, and
- David was slain by the giant of LUST!

That is exactly the warning James gave. Look at our text this morning: James 1:13-16. There are three powerful truths tucked away in these verses:

- Temptation is Inevitable JAMES 1:13A "LET NO ONE SAY WHEN HE IS TEMPTED", IT ISN'T IF BUT WHEN!

Temptation is inevitable: Use the Word

- GOD IS FAITHFUL James 1:13b-14 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone.14 But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed"

God is Faithful : Look for God

I Corinthians 10:13 LOOK FOR GOD - He's there. The apostle Paul gives us hope in this verse of Scripture. "No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, that you may be able to endure it". God is there all the time. He tells us He is faithful. When we think we are alone, we are not alone. God has already measured and limited the attack upon us. He has already provided an escape route if we will only look for it and take it. Last week we saw Where we need to look for God:

We need to look for God when we are on THE MOUNTAIN OF DESPAIR like Abraham.; in THE DEN OF PASSION like Joseph; in THE CAVE OF FEAR like David; in THE SPOTLIGHT OF PRIDE like Daniel; when we ARE SINKING IN THE FURY OF THE STORM like Peter; in THE GRIP OF PAIN like Paul; in THE GRIP OF HOPELESSNESS like Jeremiah.

FINALLY IN OUR TEXT -

- LUST IS HORRIBLE James 1:13-16 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. 14 But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. 15 Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death. 16 Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. NKJV

Let's go back to the crisp, cool air of a middle eastern morning three thousand years ago to see just how horrible lust can be.

Two calloused feet slipped quietly out from under the warmth of a wool fleece and deftly into the sandals left carefully beside the low wooden cot. In the twilight of early morning's pre-dawn darkness the red headed, teenaged-boy crept carefully out of the stone house on the outskirts of Bethlehem. With the confidence of integrity and the joy of purity, young David was on his way to a moment never to fade from the pages of history.

Walking excitedly the rocky paths up and down the hills of Judah, the young shepherd boy was headed to the Valley of Elah a mere 8 miles off. Arriving before breakfast young David eagerly surveyed the

eastern rim of the valley. Campfires and tents dotted the hillside as he looked at the army of God's people Israel. With a heart filled with gratitude and wonder David strode up to the first tent and asked if anyone knew where his brothers from Bethlehem were camping. The special provisions his dad had sent them were only a part of his purpose in coming.

- David longed to see the people who stood for the God. But even more,
- David so loved the God of Israel, he wanted to see Him at work.
- David sang of His God on his long vigils around the hills of Bethlehem caring for his father's sheep.
- David came as God's man for this very climactic moment in history!

Suddenly a loud voice brimming with evil echoed up the valley hillsides. In the distance a pillar of armor encasing God's enemy Goliath sprayed the venom of the ancient serpent from Eden across the faithless and frightened people of God.

Shocked and angered David heard for the first time this irreverent pagan reviling the God of Heaven. Instantly he wanted to stand for the honor of God at all costs. As we know so well, he did. Unafraid and with no concern for self he embodies what God can do with all who think only of the Lord and not of themselves.

The events of that day are indelibly sketched on our hearts. The shepherd lad, a handful of stones, a homemade weapon plus God made an unbeatable army of one. David defeated the giant and became an instant and enduring hero of all the ages.

But less than 30 years later David would be slain by a different giant. Far more dangerous than the Goliath that he faced as a teenager, the Giant of Lust had crept into David's own inner chambers. In a moment blinded by his own selfish desires David was slain.

These verses are part of the book of James. A letter written 19 ½ centuries ago warning us about the lethal nature of lust. James gives us the final key to overcoming temptation. Our study this morning: FLEE FROM LUST because it is horrible!

Lust is Horrible: Run from lust

As the New Testament scholar Leon Morris has written: "The man who carries on an act of impurity and lust is not simply breaking a human code, not even sinning against the God who at some time in the past gave him the gift of the Spirit.

- He is sinning against the God who is present at that moment,
- against One who continually gives the Spirit.
- The impure act is an act of despite against God's good gift at the very moment it is being proffered....
- This sin is seen in its true light only when it is seen as a preference for impurity rather than a Spirit who is holy."

TEMPTATION comes in Three Dimensions¹, packaged in varied shapes, sizes, and colors...but most of them fall into one of three categories:

- 1) *Material Temptation*. This is lust for things. The things may be as large as a house of our dreams or as small as a precious ring, as bright and dazzling as a new sports car or as dull and dusty as a two-hundred-year-old antique dresser.
- 2) *Personal Temptation*. This is lust for status. Special recognition. The status of fame, fortune, power, or authority. Having a title that makes heads turn, like "top executive" or "president" or "executive director" or even "doctor".
- 3) *Sensual Temptation*. This is lust for another person. The desire to have and enjoy the body of an individual, even though such pleasure is illegal and/or immoral.

Turn back to II Tim. 2:22 Run from Lust Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. NKJV

Now, lets examine David the giant killer, killed by the giant of lust. Note six dreadful steps down in II Samuel. Join me in II Samuel 5:

- ✓ David Desensitized his conscience by incomplete obedience II Sam 5:13
- ✓ David Relaxed his grip on personal purity II Sam 11:1
- ✓ David Fixated his heart on physical desires v. 2
- ✓ David Rationalized his mind about wrong decisions v. 3
- ✓ David Decended his life into lustful sin v. 4
- ✓ David Destroyed his testimony by the sin of a moment of stolen pleasure. Death, deceit, murder, immorality and spiritual oppression, poverty and famine of the soul are only a few offspring of this act of momentary pleasure.

- DAVID DESENSITIZED HIS CONSCIENCE BY INCOMPLETE OBEDIENCE II Sam 5:13 This was just CARELESSNESS, a slight

¹ Swindoll, *Sensuality*, p. 4.

Wandering, just a tiny LOOSENING in a socially acceptable area. (II Samuel 5:13) David's sin with Bathsheba was decided back in the earlier days. David relaxed his grip on the way God asked him to live. Listen to the record of his start as king 2 Samuel 5:13 And David took more concubines and wives from Jerusalem, after he had come from Hebron. Also more sons and daughters were born to David. So you ask, was it really wrong? Didn't all the men back then do it? Some, but if God says it is wrong, it is wrong even if all do it! Listen to God's instructions for His leaders: Deuteronomy 17:15-20 "you shall surely set a king over you whom the Lord your God chooses; one from among your brethren you shall set as king over you; you may not set a foreigner over you, who is not your brother.16 "But he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, for the Lord has said to you, 'You shall not return that way again.'17 "Neither shall he multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn away; nor shall he greatly multiply silver and gold for himself. 18 "Also it shall be, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book, from the one before the priests, the Levites.19 "And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God and be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes,20 "that his heart may not be lifted above his brethren, that he may not turn aside from the commandment to the right hand or to the left, and that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his children in the midst of Israel.

Now turn to 2 Samuel 11:1-6 and see the 2nd step down -

- DAVID RELAXED HIS GRIP ON PERSONAL PURITY II Sam 11:1 You see it was RESTLESSNESS, aimless waiting, purposeless LINGERING (II Samuel 11:1) David stepped back from the normal place of leadership he was expected to have. He relaxed his grip on the priorities he was to have as king. He was in one of those restless in between times that is so dangerous. Nothing good usually occurs in those purposeless times of wondering what to do.
- DAVID FIXATED HIS HEART ON PHYSICAL DESIRES v. 2 He didn't look away from the temptation, rather he engaged in watching, this became lust filled LOOKING v. 2 In this period of restlessness, with time on his hands moment of listless, boredom and wandering the palace he uses the highest spot in the city to take an innocent peek at his neighbors wife. BUT WAIT -
You see There is no such thing as an innocent peek at another woman,

There is no such thing as an innocent peek at an off-color TV show,

There is no such thing as an innocent peek at pornographic materials. There is no innocent trying out of intoxicating alcohol,

There is no innocent trying out of enslaving cigarettes,

There is no innocent trying out of debilitating drugs

There is no innocent trying out of premarital sexual relations.

These are steps to life crippling habits that can destroy your testimony and usefulness for Christ !

- DAVID RATIONALIZED HIS MIND ABOUT WRONG DECISIONS v. 3
Wanting LUSTING v. 3;
- DAVID DECENDED HIS LIFE INTO LUSTFUL SIN v. 4
- DAVID DESTROYED HIS TESTIMONY BY A SIN FOR THE MOMENT LYING v. 4. (See thin NASB Psalm 51 notes).

What a horrible thing sin is. It deceives with all those glittering promises. It destroys with the precision of a surgeon.

How do we get back on the track? I think the key is of course in the Word. Let's close in Psalm 51. When you have been defeated by the giant of lust David is inspired of God to tell us four steps we can take back to God.

WE MUST - Focus on God's Character: He is Exalted even in our sin (51:1-4)

- The Lord can RENEW OUR RELATIONSHIP v. 1
- The Lord can WASH US CLEAN v. 2
- The Lord can REMOVE THE ROADBLOCK v. 3
- The Lord can UTTERLY FORGIVE v. 4

WE MUST - Focus on our Character: We are sinful (51:5-9)

- As Sinners we show our nature, our choice and confirm God's declaration. v. 5
- As Sinners we destroy inner truthfulness v. 6
- As sinners we are defiled internally v. 7
- As sinners we lose our joy v. 8
- As sinners we lose fellowship with our God v. 9

WE MUST – Focus on God's Work: He is renewing (51:10-13)

- God is washing our hearts v. 10 [Heb 9.14; 10.22]
- God is restoring our walk in the Spirit v. 11
- God is renewing the fruit of the Spirit v. 12
- God is preparing us for further ministry v. 13

WE MUST – Focus on our work: We must repent (51: 14-19)

- Call sin what it is v. 14 (David murdered Uriah)
- Talk to God v. 15 (Psalm 32 David had dried up spiritually)
- Experience true contrition not mere externalism v. 16-17
- Begin zealous worship anew and afresh v. 18-19

If we neglect fleeing lust and rooting out What can we do right now to get us started back to God's path or keep us on that path? Let me give you three choice we need to make:

1. MAKE YOURSELF LOOK AT THE FINAL RESULT or ultimate form (mature plant) of the momentary choices of (or seeds you are planting) today.
 - If your parents knew what you have been hiding from them, would it crush them and grieve their hearts?
 - If your husband or wife knew about the area you have surrendered to lust, would it rob your relationship of joy and trust?
 - If you keep on in this path what will it do to your body, your family, your reputation and your heavenly reward?
 - Is it really worth as much as it will eventually cost you?
2. CHOOSE TO CULTIVATE NEW AND GODLY CHOICES that will become habits of holiness for old and ungodly patterns. Cut cable or online service for a few months and join an accountability group or Bible study; take a fast from TV watching (even sports) and start a Scripture memory plan like our "108 verses".
3. REMEMBER IT WILL ONLY BE HARDER TO STOP TOMORROW. Every wrong choice we make sets in motion a wave of consequence and growing bondage throughout our mind and body. Every obedient choice we make set in motion a wave of liberating blessing and spiritual strength.

#428 I need Thee

#430 I must tell Jesus

#330 "Come Every Soul By Sin Oppressed"

Numbers 33:50-56 Now the Lord spoke to Moses in the plains of Moab by the Jordan, across from Jericho, saying,⁵¹ "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When you have crossed the Jordan into the land of Canaan,⁵² 'then you shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you, destroy all their engraved stones, destroy all their molded images, and demolish all their high places;⁵³ 'you shall dispossess the inhabitants of the land and dwell in it, for I have given you the land to possess.⁵⁴ 'And you shall divide the land by lot as an inheritance among your families; to the larger you shall give a larger inheritance, and to the smaller you shall give a smaller inheritance; there everyone's inheritance shall be whatever falls to him by lot. You

shall inherit according to the tribes of your fathers.⁵⁵ 'But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then it shall be that those whom you let remain shall be irritants in your eyes and thorns in your sides, and they shall harass you in the land where you dwell.⁵⁶ 'Moreover it shall be that I will do to you as I thought to do to them.' "

William James, in his classic *Principles of Psychology*, put it this way:

Could the young but realize how soon they will become mere walking bundles of habits, they would give more heed to their conduct while in the plastic state. We are spinning our own fates, good or evil, and never to be undone. Every smallest stroke or virtue or vice leaves its ever so little scar. The drunken Rip Van Winkle, in Jefferson's play, excuses himself for every fresh dereliction by saying "I won't count this time! " Well! He may not count it, but it is being counted nonetheless. Down among his nerve cells and fibers the molecules are counting it, registering and storing it up to be used against him when the next temptation comes. Nothing we ever do is, in strict scientific literalness, wiped out. Of course, this has its good side as well as its bad one.²

FLEE YOUTHFUL LUSTS: DON'T-

1. HABITUATE your lusts
2. CRIPPLE your conscience
3. SOIL your mind
4. DESENSITIZE your warning system
5. MISUSE your body, mind and eyes
6. SPOIL your ability to give
7. LESSEN your desires for a godly wife

How can I check my progress in holiness. What is the area to take my spiritual pulse? Let me give you four easy spiritual health indicators:

1. Have you taken your temperature? Is it hot with 1st love for Jesus or cooling or cold? Look into the eyes of Jesus as He bends over you just now.
2. Have you checked your diet? What kind of heavenly food have you eaten in the past week. Sufficient for life and growth? Is your soul malnourished? Or do you suffer from spiritual obesity?

² William James, *Principles of Psychology* (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc. 1952), p. 83.

3. Have you examined your phone bill ? Do you have regular long distance calls to heaven? Are they regular, frequent and of all different durations? Or are you kind of out of touch?
4. Have you looked for any numbness? Sensitivity to sin is good test of spiritual health. If we are sensitive to sin in our life and the world it means the Spirit of God is unquenched and operating. Does your heart ache for your own sin and the sin of others