

Daily Devotional, August 13, 2020

'Sin's Progression', (James 1:13-15, NKJV)

"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. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death." (James 1:13-15)

****Warning: The enemy of your soul does not want you to read this devotional today. Nor does he want you to heed the applications. He may go through extra trouble to make sure that you do not turn closer to God today.*

The Epistle of James has been called the New Testament Book of Wisdom. The entire book is full of practical godly advice. Our text is an affirmation of personal responsibility for individual behavior. God does not tempt anyone. He allows temptation, but He does not instigate it. The devil, his minions, and the world system which acts in accord with his program, are the instigators of sin. Anything that violates biblical standards of conduct is called sin in the Scripture. Here we find that there is no sin that God has set us up to fail on. The fault and failure lies with the sinner, not with the Savior. *"If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it"* (Genesis 4:7).

After these statements of fact, James warns us of the progression of sin. If we understand sin's progression, we can arrest its progress as soon as we recognize it. The desire is conceived in the heart. Contrary to common belief, man's default position is not good but evil in its natural state. *"The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it?"* (Jeremiah 17:9). The sinful heart gives birth to sin, and sin always grows when left unchecked. The man then becomes a slave to sin, and without the intervention of God and a spiritual birth (Cf. John 3:3-5), the end is spiritual death. For the Christian, ideally we would stop sin's progression before it even gets going. But when we do sin, let us arrest the thought, repent of it, and not act on it. If sin has manifested itself in an action already, instead of nourishing the sin, let us starve the sin by repenting of it and not giving it opportunity to continue as a force in our lives. Arresting sin's progression in these ways allows us to maintain communion with God, and have our prayers heard. Today, come clean with your Maker. And resolve to have such an awareness of sin that its progression will be stopped at its earliest outset.