

**Definition of Temptation:** An enticement presented to lead one into sin against God. To understand the nature of temptation let us focus on the desires we turn into lust that tempt us.

**I. The Big Picture: Lustful desires cause temptation, not God.**

- A. The central problem of believers are the sinful lusts within our hearts.
- B. The heart longs for many things it should not.
- C. These longings come from the flesh (indwelling sin) producing evil desires within our hearts.
- D. As we embrace these evil desires within our hearts, we are easily tempted to further sin against God.
- E. These lusts are inordinate desires that entice our hearts to sin against God. It is not God that tempts us to sin but the lusts of our hearts that tempt us to sin.

**II. Stage One: Lustful desires are formed out of preexisting desires within our hearts.**

- A. The heart is the nurturing nest for the seeds of lust because preexisting desires lie dormant in our hearts.
- B. The seeds of lust embed themselves within our hearts. These seeds in general are the seductions of our flesh, the suggestions from the culture, and the situations created by Satan. (1 Peter 2:11, 1 John 2:15-17, Matthew 4:5-7)
- C. The seductions of our flesh, the suggestions from the culture, and the situations created by Satan promise satisfaction of and gratification from these preexisting desires within our hearts if we are willing to sin against God for it.
- D. As the preexisting desires of our hearts are stirred up through the seeds of lust, lustful desires are formed.
- E. Once lustful desires are formed they begin to rule our hearts, making satisfaction of them the predominate focus of our minds and disobedience to God feasible.

**(Adapted from *Passions of the Heart* by John D. Street. pp. 64-66)**

### III. Lustful desires corrupt us and can kill us.

- A. As a computer virus corrupts the hard drive of a computer possibly causing it to be inoperable if not detected soon enough to be addressed, so lust corrupts the heart of man leading him to death if not detected soon enough to be addressed.
- B. As a pregnant woman becomes pregnant by the implantation of a seed, so the seeds of lust + the preexisting desires within our hearts cause us to be pregnant with lust, giving birth to sin which will lead to death.
- C. As we hunger for food we decide to eat, we either choose food that is good to us but not good for us or food that is good for us and will be good to us as we acquire taste for it. So it is when our souls hunger we decide to eat. We either eat the food served from the seeds of lust which is good to us but not good for us, or we eat the food served from the seed of God, Jesus Christ our Lord, which is good for us and will be good to us as we acquire a taste for heavenly food over earthly food.
- D. As we experience physical pain we sometimes take or do whatever we can to make our bodies feel better without considering the side effects to our bodies. So with spiritual pain derived through relationships, circumstances, and our own sin--we sometimes take the medicine prescribed by the seeds of lust to make us feel better not considering the side effects to our hearts.
- E. As we develop habits dictating what we will feed our bodies, it will be that which is good for us as well as good to us or that which is good to us but not good for us. So we develop habits dictating what we will feed our hearts according to that which is good for us as well as good to us or that which is good to us but not good for us.

## The Development and the Demise of Lustful Desires of the Heart

### Step 1

The Heart of Mankind is stirred as he is bombarded with inordinate desires from indwelling sin waging war within the heart

1 Peter 2:11 / James 4:1

### Step 2

Satan further stirs up sinful desires through the opportunities provided from world's system and the world's wisdom

James 3:13-16 / 1 John 2:15-16 / 2 Peter 1:4

### Step 3

Whenever mankind is hungry in his heart or hurting in his heart and does not come to Jesus, he pursues satisfaction of the heart or silence from the pain of the heart through feeding on lustful desires by acting on Satan's opportunities, leading to Man's own destruction

(Insight adapted from *Passions of the Heart* by John Street, p.102)

James 1:13-15 / James 4:1-4