

**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. Stage One: Lustful desires are formed out of preexisting desires within our hearts. Therefore, it is not God who tempts us to do evil but we are tempted by our lustful desires.**

- 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)**

**II. Stage Two: Lustful desires demand to move into outward expression.**

- A. The natural progression of lustful desires is to wage war within our minds, demanding outward fulfillment through unrighteous activity. (1 Peter 2:11)
- B. The war waged within our hearts can cause us to experience a heavy burden that appears to only be lifted if we are willing to fulfill lustful desires through unrighteous activity.
- C. The war waged within our hearts can lead to impulses of our bodies demanding fulfillment of these lustful desires through unrighteous activity. (James 4:1)
- D. As our minds and bodies are infiltrated with demands to fulfill these lustful desires through unrighteous activity, it becomes difficult for us to resist.
- E. Our minds must allow the members of our bodies to act in order to satisfy these lustful desires through unrighteous activity.

- F. Our bodies will act in full cooperation with the dictates of our hearts whether to resist or to satisfy the lustful desires of our hearts.

**(Adapted from *Passions of the Heart* by John D. Street, pp. 68-69)**

**III. Stage Three: Every choice to act on lustful desires is a step towards bondage, demise, and death.**

- A. As we make decisions to satisfy the lustful desires of our hearts, there we be a growing demand of our hearts for more substantial satisfaction.
- B. We will count the cost of pursuing more substantial satisfaction of the lustful desires, deciding to do more to satisfy the lustful desires as the seeds of lust promise a greater reward. This will result in being held captive to the satisfaction of the lustful desires.
- C. The greater the internal obsession to satisfy the lustful desires of the heart, the greater the outward expression of sin towards God and others to accomplish the goal of satisfaction.
- D. The downward progression of sinful behavior, whether private or public, exposes the increasing control of the inward lust and our inevitable demise.
- E. The following could be the outward results of the increasing obsession with satisfying the lustful desires of our hearts:
  - 1. Unhappiness
  - 2. Financial troubles
  - 3. Broken relationships
  - 4. Distrust from others
  - 5. Bad credit
  - 6. Particular health concerns from sin choices
  - 7. Poor reputation
  - 8. Lack of willing support from others to help us, and
  - 9. Neglect of fulfilling responsibilities
- F. We will find ourselves physically dead if we continue down the habitual pattern of satisfying the lustful desires of our hearts.

**(Adapted from *Passions of the Heart* by John D. Street, pp. 70-76)**