

“...But each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.” James 1:14-15

Temptation

Suddenly covering his mouth with both hands, he tries to keep the vile acid in his stomach from exiting without consent. The longer he fights to remain in control, the weaker he becomes. Sweat soaks his flesh as every muscle in his body tightens, keeping at bay the fire within it. The struggle to keep the contents in his body is overwhelming. Clenching his hands against his mouth, he considers the relief of giving up the battle and finally succumbs to the fantasy of breathing easier. The battle is lost.

Temptation, much like the digestive acid in our bodies is always present in our lives. But just as the acid in our stomach helps us draw strength from the food we eat, so also temptation can feed our spirits when properly resisted.

The choice to allow the desires of our flesh to speak louder than the desires of our Creator is where temptation resides. Without man's consent, temptation toils in vain. Unfortunately, every human being is doomed to hear the hospice song. And the choice is ours whether to stand before our Maker damaged by the acid of the Fall or washed in the clear stream of grace.

No being is free from the reach of temptation whether he be liar or truth teller, sinner or saint, a thief or philanthropist Satan or even God himself.

Sin

From the sealed tomb of defeat, her umbra seeps through the walls. Her brittle and rotted bones are veiled by the breathtaking gown of desire, embroidered with the lace of passing pleasure covered in the pearly, translucent white of temptation yet unknown. When she walks, she moves gracefully on the balls of her feet, each foot in front of the other as if the earth beneath her is only hot at her heels to touch. Seducing her victims with her appearance, she hospitably leads them to her lifeless chamber decorated with all of man's deepest yearnings: money, fame, sex, power, love, security and happiness. Her shadow dances around the edges of her tomb, beckoning her victim with tray overflowing. She offers him to dine with her as she persistently caresses his darkest desire. Letting him select which delicacy to relish, she waits until he has eaten. His eyes open as soon as his hunger is mollified and he sees her image before him—fleshless from head to toe. The orifices of her face are filled with a dark and blinding mist. Not being able to look at her any longer, he stands, looks around the room and sees the dead that surround her. His attention then shifts to his hands only to see his flesh slowly melting from his bones. He grabs his dampening face with exposed metacarpals and screams.

Behind him Satan stands, Sin's shroud now superfluous, he laughs victoriously. Satan opens his dusky wings and a greater darkness fills the tomb.

Death

Death's victim timidly opens one of dissolving eyes and catches a brief glance of his doom before his eyesight evaporates. Satan's servant, Death crouches in his corner with a black-chained leash around his neck tied to his Master's ankle. His frame is untraceable, oil amidst water. He stares at his victim, eager to be unleashed, hoping to satisfy his hunger. Struggling to

stretch his suffocating arms, he looks at his keeper for release. Finally, free, he slithers toward his target and engulfs his prey. In one quick jolt, the task is completed.
