

Overcoming Sin

TEXT: James 1:12-15

INTRODUCTION:

- A. IN BAPTISM **ALL** OUR PAST SINS ARE CLEANSED(**Acts 22:16**).
- B. THIS DOES NOT END THE PROBLEM OF SIN(**1 John 1:8,10; 1 Pet. 5:8**).
- C. SIN MUST BE OVER COME IN TWO WAYS:
 - 1. By getting sin out of our lives(**1 John 2:1a**).
 - 2. By knowing what to do when we do sin(**1 John 2:1b-2**).
- D. WE NEED TO KNOW HOW SIN DEVELOPS AND HOW TO OVERCOME.

I. HOW SIN DEVELOPS(James 1:12-15).

- A. **THE FIRST STAGE IS "TEMPTATION."**
 - 1. In **vs. 14**, we see that "temptation" includes two things:
 - a. **Lust, epithumia**, "denotes 'strong desire' of any kind." The word is used of a good desire in **Luke 22:15; Phil. 1:23; 1 Thess. 2:17, Vine**.
 - a. **Enticement**, "Opportunity and encouragement to satisfy the desire.
 - 2. Illustrate: I like Ice Cream. Is Ice Cream available? Am I enticed?
 - 3. It is not a sin to be tempted. Jesus was tempted, yet without sin(**Heb. 4:15**).
- B. **THE SECOND STAGE: SIN OCCURS WHEN WE ACT ON TEMPTATION (James 1:15).**
- C. **THE THIRD STAGE INVOLVES THE CONSEQUENCES OF UNFORGIVEN SIN: "DEATH(Jas. 1:15; Isa. 59:2; Rev. 21:8)."**

II. Romans 7:24. HOW TO OVERCOME SIN.

- A. **CHANGE OUR DESIRES. WORK ON THE HEART.**
 - 1. Since this is where the process of sin begins, it is the best place for us to begin
 - 2. It is a part of our growth to change our desires(**Rom. 12:9; Ga. 5:24**).
 - 3. How do we change our desires?
 - a. The Bible helps overcome sin(**Psa. 119:11; Matt. 4:3-10**).
 - 1) Reading about God creates a desire to obey(**Psa. 116:12-14**).
 - 2) Sin's consequences cause us to hate it!(**Psa. 119:104**).
 - b. **Phil. 4:8**. Think about good things(**Psa. 1:1-3**).
 - 4. Studying God's Word overcome sin by "**nipping it in the bud**"!
- B. **LIMIT OUR OPPORTUNITIES.**
 - 1. First, ask for God's help(**Matt. 6:13; 26:41**).
 - 2. Purposely avoid situations that might excite wrongful desires
 - 1) Following the example of David(**Psa. 101:3-4**).
 - 2) And the example of Job(**Job 31:1**).
 - 3. Avoiding those whose evil behavior encourages us to sin with them
 - 1) Again, David sets a good example(**Psa. 101:6-7**).
 - 2) Paul also adds his warning(**1 Cor. 15:33**).
 - 4. **People, places and things.**
- C. **EXERCISE SELF-CONTROL.**
 - 1. How can we better exercise self-control?
 - a. Self-control is but one aspect of the "fruit of the Spirit"(**Gal. 5:22-23**).
 - b. A spiritual perspective produces this(**Gal. 5:16-19; 1 Cor 2:14-16**).
 - c. By the Spirit we put to death the deeds of the body(**Rom. 8:12-16**).

- e. As Paul said: **Phil. 4:13**.
- 2. The Spirit strengthens us through the word.
 - a. Our Shield in the Gospel Armor?(**Eph. 6:16; 1 Pet. 1:5**).
 - b. Where does faith come from?(**Rom. 10:17**).
 - b. We must act upon it, trusting Jesus(**Matt. 28:19-20; Phil. 2:12-13**).
 - c. As the shoe commercial says it: JUST DO IT!(**James 4:7-8**).
- 3. The Christian, has no excuse for yielding to a temptation(**1 Cor. 10:13**).
- D. WHAT DO WE DO WHEN WE FAIL? **OBTAIN FORGIVENESS**.
 - 1. Through the blood of Christ we obtain forgiveness!(**John 2:1-2**).
 - 3. Christ is truly the "propitiation" for our sins!
 - a. By His blood, we are forgiven of past sins when united with Him in BAPTISM(**Rom. 6:3-4**)
 - b. By His blood, we can be forgiven when we REPENT, PRAY, and CONFESS our sins to God(**Acts 8:22; 1 John 1:6-7, 9**).
- E. SOME OBSERVATIONS ABOUT OVERCOMING SIN.
 - 1. God is able and willing to help us overcome sin!
 - 2. We don't abuse God's grace by waiting till the last step to overcome sin. (**Rom. 6:1-2**).
 - a. In baptism, we were freed from sin, and should now present ourselves to God as servants of righteousness(**Rom. 6:12-13**).
 - b. There are still temporal consequences of sins(**Gal. 6:7-9**).
 - c. We don't want to sin willfully!(**Heb. 3:12-14; 10:26-31**).
 - c. So don't take the grace of God lightly and abuse it!

CONCLUSION:

- A. ENDURING TEMPTATION IS A BLESSING(**James 1:12**).
- B. QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE YOUR THINKING:
 - 1. Are you engaged in a daily Bible study program which will help you develop the proper kind of desires?
 - 2. Do you "watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation"?
 - 3. Do you avoid circumstances and companions that would entice you to sin?
 - 4. Do you ask God daily to forgive you, and to help you overcome sin in your life?