



Connecting People to **Jesus**

DAILY DEVOTIONAL

Thursday, June 30, 2022

Pastor Eric Jay

Prayer: Jesus, You teach us in Your word it is the unseen that is eternal and that what is seen will perish. Lord, in Your mercy, guard our hearts and our eyes. Through Your Word, give us the eyes of faith that see through the deceptions of this sinful world and the deceptions of our own hearts, so that we may know and experience the full joy of salvation You have given to us through Your death and resurrection. Amen.

Scripture: James 1:12-15

¹² Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him. ¹³ Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. ¹⁴ But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. ¹⁵ Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

Devotional – “Small Beginnings”

When Eve gave ear to the Devil’s lies, Scripture says, “she saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.”

The Devil and our own sinful nature often deceive us into think that we’re bigger than our vices, our little indulgences, and our minor compromises. This what James is warning against when he says in our text, “*each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.*” When a child is conceived in the womb, you would need a microscope to be able to see that first cell. Just as a man like me who stands 6’4” came from that one tiny single-cell zygote, so to the most heinous and grievous atrocities of sinful humanity start with the smallest of compromises.

We all, like Adam and Eve, have tasted the forbidden fruit. We have allowed things in our lives that shouldn’t be because of their deceptive beauty, we have entertained thoughts that cause us to sin because we desire to be wise, and we have given our worship to idles because we foolishly believe they will fill us and satisfy us. We have all allowed the vine of sin to wrap around us and block out the light of the Son of God and choke out the True life that we need and that is in Jesus. If we desire to see the blessings and fruitfulness in our life that God has promised us in His Word, then God must do the pruning. We must sit still long enough, and we must not resist God’s tender and loving hand when He comes with His set of shears and desires to cut out all of the dead and dying parts of us and trim all of the overgrowth. As James says,

“Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him.” It may seem counterintuitive to us at the time, and we may not understand why God is taking away or is allowing things to be taken away or trimmed out of our lives, but God has promised that when we abide in Him and allow Him as the Master Creator and Gardener to have his way with us, we will bear much fruit indeed. We can be sure of this as we look to the cross and see our Lord Jesus, our sinless Lord, who followed the Word and will of His Father even unto death, dying for our sins, only to blossom forth on Easter morning victorious over sin and death. Our Risen Lord says to us in John 15, *“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.”*

Thanks for spending time with me again in devotion, and remember, that God has forgiven yesterday, is with you today, and has already taken care of tomorrow. Amen.