

FIGHT DESIRE WITH DESIRE

“Every good and perfect gift is from above.” - James 1:16

UNDERSTAND DESIRE

Everyone of us have experienced desires and longings that lead us away from life in God. Desiring evil is a common human experience that can be traced back to the beginning of humanity. We know all too well how often were tempted to use sex, power, money, or influence to bring about our own desired end. As you reflect on your own experience, in what areas of life do you find that you are you most tempted? It's also helps to ask, “When am I most tempted?” When I'm lonely, stressed, over-worked, or dissatisfied. Where do I usually go?

JAMES 1:14-15

“Each person is tempted when he is drawn away and enticed by his own evil desire. Then after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and when sin is fully grown, it gives birth to death.”

THE PROCESS: EVIL DESIRE - SIN - DEATH

Do you see the outcome? All evil desire begins in us, in our mind and heart. We believe something God has forbidden is good and worth having. Once convinced of its goodness, we decide to pursue it without realizing we're walking away from God to our own demise. Take a moment to meditate on the process of desire. What do you see? How do you see it working?

Hopefully you see deception! All evil desires seek to deceive us.

JAMES 1:16

“Don't be deceived, my brothers and sisters.”

Evil desire is an elaborate ruse seeking to kill us!

Think of it this way!

You're on vacation, exploring a new city, and all you want to do is get around quickly and easily because after all, you want to see all the sights. You're approached by a young man, "Hey! I have some electric bikes that will get you around quick. They're affordable too." You follow him to his shop, give him your Driver's License, and debit card info, then ride off into the city. Three days later, you find out your identity is stolen, and your account is empty. You've been deceived, fallen victim to a well-orchestrated ruse.

Think for a moment, in what ways have you been deceived by the deceitfulness of sin in the past?

Evil desires make some really big promises, but we must remember, no matter how delightful and desirable they seem, they're sly, cunning, and deceptive, seeking to kill us!

Read [Genesis 3:1-7](#) taking note of the cunning nature of sin and Satan:

GOD, THE TRUE AND BETTER DESIRE

JAMES 1:16-18

"Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. By his own choice, he gave us birth by the words of truth so that we would be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures."

Let's be clear, James is comparing the goodness of God to the deceptive nature of evil desires because to be honest, we so desperately need reminded of this. Look at the startling differences.

EVIL DESIRES V.S. A GOOD GOD

Evil Desires	God
(v.14) "Evil Desires"	(v.17) "Good and perfect"
(v.15) "Sin"	(v.17) "Father of lights"-Righteous
(v.15) "Death"	(v.18) "Firstfruits"-Resurrected Life

Can you see the difference? Note some differences that you observe.

Take a moment to consider God's process of desire fulfillment.

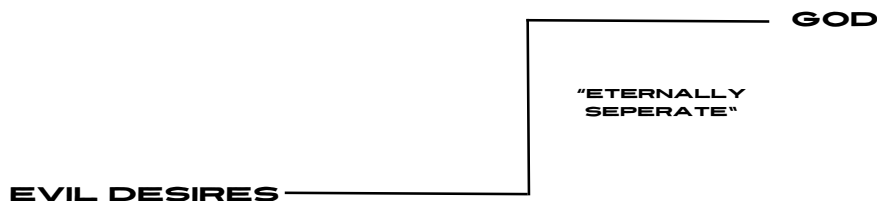
GOD'S PROCESS: GOOD - RIGHTEOUS - LIFE

How does God's process differ from our sinful desires? Where does he lead us?

Opposed to evil desires, God is a generous giver. He gives good and complete gifts that are able to satisfy our every desire. Everything good comes from him, who is above, the provider of all that we need. He is righteous. Unlike evil, he is totally good. He is not stingy or deceptive, but generous and true. This will never change! Finally, all that he gives brings life, ultimately leading us to eternal life in Christ.

SO, HOW DO WE LAY HOLD OF THE GREATER GOOD?

When it comes to fighting evil desires, we are presented with two very different choices. Either we resist evil, choosing God and life, or we bite the bait of desire, finding ourselves lured away to our own death. We cannot fight evil desire on level playing ground, because God and evil desires are on two totally different planes.



Fighting evil desires demands discernment, better desires, and faith.

Discernment: We must discern the origin and end of all desires. Where is this desire coming from? Where will it lead us? Is it from God? A good rule of thumb is considering, is what we're wanting to do going to honor and glorify God, or will it lead us to guilt and shame-hiding?

Better Desires: God doesn't want us to stop desiring, but desire the right thing. He created us with the ability to desire and long, chiefly so that we would reach for God. All desires is intended to lead us to find our satisfaction in him alone. When we feel enticing, evil desires, we must realize to accept is to settle. Remind ourselves, God is good and he is exceedingly better than anything we can acquire on our own or from this world. We must believe this!

Faith: Ultimately, the end result is obedience. We resist the sinful desire and lay hold of God. Sin's influence leads us to believe God is holding out on us, but this could not be further from the truth.

Faith reminds us that God is better, far better, and to resist temptation by walking in obedience is the path to true, enduring enjoyment in God.