

SICK OF EVIL • Week 2: It Came From Within

Daily Briefing • Day 2 of 5 • Demise by Desire

WEEKLY MEMORY VERSE

Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose trust is the LORD.

Jeremiah 17:7

Sunday's message drew a sharp line between a good, God-given want and the specific desire you chase to satisfy it. Today we slow down and fully trace that process, using James's own language for it. You can watch or listen to the sermon at 1mso.church or on the One Missoula app.

OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, it's so easy for me to be impatient or deceived in how I fulfill the good, God-given longings You have placed in my heart. I pray that You would give me discernment and guard me from error that would lead to me being tempted and taking the bait that leads to harm for myself or those around me. Give me patience, wisdom, guidance, and trust in You and Your Word and the power of Your Holy Spirit to walk it out. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

TODAY'S TEACHING

A fish is not sinful for being hungry. Hunger is exactly what a fish is supposed to feel, and swimming toward food is exactly what a healthy fish is supposed to do. The problem is not the hunger. The problem is that somewhere in the water there is a hook wearing the exact shape and color of the food the fish actually needs. The fish does not swim toward the hook because it wants to die. It swims toward the hook because the hook did its job. It looked exactly like food.

Sunday's message named the same pattern inside every human heart. You were built with real, legitimate hungers. You want intimacy. You want security. You want approval. You want peace. None of those wants are the problem, any more than the fish's hunger is the problem. James describes what happens next using this exact picture. "Each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire" (James 1:14). Lured and enticed are fishing words. James is not being poetic here. He is describing bait.

Think about what actually gets used as bait. The desire for intimacy gets lured by an immoral relationship that promises closeness without the cost of real commitment. The desire for security gets lured by money that promises a safety it was never designed to provide. The desire for peace gets lured by a drink or a substance that promises rest but only postpones the reckoning. The desire for approval gets lured by constant achievement that promises applause but never actually delivers enough of it. In every case, the hook is wearing the shape of something real. That is exactly why it works.

Now watch what James does next. He pivots from the fishing image completely. "Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death" (James 1:15). Fishing describes the process of taking the bait. This pregnancy analogy describes everything that happens after. A desire that gets what it wanted does not just sit there. It conceives. It grows. It is born as an actual pattern with its own life, and then it keeps growing toward something. Drinking to find peace can conceive into a habit and grow into a full-blown addiction that wrecks finances, health, and relationships. Flirting with a coworker can conceive into an emotional attachment and grow into a physical affair that blows up a family. Chasing achievement to feel approved of can conceive into constant striving and grow into a life with no friends or family left standing at the end of it. None of these started where they ended up. They all started as a legitimate want that took the wrong bait.

READ & MEDITATE

James 1:14-15

"Each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. ¹⁵Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death."

Read James 1:14-15 twice. The first time, notice the fishing language in the first sentence, lured and enticed. The second time, notice the second sentence uses completely different language, conceived, gives birth, grown. James is describing two separate sequences. The process of taking the bait, and the process of destruction after.

REFLECT

Reminder: honest introspection and Scripture-informed self-assessment is far more beneficial than self-delusion and wishful thinking.

Fill in the blanks from James 1:15:

"Then desire when it has _____ gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully _____ brings forth death." (James 1:15)

**These fill-in-the-blank questions use the ESV text. Your Bible may use different words for the same idea.*

James lays out actual stages here: desire, conceived, growing, fully grown, death. That means right now, with the specific thing you have in mind, you are already somewhere on that line, not just generally fine or generally in trouble. How much longer are you willing to let it continue before the damage becomes permanent?

The hook only works because it is shaped like something you actually need. That means the place you are most likely to get caught is exactly where your want is most real.

Which of your own real wants such as love, security, approval, or peace, do you suspect is currently being baited by something that only looks like the real thing, but really has a hook hiding inside?

Name the actual hook. Not the want underneath it, the specific thing you have been reaching for instead: a relationship, a substance, a habit, an achievement. Be as concrete as you can.

James says this thing grows. It rarely announces a deadline. That means there is very likely still an off-ramp available to you right now, even if it will not stay available forever.

If you decided today to actually get off this path, what would the off-ramp look like? Who would need to know? What would have to stop?

An off-ramp you never actually take is useless. Good intentions that don't get translated into concrete action mean nothing. What is the one specific, concrete step you could take on that off-ramp before this week is over?

Let's turn this outward for a minute. In Matthew 7:3-5, Jesus said to take the log out of your own eye before reaching for the speck in someone else's. That is not permission to stay silent when you see a hard conversation that needs to take place. Once you can actually see clearly, you are also positioned to help. And Galatians 6:1 calls you to do exactly that.

Now that you have looked honestly at your own life, is there someone you are genuinely worried is getting hooked and pulled somewhere that will harm themselves and those around them? What would it look like to actually reach out to them this week instead of just noticing it?

PRAYER

Write your prayer or pray out loud. As we've read, God's ear is not dull. Talk to Him like He is listening and wants to hear from you.

MEMORY VERSE

Write or recite Jeremiah 17:7 from memory:
