

A Fatal Attraction - James 1:14-15; Judges 16

Introduction: This morning, I'll be speaking on the subject on sin. It reminds me of the time when a wife finally got her husband to go to church. She couldn't attend that day, so when he got home, she asked him what the preacher preached on. Her husband said, "*He preached on sin.*" She said, "*Well, what did he say about sin?*" To which her husband replied, "*He said God's against it.*"

Well, I think we can say as that man said that God is certainly against sin. But today, we'll find out why.

Please turn to James 1:14-15, and we'll see why. James 1:14-15 says, "*But each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away 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 (NIV)**

In the late 80's a movie came out about a man who was unknowingly lured into an adulterous affair by a sadistic killer. It dealt with the power of lust and temptation and its consequences. The movie was entitled "*Fatal Attraction.*"

In a spiritual sense, we're all just a temptation away from another kind of fatal attraction. If we aren't careful, we can end up in the same predicament as the central figure of our story today. His name was Samson, and his story is an example of what can happen when we allow ourselves to be attracted to sin.

The Bible describes the devil as a cunning, deceitful, and crafty schemer. That means he knows what turns you on, and what makes you tick. He'll put something enticing before you and say, "*Here...! Go on and take it... you know you want it....!*" But what he's offering is a fatal attraction! And we can be so gullible; we'll let him lead us like a herd of cattle to slaughter.

I don't have time to tell you everything, but Samson's story is one that reads like a riches to rags soap opera. After Samson was born, "*He grew and the Lord blessed him, and the Spirit of the Lord began to stir him...*" (**Judges 13:24 NIV**) Then after Samson got older, he wanted to take a wife from the Philistines – the bitter enemies of the Israelites - even though it was against his parent's wishes and it was forbidden by God. Then in **Judges 15:20 (NIV)** we read where, "*Samson led Israel for twenty years in the days of the Philistines.*" But in the end, Samson ultimately plays with fire once too often and he gets burned.

So, the sad part of Samson's story is the fact that he has a history of bad choices and foolish decisions. It's only by the grace of God that he's made it this far without getting into real trouble. But his story illustrates the fact that the devil can play us like a fool whenever he gets ready. We've got to recognize what he's doing and stop falling for the same things.

This morning, we see from Samson's experience just how fatal this attraction to sin can be. Sin always has its consequences. First:

1. Sin Will Take You Farther than You Want to Go! (READ 4-6)

Samson got in to something he never intended to go as far as it did. I had an experience with something similar as a teenager. One Friday night, I had just got paid, and I was ready to have some fun so I went to the fair. But no sooner had I got there, than one of the game "barkers" talked me into playing his game. It was a simple game of trying to tip a leaning coke bottle to an upright position without knocking it over. He even showed me how to do it. I thought, "*How easy! I'll make some quick cash.*"

But a whole paycheck later, I discovered just how powerful the lure of easy money can be. The guy kept saying, "*Double or nothing,, double or nothing,*" and I kept forking out the money. It was gone, and I knew I now didn't have enough money to make my car payment. I went a lot farther than I ever intended to go.

After experiencing two bad relationships, you'd think Samson would have avoided Delilah like the plague. But he was the kind of guy who thought he was invincible. He was big and bad, and he was going to have his own way. Besides, Delilah had a certain charm he couldn't resist, and Samson was willing to do whatever it took to be with her - even give up the secret to his strength.

How many times do we become so attracted to something, that we're willing to give the very things that God has given us to have it. I'm sure Samson didn't go in to this relationship with the intention of losing his strength, and even his life, but when he got enticed, and lured into sin, he became like a fish on a hook.

When a fish nibbles on your line, all he wants is a quick bite to eat. He has no intention of being someone else's dinner. But by the time he's hooked, he's powerless to get away. That's when we're able to reel him in and have supper on him.

Delilah's bait was her beauty. She cast her line, and was able to hook Samson and take him farther than he

wanted to go! He tried to just hang around the edge of sin by just being with her. But he teased and played around long enough until she was able to hook him and reel him in to uncover his secret. That's just what the devil does. He's able to reel us in and take us farther than we want to go!

But you say, "*But I won't let that happen to me.*" Well, that's what I said when I went to the fair. I didn't intend to lose all my money, but I played around and played around long enough, and sure enough, before I knew it, I was broke. It's the same with sin. You may not plan to go all the way, but if you're not careful, you'll hang around it and dabble in it long enough, it will take you farther than you wanted to go!

Don't misunderstand me when I say "*Be careful.*" I don't mean to calculate your moves, or cover your steps. I'm talking about avoiding those situations or occasions that will get you in trouble.

If you know you have a problem with drinking, don't go to the party where there will be booze. If you know your hormones are in full gear, don't create situations where you'll be alone with your date. Don't play Russian roulette with the devil, you'll lose every time, and you'll end up going farther than you want to go! The second consequence of sin is:

2. Sin Will Keep You Longer than You Want to Stay! (READ 18-21)

When Delilah saw that Samson was willing to hang around, and toy with her emotions, she learned how to take advantage of the situation. The longer he stayed, the easier it would be to get him to tell his secret. All she had to do was be patient, and pour on the charm. And it didn't take much; a wink here and a nudge there, and Samson was like putty in her hands. By the time she was through, Samson didn't even realize what was happening.

That's what Satan will do to you. He'll do whatever it takes to keep you in a sinful situation. He'll lie, manipulate, pester, and torment you so much that you can't even stand to be around Christians. You don't want to come to church because it makes you feel ashamed. You can't praise, or worship, or pray, or do anything to overcome. Why? You've stayed in that sin longer than you intended, and now you feel trapped with no way out.

You see, before Samson told his secret, he always had a plan of attack... a way to escape. Before, he had the ability to overcome. But once he exposed his secret, the power of God left him.

Here is why: Before he was born, God told Samson's parents that their son "...*would be a Nazarite, set apart to God from birth, and he will begin the deliverance of Israel from the hands of the Philistines.*" (**Judges 13:5**). In Numbers 6, we are told what that means. It means that if a person was totally dedicated to God either they or their parents could take a vow of separation to God which included: 1) To never drink strong drink, 2) To never allow a razor come upon their hair, and 3) To never ever touch any kind of dead body. But in Judges 14, we read where Samson broke that vow when he scooped out some honey from the carcass of a dead animal.

And vs. 9 says, "*When he rejoined his parents, he gave them some, and they too ate it. But he did not tell them he had taken the honey from a lion's carcass.*" (**Judges 14:9 NIV**).

Do you know why he didn't tell his parents? He didn't want them to know that he had broken his vow! It's sad that a lot of people break their commitments to the Lord just so they can scoop out a little honey of pleasure. That's what Samson did. You might think it's an insignificant thing, but when you make a commitment to God, God takes it seriously!

The point is, Samson had broken his commitment before, and now he was doing it again. He broke his vow, his commitment to God, and now he was powerless.

Look at what happened to Samson: "*Then the Philistines seized him, gouged out his eyes and took him down to Gaza. Binding him with bronze shackles, they set him to grinding in the prison.*" (**Judges 16:21 NIV**). He became a slave in a prison of his own making, because he forfeited the power of God in his life.

That's what the enemy does to us: He blinds us, and causes us to take our eyes off of Jesus and lose sight of where we are going. He binds us, and holds us in captivity. Then, he grinds us down, by making us his prisoner. We become his servant and his patsy. The fatal attraction of sin will always take you farther than you want to go. It will always keep you longer than you want to stay! But there's one more thing sin will do:

3. Sin Will Cost You More than You Want to Pay! (READ 23-25)

Samson's calling by God was to deliver the Israelites from the hands of the Philistines. The Philistines were the bitter enemies of the Israelites. Now, we see that Samson was being humiliated by them. Vs. 23 says that they rejoiced because their god had "*delivered Samson, their enemy into our hands...*" They were throwing a

victory celebration because they had brought him into captivity. Samson's power was gone, his freedom had been taken away, and his spirit was crushed. All he was good for now was to be made fun of by his enemies. It was a high cost to pay for dabbling in sin.

I'm sure Samson would have given anything to start over. But that was impossible. What was done was done. His sight was gone. His influence was dead, and his future looked hopeless. Instead of standing as a symbol of strength in the Lord's army, he was now forced to stoop to the whims of his enemies. He was paying the price for his sin. And as the story ends, Samson winds up paying the ultimate price... his life!

READ vs. 26-30. What wasted life. But I want to refer you to something Paul said in Rom. 8:28... *"All things.... Work together for the good of those who love God... To those who are called according to His purpose..."*

If we apply that to Samson's story, we'll see that Samson's destiny was to deliver the children of Israel from the hands of the Philistines. And even though his sin cost him his sight, his influence and ultimately his life, God's will was still done. What do I mean?

Freedom always has a high cost. For Samson, if he had followed God's plan for his life, Israelite's freedom would have cost them some hard-fought battles. It would have cost them a lot of blood to gain their freedom from their enemy, but it would have come.

But because Samson chose to go his own way, and fall to the fatal attraction of sin, He had to pay the price. Even though Samson had to lose his life... He still destroyed the Philistines... In fact he destroyed more at his death than he did when he was alive! And the children of Israel were still delivered from hands of their enemies!

Samson had to die so that *"the good"* could come for the children of Israel. Sometimes something within you has to die – maybe it's your will or your desires...so that *"good"* can come out of whatever circumstances you're going through! So that God can get the glory!

That is ultimately what Jesus did for us. Jesus didn't deserve to die, but He had to die by taking on my sin and your sin, so that we could be free. He died and rose on the third day so that we could be delivered from the

Fatal Attraction of sin.

Because of Jesus' sacrifice, we don't have to give in to temptation. Because Jesus went all the way to Calvary, He's already paid the debt we owe. He's bought your freedom, and secured your eternity in heaven. If you'll just trust Him, He'll give you the power to overcome the fatal attraction of sin.