Do Not Go Near The Door

(by Kent Heaton)

The danger of temptation is overlooked for the danger one finds in being at the wrong place at the wrong time and not making a better choice. Succumbing to immorality is never a single step but a process, as James describes, that begins when desire draws the heart away and following conception birth gives place to sin (**James 1:13-16**). In the case of King David the focus is on his sinful act with Bathsheba followed by the murder of Uriah. But lessons should also be directed toward the door on the housetop of the king. Walking one evening on his roof ***“he saw a woman bathing and the woman was very beautiful to behold”*** (**2 Samuel 11:2**). Immediately a door appeared that gave David a choice of turning around and removing himself from the circumstance or to walk through the door and bring great sorrow to the family of God. He chooses the latter and suffered for it.

David knew what he was doing was wrong and when he first saw Bathsheba sin had not taken hold. But he decided to linger and to ponder her beauty. Asking who she was he continued on his course of sin flinging wide the door of temptation. What if he would have seen Bathsheba bathing and realizing the potential for what would come turned away and refused to go on the roof unaccompanied? He would have learned the proverb written by the second child born to Bathsheba - ***“Remove your way far from her, and do not go near the door of her house”*** (**Proverbs 5:8**).

The Lord always offers a way of escape (**1 Corinthians 10:13**) but the best antidote to sin is to not go near the door of temptation. Solomon is admonishing the young man to stay far from the clutches of the immoral woman (**Proverbs 5**). Too often those who say they are strong enough to stand at the door find themselves on the wrong side of the door. Why put yourself in harm’s way when the way of harm is clearly marked with danger? Not only should we resist evil, we need to stay as far from evil as we can.

In days gone by many towns had what was referred to as the “red light district” of town. This was a place where sexual immorality was prominent and godly people were not even found near the place (although many found themselves drawn in). Solomon alludes to the wisdom of staying as far away from these kinds of circumstances as one can find. The red light district has now turned to a glimmering blue hue of computers, smart phones and electronic devices that create a stronger appeal of immorality.

It is hard to accept a world without our electronic devices that run our lives and bring us (so-called) happiness. But at what cost? Because we enjoy our cable television on big (huge) screens with so much high definition it looks better than real life we are unwilling to live without it and we fall prey to its temptation time and time again. How can we get anything done without the internet and yet for many it becomes a millstone around the neck drowning them in the ocean of immorality. Our phones have got to be the smartest and newest phones that let us do things Dick Tracy would not have imagined and what dangers await us there?

Jesus warned in the sermon of **Matthew 5** that ***“If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell”*** (**vv 29-30**). The sin is not in the computer or IPad or smart phone; the sin is in the heart. But we must also be aware of the agents of change that cause one to sin. Solomon was not condemning the door in **Proverbs 5**; he was challenging the young man to stay away from the door.

Job was a man who “shunned evil” (**Job 1:1**). He tried to stay as far away from sin as he could and would not allow anything to be presented before him that would bring about sin (**Job 31:1**). Is it possible David wrote **Psalm 101** after the story of Bathsheba? ***“I will set nothing wicked before my eyes; I hate the work of those who fall away; it shall not cling to me”*** (**Psalm 101:3**). Paul admonished young Timothy in both letters to ***“flee youthful lusts”*** (**1 Timothy 6:11**; **2 Timothy 2:22**). The point is simple: STAY AWAY FROM THE DOOR! We do not go through doors we are not standing at.

Someone said, *“Satan, like a good fisherman, baits his hook according to the appetite of the fish.”* He knows what appeals to our desires and we must identify the doors of the devil and stay as far away from them as we can. Remember these doors do not have his name on the mailbox nor do they look uninviting. But so often we know whose street we walk and we think we can just walk by and it will not get us.

When you bravely drink that beer, proud of the fact you are not drunk, beware of the door you are going through. Your hand is turning the handle and with little effort you will be inside. As the lights go dim and the one you are with is beside you and feelings become action, you have taken the wrong path and come to the wrong door. Love is not the name of that door – it’s called fornication and adultery. Finding yourself alone on the internet or texting a friend that challenges you to ‘sex-text’ or having a relationship on Facebook hidden from your spouse is standing at the door of Satan with your hand on the doorbell. ***“Do not enter the path of the wicked, and do not walk in the way of evil. Avoid it, do not travel on it; turn away from it and pass on”*** (**Proverbs 4:14-15**).