

Title: The Bait Trap

“Recognizing and Resisting Satan’s Lures”

Scripture: *James 1: 14 – 15* “But each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death” (My story exactly.)

Introduction.

Have you ever seen a mouse trap baited with fresh cheese. The mouse does not see the danger in this snazzy little trap, it only sees the reward. It inches closer and closer, drawn in by the promise of something good and then **SNAP!** The trap is sprung. Now the mouse is in some serious trouble, if not already dead. Satan uses the same tactic. He sets traps for us with bait that looks good, feels good, and sounds good, but they all lead to destruction.

Have you ever seen a good fisherman bait a hook? The bait never looks ugly. It’s never obvious. It’s very appealing. That’s how it works, it’s a trap disguised as a treat. A good fisherman uses different bait for different fish. Satan is a seasoned fisherman. He studies our patterns. He knows our weakness. He knows what kind of bait will make us bite.

Today, let’s expose the bait trap: how it works, why we fall for it, and how we can avoid it.

1. The Trap is Always Set with Desires

James says it best. We are dragged away and enticed **by our own desires**. The enemy doesn’t force us, he **invites** us. He studies our

weaknesses. Maybe it's power, money, lust, pride, validation or revenge. The bait changes, but the hook always stays the same, **Sin**. Once we take the bait, he sets the hook and then the fight begins.

Temptation doesn't come wrapped in the things we hate - it always comes wrapped in what we want.

2. The Bait Always Hides the Hook

A good trap doesn't look dangerous, it looks safe. A mouse doesn't see the spring it only sees the cheese. The enemy works in the same way. He'll offer you pleasure without telling you all about the pain. He'll offer you gain without revealing the true cost of it.

Examples:

- Sampson was blinded by beauty and couldn't see the betrayal.
- David saw the beauty of Bathsheba but couldn't see the fallout.
- Judas only saw the silver and totally missed the magnitude of sorrow.

"Sin will take you further than you want to go. Keep you longer than you want to stay. Cost you more than you want to pay" (My story exactly)

3. The End is Death

James sure doesn't tip toe around it; desire leads to sin and sin to **death**. Death here could be a few things. The death of a relationship, a reputation, a calling, a job, or your peace. The enemy wants to convince you that it's just a little slip, a little wrong here and there is

ok, but his main objective is to annihilate you at all costs. (*1 Peter 5:8*)

4. How Do We Escape the Trap?

- a. Stay Alert** – Paul says in *1 Peter 5: 8* “Be self - controlled and alert.”
- b. Know the Word of God** –, and character fought temptation with scripture and so should we. (*Mathew 4*)
- c. Guard Your Desires** – *Proverbs 4:23* “Above all else, guard your heart.” The heart in the biblical sense is not just the physical organ, but the center of our being. Encompassing our thoughts, emotions, desire, will and character. Guarding the heart is of the utmost importance.
- d. Run when needed** – Look at Joseph. He didn’t negotiate with Potiphar’s wife. He ran!!!! (*Genesis 39:6-20*)
But we have God who gives us the strength
“What you feed grows, what you starve dies. Starve the flesh, feed the Spirit.”

Conclusion

Believe this, the bait will always be there for us. The devil may be crafty but not that creative – He simply recycles the temptations. But we have God who gives us the strength to resist, wisdom to discern, and the grace to recover when we fall.

Don’t take the bait. Trust in God who sees all traps and wants to keep us free of them. Have a blessed day. L. W.

