

**Sermon Series FREE: Week Four**  
**“FREE\* From Fatal Attractions”**  
*Pastor Dale Campfield – Eastgate Community Church*  
*March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2010*

**Intro:**

**Matt 28:19**    *“Go and make disciples of all nations...”*

**ECC Process of Discipleship: Making an IMPACT...To Love...To Grow...To Serve**

We have 3 priorities – To love...which is expressed in our Sunday morning celebration and connection groups. To grow...which is expressed in our Path to Discipleship. To serve...which is expressed in our daily lives in the places we live, work and play; as well as through the local church. The vision of E.C.C. is to gather together weekly for corporate worship, loving God and each other; then to come together in small Connection Groups for discipleship and fellowship, and are regularly involved in reaching out to others with the love, acceptance, and forgiveness of Jesus Christ through community outreach. To Love...To Grow...To Serve!

This sermon series is different in the respects that we are joining with close to 90 churches in the Cincinnati, Northern Kentucky area to all teach on the same theme of being FREE! Every church will teach their own thing, but we'll all be on the same theme throughout the next four weeks.

You are encouraged to follow along with your personal journal as well as to meet with a small “FREE GROUP”; a small group of other believers who will meet together once a week for the entire six weeks. You can pick up a study guide at the Norlyn Manor.

**2 Corinthians 3:17**

*“Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is freedom.”*

**Ps 119:45**

*“I will walk about in freedom, for I have sought out your truth.”*

**Galatians 5:1**

*“It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.”*

**This 5<sup>th</sup> week of the Free Journey is called:**

**“FREE\* From Fatal Attractions”**

If you want to make an IMPACT in life, you must be able to walk FREE. And, if you truly want to be free, then you have to be able to handle the “Fatal Attractions” that come with life. The enemy will try and stop you from being free; with one of those ways, providing Fatal Attractions for you to have to deal with. The way you choose to deal with them can either make or break your IMPACT in life.

We must learn to be Free from the Fatal Attractions of life.

**Illus:** Watch this video..... of your thoughts!

I want you to imagine these two screens and that we can put onto these screens every single thought you've had in the last week for everybody to see. Would you feel uncomfortable? Have you ever been praying when all of a sudden a most off the wall thought goes through your mind? Where in the world did that come from? I'm supposed to be a Christian. Where did I get that idea?

**I Cor. 10:13** (Living Bible)

*"The wrong desires that come into your life aren't anything new and different. Many others have faced exactly the same problems before you. And no temptation is irresistible. God will show you how to escape. (To be free)"*

I find this verse incredibly reassuring. First, it says everybody faces temptation. It's man's oldest problem ever since Adam and Eve. We've all had problems with temptation. I'm tempted, you're tempted. It's not a sin to be tempted. It is a sin to give in to temptation. You can't keep the birds from flying across your head, but you can keep them from making a nest in your hair. The Bible says even Jesus was tempted. He was tempted in every point and yet he never sinned. The Bible promises here that God will provide a way out, a way of escape.

**Question: What is a Fatal Attraction?**

**Answer: Something or someone you are attracted to, that when acted upon results in a fatality.**

That fatality could be the end of a dream, a marriage, a relationship, financial security, friends, etc. etc.

Question: What are some of the Fatal Attractions that we have to deal with in life? There are many. From people to things to the breaking of the law to the breaking of a promise.

When asked for the secret to his success, Billy Graham answered, "I don't touch the girls, the glory or the gold." We can add to that, the "gents" now as well in the society we live and as this would be for both men and women in the world today.

## **Six ways of escape from temptation. How to be free from fatal attractions.**

### **1. Make a commitment to keep God's standards.**

Be willing to do in advance what the Bible says.

#### **Ps. 119:9**

*"How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your Word."*

We've been hearing a lot on values and how we need to build our life on values. Where do you get values? Where do your values come from -- your personal values? What's your authority for the values in your life? Popular opinion: Everybody's doing it. Latest best seller. Where do you get your values? Cosmo magazine? Dr. Ruth?

#### **Ps. 119:105**

*"Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path."*

Friends, the path of life is dark and dangerous, without a lamp/light upon it, we'll get ourselves into all kinds of dangerous situations. We must walk according to that light in our lives if we want to be FREE\*.

I submit to you the best place and the safest place to get your values is to consult the creator and look at God's instruction manual, the Bible. It's stood the test of time. It's provided guidance for years and years. It won't lead you wrong.

Make a commitment to whatever God says whether it's right or wrong in the eyes of other people. Whether it's popular or not, I'm going to do it.

I've listed some verses that talk about God's specific standard in relation to sex.

1 Thes. 4:3-8, 1 Cor.6:13-20, Prov. 5:1-7:27, Eph. 5:3-5

God says sex is to be enjoyed in marriage. That's the bottom line. Some of you say, "If God really loved me He wouldn't restrict my freedom. He'd let me do whatever I wanted to do." How many of you who have kids, love your kids? How many of you let them do whatever they want to do? You don't. Because you love them. You want to protect them. The rules that you make up are for their own good.

Until you settle that God' word is the standard for your life you're going to fall for all kinds of temptations.

## 2. Maintain your relationships.

Relationships take work! You have to work on every relationship that you have. If you take them for granted, you could lose them. When we don't take care of our relationships, it leaves an open door for someone else to come in.

### **Phil 4:1**

*"So, brothers and sisters, I love you and miss you. You are my joy and my crown. Therefore, dear friends, keep your relationship with the Lord firm!"*

You can see here that Paul is talking about his relationship with the people, then he refers to their relationship with Christ. What speaks to my heart is the knowledge that we must have a strong relationship with Christ if we want to have a strong relationship with others. In fact, my relationship with my bride will be no stronger than my relationship with God.

And, the fact is, we'll always be attracted to certain people in our lives; therefore, we have to know how to deal with those attractions. For me, I think that Nicole Kidman is beautiful! And there are some people in my life that I think are beautiful people and there can be a natural attraction that I would have for them. That's why it is so very important that my relationship with my bride is intact, that we've worked on it and that it is strong; for then the attraction for someone else won't end up being fatal!

For those of you that are married: This is the greatest insurance for a happy home life. Rekindle that fire, that romance.

### **Prov. 5:18-19**

*"Rejoice in your wife. Let her charms and tender embrace satisfy you. Let her love alone fill you with delight."*

Contrary to popular opinion, God is pro-sex. It was His idea. He thought it up, not Hugh Hefner.

The Creation story says God made the trees and it was good. God made the seas and it was good. He made animals and it was good. He made man and it was good. He looked at man all alone and He made woman and it says it was very good! Everything else was good, but when he made woman it was very good!

Rejoice in Hebrew means "glitter, sparkle, " get excited. The first time Adam saw Eve he said, "This is bone my bone and flesh of my flesh."

Then it says "be satisfied". He's saying Don't compare. Don't compare your mate. There's no such thing as a perfect mate. Some of you are thinking, "Maybe I married the wrong guy. Maybe he's still out there." The grass is not greener on this side of the fence. The grass is not greener on that side of the fence. The grass is greener where you water it. The problem is in most marriages there is no spontaneity in the love life. Same place, same place. Same thing, same thing. Boredom in the bedroom. At sex o'clock the man bounds out of the bathroom, beer belly and boxers looking like a beached whale. That's about as thrilling as eating prunes! All the finesse of a John Deere tractor! Ladies, you can make the difference with your attitude. If there was more courting in marriages there would be fewer marriages in court. Keep your love life alive.

The fact is while you're married you will be attracted to other people. God says redirect that towards your mate. Rejoice in your own mate. I Cor. 7:5 says sex is a spiritual responsibility. If you're married it's a spiritual responsibility. The Bible says you are not to deprive each other of it.

I caution you against developing two separate lives. Fatigue kills romance.

### 3. Manage your mind.

You need to understand how temptation works.

#### **James 1:14-15**

*"Temptation is the pull of our own evil thoughts and wishes. These thoughts lead to evil actions."*

The battle starts in the mind. If he gets your attention then he gets your feelings. If he gets your feelings, then he gets your action. You say, "I'd never do this. I'm just dreaming about it." Who are you kidding? Watch salesmen. First they get your attention, then they move from the mental stage to the feeling stage -- "Try the coat on. See how it feels." "Have a sample of rocky road ice cream", "Get in the car and take it for a test drive". If he gets your feelings you're a goner. Thoughts determine feelings and feelings determine actions and the key is to change your mental thoughts. Jesus said in

#### **Matthew 5:28**

*"Anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart."*

Adultery starts in the head before it gets to the bed.

Lust is not physical attraction. It is not being aroused. That's just humanity. You see a nice looking man/woman you're attracted. Lust is not desire. Lust is the desire to possess. You say, "Please take away all of these desires." Are you saying, "God, don't make me a woman/man?" Lust is the desire of "if I could I would" -- I'd possess. It's what you do with those feelings. It's not the initial feelings and reactions. That's just part of humanity. God gave it to you. Manage your mind.

David walked out one day and saw a gorgeous woman bathing on a roof. The initial arousal wasn't sin. The sin was that he went downstairs, thought about it, made a plan and brought her into his home. That was lust. Manage your mind.

Check out this formula for the destiny of your life. I've got this written in my Bible and have had it there for years. It's as true today as the day I wrote it in there.

Here's the formula...

**Thoughts + Action + Habit + Lifestyle = Destiny**

#### 4. Monitor your media intake.

The media is all about sex, money and power. Our entire lives are surrounded with the desire to be rich, have great sex and walk with incredible power. We are in a sex saturated society. We are bombarded by visual and verbal stimulation every moment of the day. In advertising, sex sells everything from bingo to batteries to bananas.

From the paper recently: "Passion -- only in a Jeep Cherokee."

Since when did they acquire a monopoly on back seats?

Lust is big business. A lot of love songs are not love songs, they are lust songs. They're not about love, they're about lust. You pick up a magazine, a novel -- it's all over. Movies, television.

Michigan State University did a study and said the average teen age girl has watched 1,500 sex acts or references to sex acts by the time she graduates. A teen age boy, 100 less because he doesn't watch soaps. Ninety-four percent of all sex on television is between people who are not married. You need to monitor your intake.

The Bible says that the eye is the gate to the soul.

#### **Matthew 6:22-23**

*"The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good then your whole being will be full of light. but if bad ... full of darkness!"*

What you see is what you become. Every time you look at that screen in living, visual color at the movie, it goes off that screen and comes into the screen of your mind. Scientists tell you, you never forget anything. It's in your subconscious. Then you're wondering why you get that thought in your prayer life. It's because six months ago you saw it on the big screen. In living color.

#### **Psalm 101:3** David said,

*"I will set no vile thing before my eyes."*

The Bible says what you allow in the gate of your mind goes into your soul.

Some of you are saying, "I can watch that stuff. It doesn't affect me!" Who are you kidding? The way you think determines the way you feel and the way you feel determines the way you act.

#### **2 Timothy 2:22** (Living Bible)

*"Run from anything that gives you evil thoughts but stay close to anything that makes you want to do right."*

If you're setting in a movie and realize you've made a mistake, get up and walk out! You put a video on at home and realize that's not what you want to be watching as a Christian, take it back. You lose a few bucks but so what? *"What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his soul."* I've walked out of a lot of movies, changed the channel on a lot of TV shows. If you're serious, you've got to monitor your media intake. Refuse to eat garbage. Garbage in, garbage out. What you put into your mind is what's going to become the basis of your lifestyle.

## 5. Minimize the opportunities for temptation.

If you want to avoid a fatal attraction don't allow yourself in situations where it happens.

### **Matthew 6:41**

*"Keep watch, and pray so that you will not fall into temptation."*

Jesus said here keep watch and pray -- two preventative techniques.

"Keep watch" -- be alert, be wise. Know the situations that tempt you, that gets you off base. Are you aware of the things that trip you up? One of the things today is that partners spend less time with each other today than ever before. Women working, men on business trips, women on business trips. They're not around each other so much. Are you aware? Be wise. Be smart. Avoid certain situations.

What do you do if you're caught off guard? Get a surprise attack by the devil? You pray. Right there on the spot. You say, "God, help me get out of this situation."

Teen age boy came to a pastor, "Every night my girlfriend and I are going too far. We have a date, we park and we have problems." Pastor said, "The next time you finish your date, you park, take her hand and say `Let's just pray together before we commit this immorality.'" "I can't do that! It would spoil everything!" Augustine said, "Lord, deliver me from lust. But not yet." Avoid the opportunity.

Choose the friends you have very carefully.

### **I Cor. 15:33**

*"Bad company corrupts good character."*

People who condone or encourage lust or make light of it are not your real friends. When you choose your close friends you'd better be certain that they're committed to faithfulness in their marriage or they better not be your best friends. Why? Because you're better than them? No, it's because you're not good enough.

Minimize the opportunity. It would be better to change jobs than to be unfaithful to your mate. Change careers.

If you have a problem with donuts, stay out of the donut store. If you have a problem with pornography, stay out of the places that sell it; stay off of the sites that provide it on the internet. If you have a problem with spending money, don't go to the mall! Minimize the opportunities for temptation.

## 6. Magnify the consequences.

Ask yourself with every temptation, no matter where it is or what level it is, "Is this worth it?" Temptation is incredibly short-sighted. Especially immoral temptation. There are enormous consequences to breaking God's laws. I have heard the hurtful cries and the damage that has been done, emotionally, spiritually, relationally, mentally. When we break God's laws we don't break them -- they break us. It always causes bitterness, guilt, disillusionment, strains in relationships, hurts, breaks fellowship with God, brings judgment on our lives. It's just not worth it no matter what society says. Magnify the consequences.

**Illus:** Pastor/Aids/Mirror

Pastor who was traveling; just once, cheated on his wife, ended up with aids. "Welcome to the world of aids" was written on the mirror of the bathroom when we woke up that next morning. It destroyed his marriage and his life.

When the devil is tempting you he says, "It's no big deal." He maximizes the benefits and minimizes the consequences.

**Hebrews 11:25**

*"There is pleasure in sin for a season."*

There is pleasure in sin for a season. If sin were a bumper nobody would do it. You can have your kicks but you will have the kickback.

**I Thes. 4:3&6**

*"This is God's will for you; He wants you to be holy and completely free from immorality, the Lord will punish those who do such wrongs."*

God's serious about this. He takes a hard line about purity.

You say, "I know guys and girls who totally ignore what God says and they're getting away with it." God does not settle all of His accounts in 30 days.

**Galatians 6:7**

*"God is not mocked. Whatever a man sows he will eventually reap."*

It's inevitable. What I sow I will reap inevitably in my life. It's just a matter of time.

**Conclusion:**

I magnify the consequences of giving into a temptation. I also magnify the consequences of resisting the temptation and the benefits of it.

**James 1:12**

*"Blessed is the one who perseveres under temptation, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the victor's crown, the life God has promised to those who love Him."*

That's FREEDOM!

The result of resisting temptation is a crown in heaven. Reward. And the life God has promised to those who love Him. I want one of those crowns. He's saying, "You deny the lesser to gain the greater."

Some of you are saying, "This message is too late. I wish I had it ten years ago." There is forgiveness in Jesus Christ. There is an ability to start over. Jesus Christ says, I will wash you clean and give you a new life, not just a new leaf. It doesn't matter where you've been as much as the direction of your feet right now. I challenge you to say, "From today, I'm going to be a person of purity." Ask forgiveness, receive forgiveness and forgive yourself, offer forgiveness. And go on with God. There is forgiveness and the conscious can be cleared and clean. Today, you can be FREE!

To those of you who are teenagers: Wait for God's best. Save yourself for marriage. You will save yourself so many problems if you will. I've talked to hundreds of people who would say sex before marriage causes problems with sex in marriage. Guilt, resentment, comparisons, disillusionment, hurt, bad attitudes. Save yourself. God's laws are for our benefit not for His.

I have been tempted but I can stand before you to say that the only woman I have ever "known" is my bride. And by the grace of God I intend to be faithful to her the rest of my life. Why? Number one, I love Jesus Christ. And I owe everything I have to Jesus Christ. To hurt Him is unbearable. Number two, I love my bride and kids. I cannot bear the thought of hurting my kids.

Jesus said, *"If you love Me, keep My commandments."* Number three, I fear the wrath of God. This is a serious issue with God. The Bible says in Proverbs 16:6 *"The man who fears the Lord shall avoid evil."* That's a healthy fear. It's a fear that says, God does not let people get away in this area. Why? It destroys people and relationships. Sex is good. It's God's gift to the world. But it's so powerful!

How do you avoid a fatal attraction? How do we live FREE of Fatal Attractions? How do you live pure in an impure world? Sound in an unsound world? Morally in an immoral world? When you're being bombarded constantly and everybody is saying, "Do your own thing. If it feels good, do it."?

1. You make a commitment to God's standard. You say, "God says that sex outside of marriage is out." That doesn't matter if you're divorced, single, young, old. It's out! Does that mean I can't have close relationships with other people? No. But you maintain God's standard.
2. You maintain your relationships/marriage if you're married. All the energy you've been using to fantasize about other people or see in movies or read in romances or to watch on the soap operas or pick up in a magazine, focus that energy in your marriage and watch what happens. Some of you kids say you need to experiment before marriage so you'll be experienced. When I got married I knew nothing about sex and neither did my wife, but we sure had a lot of fun finding out.
3. Manage your mind. Are you doing this or are you indiscriminate and allow anything into your mind? You can handle it? Who said! You can't handle it! It's causing problems in your life.
4. Monitor your media intake. The Bible says the eye is the lamp to the soul. It's the gate by which everything you experience comes through. David made a vow to not watch certain things.
5. Minimize the opportunities. It's not "How close to the cliff can I get and not fall off.", "How close to the fire can I get and not get burned", "How much can I flirt around at the office and not fall". That's the wrong attitude for a Christian. It should be "How close can I get to the Lord?"
6. Magnify the consequences. The damages that it brings. Emotionally bitterness, guilt, frustration, disillusionment. Sexual relationships outside of marriage never last. God meant it for marriage. Spiritually, it breaks fellowship and causes problems in my relationship to God. That's the negative part.

The positive part is that God says "I give a crown to those who are strong under temptation, who live before Me in holiness and purity."

**Fatal Attractions must be dealt With to Live FREE\***

**And as you do...**

**You watch...you wait...you'll see!**