

DO YOU TEST POSITIVE?!
(Besetting Sin)



TEXT: *Hebrews 12:1-4* Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, **let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us,** and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.

THESIS: To reveal the *"sin which doth so easily beset us..."* and its prospective remedy.

INTRO.: A. Is there any believer here who does not sin or struggle against sin? In this message I want to deal with the phrase in the text that deals with *"the sin which doth so easily beset us."*

The writer has taken us from the *"better things"* (which is the theme of this book) to one of the most difficult things believers have to deal with daily. He has taken us in this verse from the "Heroes of the Faith" chapter (11) and brought us down from *their* lofty place in Heaven down to earth and *our* daily battle with the weights and sins of a believer!

B. I have titled this message **"DO YOU TEST POSITIVE?!"** I did so because we have so recently gone through the COVID Pandemic and understand the implications of testing. Also I have done so because I know from Scripture that ***we all test positive to the Pandemic of Sin...***no matter how long we have been saved. It is something we have to live with and battle and for which there is no vaccine that will either completely cure us or keep this malady from returning. But we can be hopeful if we follow the prescription from the Scriptures, even though we may never consider ourselves completely CURED...

I. THE DISEASE!

A. It is Distressing:

1. The very words *"besetting sins"* are negative. (assault, harass, afflict, persecute, torment, trouble)
2. The suggestion is that it will return.

B. It is Unrelenting:

1. It doesn't just "go away" without positive action on our part.
2. It is a permanent part of our old nature.

C. It is Maddening:

1. If you are a sensitive, spiritual believer the conviction is very heavy.
2. The Holy Spirit can give you control and even victory, if you mean business.

D. It is Repulsive:

1. If you are trying to be a consistent, Spirit controlled believer it is maddening.
2. When you sin with the same thoughts, actions and desires it can be depressing.

II. THE SYMPTOMS!

A. It Starts in the Heart: It is Regressive!

1. Your subconscious will cause your past life and its sins to return.
2. Your past actions and activities affect your present and future.

- a. Thus, you should be careful NOW with how you live your life to avoid future sin.
- b. Avoiding present and future sin will keep you from imbedding seeds for later.

B. It Progresses to the Will: It Becomes Repetitive!

1. You want to say "NO!" to the temptation of future repercussions.
2. Your success is dependent on your yielding to the Spirit, your immersion in the Scriptures and your daily walk with the Lord.
3. Habits and activities now, will affect your Christian walk later.

C. It Spreads to the Body: It Can Be Destructive!

1. I have counselled numbers of believers whose lives have been ruined and whose testimonies to loved ones and friends have been discredited and nullified.
2. So it is not only destructive to you, but to others as well.

III. THE PROGRESS!

A. It Starts in the Heart:

1. We sow now, seeds to our own destruction later.
2. Our present becomes our future.

B. It Progresses to the Will:

1. Our will becomes weaker as we cultivate the same sins over and over again.
2. Our will is where the battle will be won or lost.

C. It May Spread to the Body:

1. Our future spiritual and even possibly physical health may be affected.
2. Our decision or lack thereof in the NOW may cause deterioration later.

IV. THE CURE!

A. It Usually Leads to Depression or Regret:

1. In the spiritual realm we call it "conviction".
2. But sorrow for sin alone will not bring victory, a change in direction is real "repentance".

B. It Should Result in Repentance:

1. Deep sorrow for our sin is genuine repentance.
2. But it must be accompanied with a resulting change of thoughts and actions.

C. It Must Lead to Confession:

1. Specific and open and honest confession will lead to victory.
2. Victory leads to peace and spiritual contentment and freedom from guilt.

D. It Should Result in Victory:

1. Victory comes by following the next part of the text above.
2. We need to go beyond confession of sins to even removing the "**weights**": or sins that hinder us from crossing the finishing line.

ILLUS.: Two runners line up at the starting line of a race. One is in **good shape**, but the other is in **excellent shape**, but he has partied the night before and has a hangover and is wearing combat boots and an overcoat. Which do you think will win the race? The man in good shape or the one in excellent shape? Obviously the one without all the mental, and physical weights! YOU TOO!

CONCL.: You too may be weighted with down with *haunting or besetting sins* and you will test **POSITIVE to the Pandemic of Besetting Sins**. YOU do! I do! We all do! The issue is what will we do about it? Will you follow the steps to a cure? Are you sorry for your sin? Will you truly and deeply repent? Will you confess it NOW? Will you do your best to claim the VICTORY, today?!