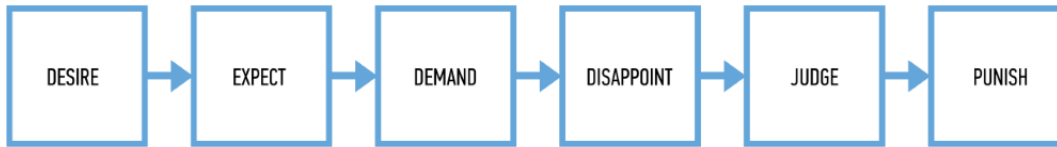


DESIRE TO DEMAND

What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions. You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

James 4:1-4



I DESIRE: These are good, God-given desires. At their basic desire, they're not sinful and that's the key in understanding idolatry. Things like love, respect, safety, security, acceptance, godly family, marriage, children, provide for family, etc.

I EXPECT: A slippery slope occurs where we start thinking "I want" or "I need" these desires to be met in order to be happy, fulfilled, pleased, etc., in life. Right here, we have one foot in the world and one foot out.

I DEMAND: Here we say, "I must have" or "I deserve to have" my desires met. Both feet are in the sin pool now and idolatry has taken root.

I'M DISAPPOINTED: Here's all the emotional energy when we don't get something that we really, really, really, really (did I say really?) want. We question God's character, love, and mercy, get angry, depressed, fearful, etc.

I JUDGE: Because idols demand a sacrifice and we're living for our mini-kingdom, we play the judge and issue a verdict that needs to be carried out because our functional idol (desires) did not get satisfied.

I PUNISH: Because our idol (desires) didn't get satisfied, we say, "Because you did (or did not) meet my desires, I will respond by _____." We either lash out in anger to tear down the person or we inflict self-harm in the form of "addiction" or other ways.

Take a minute and think about what has a strong grip on you and ask yourself the following questions:

1. What am I willing to sin to get?
2. What am I willing to sin in order to keep?
3. What do I run to as a refuge or for comfort or peace?
4. Where or on what do I spend all my time and money?
5. Where is there chaos in my life and where am I discontent with my circumstances?