

FAITH IN ACTION

Temptation, James 1:13-17

The Genesis of Temptation

James 1:13-14 (KJV) ¹³ Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: ¹⁴ But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

- In this passage, James is still talking about temptation, but the word *temptation* is being used very differently
- In verse 2, the word *temptation* is translated as "trials", i.e., "*Count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations*" (trials)
- In verse 13, the word *tempted* is referring our tendency and readiness to sin
- When you're being tempted, don't say, "God is tempting me"
- Since the Garden of Eden, we've always been trying to find someone else to blame for our sins
- The point is we rarely take responsibility for our wrongs
- We justify our behavior by blaming others
- We blame *people*, our *passions*, and even *the world* we live in, but never our ourselves
- What we're really doing is blaming God because it was God who "allowed" this be in this situation, it was God who gave me these desires, it was God that placed in this city, on this job, in this store, etc.
- James is clear, God did not tempt you to sin
- Temptation to sin is not of God
- Two reasons why our yielding to temptation is not God's fault
 1. *God can't be tempted to sin*; God is holy, righteous, and pure
 2. *God goes not tempt people to sin*; the urge, the desire to sin does not come from God
- There's a difference between *testing times* and tempting times
- God uses *times of testing* to prove our faith is genuine and that it has endurance, but the time of testing could also be a *time of tempting* when the enemy *uses* the trial to tempt us to sin
- God does not tempt us, temptation comes when we are *drawn away* by our own lust and enticed
- The Amplified Bible makes this really verse crystal clear 14 "*But each one is tempted when he is dragged away, enticed and baited [to commit sin] by his own [worldly] desire (lust, passion).*"
- The cause of sinful temptation is our own lust (desire)
- For most people, lust only has a sexual meaning; but lust refers to *any* strong desire *outside* of God's will
- Our desires in and of themselves are not bad, the problem comes in when we try to satisfy those desires outside of the will of God

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- We are tempted by our own desires, the world and the devil will gladly provide the enticements, the bait
- It is not a sin to be tempted; Jesus was tempted, but He did not sin
- The problem comes when we are tempted *and we think about, or look at* what is forbidden or harmful, we have *taken the bait*
- The sin doesn't start when we take the bait, it starts with the desire in our *own heart*, and when we grab the bait, then the *unseen hook* grab us and we're drawn away into sin

The Process of Temptation

¹⁵ Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

- James transitions from a fishing illustration to a birthing illustration
- When we fail to turn away and flee from whatever is tempting us, the *conception* or seed of lust has been planted in our mind
- The thoughts, pictures, and ideas of our evil desires give birth to sin in our minds ***Matthew 5:28 (KJV) ²⁸ But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.***
- The result of lust and enticement is death; *physical, spiritual, and eternal* all because of sin
- This path of *lust, sin, and death* is not God's plan for us
- When the temptation attacks our thought, we must push the wrong thoughts out of mind and focus our thoughts on Jesus and some passage of scripture
- Jesus told His disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane to watch and pray so they would not give in to temptation

Heed the Warning about Temptation

¹⁶ Do not err, my beloved brethren. ¹⁷ Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

- James issues a warning to the scattered believers he's writing to, *do not err*, or don't be misled, don't be fooled
- Please remember the devil's agenda and Jesus plan for your life in ***John 10:10 (KJV) 10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.***
- Too many people have been fooled by the devil are doing what's right in their own eyes, not realizing they've been deceived
- God and perfect gifts don't come the devil our this fallen world; ever good and perfect gift comes from above, it comes from God

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- He is the source of all good and perfect gifts, there He can't anything to do with temptation and sin
- God is the Father of lights and He is unchangeable
- Temptation leads us into the darkness of guilt, shame, hurting ourselves, hurting others, disappointment, secrecy, destruction, death
- The sun and the stars never stop giving light, even when we can't see them
- God is light, perfect light, His light is so perfect there's no shadow, no chance of Him changing
- God wants us to always walk in the light
- When you're tempted to chase after worldly pleasures or possessions, remember that true satisfaction and fulfilment come from God alone