

## Dealing with Temptation

James 1:12-20

“Faith Works”

<sup>12</sup> Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. <sup>13</sup> Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. <sup>14</sup> But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. <sup>15</sup> Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.

<sup>16</sup> Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. <sup>17</sup> Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. <sup>18</sup> Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of first fruits of His creatures.

<sup>19</sup> So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; <sup>20</sup> for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God

There are 3 movements in this first Chapter of James:

- The first movement is how a Believer copes with trials; V.1-11
- The second movement is how the believer copes with temptation; V.12-20
- The third movement is how the believer connects with the Word of God (1:21-27).

Today movement #2 – how the believer copes with temptation; V.12-20

Noted last week – that the Christian life is a Journey that is about Progress not perfection

A)The Journey includes trials that are going to produce something in US – Endurance –

B)A Spiritual Stamina/ But trials are the means through which God builds the muscle of Faith

C)We can count it all Joy – Knowing... producing something in us - pathway to maturity

But Trials can create times where we get Tired - Depressed and Discouraged –

A)We are the most vulnerable to temptation when we are fatigued, discouraged and depressed

B)IN those moments – we can be tempted to:

- Tempted to **Doubt God**
- Tempted to become **Disappointed with God** –

Philip Yancey – Disappointment with God

C)Even Tempted to **Desert God** – Give into my flesh – What is the use my life stinks

No don't get me wrong – Temptation can come in times when we are doing really good – smooth sailing

A)But James is writing to believers who are in the midst of a great trial – Persecution

B)James seems to anticipate that trials can lead to temptation – what he addresses in this next section

V. 12 Blessed is the man who endures temptation;

A)Here is the heart of God – He doesn't want to see us get swallowed up by temptation – but to endure temptation- He Rewards those who do.

B)Question we are going to answer today – **How do we endure temptation**

C)How many of you have ever been tempted?

1)Stupid question – all of us -

D)Let me ask another – How many of you have ever given into temptation: - Yes – **Relevant**

**How do we endure Temptation?**

#1 Consider the consequences.

- When it comes to temptation: there's always more at stake than what we think.

#2 Consider the Goodness of God

- Understanding - Your ability to endure and withstand temptation has a lot to do with **your confidence in the goodness of God.**

Is not just an issue of my self-control it is really an issue of my confidence in God.

### #3 Consider the Divine Nature within.

If you are a Christian here today – you have been born of God – Given a new nature –

- Incredible spiritual significance when it comes to overcoming temptation

Maybe you are here today and you are not a Christian- Or you're coming back to church after for a long time of being away

A) You know some Christians who seem to have it all together – and you think – they are just good people

B) I am not – or they are just stronger than I am – my problem I am just not as strong as they are,

1) That is why I am constantly messing up and there are things that grab my attention and wipe me out

C) I am just not strong enough or good enough as they are – that is the problem.

1) Listen that is really not it at all -.

D) It's not that they're so good or strong –

1) But it is that somewhere along the way they learned to pause and see temptation for what it really is!

E) Learned to Pause and Consider the consequences

They have learned to pause and fall back on what they believe about God – that He is good!

A) He loves them and is for them – and is not going to withhold any good thing from them.

B) And they have learned to pause and respond to the reality that they have a new nature within

1) Born again for something greater than simply living to **PLEASE THEIR FLESH!**

C) **FOCUS TODAY: - BUT Before we look at how to endure temptation –**

1) James gives us some insight on **where temptation comes from.**

The Source of temptation:

**1<sup>st</sup> Where temptation doesn't come from!**

Here is the thing James wants us to understand – although God allows trials

A) **God is not the source of temptation. V13**

<sup>13</sup>“Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone.”

B) **Don't blame God:**

1) **Adam was the first to blame God** – “It was the woman that YOU gave me” – Your fault God

C) We can do that too: Things I have heard:

1) God put me in this circumstance – “I am married to this unlovable person” –

D) HE put me in This Job with the great guy or attractive girl

D) Single girl: **“Great Job with this really nice guy Who is an unbeliever – but no Christians ask me out – Christian guys are just so lame!”**

E) People try to blame God all the time!

The first thing James wants to Establish about the source of temptation is:

A) **God doesn't tempt anyone – here is why!**

B) **Temptation is the solicitation to evil.**

1) **The very nature of God is such that temptation has no place in him and no allurement to him.**

C) “God is unsusceptible to evil; evil has never had any appeal for Him.

1) It is repugnant and abhorrent to Him.”

This is hard for us to understand – because we deal with temptation all the time. – Natural for us

A) God is so pure, so Holy it is impossible for him to be tempted by evil, or to tempt anyone

B) God has never tempted us to sin because he cannot! It is a moral impossibility.

C) So don't blame God!

The Source of temptation: **Others like Eve tried to Blame the Devil – it was the serpent**

A) Man, his wife shopping {Look but don't buy She comes home with red dress – get behind me Satan – looked good from that view too

B) James knew Satan had a part in tempting – tells us in James 4:7 to resist the Devil.

### C) Battle with the World the Flesh and the Devil

1) The Devil uses the things of this world to entice our flesh.

D) James lets us in on a very important truth – that the “root” problem... “us”!

### The Source of temptation:

#### The Temptations to sin arises from our own Desires

A) **14 But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed.**

B) Our flesh longs to be satisfied in every way!

C) We should never be surprised by this- never surprised by what our flesh is capable of!

D) **Story of a young priest** who served in the confessional for the first time, accompanied by an older senior priest.

1) At the end of the day the older priest took him aside and said, “**My boy, when a person finishes with confession, you have got to learn to say something other than, Wow!**”

E) I have had some moments like that.

F) Sad to say after 30 years of doing this – I am not surprised by too much any more

1) Seen it all – Seen people least expect..... give into the most horrible things -

**POINT: James wants us to understand – It starts within – Our own desires!**

A) And God has given us Desires! Natural desires

B) **Desire in and of itself is not sinful.**

C) **Desire for food** - Unless we felt hunger and thirst, we would never eat and drink, and we would die.

D) **Desire for rest:** Without fatigue, the body would never rest and would eventually wear out.

E) **Desire for Sex:** Sex is a normal desire; without it marriage would lack intimacy and the human race could not continue.

### So Desire in and of itself is not sinful.

A) It is when we want to satisfy those desires in ways outside God’s will that we get into trouble.

B) **Eating is normal; gluttony is sin.**

➤ **Sleep is normal; laziness is sin.**

➤ **Sex is normal; but outside of marriage it is sin.**

C) We all have certain things that appeal to us

1) I love Chocolate chip cookies – I love chocolate chip ice cream – together – awesome

D) Having a Chocolate Chip cookie is not a sin – having a whole batch for me is.

1) **Sunday at the Beach – Snicker doodles**

**That is how temptation works – Give into our desires suddenly – out of Control.**

A) James uses two illustrations from the sporting world of how temptation works -when he says

**“But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed.”**

B) **Drawn away** - carries with it the idea of a hunter baiting a trap.

C) The hunter baits a trap for the animal to stumble into by using food or something to draw it in. –

1 The animal moves outside the realm of protection and into the hunter's trap

D) **HIS desires ARE dragging him into danger.**

Mice to Cheese or Peanut Butter - WAP

**The second metaphor has to do with fishing - enticed in the original Greek means “to bait a hook.”**

A) It pictures the fisherman skillfully baiting the hook-

B) Fishing Lures – Shiny – look like Frogs – Feathers – inviting

1) Fish is drawn in – looks interesting – looks tasty

C) Simple hook – Nothing **inviting** about that – only stupid fish bite that

1) **Many fish see Good Lure – Fish bites and is Hooked**

**Temptation works the same way:**

A) Temptation always carries with it some bait that appeals to our natural desires.

B) **The bait not only attracts us, but it also hides the fact that yielding to the desire will eventually bring sorrow and punishment.**

C) **The attractiveness of the bait blinds us to the consequences of Sin**

**Lot saw the plains of Sodom – reminded him of Egypt – visit there – seed planted –**

A) Lot would never have moved toward Sodom had he seen the affect it would have on his family

B) David would never have committed adultery had he seen the tragic consequences:

C) So Satan used our own desires to bait us into doing something we know we shouldn't

1) That is our common – Battle – so how do we have victory?

**So How do we endure Temptation?**

**#1 Consider the consequences.**

- When it comes to temptation: there's always more at stake than what we think.

**This is what James wants us to see next – there is a progression in Sin.**

- **James moves from the picture of hunting and fishing to Child birth.**

In V.14 Drawn away and enticed by our own desires

V.15 **Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.**

**It starts with desire – desire is not sin – it is in our hearts - but then comes the bait –**

A) The bait is meant to lure us in – attract us – it gives place to a thought – **What about that?**

B) The Question is – will the thought be conceived?

Examples:

C) Contractor - **“Is it really that big of a deal if I cut some corners on this job.”**

1) Really save – need the money

D) Student: **Just a quiz – Does it matter if I cheat?**

E) Office: **She is a nice gal – if I wasn't married I would be attracted to someone like her**

1) Or - I wish my husband was more like him

**Those thoughts come but they need to be immediately aborted – if they are not, conception takes place**

**The thought has the potential to develop and like a baby in the womb it is going to grow**

A) Give birth to an action = SIN

B) Sin undealt with- grows – Weeks, months, even years

C) Blinded in thinking – not caught – no damage

1) James says when the sin is full Grown it brings forth Death

**Death and Destruction are the consequences of Sin**

A) Death to your credibility & your reputation.

B) Death to your marriage – death to your family

C) Death to the trust in a friendship

D) Death to your intimacy with God! – Naked and Ashamed!

**Sin destroys things: When tempted we need to pause and consider the consequences. Sin leads to death**

A) **There is always more at stake than you think.**

B) Give ourselves reminders:

C) Denise had 3 Dads- 1<sup>st</sup> Dad abandoned – 2<sup>nd</sup> killed – good thing / 3<sup>rd</sup> in prison

1) Every man.....

D) Toby – Picture on my computer

**How do we endure temptation?**

**#1 Consider the consequences - Sin leads to death –**

**#2 Consider God's Goodness V.16, 17**

A) **16 Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.**

B) Don't be deceived. Don't be fooled. You're in the midst of a trial? Don't be deceived.

C) One of the enemy's tricks is to convince us that **God is holding out on us**,

1) That He does not really love us and care for us.

D) When Satan approached Eve, he suggested that if God really loved her,

1) He would permit her to eat of the forbidden tree.

E) When Satan tempted Jesus, he raised the question of hunger. **"If Your Father loves You, why are You hungry?"**

**Don't be deceived. Don't be tricked by that line of reasoning**

A) In the face of temptation – we need to Pause and reflect on this beautiful truth V.17

**<sup>17</sup> Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.**

B) One of the **greatest anchors** for your soul in face of temptation is your knowledge of the goodness and grace of God on your life.

**James presented three facts about the goodness of God.**

A) ***1<sup>st</sup> God gives only good gifts.*** Everything good in this world comes from God.

B) ***2<sup>nd</sup> He gives constantly.*** "Comes down" is a present participle: "it keeps on coming down."

1) God does not give occasionally; He gives constantly.

B) **So many things that we don't even think about that are gifts from God!**

C) **Has anybody had all of your energy sapped by an illness or an injury?**

1) So sick or hurt that you couldn't get out of bed for a day or two?

D) **Okay. Getting up and moving around and having energy is a gift from God.**

1) Physical strength. That's a gift from the Lord.

**Most of you are going to eat lunch and dinner today in a way that most of the world will not.**

A) We don't think about it that way. We just think its lunch time. Let's just go eat

B) Many of us will eat something today that in most parts of the world would be seen as an epic feast fit only for holidays because of its great cost.

**C) For us, it's just something we threw in the Crockpot. Or picked up at some restaurant**

1) That's a blessing. It came down from the Father of lights.

D) **Do you have any friends? That is a gift from God!**

**Have you found a wife or a husband? Don't bring them into this analogy – you don't know my spouse**

A) **Trust me. Came down from the Father of lights.**

B) **They might be part of your path to maturity.**

1) Being married to them might constantly remind you of how much you need God – but still His gift

C) **Process – that is part of your Progress toward maturity**

1) We can all say that about our spouse – our kids – people that we work with.

**Do you have any money in your pocket? Money in your bank account - It came down from the Father of lights.**

A) **No man I work hard for my money –**

B) **Who gave you that Job? My skill, my Know how, my years of schooling**

1) But listen there were 100's if not 1,000's of people your employer could have hired

C) **Try to tell me – God had no part in that?**

***God gives only good gifts. 2<sup>nd</sup> He gives constantly.***

***3<sup>rd</sup> God does not change.***

***.....with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.***

A) **He has never had and will never have more goodness than he has now. He is unchangeably good.**

B) **In Him there is no variableness or shadow of turning. That is, He's not moody.**

1) **He doesn't have bad days.**

C)He's not **generous** with me one day, but **grouchy** the next—

We go up and down in our moods and emotions

A)God doesn't. He can be nothing but good.

B)God is good – All the time – All the time God is Good!

1)Embrace that – God only wants good for me!

C)This thing – tempting me right now – I know is not of the Lord – therefore it Can't be good for me!

**How do you endure temptation:**

**#1 Consider the consequences** – there is always more at stake than we think.

**#2 Consider the goodness of God** – Your confidence in His goodness is going to be a great deterrent of temptation

**#3 Consider that you have been given a new nature.**

A)God in his goodness does not save you and then leave you to walk in your own strength

**V.18 Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures**

A)James used birth as a picture of desire leading to sin and death V.15

B)He also used it to explain how we can enjoy victory over temptation and sin.

C)**Brought us forth carries with it the idea of being born again.**

1)We have been born again – by the word of truth.  
Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word.

**Born of the Spirit**

A)His Spirit in our hearts – Given a new nature.  
– Old nature had a propensity toward sin

B)New nature has a propensity toward righteousness.

C)John in his epistle gives us a very clear insight into this:

**“Whoever has been born of God does not sin, (Practice) for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.” 1 John 3:9**

**“His seed” refers to the divine life and nature within the believer.**

A)Word seed – comes from agriculture – Plant a seed you are going to get a plant – after it's kind.

B)**Planted tomato seeds** – not getting grapes – but tomatoes.

1)This word seed is also used in the World of Physiology - sperm

C)God puts his seeds in us – His Spirit – Result – conduct that reflects a divine Nature.

**You and have been given a new nature that is stronger than the Old nature!**

A)New Nature that enables us to walk in Victory

B)Holy Spirit acts as an alarm – Warning but also the power to walk in Victory!

**Result**

**19 So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath;**

**Trials – Prone to complain** – gets our focus off of the Lord and on to the Horizontal world around us

- **Consider the Consequences**
- **Consider the Goodness of God**
- **Consider the Divine nature within = Victory**