



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

TRUE FAITH DOES NOT GIVE into TEMPTATION, Part 1-JAMES 1:13-16

COLORADO

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James teaches us how a faith that is real, a faith that is genuine endures to maturity. As we persevere through trials to maturity, our faith is proof that we love God. God is going to reward with eternal life, those who demonstrate that they possess true salvation by this faith that endures. The demonstration of our faith is in how we live and one test of that faith is how we endure adversity. And James says that the one who persevere under trials is truly blessed. A truly blessed man or woman is one whom God has made fully satisfied, not because of favorable circumstances, which come and go, but through any circumstance of life. As a believer, our satisfaction comes from God Who lives inside us. What brings true joy and lasting satisfaction is Christ alone no matter what is happening and true joy, true blessedness can never be contingent on our circumstances.

I. TRUE FAITH DOES NOT GIVE IN TO TEMPTATION: PART 1 - JAMES 1:13-16

“Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death. Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.” James 1:13-16

James is such a practical book for us as believers. It emphasizes the fact that it matters how we live. James 1:2-12 reminded us that true faith endures to maturity through any kind of trials and testing that will come our way. Surrendering to the testing God brings leads us to the perfecting work He accomplishes in our lives resulting in maturity and becoming like Christ. We are tried as metal is by fire and purified, thus approved. The approving process, the refining process, the purifying work is the testing of our faith. This refinement, then, reveals our approval, reveals pure silver and the approval God gives brings the crown of life, which is eternal life.

Now James directs our attention to another subject matter that each of us are challenged with every day. James turns our focus from the outward trials to the inward temptations to sin.

A. TEMPTATION: WHAT IS IT? – JAMES 1:13

“Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone.” James 1:13

James makes a clear distinction by the words he uses in his text. In verses 13-15, James uses the same basic Greek word for “tempted” that he used for “trials” in verses 2-12. But there is a difference as James uses the noun “peirasmos” in James 1:2-12 and uses the verb “peirazo” in James 1:13-16. What distinction does that make?

“trial” Greek word “**peirasmos**,” meaning to put to the proof, to try, to assay, to test, for the purpose of proving someone and is never for the intended purpose of causing one to fall, based on the context of the verse. (James 1:2-12)

“tempted” Greek word “**peirazo**,” means to have the intention of proving that one has been evil or to make him evil, whereas the intent of trials (*peirasmos*) is to prove someone good and acceptable, “*peirazo*” involves entangling a person in sin or discovering what evil is in a person by Satan. Drawing, enticing, luring one to act in sin or evil behavior. (James 1:13-15)

These two Greek words are from the same root word, yet encompass two different meanings and end results. In Mark 1:13a we see, “*And He (Christ) was in the wilderness forty days being tempted (peirazo) by Satan...*” James is very aware of what word he is choosing and makes it extremely clear in James 1:2-12 that the meaning is a proving through adversity by obedience to perseverance that leads to being blessed. But as James moves to this next section in verse 13, he is talking about one who is being lured to do evil. It is one who, through enticement, is being asked to be disobedient to God and His Word, to stray from a life of obedience, to commit sin. A temptation is a direct solicitation to do evil and that lure is put in front of us by Satan or Satan’s messenger.

The trials in James 1:2-12 verifies our faith, brings about maturity and obedience to God if we endure and persevere, letting God have His way. God brings the trial, the test to use it to prove or mature the believer. It’s a choice then to count it all joy and endure through the fiery trials of adversity to maturity. This is God’s way and the one who perseveres to the end receives a crown of life. The fiery trials of adversity are outward with God’s intent to change us inwardly and we are to endure through them.

The temptations of James 1:13-16 are inward as 1 John 2:16 describes, “*the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life...*” Temptations can bring about sin and death instead of eternal life. One we are to *endure through* and the other we are *never to give in to* because it is sin. Satan *tempts* us to sin which destroys. God *tests* to build character and maturity which results in pure silver useful for the Lord’s work. These are a few of the differences between the “trials” of James 1:2-12 and “being tempted” in James 1:13-16. Both are a matter of choice. Both require God’s wisdom and God

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will provide His way of escape through both, but one is God's way and one is man's way. (1 Corinthians 10:13)

B. WHO TEMPTS? – JAMES 1:13A

"Let no one say when he is tempted, 'I am being tempted by God';..." James 1:13a

When a person is tempted, why would he or she say, "I am tempted by God"? When people do what is wrong, are they usually willing to accept the blame? No, we don't often want to accept responsibility for our sin. We want to blame someone or something else. Our basic nature and tendency is to blame someone else so we look good. From a child to adulthood, we make excuses and shift blame to anyone but ourselves. And often we blame God for the temptations that come our way.

Consider Genesis 3:9-13 where the very first sin was recorded. The Lord was asking Adam, "Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" The man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with, she gave me from the tree, and I ate. Then the Lord God said to the woman, 'What is this you have done?' And the woman said, 'The serpent deceived me and I ate.'" When God asked Adam what had happened, Adam had the nerve to blame not only Eve but the One Who had made Eve, God Himself. When God asked Eve, she blamed the serpent for her sin who had deceived her, whom God had created. Neither took responsibility for their sin and both ultimately blamed God for their sin. There is nothing different in this day and age. We still do the same thing as Adam and Eve. We will blame God, family, friends, relatives, neighbors, our circumstances, our economic condition, our disposition, our surroundings, and even the weather or the moon for our sin rather than accepting responsibility for our sin. We look for anything or anyone else to place the blame on rather than on ourselves. Have you ever said, "Well, that's just the way I am." Basically that's blaming God, for He created you and gave you new life to live differently. Or have you ever said, "It's just how I feel right now. Or, I couldn't help it, I didn't know it was wrong, I'm not perfect, everybody's doing it, I'm not as bad as" And often when we are tempted to sin, we may shake our fist in anger at God and say, "Why did you let this happen. You could have stopped this injustice, etc." We blame God for the temptations that come our way.

But James makes a point with this imperative in James 1:13 by saying, "Let no one say..." This is a command, a mandate for us to *not* say something. James is forbidding anyone from blaming God for tempting them. God puts tests and trials into our lives to prove our faith genuine. If we are disobedient, then those tests and trials turn to temptations in our lives. Is God still responsible for our disobedience? Robertson, in his commentary on James,

says (pg 50), "Though trial in itself is ordered by God for our good, yet the inner solicitation to evil which is aroused by the outer trial is from ourselves." We turn to disobedience and walk away from God's blessing. Then James gives the reason God cannot and does not tempt anyone to sin.

C. GOD CANNOT TEMPT ANYONE – JAMES 1:13B

"Let no one say when he is tempted, 'I am being tempted by God'; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone." James 1:13

God is never tempted by evil to sin.

"cannot be tempted" Greek word "**apeirastos**," means and carries with it the idea of being untemptable, without the capacity for temptation, incapable of being tempted to do evil. This means that the nature of evil makes evil foreign to God. God cannot take part in or of evil. This is the only place in the New Testament where this word appears.

God, being aware of evil, is unable to be apart of evil of any kind. God has absolutely no experience in evil. Evil cannot penetrate the nature of God. God is totally incapable of committing any evil or sin. Because the nature of God is totally absent of evil, God cannot be a tempter of mankind. There is nothing in God to which evil can even make an appeal so God has no capacity to solicit evil on ones behalf. James makes this crystal clear so that we make no mistake in blaming God for what we need to take responsibility for ourselves. God never tricks or tries to deceive us, or causes us to sin, but rather tests to prove and build our character to make us more like Christ. James assures us that God isn't tempted by evil to sin and doesn't tempt anyone to sin.

Matthew 26:41, Jesus warned His disciples in the garden with these words which are for us as well, "Keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak." Our flesh is weak and when we give in to temptation in our lives, James says we can't blame God because He doesn't tempt us, so what happens? To be continued next week.