



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

TRUE FAITH DOES NOT GIVE into TEMPTATION, Part 2-JAMES 1:13-16

COLORADO

JANUARY 29, 2017

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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. In James 1:13-16, James directs our attention to another subject matter that each of us is challenged with every day. James turns our focus from the outward trials to the inward temptations to sin.

I. TRUE FAITH DOES NOT GIVE IN TO TEMPTATION: PART 2 - 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

As James moves to this next section, in verse 1:13 he is talking about one who is being lured to do evil. It is one who, through enticement, is being asked to disobey God and His Word, to stray from a life of obedience, to commit sin. A temptation is a direct solicitation to do evil, to sin. 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?

A. WHO IS TEMPTED? – JAMES 1:14A

“But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust.” James 1:14

James reminds us about the nature of God which is holy in James 1:13. While being aware of evil, God is unable to be apart of evil of any kind. Evil cannot penetrate the nature of God. Now, James turns our attention to the nature of man in verse 14, describing each one of us. The Greek word for “each one” refers to each and every one of us, leaving no one out. In 1 Corinthians 10:13, Paul talks of temptations being “but such as is common to man...” James is assuring us that we will have temptations in our life. They are common to all of us. No person is immune from them and we will all experience them. There are no exceptions.

James uses the present tense in 1:14; “each one is tempted...” instructing that this tempting is a continual, repeating process that is going on presently in our lives each and every day.

B. WHAT ARE WE TEMPTED BY? – JAMES 1:14

“But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust.”

James 1:14b

Two verbs give a clear description about what happens when we are tempted to sin. Keep in mind; it is not a sin to be tempted, only to give in to that temptation. Note what James says.

“**carried away**” Greek word “**exeiko**,” means dragged away, as if compelled by an inner desire, to lure forth.

This verb was used as a hunting term and referred to a baited trap which was used to lure an animal being hunted.

“**enticed**” Greek word “**deleazo**,” which was a commonly used fishing term to refer to bait, whose purpose was also to lure the fish to the baited hook. To, by deception, lure to capture and death.

These terms are descriptive of animals and fish being attracted by a lure, which is a deception laid out to capture them. The animals are overcome by the lure and cannot resist the bait. Their instinct and desire for the bait is so overwhelming that they can’t refrain. In fact, the bait is so appealing to the animal’s sense of smell, taste and hunger that the trap or hook is ignored by the animal or isn’t even seen. They are consumed by their own appetite.

“**lust**” Greek word “**epithumia**,” meaning a deep, strong desire or longing of any kind, the active, individual desire resulting from the soul’s diseased condition which is a natural tendency towards evil.

James paints a picture of exactly what happens to us. That bait is set by Satan, the world or our flesh to lure us to sin. We are drawn by our own sinful desires to take the bait and thereby sin. At this point, the sin looks attractive as the bait or lure does to the animal or fish. We completely ignore the trap that will entangle us Hebrews 12:1 refers to sin that entangles. Satan tries to make the bait look so attractive and appealing. But it’s our own desires and lusts that draw us to the bait or lure. We act on the lure, the temptation and sin. We take it as a fish takes the bait on a hook. And our own lusts and desires often keep us from seeing the consequences

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of our sin or God's judgment of it. We can't even blame Satan. We have no one to blame but ourselves because *we* acted on the bait.

C. SURRENDER TO LUST RESULTS IN SIN?— JAMES 1:15

"Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin;..." James 1:15

James uses incredible word pictures for us to understand what happens when we give in to temptation. He wants us to recognize what motivates sin in our lives. Here in verse 15, he uses the analogy of a pregnancy and birth as he describes the progression to sin. In his analogy, our strong desires or lusts are the mother in her pregnancy, conceiving and giving birth. The birth of the child refers to our sin that is conceived. And that sin is conceived because we were deceived by our own selfish desires or lusts which lured us away from godliness.

"sin" Greek word **"hamartia,"** means an action, to miss the mark.

When we sin, we miss the mark, the standard of holiness that God requires and desires. But it doesn't stop there, for when we sin; James says it brings forth death. All sin brings death.

D. SIN BRINGS DEATH— JAMES 1:15B

"Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death." James 1:15

"death" Greek word **"thanatos,"** means a separation of man from God, referring to natural or temporal death, forsaken state. This could be a premature, natural death but more often means spiritual death. As spiritual life consists in constant communication with God Who is life, so spiritual death is the separation from His blessed influence.

John MacArthur lays out this process of temptation in his James Bible Commentary, pages 52-54. *The first step is desire.* It might start as an emotional feeling, a longing, wanting to acquire, achieve or possess something we don't have. That desire begins to grab our attention. *It's then followed by deception* where we begin to rationalize and make justification for getting or doing what is desired. We make excuses and find ourselves trying to figure out a way to obtain whatever it is. There is a lure to give into it. At

this point James says, *"lust has conceived"* and our sin has started the process of forming, growing. *The next step is design.* We make plans on how to fulfill our emotional desire that has come through deception, enticement and luring. Now we pursue the lust until we are satisfied by the lust, the bait, the lure. And we don't see the hook, the trap. The temptation doesn't appear to be all that bad. The bait keeps us from seeing the consequences and judgment of our sin. *The final step is disobedience.* We act on our design and carry out the evil, the sin, the lust. We have taken the bait and are trapped. It's more than a thought; it becomes an action...sin. We are hanging on the hook and James says *"it gives birth to sin."* We have acted in disobedience and sinned against God. And who is responsible? Not God and not even Satan. Only the person walking through the steps sinned, and that's you and I.

"When sin is accomplished", when it is brought to maturity or comes into existence, sin will always bring death. Romans 6:23a says, *"For the wages of sin is death but the free gift of God is eternal life."* Sin always gives birth to death. There is no *"small"* or *"little"* sin. All sin brings death. Physical death is separating the soul from the body, spiritual death is separating the soul from God and eternal death is separating both the body and the soul from God forever. If we do not turn from sin, the result could certainly be physical death. If we live in habitual sin, sin that persists, goes on and on, never checked by the Spirit of God, not ever resisting the temptation, there is reason to doubt if that one is genuine in his or her faith.

Temptation is a process where we seek to satisfy our desires outside of God's will. Where must it be stopped? When that temptation comes to our mind and we are enticed to desire. We must stop it in our mind for when our mind dwells on that sinful desire; it gives in and is carried away by it. This is when we need to bring our desires under God's constant control and fill our hearts and minds with God and His Word. (Psalm 119:9-11, James 1:21) It begins in the mind and is carried out in the flesh. Temptation is common to all men but we must take God's way of escape and not be deceived by the lure of our selfish desires. And God's way of escape is never contrary to Scripture, and never gives in to temptation but endures to maturity. True faith does not give in to temptation but endures to maturity.

We have two choices regarding the temptations we face; God's way and man's way. We can be tempted, but that's not sin. We can be enticed, and that's not sin. It becomes sin when the lust or desire is dwelled on, focused on and then acted on. Our lust, our desires lead us to sin and sin is missing God's standard of holiness, righteousness. Our flesh is weak and we are easily seduced. We must turn to the Lord for wisdom, turn to His Word and know as 2 Peter 2:9 says, *"The Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation."*