



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

Temptation, Sin, & Survival (James 1:13-15)

FEBRUARY 5, 2014

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Relationships, careers, even life itself hinges on discipline and strength of faith. How do you survive the various trials that temptations bring into your life?

INTRODUCTION

Humans face temptations that can impact every facet of their life. A child of God comes under spiritual attack that is a test of faith. The terms “temptation” and “trial” come from the same Greek word *peirasnos*. Context determines its meaning.¹ Jesus endured a severe **trial** while fasting and praying in preparation for His ministry on earth (Matthew 4:1). Satan **tempted** Jesus to depart from the path of sacrifice and to take short-cuts to satisfy His own needs.

STEADFAST THOUGH TEMPTED

James 1:13-15 No one undergoing a trial should say, “I am being tempted by God.” For God is not tempted by evil, and He Himself doesn’t tempt anyone. But each person is tempted when he is drawn away and enticed by his own evil desires. Then after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and when sin is fully grown, it gives birth to death.²

The Book of Job provides a rare glimpse of the spiritual realm. Satan accused God of gaining Job’s conditional affection by blessing him with wealth and success. God gave Satan permission to afflict Job but not to take Job’s life (Job 1:12, 2:6). Though severely tested, Job did not sin by cursing God. Job continued to trust God during the series of trials, unaware of the unseen spiritual drama. How do you keep yourself accountable during temptations, when enticed by evil?

SAFE FROM SIN

1 Corinthians 10:13 No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to humanity. God is faithful, and He will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation He will also provide a way of escape so that you are able to bear it.³

Sin has been with us since the beginning. Eve blamed the Serpent for tempting her with the forbidden fruit, and Adam blamed Eve for offering it to him (Genesis 3:12-13). Fish are caught when lured or enticed with bait. Humans are the only creation that God holds accountable for moral decisions. Our fallen nature drives us to lust for what sin can more quickly provide. In what ways has God moved to give you His best rather than what you once desired?

Joseph was being groomed by God for high public office when enticed by the wife of his supervisor. Joseph’s flight saved his career and most certainly his life (Genesis 39:12). What is your escape plan for sin?

King David was tempted to take a census, counting his military resources even after it was clear that God had secured the land (1Chronicles 21:1). David confessed his sin and received mercy from God. How do you test your initiatives by wise counsel of others and with God?

SUMMARY

1. Desire can corrupt our conscience, causing us to lust, envy or covet. This can accumulate and move us to look for openings to sin. Temptation may then overtake us. Do you invite God to examine your heart (Psalm 51:1)?
2. Do not deceive yourself by blaming other people, circumstances, Satan, even God for your temptations and failures. Acknowledge your sin and ask God (and others) for forgiveness. Can you commit to starting over and doing life God’s way (2Corinthians 1:12)?
3. Sin damages relationships with others and may separate a person from God. The result might be spiritual death. How are you striving to draw closer to God (Psalm 119:1-16)?

A PRAYER

Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me and know my anxious thoughts; And see if there be any hurtful way in me, And lead me in the everlasting way (Psalm 139:23-24).

¹ John MacArthur, The MacArthur Study Bible, (Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 2006. p1896.

² The Holy Bible, Holman Christian Standard Bible (Holman Publishers) 2009

³ Ibid