

Bible Studies for Life: April 16

The Source of Temptation • James 1:13-18

By Laura Lee Leathers



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Why is it so hard to confess our wrongdoing, our sin? Because

human nature, just like the child's response, leads us to blame someone or something rather than admit the truth.

For a Believer, overcoming temptation is one of the most frustrating things with which we must deal. Why do we do the things we don't want to do, and don't do the things we should do? The Apostle Paul also wrestled with this question (Romans 7:15).

The reason: We have a fallen human nature. Rather than pulling us toward what is good and right, we are drawn toward sin. However, in Christ we don't have to give in to temptation.

God does not tempt anyone to sin (James 1:13 NKJV). In verses 2-12, James addresses our trials or tribulations. He uses the Greek verb, *peiraz*, and the noun, *peirasmos*.

Starting in verse 13, James changes and uses the exact Greek words, but from the standpoint that our trials and tribulations can also become a source of temptation. "Every trial has the potential to become a temptation depending on our response," states John MacArthur. (<https://www.gty.org/library/print/sermons-library/59-7>).

"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" (v. 13). Then who is at fault? Is it God, Satan, or me?

"Every difficult thing that comes into my life either strengthens me because I obey God and stay confident in His care and trusting His power, and so I grow or I am tempted to doubt God, deny His Word, disobey, do what is expedient and thus, I have fallen to the solicitation to do evil" (MacArthur, sermon 59-7).

You and I have no one to blame. We are individually responsible. This is James' declaration.

Temptation begins with our own sin nature (James 1:14-15). Who committed the first sin? Go back to Genesis chapter three. Adam and Eve have eaten the forbidden fruit. They are in hiding. God addresses His conversation directly to Adam (v. 9). Note the interchange. Who does Adam blame?

It's the woman God gave him. Adam is saying, "God, it's your fault." Eve blames the serpent because God created the reptile. Both are shirking their responsibility. We are no different today. We blame our circumstances, family, relatives, and friends. It comes from the sin nature in us.

The exhortation from James forbids ANYONE ever blaming God. Why? Because every person "is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed."

Notice the progression of sin. First, it's conceived, then there is the birth of the sin, and when it comes to maturity, there is death – separation from God.

You and I must confront sin at its origination. Again, going back to MacArthur's sermon, he gives a breakdown of sin. First, there is the *desire*, and this comes from our emotions. Secondly, *deception* is birthed in the mind. We can rationalize and justify the sin.

Thirdly, *design* refers to your will. How will you pull off this sin? Fourth, *disobedience* refers to our behavior; the choice is made.

Everything good comes from God, including the word of truth (James 1:16-18). What is the warning? Do not be deceived, but also notice the term of endearment: "my beloved brethren." James is addressing, and is concerned for, fellow Believers.

In verse 17, "every" means "all-inclusive." It is used twice in verse 17: "every good gift (the act of giving) and every perfect gift (the gift given)." God is always good because it is the very nature of who He is.

God does not leave us defenseless as we deal with temptation. He has given us the Truth of His Word. Ephesians 6:10-20 tells us how to put on our spiritual armor daily.

Take a moment to read 2 Corinthians 10:1-5. When the desire to sin is birthed, remember to bring "every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ" (v. 5). We are to be transformed by the renewing of our minds (Romans 12:2).

Out of God's goodness came His greatest gift, His Son Jesus. Through Christ, we can conquer our fleshly because He gives us everything pertaining to life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3).

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