

James 1:13-18 –Temptation to Sin during Trials!

Rienecker, Adamson, Geneva, TSK, Lexicon, Family, JFB, Ellsworth, Gaebelein, Arnold, Robertson, Trapp, Clarke, Calvin, Vincent, PNT, Henry, INT Beloved Congregation of the Lord Jesus Christ:

Apostle James taught believers that their **faith had to be seen in good works**, and when they obeyed, they would receive great blessings. Apostle James then taught that for believers to understand **what good works were and how to do them, they needed wisdom**, and God would give them wisdom liberally if they asked.

Apostle James then taught believers they would **receive a “crown of life” if they use God’s wisdom to deal with their trials**.

Apostle James then showed Christians **the nature of temptations and how they would be able to face them with God’s wisdom**. (This is now the application of wisdom to do good works!) This is the message for today.

Our headings are:

Man faces temptation under trial but God does not tempt man

Man faces temptation under trial from the Devil and man gives in to temptation

Man faces temptation and God gives gifts to enable man not to give in to temptation

Our goals are: That you will learn to use God’s wisdom to resist temptation to sin during trials and to live a life of true faith.

Man faces temptation under trial but God does not tempt man

13 **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**.

1. God does not tempt man to do wrong.

God is so pure that **he cannot be personally tempted by evil**, and because of his purity, **he will not tempt man**.

2. Well, what does ‘tempt’ mean?

To “tempt” is to try to induce someone to do wrong. The Devil tempts. God doesn’t. The Devil is so bold he even tried to tempt Jesus to do wrong so Jesus wouldn’t go to the cross to die for sinners. Thank God Jesus passed those temptations!

Mark 1:13 And He was there in the wilderness forty days, **tempted by Satan**, and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered to Him.

When you go through trials in life (and Christians constantly go through trials) you will be **tempted by the Devil to doubt God’s presence and God’s promise and to compromise and do what is wrong**.

But God does not tempt; he does not want anyone to stumble.

3. So you might ask, “Didn’t God tempt Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden to do wrong?”

God did not tempt Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden to do wrong. He **induced them to obey** so they **would be blessed** and be **confirmed in righteousness**. If they had kept God’s law and resisted the temptation of the Devil (the Devil tempts and tries to get people to do wrong), they would have been put in a state as the angels in heaven – in confirmed holiness - and be beyond falling into sin. God tests. Satan tempts.

Remember Job? God did not tempt Job to sin. The Devil went after him to destroy him, and God in his providential plan allowed it, but God didn’t tempt Job. Satan did.

When Christians undergo trials and are successful, it brings glory to God, so it would be illogical for to God bring temptations to destroy his children when he wants them to be successful and bring glory to his name!

4. It was an insult to God to say he was tempting Christians to sin.

5. Lessons:

a. It is common to look for someone or some circumstance to blame whenever you have hardships in life: When you lose your job, when you experience a broken relationship, when you don’t do well in school, or when you get Covid! But you must remember your **suffering is ultimately because of sin**: your sin, or your parents’ sin, or someone else’s. God put man into a perfect situation in the Garden of Eden with an inclination to obey. Man, in his reckless disobedience, yielded to temptation and sinned and corrupted his whole nature.

b. Never blame God for trials you undergo. He **gave you and your fathers everything you needed to obey him**, and he even encouraged your obedience by **promising eternal blessing if you obeyed**. God continues to give his children the ability to face all kinds of temptation without being forced to sin. So, **don’t say, “God, if you had given a better wife, I would have lived a better life,” or “God, if you had not given me a sick child, I would have worked more for you.”**

c. Guard your eyes and heart so you are now drawn away by doubts about God’s love and so compromise and sin against your Savior. (God gave you everything you needed!) Keep you eyes on the one who loves you! Keep away your eyes from the winds and the waves or you will sink like Peter!

Man faces temptation under trial from the Devil and man gives in to temptation

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

1. Man, in and of himself, lusts every single day.

Man desires in his soul to have things which are forbidden. He may desire food that he does not have, intimate relations he cannot get, and power that belongs to someone else. His own desires pull him.

This is a picture of putting a bait in front of a fish. This is a picture of a hunter setting a trap to catch a wild animal. This is a picture of a prostitute baiting one to forget his duty and to be drawn into sin.

This is the work of the Devil.

2. When man gives in to those temptations which are conceived in his heart, he the gives birth to sinful actions, giving life to those immoral desires, those lusts!

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

3. Lusts then give birth to sin.

“Conceived” means “to become pregnant,” and that pregnancy leads to giving birth.

Sin is the union of the will with lust!

But this birth does not give life, **like you might see in a newborn baby. This birth results in death.**

This is a spiritual and eternal death, eternal separation from God.

16 Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.

4. Attention Grabber: You would do well to take note that lusting, inappropriate desires, lead to death.

5. Lessons:

a. Without God’s wisdom to deal with temptations, you will be guided by your own wisdom. Your wisdom says when you are tempted, “Do what feels good. Do whatever gives you pleasure. Do what gives you power!” *Your* wisdom leads to spiritual death.

b. Even in this life, if you don’t have God’s wisdom to resist temptations, your life will be marked by many failures and frustration. Your wisdom, which exalt human understanding, has never brought, nor will ever bring, life and blessing.

c. Don’t blame God for bad things that happen when you give in to temptations. Don’t take credit for good things when you resist temptations in your life. You and the Devil are the cause of the bad things; God, and only God, is the cause of the good things! God’s wisdom makes you say “no” to sin!

Man faces temptation and God gives gifts to enable man not to give in to temptation

17 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. 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.

1. In contrast to the Devil’s “gifts” which are temporary and harmful, God’s gifts are always good, so man must ask God for good gifts, like wisdom, to resist the Devil’s temptations and to live obediently.

Moreover, the Devil’s gifts lead to death. God’s gifts lead to life.

2. To further encourage Christians to ask for God’s wonderful gifts, Apostle James describes God as the Father of lights.

This means that **God’s gifts are enlightening**, as God is the Father of lights. You will be able to **see the situation, assess it, and decide what your response** ought to be! You will see to avoid sins!

3. To further encourage Christians to ask for God’s wonderful gifts, Apostle James describes God as one who does not change.

The fact that God does not change means God's gifts are permanent. God doesn't do "take-backs." His gifts are for your whole life and for eternity. That is why **there is no "shadow of turning with God."** **The sun casts a shadow when it turns and it marks changing time, but not so with Christ. He never turns or changes so his gifts never change either.** More, God's Word never changes nor is it ever blinded as an eclipse might do to the sun or the moon.

Children, how many of the gifts you received at Christmas 2019 that you still have...or are still in working condition? Probably not too many! But no so with God's gifts. God's gifts not only last forever, they are most valuable. **And in this case, it is the gift of wisdom too resist temptations!** You are safe throughout your life.

4. To further encourage Christians to ask for God's wonderful gifts, Apostle James shows Christians the evidence of God's goodness by showing them how God cared for his children.

God saved his children by his Word of Truth. God gave Christians the Word – the message of salvation – that led to their new life.

Colossians 1:5 because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel, Christians, particularly the Jewish Christians, were like the firstfruits of the ground.

And using the Word of God to bring men to faith in Jesus Christ was by the electing will of God.

5. Lessons:

a. If you want others to have faith and then show it by obedience and give glory to Christ, you must let the Word of God work in their hearts. There is no salvation without the Word. Don't tell them how nice Christians are. (Sometimes we aren't so nice.) Don't tell them they will get new friends. (Sometimes there aren't a lot of friends.) Let the Word be heard! The Word gives life. This is most important of all!

b. God's gifts are good but you won't get them unless you ask for them. I know you pray for a new job, or a wife, or new house. **But how often have you prayed for wisdom...wisdom to resist temptation – wisdom to obey God and show real faith?** This brings glory to him!

c. God elected you. You would not and you could not choose God. He had to make the first move and he had to incline your heart to choose him.

Conclusion:

Apostle James taught that **God does not tempt man to sin**; he tests man to reward him. **The Devil tempts man to sin.** The Devil wants to destroy man. Among other things, the Devil lures man by enticing him to have an insatiable desire for things to which he has not right. Apostle James then **urged Christians to call on God for wisdom to resist the Devil's evil lures and live obedient lives before God.**

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. Don't deny your weakness. You can be led astray...you can be drawn away by your own lusts! It is true you can't lose your salvation, but your life can become miserable if you turn your eyes off of Jesus and turn them to yourself. You don't have the wisdom to resist temptation to sin and to live obediently before God.

2. So ask God for wisdom so you don't fall into temptation. Ask God to show you **his electing love.** Ask God to show you the **schemes of the evil one.**

3. On what basis can you ask for wisdom? You can ask God for wisdom because he has true, undying love for you that was displayed on the cross of Christ.

Finally: Left by yourself, if you are not a Christian, you will fall prey to the Devil's temptation as he lures you to satisfy your own lusts. Your lusts will kill you. On the other hand, if you ask God to make you his child on account of Christ's suffering for you, you will then have your eyes opened and will ask God for wisdom, so you no longer fall prey to the Devil's designs, but you will resist the Devil and obey God.