



Midweek Bible Study:

Series Entitled: “Taming Areas of Our Lives”

Lesson Two: “Taming Temptation”

(NOTES FROM Tommy C. Higle’s Series on Faith That Works)

In the Christian life we have two major difficulties: trial and temptations. Both always present us with choices. God doesn’t cause our trials or temptations, but He does allow them so we may grow spiritually. Both are test that reveal our spiritual maturity. In this section James reveals **three** things we must know about temptation if we are to Tame Our Temptations.

➤ **Point 1 “The Origin of Temptation” James 1:13-14 (NASB)** ¹³Let 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. ¹⁴But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust.

- Temptation is a test we may fail. When we do, we often play the blame game and give all kinds of excuses, one of which is to blame God. Therefore, James writes: when tempted by neither evil, nor does he tempt anyone (1:13). Notice James doesn’t write “if tempted,” but “when tempted.” We are going to be tempted every day in our thoughts, words, and actions. That’s why Jesus says we should pray (Mathew 6:13a “... and do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil.”

-
- God cannot entice us to sin because He is absolutely holy: however, He does allow us to be tempted to test our faith. The petition in the Lord’s Prayer could be translated, “Do not allow us to fall into temptation” Jesus indicate this in Mathew 26:41a “keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation ...”

Blame Game Genesis 3:12 (NASB) The man said, “The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate.”

- Adam blames Eve, and Eve blamed the serpent, but God held them all responsible (Gen. 3:14, 22-24)

- The **origin of all our sin** is when by our own evil desires, we are dragged away and enticed (James 1:14)
 - It is the idea of fishing with a lure (a leather / feather attached to a long cord) The word means appeal or attraction.
 - Fishing Example: The fish will be drawn away from what he is doing and come for a closer look.
- **Enticed** means “to entrap” to go a step further than just looking at the bait, If I can get him to look at the fly for just a moment, something inside him will hopefully take over, and he will gobble up the fly, only to find a sharp hook in it, Now, I’ve got him! The Evil One uses the same strategy, which we see in the life of King David. One evening he gets up from bed, walks around on the roof of his palace, and sees in the distance the beautiful Bathsheba bathing. Instead of turning away, he is drawn away by desire.

- NOTE: Give the devil an inch and he will take a mile; give him a second, and he will take a lifetime; give him a thought and he will take that thought and make it a reality in your life.
- The origin of Temptation is our own evil desires.

➤ **Point 2 “The Outcome of Temptation” James 1:15-16 (NASB)** ¹⁵ Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death. ¹⁶ Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.

- James describes the outcome like this: Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, give birth to death (1:15).
- When tempted, we need to consider the outcome.
- It can bring death to a reputation, to happiness, or to a marriage, But the word death also refers to spiritual death or eternal separation from God. The ultimate goal of the Evil One in temptation is spiritual death. James is not referring to an isolated act or series of isolated acts, but rather a lifestyle of giving into temptation, which leads to habitual sin.

- The consequences of giving into sin are always bad, and that’s why James writes: Don’t be deceived my dear brother (1:16).
- As someone has said:
 - Sin will take you further than you want to go.
 - Sin will keep you longer than you want to stay.
 - Sin will cost you more than you want to pay.”
- After his sin David wrote Psalm 51, where we see some of the consequences of sin. One is that sin makes us feel dirty. That’s why David prays in Psalms 51:2

- When we sin we feel spiritually dirty. That’s the difference between a true believer striving to live holy and a lost person. A child of God cannot lapse into sin without feeling that it soils his or her soul.
- One way to know you are a striving Christian is your sin makes you feel dirty and in need of Gods Spiritual cleansing.
- To tame temptation, we must know the origin of temptation and the outcome of temptation.

➤ **Point 3 “How To Overcome Temptation” James 1:17-18 (NASB)**

¹⁷ Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow. ¹⁸ In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures.

- The Evil Once can lead us into sin only if we are incredible short-sighted and forget every good and perfect gift comes from God (1:17a)
 - **Perfect means** “complete or lacking nothing.”
 - It means God gives us gifts perfectly matched for our personalities, maturity levels, and needs.
- When the Israelites come to the border of the Promised Land, great prosperity is in their future, but so is their greatest temptation, Therefore, Moses warns the Israelites what may happen “...when you eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase and all you have is multiplied: (Deut. 8:12-14)

- He chose to give us birth through the word of truth (1:18a). The phrase gives us birth refers to being born spiritually or the new birth which is really starting life over again with God. It is getting a fresh start in life.

- Another gift from God is that we might be a kind of first fruits of all he created (James. 1:18b).
 - When we remember we are the first fruits of God’s kingdom, it should remind us to live as first fruits, or examples, of God’s new creation in a world overwhelmed with temptation.
 - No temptation has seized you except what is common to man.
- God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear (1 Cor. 10:13). A wonderful promise is found in this scripture.

- To Tame Temptation, you must know **the origin of temptation, the outcome of temptation, and how to overcome temptation**. What in this lesson do you think will most help you Tame your Temptation?
