

James 1:12-15
The Lure of Temptation

I. God's _____ and _____ in temptation

a. The relationship between _____ and _____

b. God's _____ in allowing temptation

c. God's _____ in temptation

II. The _____ of temptation and sin

a. _____ is never the source of temptation

b. Temptation is the _____ of sin, not the _____ of sin

The test does not _____ the failure – it _____ the failure

c. Temptation comes from the _____

III. The _____ of temptation and sin

a. We are _____ and _____

b. Desire leads to _____

c. Desire conceived always gives _____

d. Sin in time always brings _____

IV. The _____ to temptation

Questions for reflection, application, and discussion

1. James is clear in verse 13 that God is never the source of temptation. Why is this an important principle that we have to remember from the start when we think about temptation?
 - a. Can you think of a time when you tried to blame a temptation on God, or when you interacted with a friend who did so? What can you learn now in retrospect from that experience?
 - b. In his message Pastor Mike said that not only are temptations not from God, but that trials are not from God, but that both are allowed by God. What is your response to this?
2. If God is truly sovereign, and no temptation overtakes us except which he allows, then why does God allow us to be tempted? It like trials, he allows temptation for our good, how is temptation for our good?
3. When we think of temptation, it is easy to think of the temptations of our youth, or pre-Christian days. It is important to realize that it will be our natural tendency to see the temptations that others face far more clearly than we will see and understand the temptations Satan will use against us.
 - a. What are some of the unique type of temptations that Satan uses against mature Christian adults?
 - b. One of the essential elements of James' fishing analogy is that most fish don't realizing that they are chasing after bait until they are hooked. This implies during the early stages of a temptation we usually don't perceive the temptation to be dangerous. Do you agree with this? If so, how can we defend ourselves against being unwittingly "bated" in this way?
4. It is human nature to seek to make excuses for sin. Thus, like our children, when we sin our initial reaction is often, "this happened and *it* caused me to sin. But James' teaching is clear; there is only one cause behind all of our sin, and that is our desires.
 - a. If we are honest with ourselves, how often do we take responsibility for our sin, and how often do we try to blame our circumstances?
 - b. In his message Pastor Mike said that the occasion (the temptation) of sin may be the test, but the test only reveals what is in our heart. The test reveals the failure; it does not cause the failure. What does he mean by this? Do you agree with this?
5. James 2:14 tell us that the source of our sin is "*each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed...*" The word translated here "evil desires" is best translated "over desires," and often is used for good desires. Thus the way sin works is not that we want bad things, but that we want so badly. Even a good desire when elevated over God can become the source of sin.
 - a. If you evaluate your struggle with temptation in your own life, how often is the temptation rooted in a desire for something that you know is sinful, and how often is it rooted in a good desire that may have become too important to us?

- b. If we realize that temptation is rooted in “over desire,” possibly even for good things rather than in just evil desires, how should this impact the way that we defend ourselves against temptation?