

**CrossWay Church – October 2, 2022**  
**Testing, Temptation, and God’s Provision – Sermon Outline**  
**James 1:13-18**

**Introduction (v. 1-12)**

Trials are a reality even for the believer in Christ. James helps us (1) to find joy through faith in trials in verses 2-4; that is a complete joy, not a one time emotion; (2) to seek wisdom by faith in trials in verses 5-8; asking by prayer in faith and not doubting; (3) to understand our exalted yet humbling position in Christ through whom we already have victory in verse 9-11; and (4) James exhorts us to persevere in our trials to Christ in verse 12.

**1. The Plan of Testing (v. 12-13)**

The Old Testament (and scripture in general) makes it clear that God brings about trials in the lives of people to act as testings of their faith:

- In Genesis 22 God tests Abraham by commanding him to sacrifice his son Isaac as a burnt offering.
- In Exodus 16, God tests Israel by providing manna in the morning and commands them to gather what they need only for that day.
- God tested King Hezekiah of Judah in 2 Chronicles 32.

A true faith is an enduring faith that perseveres in trials. And a saving faith is an enduring faith ultimately in the person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**2. The Process of Temptation (v. 13-14)**

Trials can be the source of temptation

- Abraham’s temptation was to question God’s plan; to trust his own way.
- Israel’s temptation was to complain to, grumble against, to curse, and to doubt God’s provision; to look to the world for comfort, satisfaction, pleasure.
- Hezekiah’s temptation was to believe that God had abandoned him completely and to not trust His providence.

Temptation (to sin) is NOT from God (v. 13)

What James is saying here is that temptation in this context is an urge to sin. God is not the author of sin, and he desires no man to sin. Therefore, He tempts no one to sin.

However, James also does not imply that God never allows temptation to come our way in His sovereignty. God allowed the serpent to approach Eve, but Eve was tempted by her own desire to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 3).

Temptation and sin bears an individual responsibility (v. 14)

Temptation is born from within each person, and the starting point of temptation is within ourselves. We are responsible, not God, for our own temptations. Friend, God is never to blame for your temptation and resulting sin. We must take responsibility.

Temptation is deceptive (v. 14)

James says that we are “*lured and enticed by [our] own desire.*” The picture here is of a fish that by its desire for food is enticed by bait, and lured away by the hook that catches it. Like the fish and the bait, temptation to sin appeals deceptively to our individual desires and lusts. Be aware that you are not lured away by a desire.

Three points of practical biblical application

1. Know Your Desires and Weaknesses (David)
2. Develop a Right Plan for Battle (Joseph)
3. Consult God’s Word (Psalms)

**3. The Predicament of Personal Sin (v. 15)**

When we don’t check ourselves, when we don’t recognize our desires, when we don’t have a battle plan, when we don’t consult God’s Word, desire moves quickly to temptation and then to sin. Sin leads to death (Ezekiel 18:4; Romans 6:23).

The sin is NOT in the temptation, but the resulting act upon it (Hebrew 2:10; 4:15).

**4. The Provision of God (v. 16-18)**

God’s purposes are always right and good. Remember James is endeavoring to show us that God desires us to be mature Christians. His purposes in trials and temptations of all kinds are for our ultimate good and for His glory.

In verse 17, James gives us a biblical picture of the sovereignty of God. God rules over the heavens and the earth. In His providence He dictates the course of the sun, moon, and stars which provide us physical light. But unlike the heavenly lights, God is immutable and does not shift or change. We can firmly stand on His Word and promise.

And finally, verse 18; here James moves us from the physical realm of all that occurs under the Heavenly lights, to the spiritual realm. The greatest gift that God ever gave to humans “*of His own will*” is in His “*word of truth*”; that is the gospel message - the good news of our Lord Jesus Christ who came into the world to save sinners.