

the desire, to pursue the bait, but the process slips from our control.

sin . . . brings forth death -- The fish that is attracted and deceived by the beauty of the lure is led to his death. Lust culminates in indulging in the sin (taking the bait) and sin always leads to death

James is stating the general principle of Scripture: "*The wages of sin is death*" (Rom. 6:23; 7:5).

Destruction is always the end result of sin. While the believer may not lose his salvation,(that is a debate for another day) he can suffer great loss and ruin.

Note that each of these steps entails a process: "**Lust-conceived in the heart (mind). . . gives birth to sin.**" That lust which is harbored in the mind and heart will break out in time. Do not be deceived.

Someone under the sound of my voice is already in the path of ruin. You have lust in your heart -- the desire for riches, fame, power, etc.-- which will move you to take the bait at the opportune time.

Right now, even as I speak marriages are deteriorating from within because of the thoughts that are going on in the mind of the husband or wife -- thinking wrongly about their spouses, secretly desiring a relationship with another.

Those desires cannot be harbored, but must be crushed immediately or they will lead to sin which will lead to ruin.

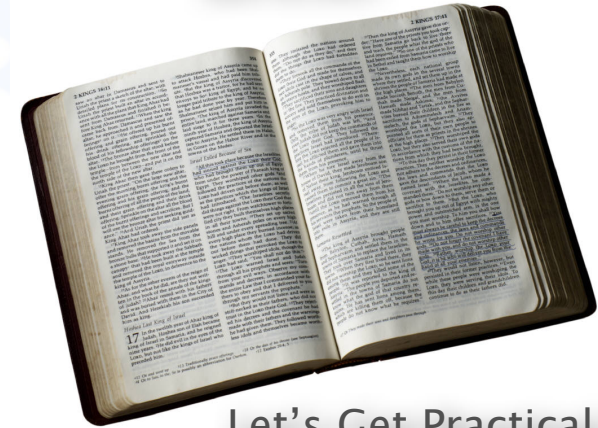
Only God can give power and victory over sin. That centers in His Son, Jesus Christ. He can set you free from lust and sin (John 8:36).

For us as believers there is always strength and power available from Him 1 Cor. 10:13 -- there hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able to

stand; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that you are able to bear it."

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Let's Get Practical

Part 4

The Test from Within

Practical Applications of Biblical Truth

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Going Around the World for Jesus

Let's Get Practical
James 1:13-15
THE TEST FROM WITHIN

Through the first 12 verses, James has dealt with the issue of testing and trials in the life of the believer. These have been shown to be an essential part of the maturing process for the child of God. James concluded this section by speaking of the blessedness of the man who perseveres under trial. When this man has been approved (dokimon), he will receive the crown of life.

When that refining, approving process is complete, we shall be presented in the glory of His presence as "holy and blameless and beyond reproach" (Col. 1:22). Then we shall be given the crown of life -- eternal life in the presence of our God.

Beginning in vs. 13, James is now going to turn our attention from external trials and testing to internal temptations. With every test we face there is the possibility that we will sin and turn away from God. Because of our sinful character, every trial which God intends for good may become the occasion for sin. James wants us to clearly understand that God never leads us into sin, but sin finds its origin within us.

The issue of sin and temptation is a very important one for the believer. James gives as clear a description of how sin unfolds in the life as is found anywhere in the Word of God.

1:13

tempted (peirazo) This is the same word translated "trials" in the first 12 verses. Here the verb form is used; there it is the noun peirasmos.

It has always been true that man's first reaction is to blame someone else for his sin or temptation. This was true of the original sin and temptation in the Garden of Eden (cf. Gen. 3:12,13).

Some people even blame God for their failures. Note Adam's response to God: "The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate" (Gen. 3:12).

Many people feel that God is responsible for their sin. In fact, some try to excuse their sin by saying that this must be what God wanted since He put them in the situation which led to the sin.

James tells us that no one should say, "I am being tempted by God." There are two prepositions that James could have used to say by in this statement. One, hupo, would have suggested direct agency. It would mean that God was the direct and immediate cause of the temptation.

James uses another word, apo, which carries the idea of remoteness or an indirect agent. James is saying we should not even suggest that God was involved or to blame by putting us in the situation. The point is that God has no part of any kind in leading us into sinful activity. James gives two reasons for this statement:

God cannot be tempted by evil -- The very character of God as One who is absolutely holy eliminates any possibility that He could be enticed to do evil. The whole issue of rightness and morality in the world is founded on the premise of God's unchanging goodness. There is no possibility that God could ever do anything immoral or evil.

(Note: This means that in the temptation of Christ in Matthew 4 there was no possibility that He could have responded to the enticements of Satan (Cf. Heb. 13:8)).

He Himself does not tempt anyone -- Tempting someone to do evil would imply a delight in evil which is impossible for God. God always acts consistently within His character.

This means that God never in any way, directly or indirectly, entices or leads us into sin. This being the case, we must face the question, Where do temptation and sin come from?

We are all familiar with the excuse, "The devil made me do it." And it is true that Satan is called "the tempter" in Scripture (Matt. 4:3; 1 Thess. 3:5). But as James proceeds to demonstrate,

this excuse is also invalid. The individual is personally responsible for his own sin.

1:14

each one -- indicates that everyone, personally and individually, is responsible for his own sin. The temptation which leads to sin comes from within the person himself.

James uses two words which are probably drawn from the realm of fishing to describe the process of temptation:

carried away (exelkomenos) The idea of this word is "to be drawn away" or "led aside." The bait, some external lure, catches the attention and draws the fish away from its course.

enticed -- (deleazomenos) This word refers to a lure or bait which is used to entice.

by his own lust -- The real source of the temptation is within the person. The word by (hupo) as opposed to (apo) indicates that which is the direct agent and responsible cause.

It is our own lust which turns us aside and deceitfully entices us to indulge in the sin. Our attention is caught by the lure and we are deceived by our lust to strike at the bait and indulge the flesh.

1:15

James now unfolds very simply and directly the pattern that lust takes: LUST . . . SIN . . . DEATH

A desire born in the mind is one of the strongest things that our wills can ever face. Either we have to proceed with the fulfillment of the desire, or somehow we have to give it up or sublimate it. That word 'then,' with which our verse begins, is very significant. **It indicates the impossibility of the thought, the idea, the desire ever remaining as an idea.** It either has to move forward and take upon it some kind of expression, or it must be thrown into oblivion.

lust . . . gives birth to sin -- This is always the pattern and conclusion. We make a decision to entertain