

The Letter of James

Lesson 2

Source of and Response to Temptations

James teaches no Christology, gives no gospel because his audience knows it and believes it. James is concerned for the moral application of their professed beliefs. In James 1:13-18 he addresses the question, "what is the Christian's mature response to temptations?"

Read James 1:13-18

1. In this context the word for "tempted" means a solicitation to evil. What can no man truthfully say about such a solicitation (1:13)? Can God be tempted by evil? Will God ever tempt us to evil? Therefore, when we fall victim to it, can we truthfully blame God?
2. Is temptation a common everyday experience? Should we expect it on a normal basis (1 Cor 10:13)? If we respond in faith, are we promised escape from it? Is the promise such that we will be immune to temptation or is it that we will be able to endure it?
3. We are told in James 1:13 that "God does not tempt anyone". Based on Math 4:1, might God ever lead us into temptation? Based on 1 John 2:16, what are the three categories of temptation we experience "in the world"? Can you find these three in the temptations of Math 4:2-9?
4. The Biblical principle is that God allows temptations to evil on a regular, normative basis; but the faithful believer will turn to God and God will enable him to endure and overcome. When men fail, who do they blame? Is it difficult to take full responsibility for our sin? Who must we definitely not blame (James 1:13)? Which is your favorite excuse: "I was a victim of circumstance." "I just couldn't help it." "It was her fault." "God shouldn't have put me in that situation."

5. Historically/Biblically, what is the normal worldly pattern for accepting responsibility and accountability (Gen 3:12-13, 4:9; Ex 32:21-24; 1 Sam 15:20-21; 2 Sam 12:5-12; Math 27:24; John 3:19-20)? What does Proverbs 19:3 say?

6. Does James make it clear who is responsible for sin (1:14-15)? Lay out the steps for the progression of being enticed all the way to sin being accomplished. What does it "bring forth" or "give birth to"?

7. Explain the four proofs that James gives that we are responsible for our own evil:

Verse 13, the nature of evil _____

Verse 14, the nature of man _____

Verse 15, the nature of lust _____

Verse 13,17-18, the nature of God _____

8. Therefore, based on the principle of responsibility and accountability, what is the first step in overcoming temptation as it entices us at our weakest places (Ps 32:3-5; 1 John 1:8-10)?

9. As opposed to the enticement to sin that comes from our fleshly desires and the world we live in, how do we know that God is not responsible for evil or sin (James 1:17-18)? What is God responsible for (1:17-18)?

10. Before salvation, our conduct was dictated by the desires of our flesh and the worldly system in which we live. No external ritual, no ceremony, tradition or rite can change man's basic carnal nature (Jer 17:9, Rom 3:23). Who has provided an internal spiritual solution so that we can be new creatures (James 1:17-18)? In James 1:18, he says God "brought us forth" or "gave us birth". This is the same as what phrase that Jesus used in John 3:3-7? What about Peter in 1 Peter 1:23? What is the prophecy and promise of the New Covenant in Jerimiah 31:31 -33?