



# James

Living Right in a Wrong World!

## Living Right when Tempted!

**James 1:12-18**

Message #3 of 14 – S964

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**Sunday Morning Service**

**Pastor Rick Lancaster**

# Living Right when Tempted!

*James 1:12-18*

## Opening Comments

- Turn to **James 1**
- Today, we continue the series: **James - Living Right in a Wrong World!**
- There is a lot that is wrong in this world
- There are hundreds of thousands of people trapped in Afghanistan by the terrorist Taliban government
- Thousands of people in Del Rio, Texas are living under a bridge in squalor after they were blocked from entering the US illegally
- On Thursday, a man walked into a grocery store and shot fifteen people before taking his own life
- And there is an active battle going on to determine if unborn children have a right to life
- When people reject God and despise His Word, things go wrong
- People do wrong because they have no basis to do anything else
- They will do what is right in their own eyes, even when it is harmful to others
- James doesn't answer all the questions as to why the world is the way that it is
- His focus is to help us to live the right way in this wrong world
- It is not easy because the world wants to go the way it is going and it is offended that you won't go along with them
- Jesus talked about that **Matthew 7:13-14**

**Enter by the narrow gate; for wide *is* the gate and broad *is* the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. <sup>14</sup> Because narrow *is* the gate and difficult *is* the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.**

- Most of the world is going the wrong way
- And because they are, bad things are happening, and they are happening around and to the people who are trying to go the right way – God's way!
- James started by telling us to have the right attitude about the difficult things that come into our lives

- Not everything bad that happens is because of what other people are doing wrong
- Sometimes we bring trials into our own lives through our wrong choices
- James will address why we make wrong choices in today's text
- And if we understand what he is saying we might make fewer wrong choices and not have to live with the consequences of those choices
- Let's pray and learn better how to do that
- **Pray**

### Teaching

- **Living Right when Tempted!**
- James started his letter by telling us to 'count it all joy' when we experience difficult trials
- He is exhorting us to look past the inconvenience, or pain, or difficulty of the trial
- And to look ahead by faith in hope of the good work God will do through the trial
- Verse 12 is a continuation of the same basic theme
- **James 1:12**
- Notice the word 'temptation' – in the original Greek it is the same word that is translated as 'trial' in verse two
- Just as in English, Greek words can have more than one use or meaning
- When it is translated as **trial** – the meaning = **to test for authenticity**
- Trials test to verify that our faith is real, authentic
- When it is translated as **temptation** = **to entice to evil or sin**
- A temptation is attempting to lead us to sin
- A temptation is an invitation to reject God, His Word, and His will
- A temptation will lead you away from God, never toward Him
- Giving in to temptation is always the wrong way, never the right way
- James says a person who endures temptation is blessed = happy, fortunate
- Temptations, like trials, are inevitable in our lives in this wrong way world

- To experience the blessing, a person needs to ‘endure’ the temptation
- Endure – ‘remain behind’ ‘To face and withstand with courage.’
- Every temptation that comes our way can be endured **1 Corinthians 10:13**

**No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.**

- James will go on to explain why we don’t always ‘endure temptation’
- But first, the blessing for enduring is God’s approval and the crown of life – one of several crowns mentioned in the NT that believers can be blessed with
- It is a reward for loving God and believing in Him enough to endure the natural temptations of this wrong way world
- Giving in to temptation is a sad reality of the fallen human nature
- Even though every temptation can be endured, not every one is
- The very first temptation recorded in the Bible was in the beginning in the Garden of Eden with Adam and Eve
- They did not ‘endure temptation’
- And when God asked them why they had done it Adam responded

**Genesis 3:11-12**

... **Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?” 12 Then the man said, “The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.”**

- Adam blamed God for giving him a woman who was tempted to sin – He blamed God first and then his wife Eve
- People have been blaming God ever since – James deals with that
- **James 1:13**
- To blame God for you not enduring temptation is to blame God of evil
- Often trials are accompanied by temptations.
- For example, if God allows a financial trial into our lives to test our faith, we may be tempted not to trust God to provide for us.
- If someone we love dies, we may be tempted to question God’s love for us.
- God might be the source of our trial, but He is never the source of our temptation
- That comes from elsewhere, and no, it is not Satan

- **James 1:14**

- Satan is called the ‘tempter, and the ‘deceiver’ in the Bible, but the reason why he can tempt us is because we have desires that he can play upon

- Eve desired the forbidden fruit **Genesis 3:6**

**So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.**

- Where there is no desire, there is no temptation

- For example, I have no desire to wear a dress

- So, you could show me a rack of dresses that would make me look pretty – no temptation – none

- On the other hand, put a bowl of ice cream in front of me, especially something with caramel in it – different story – there is desire

- Where there is desire, there is the possibility of temptation

- It is our own desires that make temptation possible

- It is our own desires that lead us to do things that lead us away from God

- It is our own desires that cause us to sin and disobey Him

- We sin and disobey God because there is something inside of us that wants to do it

- God won’t tempt you and the devil can’t make you do it

- The devil does play a role in temptation **1 Peter 5:8**

**Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.**

- The words ‘drawn away’ and ‘enticed’ are hunting and fishing terms

- Both have the sense of being lured away

- As a fisherman, I do my best to know what the fish desires

- I then tempt it to satisfy that desire by offering it something (bait) that resembles what it desires

- But what the fish doesn’t know is that there is a lie hidden within that bait – a hook that I will use to drag it away to its death

- If I don’t use the right bait, something it desires, it won’t be tempted

- Satan has been studying humanity for thousands of years

- He is cunning and devious and he has one goal **John 10:10a**

**The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy.**

- Where there is no desire, there is no temptation
- Desire, by itself, is not sin, but it is the starting point of sin
- James tells us what desire can lead to
- **James 1:15**
- The sin-process has four steps: desire, deception, disobedience, and death
- The desire in me makes me vulnerable to deception – temptation
- The temptation is seeking to draw me away from God and His Word
- To take the bait, I have to disobey God, satisfying my desire in a way that is contrary to God’s will
- One of the desires I believe God puts into the hearts of all his image-bearers is to flourish and prosper
- The world or the devil will tell you to do whatever you have to satisfy that desire, even if it means doing things that might not be right
- God-given desires must be satisfied by trusting God and obeying Him
- Any other way is wrong – and leads to death
- Every time we give in to temptation and sin, something dies, at least a little bit, sometimes a lot
- Relationships suffer, your health might suffer, your reputation might suffer, and you might even die
- James just told us that the reason we are tempted is because of our own desires
- He now tells us to take responsibility for our own holiness
- **James 1:16**
- The second step of the sin-process is deception
- How do we counter the lies this world or Satan might try to lure us away with? The truth! With God’s Word – known, believed, and obeyed
- Eve ate the forbidden fruit in the Garden because she listened to the lies of the devil and believed them – she then chose to disobey God
- The best defense against temptation is to know, believe, and obey God
- If the devil deceives someone, they can’t blame God, they can’t blame the devil – that’s what he does – they should look in the mirror

- James then goes on to remind us why we should trust God and endure temptation
- **James 1:17**
- Have you ever gotten a gift that you didn't want?
- Something you had no desire for?
- Like, as a kid, getting socks and underwear for birthdays or Christmas
- I might need them, but I don't have a desire for them
- God gives good and perfect gifts because He is good and perfect
- God implants a desire for those gifts and then calls us to wait patiently until He satisfies those desires with His good and perfect gifts
- Temptation comes when we don't want to wait patiently for God's good and perfect gifts
- James ends this section by reminding us of who we are
- **James 1:18**
- God created every human to bear His image out into the world
- And 'He brought us forth' = brought us into being - He saved us
- 'firstfruits' there probably refers to James' original readers
- Temptations, like trials, are a part of living in a world that has rejected God and His Word
- But we can endure those temptations
- Just like we look past the trials to the good God is working in us, we are to look past the temptation to the good and perfect gifts of God
- Don't be deceived – hidden within the temptation is a hook that the enemy of souls will use to steal, kill, and destroy the good and perfect things of God in our lives
- Trust God, know, believe, and obey God's Word and you will endure
- You will receive the crown of life and experience God's good and perfect gifts
- Make His desires your desires and trust Him to satisfy you completely
- **Pray**