

Faith in Action – James

James 1:12-18

"The Trial of Temptation" – August 16, 2020



Introduction

A trial and temptation are not exactly the same...but a trial can easily become a temptation. If a trial is an external difficulty, temptation can be an inner trial. Trials test our faith ([v3](#)) and though their purpose is to develop steadfastness, our sinful hearts can get impatient and look for sinful shortcuts. Left unchecked, the shortcut of temptation can knock us out of the race. So how can we *remain* steadfast? How can we keep going such that we receive the 'crown of life' ([v12](#)). James sets out to help us that we may be 'blessed'.

Pray

Before you begin, take some time to ask God to help you understand His word, to reveal what needs to change in you, and for the grace to follow Him in response. To help, use [Psalm 119:33-40](#) as a prayer for God to open His word up to you.

Sermon Outline

The goal: remaining steadfast to receive the crown of life (1:12)

- I. Know how temptation works (1:13-16)
- II. Know how to overcome temptation (1:17-18)

Read & Discuss

1) Read [James 1:12-16](#)

Remaining steadfast when our faith is being tested by a trial is no easy task. To help us endure, James wants us to understand *how* temptation works. On Sunday, we noted how we can break up James play-by-play commentary into four stages of temptation: *deceit* ([v13](#)), *enticement* ([v14](#)), *sin* ([v15a](#)), and *death* ([v15b](#)). Consider some questions to aid you in your self-reflection and to foster conversation with those you're discussing James 1:12-18...

- Why is it easy to question God's goodness in a trial? How does that look in *your* life? What does [v13](#) teach us about God's character?
- Consider the imagery of *luring* (think fisherman). According to [v14](#), what is the cause of such enticement? Similar to Adam ([Gen. 3:12](#)), why do we want to push the blame?
- The imagery of [v15](#) shows sin growing in the womb of our mind. When temptation presents an *illegitimate* solution to a *legitimate* need we need to act quick on fleeing, not conversing with temptation. Can you recall a time you've been lured in and let sin conceive? How does understanding *how* temptation work help?

Additional Reading: Ephesians 2:1-5, Genesis 3:1-15

2) Read [James 1:17-18](#)

We are in a *spiritual* battle when it comes to overcoming temptation (see [Eph. 6:10-20](#)) so we need help from *above* to overcome – the very thing James says God promises to provide. He gives generously ([1:5](#)); He gives good and perfect gifts; and He is *unchanging* ([1:17](#)). How can we overcome temptation? We mentioned three parts of our response:

a) Declare war – We must not be passive, take sin lightly or play games. Instead we must put sin to death ([Rom. 8:13](#)) and *fight* ([2 Tim. 4:7-8](#)). We fight by knowing and wielding the promises of God's word, the *sword of truth* ([Eph. 6:17](#)). We fight by persevering in prayer ([Eph. 6:18](#) and [Matt. 26:41](#)). We fight *together*, not alone ([Gal. 6:2](#)). Do you have a battleplan for overcoming temptation? If not, take some time to plan ahead so you don't go into battle unprepared and ill-equipped.

b) Flee temptation – When faced with temptation, Joseph models ([Gen. 39:12](#)) what we should do: flee! Don't converse with temptation – turn away from it. Take a moment to read [Proverbs 4:14-15](#). How should this look in your life?

c) Love God more than sin – remaining steadfast requires effort, but it's not a grin and bear it issue of willpower. As v12 says, it requires that we *love God* and love Him more than our sin. Why is the new birth James mentions in v18 crucial to having such love?

Additional Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:17, Jeremiah 31:31-34, Ezekiel 36:26

Prayer of Response

1) After hearing God's Word, what sin do I need to *confess*? From what do I need to *repent*?

2) How should my life be lived this week based on what I have heard? What should I *understand*, *believe*, *desire*, or *do*?

Spend time praying together in response to God's word asking for His help and greater faith to follow Him in the week to come.

If you missed the sermon on Sunday or would like to listen again, visit our website at <https://fbcum.org/sermons-new/>

*Next week's sermon text: we turn to Luke 8:4-15 "Having ears that hear" (Sermon Card)
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