

THE TEMPTATION TRAP

JAMES 1:13-18

CHURCH GROUP SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE – OCTOBER 1, 2023

SCRIPTURE READING

James 1:13-18 ESV

13 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one.

14 But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire.

15 Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

16 Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers.

17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.

18 Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

ICE BREAKER QUESTION

What is something you recently purchased that you really shouldn't have, and what enticed or lured you into buying it? What made you regret the purchase?

SERMON RECAP

There are opportunities for growth in every trial, but there are also temptations in every trial.

1. The Temptation to Justify Our Sin. v13

When faced with difficult circumstances or overwhelming temptations, we blame God.	God never leads us to sin and never gives us permission to sin.
We use our circumstances to give us an excuse to rationalize our sin.	Suffering is never an excuse to sin. Our circumstances are the context, but never ultimately the cause of our sin.

2. The Temptation to Indulge Our Sin. v14-15

The four (4) stage process of Temptation:

- Desire – wanting a thing so badly that you are willing to sin to get it, or sin in response to not getting it.
- Deception – Lured into believing that sin will be more satisfying than trusting and obeying God.
- Decision – leads to devastating consequences.
- Death – experienced spiritually or eternally.

3. The Temptation to Doubt God's Goodness v16-17

- God's goodness is revealed in creation to show us his abundantly goodness and compassion towards us.
- God's goodness never changes. Even in painful seasons, he is still the giver of every good and perfect gift.
- God's goodness is ultimately demonstrated in salvation through His Son.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Observation: What does the passage say?

1. Read James 1:13-18 aloud. Take some time to let group members share their observations about the passage. Try not to move into interpretation of the passage or application of what you have read quite yet. Simply share what you all observe from the text.
2. What does the passage say is the source, purpose and outcome of temptation? v13-15

3. When temptation is birthed in us, what does this reveal about our hearts? What are desires? v15 See Matthew 15:18-20
4. What do you learn about God in the passage that gives you hope about His character? v17-18

Interpretation: What does the passage mean?

1. What does James want us to understand about the process of temptation? How it works and why it's so effective in our lives? v14-15
2. What does it mean to be "lured and enticed" by our own desire. v15 See Genesis 3:1-6 Are desires inherently good? How do you differentiate between desires that are sinful and those God-given desires?
3. Why is it important that we NOT blame our temptation on God? Habakkuk 1:13, Hebrew 4:14-16
4. What does James mean when he says that "sin when it is fully grown brings forth death" v15. Galatians 6:7
5. When facing temptation, what does the passage encourage us to remember about God's goodness? v17-18 Romans 8:18-23
6. How would you explain or summarize today's passage in your own words?

Application: How can we apply this passage to our lives?

1. What kinds of temptations do you face regularly that are enticing or luring you away from Christ? What deceptions are you tempted to believe?
2. In what ways are you fighting the battle, or guarding, temptation in your own power and strength? 2 Cor 10:5; 1 Cor 10:13 How can you reorient your affections toward Christ and His word?
3. What do you desire more than trusting and obeying God? How can you surrender to trust and obey God to satisfy your desires according to his goodness and perfect wisdom?
4. How can your church group be praying for you to break this cycle of sin in your life? What struggles do you need to confess before God or others?

LEADER NOTES

- Global Outreach Prayer Guide – As a group, pray for the [Global Outreach weekly prayer focus](#).

