

“Temptation Teaches Us to Repent”

James 1:13-15

CONTEXT OF JAMES

1. James—the man.

- A pastor. He’s writing as the pastor of the Jerusalem church. A pastor with a shepherd’s heart.

2. James—the letter.

- Practical. The letter addresses practical matters about the realities of the Christian life.

DESCRIPTION OF THE BELIEVER’S FALL INTO TEMPTATION

→ James gives us a step-by-step explanation of how we fall into temptation.

1. The first step of temptation happens when we are **lured**. v.14

- “lured” = carried away, drawn away, dragged → Lured away from what?

2. The next step of temptation happens when we are **enticed**. v.14

- “enticed” = to be drawn, attracted to something → Enticed by what?
- “desire” = intense longing, craving for something. Almost always negative in NT. Ref. Mk 4:19; Jn 8:44; Rom 1:24; 6:12; 13:14; Eph 2:3; 4:22; 1 Pet 1:14; 2:11

→ This two-step fall into temptation is found throughout the Scriptures. A few examples:

-Jeremiah 2:13: My people have committed two sins: they have forsaken Me, the spring of living water; and they have dug their own cisterns [wells], broken cisterns that cannot hold water.

-Ezekiel 14:7: For anyone of the house of Israel or of the immigrants who stay in Israel who separates himself from Me, sets up his idols in his heart...

-Ezekiel 14:11: ...in order that the house of Israel may no longer stray from Me and no longer defile themselves with all their transgressions.

-Exodus (‘Let My people go that they may worship Me’); John 4 (Jesus with the Samaritan woman)

3. Both verbs (*lured* and *enticed*) are passive and indicate on-going action.

- They happen automatically and continually—unless the Christian works against them.

IMPLICATIONS

1. The danger of temptation actually begins *before* we are enticed.

- It begins when we’re *lured* away from Jesus & the Gospel; when we drift away become unattached to Him

2. We must actively guard against BOTH being lured away from Jesus and being enticed toward sin.

- 1st priority: Clinging to Jesus and believing the Gospel every day. (love for, intimacy with, worship of Him)
- 2nd priority: Resisting the temptations and allurements of sin. Remove the ‘stumbling blocks’ in your life.

3. Righteousness is not merely the absence of sin in your life—but the presence of Jesus.

- Galatians 5:16: But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires (lust) of the flesh.

APPLICATIONS

1. Pray for your heart.

- An enamored heart—enamored with Jesus! enamor = en (in) + amor (love) = ‘in love’
- An occupied heart—occupied, filled up with the things of God. Ref. Revelation 2:2-4
- Pray for an early recognition of when you’re NOT being satisfied with Christ.

→ *Sin is what you do when your heart is not satisfied in God.* –John Piper

- Ask God for a heart that repents (returns) quickly to Jesus—that doesn’t wait until deep sin.

2. Consider your parenting/grandparenting.

- The first priority for your child is relationship with Jesus Christ (secondarily: keep your child from sin).