

James

~Authentic Faith At Work~

James 1:13-18

13 Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone.

14 But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust.

15 Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.

James 1:13-18

16 Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.

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

18 In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures.

James 1:13-18

- Generally speaking, James 1:2-12 are about a right response to trials/difficulties.
- We need God's wisdom to respond rightly to those trials but when we do respond rightly, God uses those trials for our maturity.
- Last time in vs. 9-12 we had a "homework assignment" to apply our need for wisdom to our situation (trial) in life. The example used was the trial of being poor or rich.

James 1:13-18

- If vs. 2-12 are about a right response to trials, then vs. 13-18 would be about a right response to temptation (hint: look for a repeated word in vs. 13-14).
- Trials and temptation are the same word in Greek. The way that it is translated is determined by the context and usage.
- Beginning in vs. 13 there is a clear shift in the meaning of the word. Now James is talking about a solicitation to sin, or evil.



“Though He
slay me, yet
will I trust
Him.”



Trial

Peirasmos

Temptation



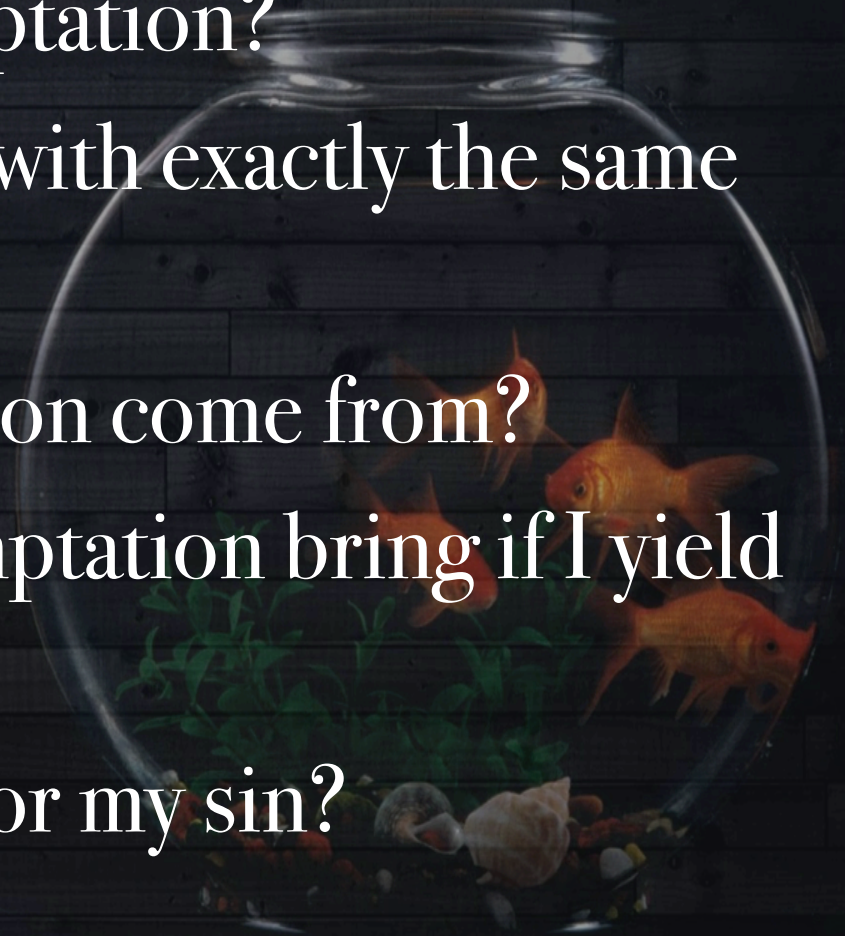
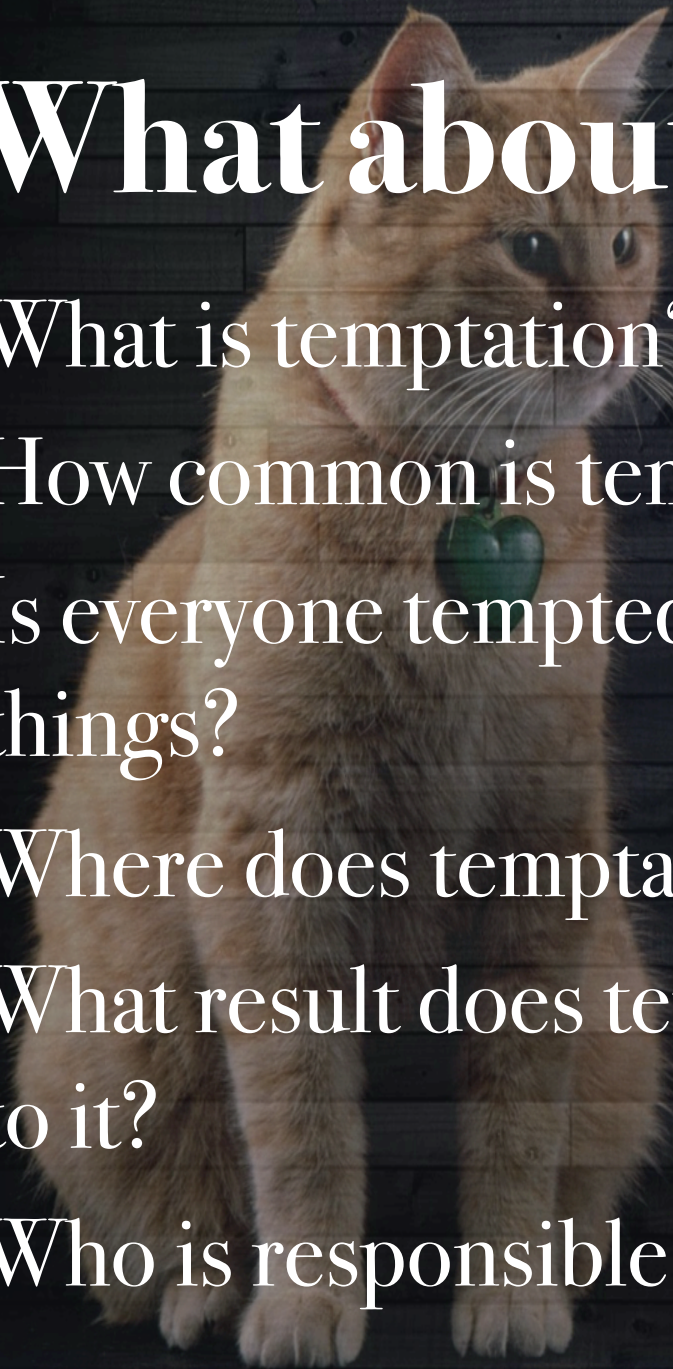
“Do you still hold
fast to your
integrity? Curse
God and die!”

The heart of it all

- At the heart of the whole passage is this Pastoral concern of James that we would not be deceived.
Vs. 16 “Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.”
 - Don’t think that God is evil and He solicits us to sin.
 - Don’t be drawn in by the enticement and allure of sin.
 - Don’t be deceived about your part in temptation and sin.
 - Don’t be deceived about the result (consequence) of sin.

What about temptation?

- What is temptation?
- How common is temptation?
- Is everyone tempted with exactly the same things?
- Where does temptation come from?
- What result does temptation bring if I yield to it?
- Who is responsible for my sin?

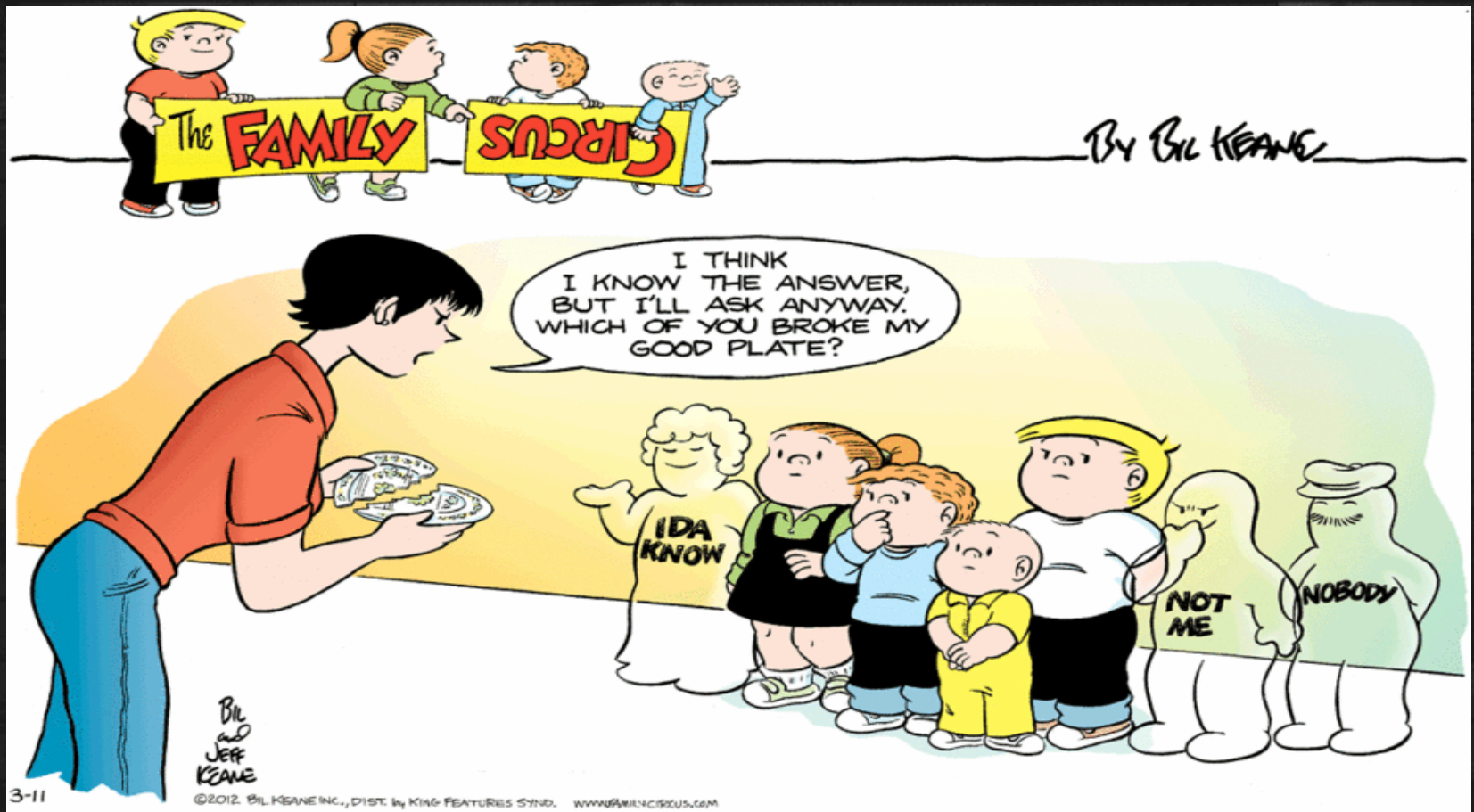


Temptation: Whose fault?

- If God allows trials and uses them in my life to bring me to maturity, does that also mean that God tempts me to sin?
- Where does temptation come from?
- “The economy made me do it”
- The stressful job made me do it
- The devil made me do it
- God made me do it....

We are blamers

- Have you ever noticed how it's always someone else's fault?



We are blamers

- Have you ever noticed how it's always someone else's fault?



“The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate.”

“The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

We are blamers

- Have you ever noticed how it's always someone else's fault?
- James wants to ensure that we do not blame God for our temptation.

Vs. 13 “Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God”

- God is not at fault for your temptation.

WHY?

Why is temptation not God's fault?

2 Reasons – vs. 13b

1. “God cannot be tempted by evil”
 - Temptation is contrary to the character of God.
 - He is un-temptable.
 - God's nature is good and perfect and unchangeably holy.
 - Evil has no appeal to God. It is repugnantly abhorant to Him. God has no desire for evil.
 - So, God and evil are mutually exclusive. He is aware of evil but He is untouched by it.



**GOD IS LIGHT;
IN HIM THERE IS NO
DARKNESS AT ALL.**

1 John 1:5 (NIV)

Why is temptation not God's fault?

2 Reasons – vs. 13b

2. “He Himself does not tempt anyone.”
 - If evil is contrary to the character of God, and against His holy will, why would he solicit us to evil?
 - His character makes it impossible for Him to tempt us.
 - He is holy and calls us to holiness (Lev. 19:12, 1 Pet. 1:16). He does not entice us to sin against Him.

“The gods of heathen imagination are always conceived both as liable to temptation to moral evil, and as themselves tempters. The conception of their character comes from man’s wicked heart, and the stream cannot rise higher than its source.”

-Robert Johnstone



Where does temptation come from?

- Vs. 14 “But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust.”
 - “Lust” - a strong desire for anything, good or bad.
 - Many of these desires are for good things that God gives us, but we are tempted to abuse the good gifts of God, or to satisfy our desires in ways that are outside of God’s will.



Where does temptation come from?

- Temptation always comes from our desires. We are never tempted by something that we do not desire.



Where does temptation come from?

Pop Quiz

Where does temptation come from?

a) from outside me

b) from inside me

c) the aliens brought it to our planet

d) I'm still thinking about that hamburger...

The source of temptation is each person's own
lusts (desires).

Where does temptation come from?

So, what is happening inside us in the moment of temptation? Verse 14 describes the process for us with two descriptive terms.

- “Carried away” – a word that has the idea of drawing out, or luring out – our lusts/desires lure us out to follow.
- Fishing lures are used to lure fish out of their safe places. They are made to be enticing.

Where does temptation come from?

- “Enticed” – to catch by bait.
- Temptation doesn’t look like this
- It looks like this
- It ends like this
- Desire – Emotions
- Deception - Intellect
- Disobedience - Will



What is the process of temptation? Vs. 15

- If we say yes to temptation, our lusts (desires) begin a process that has an inevitable outcome.
- The illustration switches from fishing and hunting to childbirth – vs. 15.
- When we act upon our lust, it will inevitably lead to sin, and when sin is allowed to mature (grow up) it will inevitably lead to death.

What is the process of temptation?

Desire
(emotions)

Deception
(thinking)

Design
(will)

Disobedience

The process can be cut short anywhere along this path. The earlier we determine to resist, the greater the likelihood that we will avoid the actual sin.

The heart of it all

About temptation, or sin and its end result – vs. 13-16



Vs. 16 – “Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.”



About what God is like – vs. 17-18

What is God like?

- God is the giver of every good gift (He only gives good gifts) – vs. 17.
 - God is the source of every good thing that exists. Satan has nothing that is good to give. He only takes God's good things and offers us a twisted form.
 - These good gifts are part of God's common grace to all people.
 - These gifts are good (useful, beneficial) and perfect (batteries included).
 - Coming down – Present participle – A continual stream of goodness that comes from God.

What is God like?

- These good things come from God who is called “the Father of lights” – vs. 17b.
- God is the maker and giver of the “lights” which are the sun, moon and stars.
- The light from the sun, moon and stars is good, but it varies constantly.
- What about the “Father of lights”? Does he vary?
- God is changeless, unlike the constantly changing lights and shadows.

What is God like?

- Vs. 17 is a general description of God's goodness to all. Vs. 18 is a specific description of God's great goodness to you.
- "He brought us forth" – this is the new birth (regeneration). God gives life to the spiritually dead.
- You did not birth yourself physically, and you do not birth yourself spiritually. It is God who gives you life, and he does so by His own gracious will.

The New Birth

- Have you ever thought about how much your birth influences your life?
 - Your race
 - Your country
 - Your family
 - Your language
 - Your privileges
 - Your place in life
 - Your opportunities

The New Birth

- How different would life be for you if you just “happened” to be born in to India’s slums?



The New Birth

- Or what if you just “happened” to be born as this little baby?

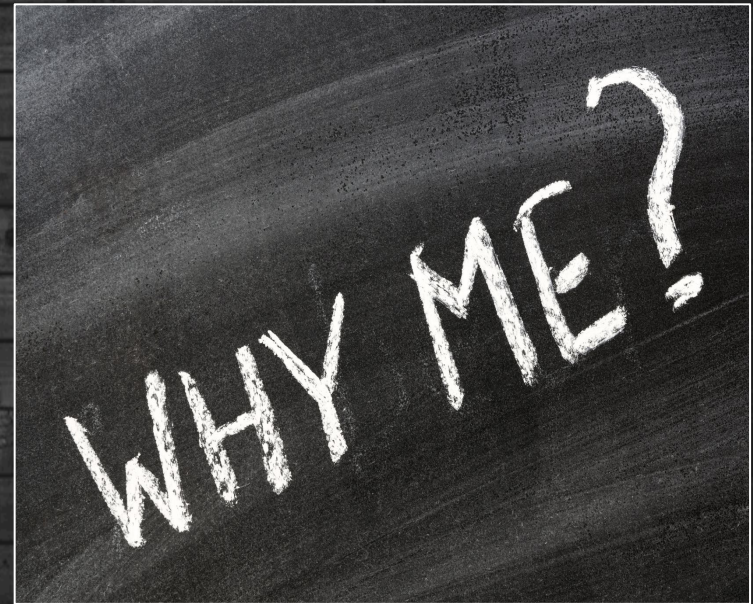


The New Birth

- What if the little Indian child could be re-born in to this entirely different family? How different would his life be?
- That's the point! In God's specific goodness to you, He (by His gracious choice and will) caused you to be re-born into His royal family.
- You have a new life because of God's goodness.
- God gave you this new life by the power of His Word ("the Word of truth").

The New Birth

- Why did God do this for you?
- “So that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures.” – vs. 18b
- First fruits – The first part of the harvest, and the best part belonged entirely to God.
- God saved us for Himself as the part of that harvest that belongs completely to Him, given for His use, and His glory.



Conclusion

- God's Word gives us great help and clarity in understanding our temptation and dealing with it at the very source – our desires (feelings) and our thoughts.
- Stop deceiving yourself, rationalizing, excusing, blaming, and continuing to give into temptation.
- Recognize and remember the goodness of God to all generally, and to you specifically.