

## James 1:9-18

### *Trials and Temptations*

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**What does it mean to be in humble circumstances?** Financially poor. Contrast with verse 10.

**What does it mean to be poor and yet have a high position?** Poor in material resources/possessions but in a high spiritual position (righteous) before God. Materially poor believers should derive joy from focusing their thinking on their spiritual riches. (Ephesians 1:3)

**What does it mean that the rich man should take pride in his low position?** He knows that his possessions and wealth end at the grave where he is no better than anyone else. Death levels the playing field. Likewise the materially wealthy should remember that riches are temporary and that one's real condition before God is a very humble one.

**What is the warning for the rich man?** Don't put your trust in things. They will fade away. Riches are worthless in the face of death and judgment. Hold onto your things loosely.

**Application: Which camp do you fall into—rich or poor?**

**So what do you do now that you've identified yourself as belonging in that camp?**

**What application does this have to your stewardship? Your legacy?**

**What does it mean to persevere?** (verses 3, 4, 12) Persevere in the will of God. Persevere under trials; do not yield to temptation to depart from the will of God. Stay the course. Our motivation should be to demonstrate our love for God.

Those who persevere under trials out of love for God will be rewarded with the crown of life. Walk by faith. Don't give up on God. Persevere as empowered by the Holy Spirit.

**What is the crown of life?** Eternal life with Christ

**What two things do you have to do to receive the crown of life?** Persevere and love God

**What are some of the differences between trials and temptations as presented by James 1:13-18?** God ordained vs. Satan directed. From outside vs. from within. Trials are designed to bring out the best in us—resulting in something good such as perseverance, maturity, character, and hope (Romans 5:3-4). Temptations are designed to bring out the worst in us such as sin and death.

**When we are tempted to sin, where does the temptation *not* come from?** God

**Why not?** God does not tempt anyone. God doesn't want us to sin. He isn't glorified by our sin. He cannot tolerate the presence of sin. Sin interrupts our relationship with God. It's contrary to His nature.

**Where do temptations come from according to James?** Evil desire. Our sinful nature (Romans 7:14-20)  
Other sources of temptation include Satan and the world.

**Application: What are some examples of temptations you face?**

**Who are some people in Bible who dealt with temptation both well and not so well?** David and Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11:1-5), Joseph and Potiphar's wife (Genesis 39:1-20), Eve (Genesis 3:1-13), Jesus (Matthew 4:1-11, Matthew 26:36-44)

**In verses 2-4 James gives us a progression for *trials* in life. What is the progression that He gives us relative to *temptation* in verses 14-15?** Evil desire, enticement, sin, death.

**Where does Mathew 15:19 say evil desires come from?** The heart.

**What hope does Ezekiel 36:26 give us?** A new heart and a new spirit in us. Guard your heart. The heart trumps the will every time.

**Application:** Last week we discussed practical solutions to handling trials. This week let's discuss practical solutions to handling temptations. There are two approaches: prevent the temptation or short circuit the progression.

## Prevent

I need to subdue my sinful nature—the source of temptation (James 1:14).

Appropriate the power of the Holy Spirit (John 16:8).

Be self controlled and alert (1 Peter 5:8).

Nurture self-control—the final Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:23).

Memorize Scripture (Psalm 119:11).

Walk closely with God (John 14:23).

- Control sensory input. Prime access points are eyes and ears.

**What are examples of sensory input that need to be controlled?** Movies, TV, magazines, computer, places (bars, casinos, beach)

- Make a covenant with God. A changed heart helps to fend off evil desires (Ephesians 4:30).

Answer to an accountability partner (Hebrews 10:24).

## Short Circuit

Evil Desire stage ---How do we prevent it from going to the enticement stage?

Expel evil thoughts quickly! Don't dwell on the thought (2 Corinthians 10:5).

Enticement or temptation stage

Self control, Scripture memory (Hebrews 4:12)

Sin stage

Repentance, be quick to confess (Psalm 51:1-17)

Death Stage

Is there any hope? (Romans 6:23)

**What can we know about God based on James 1:16-17?** God is truth. God is the source of good and perfect gifts. God never changes. God's goodness is constant. There is no variation with Him—His nature remains the same. He always does everything for His own glory and His creatures' good. He doesn't renege on His promises.

**How did God give us birth?** Through the word of truth

**What does that mean?** He revealed Himself in the Bible, offering us spiritual birth. Apart from the Bible we would not know the way of salvation.

**What was the purpose for giving us birth?** To bring glory to God's name

**What does first fruits mean?** Just as the first fruits in Israel were a special offering to God (Deuteronomy 26:1-11), the early Christians were a pledge of the full harvest to come down through the centuries.

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**MEMORIZE: James 1:12**