

Trials & Temptations

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[0:00] Amen. You may be seated. I want you to turn your Bibles to James chapter one. We're moving through the epistle of James and what a fantastic letter it is for us. I think there's so much practical application for us that we can dig into it every day and just get bits and pieces of it and slowly move through this. We could take the next 10 years and go through this. I'm not going to, I promise. Okay. But it may be a while. We're just going to crawl through it and we're going to just, just, I mean, absorb all the nutrients from the bones. We're just going to gnaw on it for a while and we're just going to see what God has to say. And so it's going to be good for us.

James chapter one, today we're really dealing with the issue of temptation and the overcoming of it. It's really the, the issue of being a survivor of temptation. I thought about this this week as this week, it was May 14th. It was the actual anniversary of the landing at Jamestown. And I only know that not because I'm, you know, awesome about history and stuff, but there was a meme that popped up about it. And so I followed the link and read about it and, and it, but you look at it and it's just, uh, you just think of the adventure that it had to be, but you also think of the hardship that had to come with that. And, and really there's some comparison. Once you look at Jamestown and look at it and, uh, you know, the Plymouth settlement and look at comparisons between the two, it's really interesting. As I was reading through, uh, the Jamestown settlers were actually driven more, uh, by the economic, uh, pursuits. They were there for the Virginia company. And as representatives that they're looking for trade routes and they're looking to, uh, try to find things that they can trade and make money off of. And the issue was in this settlement is that they really were not prepared well for what they were going into. Uh, they were not unified together and they found out very quickly and they didn't have the moral framework like some of the other settlements had.

Uh, it came to a very difficult point in Jamestown where they refer to it as the year of starvation when things got really difficult to the point where they were eating cats and dogs. Uh, and when those were gone eating leather belts and boots and during that time, 80% they're looking for a place to worship God without persecution. They build their community on Christian principles. They were unified and faced a lot of the same kinds of severe hardships.

Uh, but it was faith in Christ that enabled them to persevere together in that situation and thrive. And then you look back at it historically and out of Plymouth comes for America, the idea of religious freedom, self-government, peaceful alliances like they had with the native Americans in the region.

[3:33] And of course, Thanksgiving, can I get an amen? Right out of Jamestown, you get tobacco. Wow. I look at these examples and I just really think about the struggles of life at every level and what it takes to survive and what's going to be the outcome. What's going to be the meaning of the, the purpose when people look back at you, at your life, as you go through the struggles of your life right now, which all of us are going through in different ways, different places, showed what we're capable of in the best and in the worst.

But it also, I think, showed us that if we follow the teachings of Christ, really, we will have a greater impact.

And so I thought about that as I was coming to the book of James and just thinking about, uh, this Jamestown settlement. Uh, the book of James written to not to a place where people are all gathered in one spot.

It's actually, as we've talked about, written to the scattered believers everywhere who are suffering. But we are in the same boat. We are in the same situation as believers everywhere. And this letter is then a letter of wisdom. We refer to this as the New Testament book of Proverbs because you go through this book and over and over again, you find so many nuggets of wisdom, which is why I say we can take a long time and look at this letter.

[5:17] It'll take us a long time to get through it because every few verses is like, wow, that is so packed. And then as you start to unpack it, you just realize how much wisdom is there for us.

It's for believers that are scattered so that we'll be survivors in the end. So that we'll make it through and have an impact. And, and you come to the book of James now in this verse 13, which is where we're looking at.

In fact, let's go ahead and stand. We're going to read this together before I get ahead of myself. James chapter one, beginning in verse 13.

And these are the words of the Lord. But no one say when he is tempted, I'm being tempted by God. For God cannot be tempted with evil and he himself tempts no one.

But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire, when it has conceived, gives birth to sin.

[6:32] And sin, when it is fully grown, brings forth death. Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers. 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. Of his own will, he brought us forth by the word of truth.

That we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures. Father, bless the reading of your word. Speak to us today. We pray this in Jesus' name.

Amen. You may be seated. So this section that we're coming to now, really, the main principles of these verses revolve around the origin of temptation.

And what you see then is the dangerous pattern of temptation. But you also see what God has given as the provision for us so that we can deal with temptation in a way that in the end we end up survivors.

[7:44] We end up making it through and having an impact along the way. This is written, of course, by James, somebody who has been through trials.

And so he speaks with authority. He's basically saying, I've been through some trials and I've got many more trials to go. But God has revealed some things that have given me strength and that are going to give you strength.

And so if you'll take this wisdom from God and take these principles under your belt, you'll learn how to deal with temptation a whole lot better. How many of you are at any point in the last year having struggles with temptations?

Anybody? The rest of you are liars. Okay? You're lying. You are not being honest with yourself or you have so domesticated some of the temptation in your own heart and mind that you don't think that there's a struggle in your life.

There may be no struggle because you're not fighting against the temptations. And so the reality is if we're going to be survivors in this, we really need to get a handle on how this temptation is at work so that we can take God's promises and find some victory.

[9:12] Are you ready to find some victory over things in your life? Over anger? Over resentment? Over bitterness? Over addictions? Over all the things?

I mean, I'm looking around the room. I know you guys. Okay? You guys, we know each other. Can I, I got an amen. We've got a hallelujah. We know each other.

We're just human beings. Nobody's under the pretense in this room that anybody in this room has got it all together. Right? If you, if you are under that, I want to just go ahead and burst that bubble for you because all of us are sinners saved by grace.

All of us. All of us are going through similar struggles at different levels. Maybe we've got more victory in one area than another. But we've all got struggles.

And we're all going to continue to fight that kind of fight in our sanctifying work until we see Jesus face to face. All of us.

[10:16] I have been justified. I have been legally declared a new creation by God forgiven. But I am being sanctified.

And that means God is chiseling out of my life all of the things that don't look like Christ. All of it. And that is going to be a continuous work until I see him.

So he gives us a few principles here that I think really help us as we try to wrap our minds around it. And if we're going to be victors, survivors, overcomers, we want to get hold of this.

So let me give you the outline. Trying to do this because sometimes the outline gets lost and you're like, man, I didn't know what your point was there. Okay, so point number one, point number one, temptation has a hell-born origin.

Temptation has a hell-born origin. That's dealing with verse 13. Basically, you have a fundamental enemy.

[11:25] Number two, not only does temptation have a hell-born origin, temptation has an earthly path. He deals with this in verse 14 and 15. Temptation has an earthly path.

You have a fundamental enemy, but really what we're dealing with here is that sometimes you are your own worst enemy. And when temptation follows its path, you see how it works.

And it helps you. It really helps you to see where you're at in the path and in the course of that. But then, number three, which I think is the hope of it, it is that temptation has a heavenly provision.

And that is verse 16 through 18. Temptation has a heavenly provision. Satan is your enemy. You have a fundamental enemy. Sometimes, yes, unfortunately, you are your own worst enemy.

But here, you need to know that you have a heavenly advocate. And that is Christ Jesus. That's the message for believers. Now, if you're an unbeliever, you find yourself caught in sin.

[12:35] You have no advocate. You are alone in your sin. You're trying to fight it on your own. That doesn't end well. It ends in destruction. So this really is the principles of understanding how temptation is at work, where it's coming from, how it's working, and how to overcome this.

So James is speaking as somebody who's gone through trials and temptations and sees the contrast between the trials that come from God and the temptation that we experience so that we can't blame God for our weakness.

And in the end, we become overcomers because we see what God has given us in Christ. So number one, temptation has a hell-born origin.

So beginning in verse 13, he offers up this situation. Let no one say when he is tempted.

The situation is that somebody is being tempted. We know that there's trials in life. There's difficulties. But there comes a moment in your life where you're tempted, where you may be tempted to think that God has brought temptation into your life.

[13:48] And it's all from him. And so why have you done this to me, God? Why did you bring these circumstances in my life to cause me to fail? Why are you doing these things?

It's sometimes when you are dealing with people that are going through big problems in their life, you hear that. That I just can't understand why all these bad things happen to me.

Right? You ever heard that? Have you ever said that? God's not the author of temptation.

It's not one of God's attributes that he would be a tempter because God's attribute, his character is, in the scripture, described as being good.

And this is really the distinction that's being made here. His intentions are good. When God is bringing trials into our life, there is a positive outcome expected.

[14:47] When God is bringing trials into our life, he's doing something to produce something that's good. When temptation comes into our life, Satan is bringing temptation into our life to bring something bad.

He's wanting to trap us in our sin. God's wanting to train us in our sin. Satan's wanting to tempt us to not trust God. God is bringing trials so that we'll trust him more.

In our confession of faith, it describes the fall of man in Adam and Eve and describes it saying they were subtly seduced by the temptations of Satan.

Subtle seduction. Subtle seduction. It's drawing out even what you see in the wording here in verse 13. Let no one say when he is tempted.

I'm being tempted by God. For God cannot be tempted with evil. And he himself tempts no one. And so the emphasis here is on tempting with evil.

[16:03] God's not bringing things into our life to entice us into sin. God brings trials, yes, but God doesn't tempt. He's not trying to expose us as being weak.

He's trying to strengthen us and cause us to be strong. Believers are effectually called, according to our statement of faith, effectually called and sanctified by the spirit.

And we may at times fall into grievous sins due to the temptation of Satan and the world. It goes on to just describe these moments as sometimes special sins that attack us.

That there may be moments, it says, quote, of sudden and vehement temptation. So in our confession of faith, we acknowledge that this is actually part of our life as a believer.

That these things are going to come from time to time. Sudden, vehement temptations.

Recognizing where this is coming from. Satan hates you. He hates your family.

[17:11] He hates your kids. He hates your friends. He hates your church. He hates the relationship you have with brothers and sisters in Christ.

The word temptation here means to endeavor to discover the nature or character of something by trying or making trial of or putting to the test. But in this case, the context is with evil.

God does not tempt with evil. God cannot be tempted with evil. It is speaking to the motivation of it to attempt to entrap someone through the process of inquiry.

That's what it's meaning. The tempt here is meaning it's purposefully trying to entrap you. Do you think that God is trying to entrap you in your sin?

And what James is saying is God is not trying to entrap you. Satan wants to trap you in your sin.

That's always his plan. He wants to trap you. He wants to lure you.

[18:16] Which is why James said in verse 16, do not be deceived. This is the work of Satan. He wants to deceive you. God is not going to entrap you.

God's purpose in this is not to entrap you. Trying to grow you. Jesus was tempted.

It says in the scripture in Matthew 16, 1. As the Pharisees and the Sadducees come to him, it says to test him. Their desire and this use of this word is speaking to the entrapment.

They were seeking to test Jesus. They were going to entrap him. The motivation of their questions is so that they can catch Jesus in something and discredit him.

And so you see the distinction of the usage in that. It's used all over the Gospels that way. God's not working to entrap you, James is saying. God is working to transform you.

[19:19] What is temptation? Temptation. So as he uses this word, it really is the seduction toward evil. It's a solicitation toward wrong.

It stands distinguished from trials in that, as one commentator said, trials test. It seek to discover the man's moral quality or character.

But temptation persuades to evil. It deludes that it may ruin. The one means to undeceive and the other means to deceive.

The one aims at man's good, making him conscious of his moral self. But the other at his evil, leading him more or less unconsciously to sin.

God tries. Satan tempts. And so you see even in Genesis 22, where it says, after these things, God tested Abraham and said to him, and Abraham said to him, here am I.

[20:23] God's intent was not to trap Abraham, but to grow Abraham. He had a purpose and he had a plan. And you think of it, James might have even had Job in mind here, because you think of the scene in Job chapter 1, and you're just reminded of that situation where Satan has come to discuss somebody with the Lord.

And it says in Job chapter 1, verse 8, And the Lord said to Satan, have you considered my servant Job? There's none like him on the earth, blameless and upright, a man who fears God and turns away from evil.

And Satan answered and said, does he fear God for no reason? Have you not put a hedge around him and his house and all that he has on every side? You might make note there of just the work

that God is doing in your life to put a hedge around your life.

There is no work of Satan that can come into your life without God's permission. He cannot cross God's hedge. It's a reminder to us. But in this, you see this unfolding.

You've blessed the work of his hand, Satan says. The possessions that he has have increased in the land. But stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and he'll curse you to your face. The Lord said to Satan, behold, all that he has is in your hand.

[21:44] Only against him do not stretch out your hand. And Satan went out from the presence of the Lord. God was trying. Satan was tempting.

The motivation is completely different. It was not to trap Job and cause him to sin. His purpose was to grow Job and bless Job. In the end, we see him blessed.

We're reminded that all things work together for good. For those that are called according to his purpose. God's working things for my good.

He's using these things in the context. In verse 1 and 2, we just saw that. Count it all joy, brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds. For you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.

What's God doing in the trial? He's growing you. He's strengthening you. He's building perseverance and endurance in you. Let steadfastness have its full effect that you may be complete, lacking nothing.

[22:49] He's producing greater faith. He said that in verse 12. Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial. When he has stood the test, he'll receive the crown.

Which God has promised to those who love him. In Romans, he reminds us that he's developing character. He said in Romans 5, Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings. Knowing that suffering produces endurance.

And endurance produces character. And character produces hope. And hope does not put us to shame. Because God's love has been poured out in our hearts. Through the Holy Spirit whom God has given us.

Suffering leads to endurance and character and hope. And it just demonstrates that God has a plan in the trials. He's developing something in us. He's refining us in the trials.

Anybody got a trial? Can I get an amen? Man, we've got trials. 1 Peter 1, Peter said in this, You rejoice.

[23:51] Though now for a little while, if necessary. If necessary. All your trials are necessary. God wouldn't have brought it. It's necessary. If necessary, you've been grieved by various trials.

So that the tested genuineness of your faith. More precious than gold that perishes. Though it's tested by fire. May be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. God is refining your faith. It's increasing your dependence on God. 2 Corinthians 1.8 For we do not want you to be unaware, brothers, of the affliction we've experienced.

For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself. Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But that was to make us rely not on ourselves, but on the God who raises the dead.

God's not tempting us. You have an enemy that is seeking your destruction, according to this passage.

[25:01] Identifying your enemy is actually a necessity for your survival. If you think it's coming from God or from nature or just from some other source, then you won't realize that all of these things are designed to undermine your faith and destroy your faith.

It's just like watching Disney movies and things like that. You know, it's like, well, it's just a story. No, it's actually not just a story. No story is just a story.

All stories are actually intended to teach something, to lead you somewhere, to influence your thinking and the way you think. You think of Disney as being groomers of children and then look back at some of the ideals that they've been teaching through these movies over the years and it's no surprise.

Look at all these, you know, the talk of Hollywood for years and years and years has been, oh, how immoral it is. And people are like, oh, it's not so bad. And all of a sudden, whoa, you get a peek into

what's going on in Hollywood for just a second.

And it's like you've got all these child pedophiles and people trafficking. And it's just, it's unbelievable. Who's responsible?

[26:20] You don't realize you have an enemy, man, you are, you are going to be destroyed. There's nothing neutral in this world. It's just God has a purpose and a plan.

And he, and we see it even from the beginning in Genesis where in Genesis three, it starts, starts right off talking about the work of Satan. As if this is something fundamental to your faith, that you ought to really get a hold of this.

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, did God actually say, you shall not eat of the tree in the garden?

And in that, the fundamental temptation, right? Did God actually say, is his word the guide? The work of Christ, according to 1 John 3, 8.

And, and if you were reading along in your reading this week and you read 1 John 3 yesterday, I think. Just, it just, I had to read through that passage again because I was like, man, is that, did I just read that?

[27:28] Right? 1 John 3, 8. Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil. For the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.

Is the devil real? Is he at work? Even in 2 Corinthians 11, 3, as Paul is talking to the church, he's reminding the church in Corinth, in chapter 11, verse 3, he said, I'm afraid that just as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere, pure devotion to Christ.

Is Satan at work in the church at Corinth? And yet, even though he describes Satan as being the originator of sin, I think it's really important that he also indicate that often your sin is an inside job. Sometimes you are your own worst enemy in this, sabotaging your own life. If you know Satan's out there and you know he's working against you, you can put up a defense.

Work around us in the city, removing trees and things like that. I had some branches in my yard and I said, man, I'm going to take these down. I've got a chainsaw.

[29:01] Right? I'm a man. I'm going to get up there and take these branches down. And so I get my, and my, I can't remember who it was that said, yeah, you're no lumberjack.

It's an electric chainsaw. Right? Big deal. Right? But, but I get my electric chainsaw and I get my cord. Kylie, I mean, no judgment here. Right? So I get up there and I'm like, I could take these down.

This is no problem. And so, you know, one of the branches is about that big around and the other was about, I don't know, about that big around. And they extend over my driveway.

But with all these storms, I thought, man, I've got to get these things down or they're going to come down on the cars or whatever and do some damage to the house. And, and so I get up there and as soon as I climb the ladder and get up there, first of all, the first ladder wasn't tall enough.

So I looked up and I was like, yeah, that's way higher than I thought. I thought I could get it with my pole saw. So first I got the pole saw out and I put it up there and, and I had about, I don't know, eight feet to go.

[30:09] And I was like, wow, that is way higher than I thought. And so I put the pole saw up and I probably, my neighbors were probably watching me all that morning, you know. And, and so I put my pole saw up and then I get the ladder out and I put the ladder up.

And I extend the ladder and it's not long enough. I keep extending it. I've got a 24 foot ladder. And so I finally get it up there and I'm like, okay, I think I can do this. And so let me climb up at first.

And I get up to the top and I'm like, oh my goodness. I'm, I'm dangling over, holding onto the branch, looking down at the driveway, looking down at the basketball goal.

And I'm going, wait a second. Now I, I remember something about my family. My dad fell from a ladder one time and I was thinking about it.

This is all rushing through my mind as I'm holding on up there. My dad fell out of a ladder. He was cutting some branches. And, and it was up in a tree.

[31:08] He doing some branches and he fell out of the tree and broke his back. And I got to thinking, how old was he? And he's my age.

And so I'm thinking, he is my, he was my exact age when he did that. Or right around there. And I'm holding on to that branch and I was like, get down from this tree. What are you doing?

You know? And sometimes you, you don't think about what you're up against. You know? You think you've got this. You think you've got control of the situation. You think you can handle this or that. Until you get in the situation and realize, oh man, this is, this is way more than I thought. And so I had this big vision of cutting all kinds of branches off that tree. I did two.

And I counted myself grateful for being alive. You have an enemy. He's bigger than you realize.

[32:07] He's bigger. And you're not big enough. You think you're strong enough. All you need is the right circumstances. And I'm telling you, you will crumble.

You're not that strong. So it is important for us to remember that we have an enemy. Sometimes we're our own worst enemy. As he goes on in verse, uh, uh, verse 14.

But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. But here now is responsibility for my own sin.

The devil didn't make me do it. I have been lured away by my own desire. This is ownership over sin. It's my sin. I made a decision.

I fell into it. It was my choice. I did this. Nobody made me do this. I was lured away. Enticed. And then he says, and then desire, when it's conceived, gives birth to sin.

[33:13] And sin, when it's fully grown, brings forth death. I have an enemy.

If we don't, if we don't identify the enemy, it's going to be really hard to fight against him. If we don't, if we don't, if we don't, if we don't, if we don't, if we don't think about it, if we don't agree with everything, we don't agree with everything.

Protests all over America. As one person said, it's mainly rich white girl. Think about it in Germany. People would have said, I don't agree with everything. I'm just part of a political party.

I'm a yellow dog Nazi. Right? I mean, that's what they would have said in Germany, World War II. Democratic Party platform expels God from its language, adopts gay transgender policy, endorses mutilation of children, wants to take guns away.

I'm just telling you, there's an issue. Progressive-ism is the enemy of America. Islam is an enemy to American ideals.

[34:25] I don't care what you think. If you don't recognize who the enemy is, you'll be destroyed. If you don't identify it.

Satan's at work to destroy you. Everything that takes away from the work of God and the word of God. As I saw somebody's meme this past week, it said, your grandfather did not sit in a foxhole in Europe clutching a photo of your grandmother so that you would surrender your guns, you pathetic, weak-minded imbeciles.

Right? It's like, for goodness sake, know who your enemy is. We should pray for Israel. Churches all across America today praying for Israel.

Country that was invaded. Hundreds of hostages taken. Most of them are probably dead. But they understand who their enemy is. Hamas is the enemy.

The people of Gaza were supporting Hamas. Many of them. 1 John 2.15 Do not love the world or the things of the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

[35:28] For all that is in the world, the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eye and the pride of life, is not from the Father but is from the world. The world is passing away with all of its desires.

Whoever does the will of God abides forever. Point number two. Temptation has an earthly path. So notice the steps here of progress. As one commentator said, Being dragged away and enticed comes from the language of fishing.

The first word describes the act of luring fish from their hiding places. The second word pictures the enticing of fish with a juicy worm on a hook.

Evil desire is the bait which hooks the human being. The Bible will not let us blame heredity, an evil environment, or wicked companions for sin. The blame rests squarely on the individual, on you and me.

[36:33] You're your own worst enemy. It really is an idea of identifying the progress of sin and temptation and stopping it in its tracks.

It's not that you're going to guard against it at the point of adultery. You're going to guard against it at the point of temptation.

It's not that you're going to guard it at the point of indulging in pornography. You're going to guard against it in your mind and in your heart when you decide you think you ought to click on that button.

You think you ought to read that news article. You think you ought to go to that site. You think you, out of curiosity, ought to just at least check it out.

Right? It's not way down the road. It's at the beginning in your heart. And that's what the point of this is. James is saying, you want to be a survivor?

[37:34] You want to make it to the end? You want to be a conqueror in Christ Jesus? Temptation is coming. You have an enemy who's real. It's going to be constant in your life. And if you're going to overcome this, understand the path and the progress of temptation.

And sometimes in this earthly path, you're going to find yourself to be your worst enemy. As one commentator said, practically speaking, sin occurs whenever a person's mind approves the performance of a sinful act.

It's in the approval. Whenever the person repeatedly approves the same sin, the result will be death. This is death in all its terror.

A total disintegration of the personality, the physically, emotionally, and spiritually. It leads to a separation from God, even lasting for eternity.

It all begins when an individual yields his will to evil. And it makes progress. And when it conceives, it makes progress.

[38:47] Like, this is a surprise to us that it's giving birth. It's like somebody going to the doctor and you've heard these stories in the news cycles periodically.

Like, somebody is really, really, really, like, how did this progress? How did this get so, to this point, without me even knowing? And I think it just gives such a good analogy to our life.

Because so many times, our life is so filled with temptation. And so filled with sin. And we're so overweight that we don't realize how much we've been indulging in it to the point where all of a sudden, we're giving birth on a regular basis to sin.

Where does it start? Jesus said in Matthew 5, 23, adultery starts in the heart. Have you heard that it was said, you shall not commit adultery?

But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. Where did it start?

[39:47] The battle is not way down the road. It's at the beginning. Matthew 15, Jesus said, But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart and defiles a person.

For out of the heart comes evil thoughts and murder and adultery and sexual immorality and theft and false witness and slander. All of those temptations that have given birth, we're so surprised about, started way back when we gave approval.

When we made concessions. This is why Psalm 119.11 is one of those verses that we memorize because it reminds us the power of God's word placed in our heart is a defense against temptation. It's to strengthen us. That's why Psalm 119.11 says, Your word I have stored up in my heart that I might not sin against you.

Paul reminded the Corinthian church in 2 Corinthians 10.5 that we destroy the arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.

[41:05] Where does it start? In the heart. In the mind. It's an internal battle before it ever becomes an external loss. So we're to meditate on, according to Philippians 4.8, whatever is true.

Whatever is honorable. Whatever is just. Whatever is pure. Whatever is lovely. Whatever is commendable. If there's anything of excellence. If there's anything worthy of praise. Think on these things.

Why? Because temptation is coming. It's progressive in your life. If you don't stop it at the beginning, it causes destruction. It's like we domesticate it.

You've heard the story about the lady that takes on a monkey as a pet, right? And we all would see something like that. And it's kind of funny to watch, you know, a little monkey walking around in a diaper.

Whatever. And they show it brushing its teeth. And there's little videos of the monkey sitting at the dinner table. And he's using a knife and fork to eat or whatever.

[42:12] And you just think of how, man, wouldn't that be cool as a kid you think that? You think, man, it would be awesome to have a monkey in the house. And then you read the news story of what happens when somebody goes to take care of the monkey.

And the monkey eats the face off of the person that goes and tried to take care of it. And you're like, oh my goodness, how did that happen? You had a monkey in your house.

You tried to domesticate something that you're not able to domesticate. And it ate the flesh off of a human being and killed somebody.

Ruined somebody's life. Maimed somebody. Ruined somebody. It's the most unbelievable thing you could imagine until you make the application to what you do sometimes with the temptations of your own life.

And how you domesticate some of these things. And I can handle it. I can handle a little weed.

Right?

[43:16] It's what we say. I'm going to do that so that I don't do something else. Because I'm tempted to do some harder things. And this is just the way to cope. You don't realize how you're being fooled in this.

You're being fooled. You're being absolutely duped in it. It's just like that Democratic. It's okay for these people to have child pornography.

At least they're not molesting children. Oh, really? And then everybody in law enforcement and everybody... There has to be a death to sin, as the Puritans would say.

Either be killing sin, or sin will be killing you. Kill the monkey. Okay? Maybe that's not a good way to put it.

Animal rights people will be all over Facebook. Pastor in Bartlesville wants to kill monkeys. Okay.

Temptation to gossip.

[44:19] Where do you kill it? In the heart. Temptation to get angry. Lose control as a parent. Right?

Where does it start? Temptation to be bitter about your circumstance in life. Be angry. About your health condition.

Financial situation. Marital status. Whatever it is. Some single or some married wanting to get out of their situation. You know, I mean, it's just...

We deal with these temptations. But we better deal with it in the heart. Temptation to be depressed. This is a spiritual issue.

Not just a physiological issue. Yes, I agree that there are some physiological things going on with that as well. But understand, this is an issue that's very spiritual according to the scripture.

[45:21] Use of alcohol. Use of entertainment. All kinds of things come into play here. Understand that there is a progressive path of this. And if you do not defeat this at the early stages.

You'll be dealing with a whole bunch of babies. You didn't plan on. Number three.

Thankfully. Temptation has a provision that is heavenly. God has made provision for us to overcome. You see in verse 16.

Where he starts this out. After he says this. It's a warning. And a command. Like verse 16. Do not be deceived.

You can be deceived in all this. If you're not careful. You will be deceived in this. Be careful. Don't be deceived. Every good gift.

[46:19] And every perfect gift. Is from above. Coming down from the father of lights. So we have a contrast between the father of lies. Who is Satan. And the father of lights.

Who is Christ the Lord. With whom there's no variation or shadow due to change. He's all light. There's no darkness in him at all.

There's no shadow of turning. There's no weakness. There's nothing that is not exactly. Pure and holy. And good. And right.

Of his own will. He brought us forth. By the word of truth. That we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures. He brought us forth by the word of truth.

The message of the gospel. The truth of God's word. What are the good things that come down from above? He's talking about God's wisdom. God's wisdom.

[47:20] Is to be applied to my circumstances. The application of God's truth. To my life. Is the substance of wisdom. And so you see this here in.

In verse. Oh where is it. Actually in chapter 3. When you look ahead. In chapter 3 verse 13.

He says. Who is wise and understanding among you. By his good conduct. Let him show his works. In the meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter jealousy.

And selfish ambition in your hearts. Do not boast. And be false to the truth. This is not the wisdom. That comes down. From above. So now you get the picture.

Of what he's talking about. The context here. There's all kinds of things. That God gives us. From above. Salvation is from above. Aren't you glad? You don't save yourself.

[48:19] God saves you. That's the whole nature of a rescue. Right? Is that you couldn't save yourself. That's why we're saved. He came down and saved me. From my sin.

I couldn't save myself. Dead in my trespasses and sin. Ephesians 2.8.9. By grace you've been saved through faith. This is not your own doing.

It's the gift of God. So that no one may boast. God saved me. From above.

Acts 2.38. Peter said to them. Repent. Be baptized. Every one of you. In the name of Jesus Christ. For the forgiveness of your sins. And you'll receive the Holy Spirit. Of God. God gave his Holy Spirit. Man that's a gift from above. He gives us our material blessings. In our life. Every good thing.

Matthew 6.11. Give us this day. Our daily bread.

[49:15] We're calling on God. From above. To provide for our needs. In our life. And he's promised. That he'll do that. But in this context. He's not just speaking generally.

About all of these things. He is speaking specifically. About the wisdom. That we need to survive. The wisdom you're going to need. Tomorrow morning. The wisdom you're going to need.

This afternoon. When you see a family member. Or a friend. When temptation is going to come. In verse 1.

In verse 5 of chapter 1 rather. He said. If any of you lacks wisdom. Let him ask of God. Who gives generously. He's giving from above. He's giving wisdom. For the things you're going through.

He's going to provide it. It's his will. Aren't you glad. God has a will for your life. Plan for you.

[50:13] Think of his will in your life. And I'm talking to somebody. Just about God's. You know. Trying to think through it. Theologically. God's perfect will. His. Will of decree.

He has decreed some things. They're going to come to pass. They're going to happen. It doesn't matter what you say. It doesn't matter what I say. It's. It's part. It's his will. When God speaks.

And he says something. There's nothing that can stop it. Which is why. When he declares. His. Will for my life. I'm so glad. That's unchanging. And there's some things.

That God has given. A decorative will. But there are some things. That are a prescriptive will. He's given a will. Prescribing some things. It's his will. That you be sanctified.

That's his will in a different sense. Right. One is the will of God that says. This is going to happen. This is the will of God that says. I expect this to happen.

[51:09] And you can obey or not obey. But you can't disobey without consequence. Right. So it still is will. So the scripture would say. It's the.

This is the will of God for you. Your sanctification. That you be holy. Now there's a word we all learn. That we be holy. Meaning that we be clean.

Set apart. That we walk distinctively different in the world. That we walk in such a way that we. That we're unstained from the world. Isn't it good to be unstained?

Man it would do us some good. To look a little deeper into holiness. There's generations past that talked about holiness. As if it was expected of believers.

In fact they said that. Because that's what the Bible says. I think for us. We live in a generation that does not know. What it means to be holy. People will call us a holy roller.

[52:09] If we raise any kind of expectation. If we say. Hey I'm not going to do that. I'm not going to participate in that thing. I'm not going to do that thing. And say oh well. What a holier than thou.

Well it may be holier than thou. That's none of my concern. But the issue is. I have actually been called to be holy. And you as a believer in Christ. Have been called to be holy.

You've been set apart by the living God. To live a holy life. Because Jesus Christ is holy. And he said. You're to be holy because I'm holy. And if I live in you.

According to 1 Peter 1.13. You are to live your life out. In a life of holiness. Just expressing the beauty. And the cleanliness. And the rightness. And the righteousness.

And the justice of God. That's your life. And if you don't have a mind for that. And don't realize that the Christ within you. Is your strength.

[53:04] He is my goal. He is my strength. He's everything. Then I'm going to be defeated. At every turn. I lose the battle. Before it ever starts.

A trial is not a temptation. To trap a disciple in sin. A trial is a test. To teach the disciple. And train the disciple. To trust Jesus more.

Temptation has a hell born origin. Temptation has an earthly path. Temptation. Thank God. Has a heavenly provision. In Christ Jesus.

That ought to be our resume. Right? That God has graciously forgiven me. First John 1.9. I'm just reminded.

He's faithful and just. When I confess my sin to him. He is faithful and just. To cleanse me. And make me new. That's what I have in Jesus.

[54:09] I'm not going to be sinless. I'm going to sin less. But I'm not going to be sinless. I have to recognize that God is gracious. And he's forgiven me.

I'm immeasurably weak. But he strengthens me. I can do all things in Christ. Who gives me strength. He enables me to overcome sin. And the grave.

He's given me life. And hope. And I can't do anything of lasting value. Unless he works through me. It's the promise of scripture. That if Christ is with us.

Who can be against us? And so Spurgeon said. He said. What settings are you in. When you fall. Avoid them.

What props do you have. That support your sin. Eliminate them. What people are you usually with. Avoid them. There are two equally damning lies.

[55:09] That Satan wants us to believe. One. Just once won't hurt. And two. Now that you've ruined your life. You're beyond God's use. And might as well go on enjoying your sin.

Spurgeon said. Learn to say no. For it will be of more use to you. Than being able to read Latin. Just learn to say no.

For it will be of more use to you.