

BLESSED ASSURING, BEWARE OF THE LURING

JAMES 1:12-15 LESSON

DANNY SCOTTON JR

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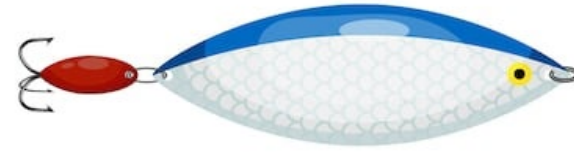
JAMES 1:12-15 CONTEXT



- **1 James, a slave of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes in the Dispersion. Joy be to you! 2 Consider it all joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. 4 And let this perseverance bring about [its] perfect work, so that you may be perfect and complete -- lacking in nothing. (Jas 1:1-4,AT)**
- **5 If any of you lacks wisdom, that person must ask God who gives to all sincerely and without reproaching, and it will be given to you. 6 But they must ask in faith(fulness), not wavering in doubt. For the one who doubts is like a surge of waves on the sea, being blown by the wind and tossed back and forth. 7 That person must not expect that they will receive anything from the Lord 8 – a double-minded individual, unstable in all their ways. (Jas 1:5-8,AT)**
- **9 The believer in humble circumstances must boast in their high position – 10 but the rich in their humiliation, because like a flower of the field they will pass away. 11 For the sun rises with scorching heat, and the field dries up, and its flower falls, and the beauty of its appearance is destroyed. In the same way, the rich -- in their journeys [in life] -- will fade away (Jas 1:9-11,AT)**



JAMES 1:12-15 CONTEXT



- James reiterates his earlier teaching on testing and trials of James 1:2-4 (Stulac 1:12; Motyer, 47; Osborne, 31; Moo P, 69; McKnight, 106; Martin, 30). James 1:12 links James 1:1-11 to James 1:13-18 (Moo P, 71; Nystrom, 71; McCartney, 100; cf. Jas 1:12-27; Guthrie, 219)
- The testing of our faith produces perseverance, which produces Christ-like maturity/perfection (Stulac 1:12)
- Our “growth in holiness culminates in a future sharing of the glory of Christ” (cf. Mt 5:48, 7:15-23; 1 Pet 1:7; 13, 15, 4:13-14, 5:1, 10; Rev 2:10; Stulac 1:12; cf. Moo T, 95)
- Even during trials and testing, keep your eyes on the prize! (cf. Stulac 1:12; Motyer, 47, 48)
- James considers a potential misunderstanding: God tests for growth, does He tempt for death? (Stulac 1:12; cf. Johnson, 203). God’s Testing → Perseverance → Maturity/Perfection. God’s Temptation → Sin → Death? (Stulac 1:13)
- James refutes the latter in James 1:13-15 and affirms the former in James 1:16-18 (Stulac 1:13)
- In a way, trials can become temptations if we respond based on human desire and not divine wisdom (cf. Jas 1:5-8; Osborne, 32, 33).

JAMES 1:12 BLESSED

- **Blessed** is the one who perseveres trial, because having been tested, they will receive the crown of life, which [the Lord] has promised to those who love Him (Jas 1:12, AT)
- **Blessed** (μακάριος | *makarios*): “fortunate, happy” (NIDNTTE, 206; cf. BDAG, 610; EDNT, 357) can refer to being happy in general (Ac 26:2; Rom 14:22; Motyer, 47) but here refers to “true happiness” that comes from God (UBS, 29; cf. McKnight, 109) – being fulfilled from His blessing cf. Lk 10:23; 12:37; Motyer, 47, 48)
- Very common **beatitude** formula (Keener, 673) – a *macarism* – (Lockett/Evans, 267) in Scripture (cf. Job 5:17, Ps 1:1, 32:2; Pr 8:32, 34; UBS, 29; cf. Pr 3:13, 14:21, 16:20, 20:7, 28:14, 29:18; Ecc 10:17; Dn 12:12; Lockett/Evans 267; cf. Ps 34:8; Isa 56:2; Rev 1:3, 14:13, 16:15; Osborne, 32; cf. Dt 27:15, 28:4; McKnight, 106; cf. Guthrie, 219; Adamson, 67; Martin, 33; Richardson, 75-76)
- “**Blessed** is the one whom God corrects; so do not despise the discipline of the Almighty. (Job 5:17, NIV; UBS, 29; Lockett/Evans, 267; Martin, 33)
- **1 Blessed** is the one whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. **2 Blessed** is the one whose sin the Lord does not count against them and in whose spirit is no deceit. (Ps 32:1-2, NIV; UBS, 29; Guthrie, 219; Johnson, 187)

JAMES 1:12 BLESSED

- 32 “Now then, my children, listen to me; **blessed** are those who keep my ways. 33 Listen to my instruction and be wise; do not disregard it. 34 Blessed are those who listen to me, watching daily at my doors, waiting at my doorway. 35 For those who find me find life and receive favor from the Lord. 36 But those who fail to find me harm themselves; all who hate me **love death**.” (Pr 8:32-36, NIV; UBS, 29; Lockett/Evans, 267; Osborne, 32; Martin, 33)
- I **Blissful** is the one who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or dwell in the assembly of mockers 2 but rather in the law of the LORD they delight and on His law they meditates day and night. (Ps 1:1-2, AT; UBS, 29; Osborne, 32; Davids U, 49; Moo P, 69; Guthrie, 219; Johnson, 187; Martin, 33; Richardson, 76)
- Jesus uses this formula in the Beatitudes (Mt 5:3-12; Lk 6:22-23; UBS, 29; Lockett/Evans, 267; Stulac 1:12; Davids U, 34; Moo P, 69; McCartney, 100; Blomberg/Kamell, 69; cf. Mt 11:6, 13:16, 16:17, 24:26; Lk 7:23, 11:27-28; Jn 13:17, 20:29; Guthrie, 219; McKnight, 106; cf. Lk 12:37-38, 43, 14:14, 23:29; Johnson, 187; cf. Martin, 33; Richardson, 76)
- 20 Looking at his disciples, he said: “**Blessed** are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. 21 **Blessed** are you who hunger now, for you will be satisfied. **Blessed** are you who weep now, for you will laugh. 22 **Blessed** are you when people hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man. 23 “Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven. For that is how their ancestors treated the prophets. (Lk 6:20-23, NIV; UBS, 29; Lockett/Evans, 267; Stulac 1:12; McCartney, 100; Guthrie, 219; cf. Lk 24:-26; McKnight, 106; Martin, 33; Richardson, 76)

JAMES 1:12 BLESSED

- Such bliss is **not affected by external circumstances** – even when times are tough (UBS, 29; Moo P, 69-70; cf. McKnight, 109).
- 10 Blessed are those who are **persecuted** because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 “Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. 12 Rejoice and be glad, because great is **your reward in heaven**, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you. (Mt 5:10-12, NIV; Osborne, 32; Moo P, 69-70; cf. Jas 5:11; McCartney, 100; McKnight, 111; Johnson, 187; Martin, 33)
- Likely refers to the **final blessing** that will come at the end of this age (Osborne, 32; McKnight, 108-109; cf. Nystrom, 72; McCartney, 100; Martin, 33) though not exclusively (McKnight, 108-109)
- Trials are not inherently good, nor to be enjoyed (Davids U, 34) but they serve a purpose that should produce joy and bliss (Davids U, 34) Earlier James says trials lead to perseverance, now he says it also leads to blessedness (Davids U, 34; Nystrom, 72)
- Blessedness does not = ordinary happiness, which varies by circumstances. “‘Blessedness’ has to do with well-being in life that flows from the favorable position in which one is **rightly related to God**” (Guthrie, 219; cf. McCartney, 100; cf. Ps 84:5, 112:1, 144:15; Pr 3:13; Sir 34:15; Jas 5:11; Johnson, 187; Martin, 33; Richardson, 76)
- It entails a “present reality” that will fully be realized in the future (McCartney, 100; cf. McKnight, 109). We are part of God’s **blessed family** (Nystrom, 72)



JAMES 1:12 PERSEVERE



- Again, **persevere** means more than just negatively enduring hardship, but positively “remaining **steadfast**” in the midst of difficulty (UBS, 29) – holding on to God’s unchanging hand!
- As we’ve said, perseverance in the faith is crucial (cf. 2 Cor 6:4; Rev 1:9; 2:2, 3, 19; 3:10; 13:10; 14:12; Osborne, 23; cf. 2 Cor 12:12; 1 Th 1:3; Davids U, 45; cf. Lk 8:15; 2 Th 1:4; Moo T, 81; cf. 2 Pet 1:6; Adamson, 55; cf. Lk 21:19; Rom 2:7; 8:25; 15:4–5; 2 Cor 1:6; Col 1:11; 1 Th 1:3; Heb 12:1; Johnson, 178; cf. Guthrie, 213; Richardson, 62)
- 22 and you will be hated by all because of my name. But the one who **endures** [*hypomenō*] to the end will be saved. (Mt 10:22, NRSV; cf. Mt 24:13; Osborne, 23; cf. Mk 13:13; Davids U, 45; cf. Mt 24:9; Richardson, 60; cf. Mk 8:34–9:1; McKnight, 109; cf. Lk 21:19; Johnson, 187).)
- No fair-weather Christians! (Davids U, 45). The church would never have lasted this long if people fell away during hard times (Davids U, 50)



JAMES 1:12 TRIALS AND TESTS



- This recalls: **2 Consider it all joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face various trials 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces perseverance (Jas 1:2-3,AT; Stulac 1:12)**
- As we've said, trials (*peirasmos*) can refer to either external hardships or internal temptations (UBS, 29-30; Osborne, 31; McKnight, 110) — anything that can “threaten our faithfulness to Christ” (Moo P, 70)
- Here it still likely means external hardship (UBS, 29-30; Osborne, 31; Blomberg/Kamell, 69). James likely switches from the former to the latter meanings in what follows (UBS, 29-30; McKnight, 110)
- **Having been tested:** Testing (*dokimos*) can refer both to the testing for genuineness of one's faith and the approval that comes as a result of the testing (UBS, 30) — both the process of testing for genuineness and genuineness itself (UBS, 30)
- Likely refers to when the testing has been completed and one has therefore been approved by God (Stulac 1:12; Osborne, 32; Blomberg/Kamell, 69; cf. 2 Cor 10:18, 13:7; 2 Tim 2:15; Adamson, 67; Richardson, 76; cf. Johnson, 187)
- Athletes were tested for physical fitness (UBS, 30; cf. Moo T, 96); metals were tested for purity (UBS, 30; e.g., silver Davids U, 34) — standing the test proves the genuineness of our faith (Davids U, 34; McCartney, 100; Blomberg/Kamell, 76)



JAMES 1:13

CROWN OF LIFE



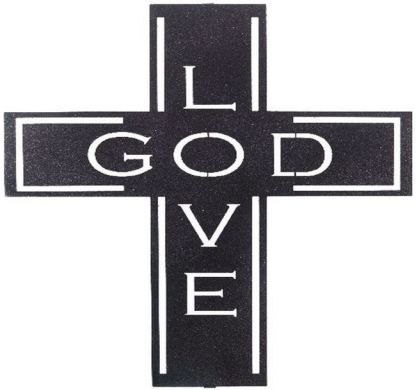
- Crowns were used for the recognition of someone's service (cf. Heb 2:7-9) and as a designation of rank (cf. 2 Sam 12:30; Is 22:21) (Lockett/Evans 268; cf. Johnson, 188) and dignity (Est 8:15; Ps 21:3; Motyer, 48).
- Crowns are causes for rejoicing (cf. Song 3:11; 1 Th 2:19; Motyer, 48; cf. Osborne, 32; Blomberg/Kamell, 76) and may symbolize the blessings of God (cf. Pr 10:6; Is 35:10; Guthrie, 220)
- Also, crowns were wreaths given to winners in athletic competitions (Lockett/Evans, 278; Osborne, 32; Nystrom, 72; Guthrie, 220; Adamson, 67; Johnson, 188; Martin, 33) – a sort of medal of honor (cf. Moo T, 96; Nystrom, 72) – like the Olympics (Blomberg/Kamell, 69). This is likely the meaning here (Moo T, 96; McKnight, 112). The crown is a symbol of our “spiritual success” (Moo T, 96)
- But athletes only “shine for a moment” (Osborne, 32) while our crown after our race (cf. Heb 12:1-3; Osborne, 32; Adamson, 67; McKnight, 109, 112) endures forever (Osborne, 32).
- 25 Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a **crown** that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever (1 Cor 9:25, NIV; Lockett/Evans, 268; Motyer, 48; Osborne, 32; Moo T, 96; Nystrom, 72; Blomberg/Kamell, 76; cf. 2 Tim 2:5; Guthrie, 220; Adamson, 67; cf. Php 4:1; 2 Th 2:17; Martin, 33)
- This is not a gamble, but a **blessed assurance** (Stulac 1:12; cf. Blomberg/Kamell, 70) – not a wheel of fortune! (Stulac 1:12). The crown of life makes persevering through **various** trials and testings all **worth** it! (Stulac 1:12)
- Earlier James focused on our **current** exalted position (Jas 1:9), now he focuses on our **future** reward (cf. Osborne, 32; cf. McKnight, 110)



JAMES 1:12 CROWN OF LIFE



- 8 Now there is in store for me the **crown of righteousness**, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing. (2 Tim 4:8, NIV; UBS, 30-31; Motyer, 48; Osborne, 32; Davids U, 34; Nystrom, 72 FN; Blomberg/Kamell, 76; Guthrie, 220; Adamson, 68; Johnson, 188; Martin, 33)
- 4 And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading **crown of glory**. (1 Pet 5:4, ESV; UBS, 30-31; Motyer, 48; Osborne, 32; Davids U, 50; Nystrom, 72 FN; Blomberg/Kamell, 76; Guthrie, 220; Adamson, 68; Johnson, 188; Martin, 33)
- Similarly, the church in Smyrna was also to persevere through trials in order to receive the crown of life (Motyer, 48; McCartney, 101):
10 Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Beware, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison so that you may be **tested** [**peirazo**], and for ten days you will have affliction. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the **crown of life** (Rev 2:10, NRSV; UBS, 30-31; Stulac 1:12; Motyer, 48; Osborne, 32; Davids U, 34, 50; Moo T, 96; McCartney, 101; Blomberg/Kamell, 69; cf. Rev 3:11; Guthrie, 220; Adamson, 68; Johnson, 188; Martin, 33; Richardson, 77)
- Can mean “living crown” (genitive of quality) or “the crown that is life” (appositional genitive) (UBS, 30-31) – likely the latter (meaning **eternal life**) (UBS, 30-31; McCartney, 101; cf. Osborne, 32; Moo T, 96; Nystrom, 72; McKnight, 112; Johnson, 188)
- 5 Listen, my dear brothers and sisters: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to **inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him** (Jas 2:5, NIV; UBS, 30-31; Davids U, 50; McCartney, 101; cf. Jas 1:9; McKnight, 112; Johnson, 189; Martin, 33; Richardson, 77)



JAMES 1:12 FOR THE LOVE OF GOD



- Love means more than “like”; it is more than an emotion (UBS, 31). Biblical love is not merely thinking fondly of something/someone. This loyal love is unconditional and implies “faithfulness and loyalty” (UBS, 31; cf. Nystrom, 72; Richardson, 77)
- 6 but showing **love** to a thousand generations of those who **love** me **and keep my commandments**. (Ex 20:6, NIV; cf. Dt 5:10; UBS, 31; Davids U, 50; McKnight, 114; Johnson, 188)
- 9 Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and **steadfast love** with those who **love him and keep his commandments**, to a thousand generations, 10 and repays to their face those who **hate** him, by destroying them. He will not be slack with one who hates him. He will repay him to his face. (Dt 7:9-10, NIV; Davids N, 80; cf. Dt 30:20; Johnson, 188)
- 15 “**If you love me**, keep my **commands**. (Jn 14:15, NIV). 23 Jesus replied, “Anyone who **loves** me will **obey my teaching**. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. (Jn 14:23, NIV)
- This is how we know that we love the children of God: **by loving God and carrying out his commands**. (1 Jn 5:2, NIV; Johnson, 189; Richardson, 77)
- 3 In fact, this is **love** for God: to **keep his commands**. And his commands are not burdensome (1 Jn 5:3, NIV cf. 2 Jn 1:6)



JAMES 1:12 FOR THE LOVE OF GOD



- “We **live** by what we **love**; the shape of our lives is determined by the joys of our hearts.” (Motyer, 49). What/who are we most **loyal** to? What things do we do **religiously**?
- “Real love for God **manifests itself in action**” (Nystrom, 72; cf. Guthrie, 220) -- “faithful endurance” (McCartney, 101; cf. Blomberg/Kamell, 70; Guthrie, 220; McKnight, 113)
- The Lord watches over all who **love** him, but all the wicked he will destroy. (Ps 145:20, NRSV; UBS, 31).
- 28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who **love** him, who have been called according to his purpose (Rom 8:28, NIV; UBS, 31; Osborne, 32; McCartney 101; Johnson, 189)
- However, as it is written: “What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived”— the things God has prepared for those who **love** him— (1 Cor 2:9, NIV; cf. Eph 6:24; Davids U, 50; McCartney, 101; Johnson, 189).
- It’s only logical to love the Lord!



JAMES 1:12

FOR THE LOVE OF THE LORD OR REWARD?

- Some are uncomfortable with thought of us being rewarded for faithfulness (Moo T, 96); rewards should not be our motivation (Moo T, 96) – like a bribe (Nystrom, 81)
- But we see reward language throughout the NT (1 Cor 9:24-27; Php 3:14; Mt 5:12; Nystrom, 81; cf. Mt 10:41, 6:1; Jn 20:1-16, 4:36; 1 Cor 3:8, 14; 2 Jn 1:8; Rev 11:18, 22:12; McKnight, 110-111)
- Keeping our eyes on the heavenly prize can put our earthly troubles in perspective (Moo T, 96; cf. Richardson, 76): 18 I consider that the sufferings of this present time **are not worth comparing** with the glory about to be revealed to us (Rom 8:18, NRSV; Moo T, 96)
- 17 For this **light momentary affliction** is preparing for us an **eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison**, 18 as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal. (2 Cor 4:17-18, ESV)
- This is good news to the poor and oppressed who may “never find justice within the fallen systems of this world” (Blomberg/Kamell, 76)
- If someone doesn’t love God, why would they want the reward of eternal life with Him? (cf. Moo T, 97)

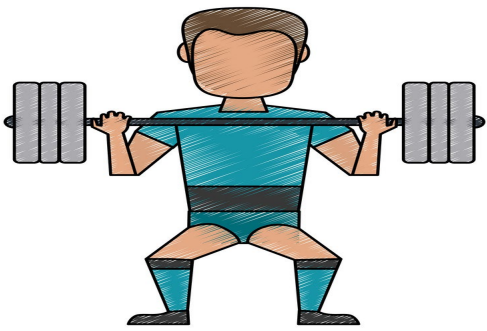


JAMES 1:13

GOD DOES NOT TEMPT



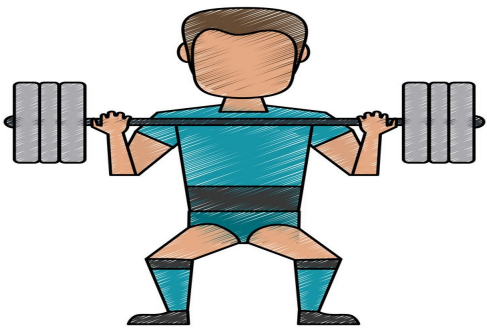
- **When being tempted, let no one say, "I am being tempted by God." For God is untemptable by evil -- and He tempts no one. (Jas 1:13, AT)**
- **“Untemptable”** (ἀπειράστος | *apeirastos*): (NIDNTTE, 697; cf. Moo T, 98; McCartney, 104; Blomberg/Kamell, 70; Guthrie, 221; McKnight, 117-118; Johnson, 192; Martin, 33; Richardson, 79) can mean God does not tempt, but this would be redundant (BDAG, 100; UBS, 31; Davids N, 82; Martin, 34)
- **Wordplay:** James uses four variations of **tempt** in one verse (UBS, 32, 33; cf. McCartney, 104; Martin, 37).
- In a way, trials can become temptations to sin (Moo T, 97; cf. Blomberg/Kamell, 70; Guthrie, 221; McKnight, 114) — if we do not use godly wisdom (cf. Jas 1:5-8; Osborne, 32,33; cf. Moo T, 98; Blomberg/Kamell, 70; Richardson, 80)
- James likely switches from **trial** (external hardship) to **temptation** (internal trouble) though using the same word (UBS, 32; Motyer, 50; Moo T, 98; Nystrom, 73; McCartney, 104; Blomberg/Kamell, 70; Guthrie, 221; McKnight, 114; Johnson, 192; cf. Richardson, 78-79; contra Davids N, 80). Polysemy, e.g. **“sanction”** in English (Nystrom, 78)
- God tests people’s faith, which can lead to the exposition/perfection of their character (UBS, 32-33; Keener, 673; Moo T, 98; cf. Guthrie, 222; McKnight, 117)
- Does not mean that God does not **allow** temptation (Blomberg/Kamell, 71), yet God does not tempt (entice) people to sin (UBS, 32-33; Moo T, 98; McCartney, 105; Johnson, 193).



JAMES 1:13 GOD TESTS



- 2 Remember how the LORD your God led you all the way in the wilderness these forty years, to humble and **test you in order to know what was in your heart**, whether or not you would keep his commands (Dt 8:2, NIV; cf. Judg 2:22; Keener, 673; Motyer, 51; Guthrie, 221; Johnson, 192; Richardson, 78)
- “If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams arises among you and gives you a sign or a wonder, 2 and the sign or wonder that he tells you comes to pass, and if he says, ‘Let us go after other gods,’ which you have not known, ‘and let us serve them,’ 3 you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams. For the LORD your God is **testing** you, to know whether you **love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul**. 4 You shall walk after the LORD your God and **fear him and keep his commandments and obey his voice**, and you shall **serve him and hold fast** to him (Dt 13:1-4, ESV; Keener, 673; Johnson, 192; Martin, 34; Richardson, 78)



JAMES 1:13 GOD TESTS



- Several people in Scripture are tested by God in ways that reveal their character (e.g., Jacob, Ruth, David, Daniel, etc.) (Guthrie, 220; cf. Ex 15:25; Dt 33:8; Martin, 34) Most famous testing is that of Abraham (Guthrie, 219)
- Some time later God **tested** [πειράζω | *peirazō*] Abraham. He said to him, “**Abraham!**” “Here I am,” he replied. (Gen 22:1, NIV; cf. 1 Ki 10:1; UBS, 11; Osborne, 22; cf. Jas 2:21; Davids U, 44, 50; Martin, 15; cf. Gen 22:12; Richardson, 58); UBS, 32; Keener 673; cf. 2 Ch 32:31; 2 Ki 20:12-19; Moo T, 98; cf. McCartney, 104; Guthrie, 219, 221; Johnson, 192; Martin, 34; Richardson, 78)
- 12 “Do not lay a hand on the boy,” he said. “Do not do anything to him. **Now I know that you fear God**, because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son.” (Gen 22:12, NIV)
- Was not our father **Abraham** considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? (Jas 2:21, NIV; UBS, 32; Davids U, 44; Johnson, 192; Richardson, 78)



JAMES 1:13 GOD DOES NOT TEMPT



- When we think of temptations, we often think of sexual lust, guilty pleasures in our diet, etc. (Stulac 1:13)
- Since James' audience is likely facing economic hardship, social persecution, etc., their temptation is likely to **respond with jealousy, hatred, and/or revenge** (Stulac 1:13; cf. Jas 1:19-21; McKnight, 116)
- In the Greco-Roman world, people often thought that temptation came from the gods (Lockett/Evans, 268; McCartney, 107; Martin, 33)
- In contrast, God's motives are not to make us succumb to sin (Keener, 673; McCartney, 105; Guthrie, 222; Johnson, 193; Martin, 34). **God tests; Satan tempts** (Keener, 673; Adamson, 69)
- 7 Submit yourselves, then, to God. **Resist the devil**, and he will flee from you (Jas 4:7, NIV; Keener, 673; Osborne, 33; Moo T, 100; McCartney, 107; Blomberg/Kamell, 77; cf. Jas 3:15; Martin, 35)
- But James does not mention Satan here (Davids U, 35; Richardson, 80-81). Regardless, people are **still** morally responsible (Keener, 673; Nystrom, 73; McCartney, 107; Blomberg/Kamell, 77). One cannot "[substitute] one excuse for another" (Adamson, 71)
- 23 Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, **Satan!** You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely **human concerns.**" (Mt 16:22-23, NIV; Richardson, 79)



BE YE HOLY AS
I AM HOLY



BE YE HOLY AS
I AM HOLY

JAMES 1:13

WHAT A HOLY GOD WE SERVE

- God is morally perfect and holy – He cannot be tempted to do evil (Stulac 1:13; Motyer, 51; Osborne, 33; Adamson, 69; McKnight, 117-118; Johnson, 193)
- 5 This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: **God is light**; in him **there is no darkness at all**. 6 If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth (1 Jn 1:5-6, NIV; Stulac 1:13)
- God is so holy and so morally pure (“unmixed good”; Adamson, 70), He cannot be close to those who are evil (Stulac 1:13; Adamson, 70)
- The Temple/Tabernacle was set up with varying degrees of cleanness/holiness; certain people could only come so close to God’s Presence – after making the appropriate sacrifices (Osborne, 33)
- “Woe to me!” I cried. “I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord Almighty.” (Is 6:5, NIV; Stulac 1:13)



JAMES 1:13

GOD DOES NOT TEMPT



- Because God cannot be tempted to do evil, He cannot tempt others to do evil (UBS, 32-33; cf. Motyer, 51; Moo T, 99; Adamson, 70; Richardson, 79) — which would be evil! (cf. Adamson, 70) Because God is holy, He desires others to be holy (Stulac 1:13)
- 15 But just as he who called you is **holy**, so be **holy** in all you do; 16 for it is written: “**Be holy, because I am holy.**” (1 Pet 1:15-16, NIV; Stulac 1:12)
- 11 Do not say, “It was the Lord’s doing that I fell away”; for he does not do what he hates. 12 Do not say, “It was he who led me astray”; for he has no need of the sinful. (Sir 15:11-12, NRSV; cf. Sir 15:20; Keener, 673; Lockett/Evans, 268; Moo T, 98; McCartney, 104; Blomberg/Kamell, 77; Guthrie, 221-222; McKnight, 117; Martin, 33)
- The Lord hates all **abominations**; such things are **not loved** by those who **fear** him. (Sir 15:13, NRSV). The Lord does not want people to give in to temptation (cf. **Mt 6:13; 26:41**; Stulac 1:13; cf. Mk 14:38; Motyer, 48)
- 13 No **temptation** has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be **tempted** beyond what you can bear. But when you are **tempted**, he will also provide a way out so that you can **endure** [*hypomeno*] it. (1 Cor 10:13, NIV; UBS, 33; Osborne, 33, 34; McCartney, 105; Blomberg/Kamell, 71; McKnight, 116; Martin, 34)

EACH PERSON IS TEMPTED WHEN THEY
ARE DRAGGED AWAY BY THEIR OWN
EVIL DESIRE AND ENTICED.

JAMES 1:14



JAMES 1:13

LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION?

EACH PERSON IS TEMPTED WHEN THEY
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JAMES 1:14



- And lead us not into temptation [**peirasmōs**], but deliver us from the evil one.' (Mt 6:13, NIV)
- And do not bring us to the time of **trial**, but rescue us from the evil one. (Mt 6:13, NRSV)
- “Lead us not into temptation” (Mt 6:13; Lk 11:4) does not imply that God is actively tempting us into sin (McCartney, 104) but is a request that God does not allow us to yield to temptation (Osborne, 33).
- “Deliver us from the Evil One” makes it clear that God is the One **preventing** Satan’s temptation (Davids U, 50)
- Then Jesus was **led by the Spirit** into the wilderness to be tempted [**peirazo**] by the devil. (Mt 4:1, NIV; cf. Mt 4:1-11; Lk 4:1-13; Blomberg/Kamell, 77)
- God the Father led Jesus to the place where the devil would tempt Him. But God the Father did not actively tempt Jesus to sin (Blomberg/Kamell, 77)
- If God cannot be tempted, why was Jesus tempted? Orthodox response: Jesus’ human nature was tempted – not His divine nature (Blomberg/Kamell, 77)



JAMES 1:13 DON'T TEST GOD



- Instead of “untemptable”, can also mean “evil people should not put God to the test” (Davids U, 35) – but I am unconvinced. That being said, in the OT, many people tested God (cf. Mal 3:15; Keener, 673)
- 5 The LORD answered Moses, “Go out in front of the people. Take with you some of the elders of Israel and take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. 6 I will stand there before you by the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it for the people to drink.” So Moses did this in the sight of the elders of Israel. 7 And he called the place Massah and Meribah because the Israelites quarreled and because they **tested** the LORD saying, “**Is the LORD among us or not?**” (Ex 17:5-7, NIV)
- 22 not one of those who saw my glory and the signs I performed in Egypt and in the wilderness but who **disobeyed** me and **tested me ten times**—23 not one of them will ever see the land I promised on oath to their ancestors. No one who has treated me with contempt will ever see it. (Num 14:22-23, NIV; Keener, 673; Davids U, 35)
- 16 Do not put the LORD your God to the test as you did at Massah. (Dt 6:16, NIV; Davids U, 35; cf. Mt 4:7; Lk 4:12; Nystrom, 73; McCartney, 105; Martin, 34)



JAMES 1:13 DON'T TEST GOD



- “Do not harden your hearts as you did at **Meribah**, as you did that day at **Massah** in the wilderness, where your ancestors **tested** me; they tried me, **though they had seen what I did**. (Ps 95:8-9, NIV; Keener, 673; cf. Ps 95:5-11; Osborne, 31)
- They **tested** God in their heart by demanding the food they craved. (Ps 78:18, NRSV; Keener, 673)
- 40 How often they rebelled against him in the wilderness and grieved him in the wasteland! 41 Again and again they **put God to the test**; they vexed the Holy One of Israel. 42 They did not remember his power—the day he redeemed them from the oppressor, 43 the day he displayed his signs in Egypt, his wonders in the region of Zoan. (Ps 78:40-43, NRSV; Keener, 673)
- But they put God to the **test** and rebelled against the Most High; they did not keep his statutes. (Ps 78:56, NRSV; Keener 673)
- We are commanded not to test God as they did (cf. Heb 3:8-9; Osborne, 31): 8 do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, on the day of **testing** in the wilderness, 9 where your **fathers put me to the test** and saw my works for forty years. (Heb 3:8-9, ESV; Osborne, 31)



DESIRE

JAMES 1:14 DESIRE



DESIRE

- But each person is tempted by their own desire, being lured and dragged away (Jas 1:14, AT)
- **Desire** (ἐπιθυμία | *epithymia*): “desire, lust” (NIDNTTE, 241). Not all desires are bad (UBS, 33; Motyer, 52; McCartney, 106; Adamson, 70; Martin, 36).
15 He said to them, “I have **eagerly desired** [ἐπιθυμέω | *epithymeō*] to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; (Lk 22:15, NRSV; UBS, 33; cf. Jas 4:5; Adamson, 70; cf. Php 1:23; Moo T, 99; Guthrie, 222; cf. 1 Th 2:17; Pr 10:24; Johnson, 193; cf. Rom 15:23; 2 Cor 5:2; Martin, 36)
- But the desire here is **sinful** desire (cf. Rom 7:17-25; UBS, 33; Adamson, 71; cf. 2 Pet 2:14, 18; Motyer, 52; cf. Stulac 1:13; Davids U, 36; cf. Moo T, 99; McCartney, 106; Blomberg/Kamell, 71; cf. Mk 4:19; Rom 1:24, 6:12; Gal 5:24; Col 3:5; Guthrie, 222; cf. Ex 20:17; Dt 5:21; 1 Tim 6:9; 2 Tim 3:6, 4:3; Ti 3:3; 1 Pet 1:14; 2 Pet 2:10; Jude 18; Johnson, 193; cf. 1 Th 4:5; Eph 2:3; Martin, 36; cf. 2 Pet 1:4; Richardson, 81) – that which “gets in the way of our pursuit of God” (Blomberg/Kamell, 71)
- People’s **own desires** lead them to sin – not God! (Keener, 673; Lockett/Evans, 268; Stulac 1:13; Motyer, 50; Davids U, 35; Nystrom, 82). People are not essentially good (Nystrom, 82)
- Though God is sovereign, He is not to blame! (Motyer, 51; Davids U, 35; Moo T, 98; cf. Osborne, 33; cf. Pr 19:3; Nystrom, 73, 86). People can **deceive themselves** into blaming God for their failures (cf. Jas 1:16, 22, 26; McCartney, 105)
- A person’s own folly leads to their ruin, yet their heart rages against the Lord. (Pr 19:3, NIV; Nystrom, 73, 86; Guthrie, 221; Martin, 33)

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JAMES 1:14



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JAMES 1:14



JAMES 1:14

OUR DESIRE

- Often people do not seek understanding concerning temptations, but excuses (Davids U, 35; Moo T, 99; cf. Blomberg/Kamell, 70). It comes from us! (Davids N, 83; Blomberg/Kamell, 71; Richardson, 81)
- It is tempting to blame parents, our society, and other external circumstances (Stulac 1:13; cf. Gen 3:12-13; Nystrom, 72; McCartney, 104; Blomberg/Kamell, 70, 78).
- 12 The man said, “**The woman whom you gave to be with me**, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate.” 13 Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this that you have done?” The woman said, “**The serpent tricked me**, and I ate.” (Gen 3:12, NRSV; Nystrom, 72; McCartney, 104; Blomberg/Kamell, 70, 78; Guthrie, 221; Martin, 33)
- It’s hard to mature/be perfected in one’s faith if we put all the blame on others (Stulac 1:13) – including the devil! (Davids U, 35)
- In every circumstance we have to make a **personal decision** to persevere in loyalty to God or to be disobedient/disloyal to God (Motyer, 50) – to rely on God’s wisdom or human wisdom (Osborne, 33)
- Though there is much written about systems of oppression and corporate responsibility, everyone is responsible for their **own** moral choices (McCartney, 107)

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JAMES 1:14



JAMES 1:14 (SINFUL) DESIRE

- Though there are some sinful desires (cf. Mt 5:28; McCartney, 106), desire by itself is not necessarily sin – only when we succumb to it (Moo T, 100) and **gratify our cravings**. We should not let it grow into sin (Nystrom, 74)
- **Desire** without knowledge is not good— how much more will hasty feet miss the way! (Pr 19:2, NIV)
- As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, 2 in which you used to live when you **followed the ways of this world** and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. 3 All of us also lived among them at one time, **gratifying** the **cravings [epithymia]** of our flesh and following its **desires** and **thoughts**. Like the rest, we were by nature **deserving of wrath** (Eph 2:1-3, NIV; UBS, 34; Martin, 36)
- 16 So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not **gratify** the **desires [epithymia]** of the flesh. 17 For the flesh desires **[epithymeō]** what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you **are not to do whatever you want**. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.
- 19 **The acts of the flesh** are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; 20 idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions 21 and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that **those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God**. (Gal 5:16-21, NIV; UBS, 34; Adamson, 71; Martin, 36; Richardson, 81-82)

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JAMES 1:14



JAMES 1:14 (SINFUL) DESIRE

- 20 He went on: “**What comes out of a person is what defiles them.** 21 For it is from **within**, out of a **person’s heart**, that evil thoughts come—sexual immorality, theft, murder, 22 adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. 23 All these evils **come from inside** and defile a person. (Mk 7:20-23, NIV; Davids U, 36; McKnight, 118; Martin, 42)
- 11 Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful **desires** [**epithymia**], which wage war against your soul (1 Pet 2:11, NIV; Moo P, 74)
- 15 Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them. 16 For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world. 17 The world and its **desires** [**epithymia**] pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever. (1 Jn 2:15-17, NIV; cf. 1 Jn 3:14; Davids U, 36; cf. Moo P, 74; Johnson, 194)
- We all still struggle with certain sinful desires (cf. Motyer, 52); we should not give in to them!



JAMES 1:14 LURED AND DRAGGED AWAY



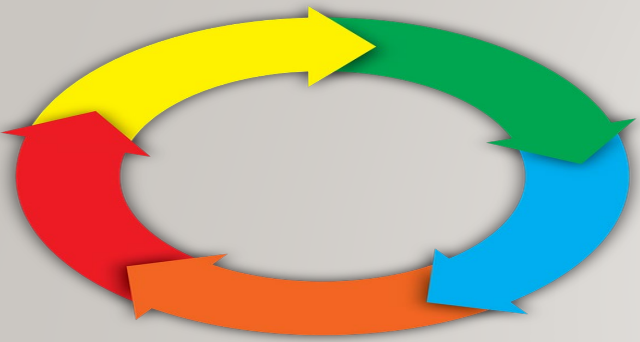
- **Lure** (δელιάζω | *deleazō*): “to lure by the use of **bait**” (BDAG, 217), “‘to make sinning look attractive’ or ‘to make sin taste good’ or ‘to wave sin in front of a person’s nose.’” (LN, 774)
- Luring is a fishing metaphor (UBS, 34; Stulac 1:13; Osborne, 33; Nystrom, 74; Blomberg/Kamell, 71-72; Guthrie, 222; McKnight, 119; Martin, 36) — being **baited** into sin (Lockett/Evans, 268; Davids U, 35-36; Moo T, 100; McCartney, 106; Adamson, 71; Johnson, 193). People can get **hooked** on sin! (cf. Adamson, 71)
- **Dragged away** (ἐξέλκω | *exelkō*): “to drag away with the connotation of **initial** resistance” (BDAG, 347) — by force (Moo T, 99-100)
- This is a hunting metaphor; this word is used to describe how animals are **trapped** (UBS, 34; Stulac 1:13; Osborne, 33; Nystrom, 74; McCartney, 106; Blomberg/Kamell, 71-72). One would expect Satan to be mentioned, but our own desires drag us away (cf. 1 Pet 5:8; Richardson, 81)
- May be tempting to take revenge on persecutors; “but who is really being captured”? (Stulac 1:13; cf. McKnight, 116)
- Temptation is both **attractive** and **destructive** (Guthrie, 222)



JAMES 1:14 LURED AND DRAGGED AWAY



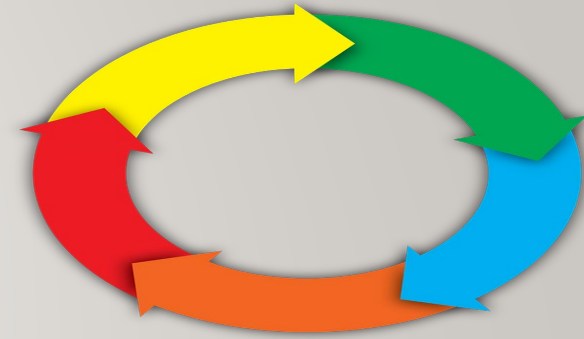
- Can be tempting to try certain drugs – but they can take over one's entire life (Motyer, 52)
- Can be tempting to try to engaging in a criminal enterprise – but getting caught can affect your freedom and your life (Motyer, 52)
- Can be tempting to give in to that internal voice that says, “Go ahead; you deserve it; it **feels** good” (Davids U, 36)
- Lures can seem harmless (Nystrom, 81). Our desires can tell us that sins really aren't sins (Nystrom, 83).
- Lures aren't effective if they're obvious! (Nystrom, 84)
- Sinful thoughts can “turn minor temptations into major transgressions” (Blomberg/Kamell, 72)
- Beware of things that look tempting! You could get **hooked**! (Moo T, 100)



JAMES 1:15

THE “LIFE CYCLE OF SIN”

(BLOMBERG/KAMELL, 72)

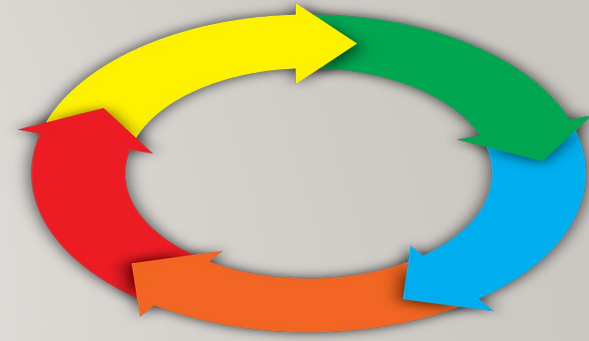


- **Then desire, having conceived, begets sin; sin, having been brought to maturity, gives birth to death (Jas 1:15, AT)**
- James switches from a hunting/trapping/fishing metaphor to a childbearing metaphor (UBS, 35; Stulac 1:13; Osborne, 34; Moo T, 100; cf. Ps 7:14; McCartney, 103) – likely playing **sexual** connotation of “desire” (Osborne, 34; Blomberg/Kamell, 72; cf. Davids U, 36; McCartney, 107; Guthrie, 222)
- Recalls theme of the adulteress who tries to lure God’s people into spiritual adultery (Lady Folly vs. Lady Wisdom) (Pr 5:1-5, Pr 7:4, 8:1, 11, 12, 9:1-6, 10-12; Revelation 17; Osborne, 34; cf. Pr 7:22-23; Davids U, 51; cf. McKnight, 120-121) and eventually to death (cf. Jas 1:5; Pr 9:18; Moo T, 100; cf. Pr 7:27)
- 21 With much seductive speech she persuades him; with her smooth talk she compels him. 22 All at once he follows her, as an ox goes to the slaughter, or as a stag is caught fast 23 till an arrow pierces its liver; as a bird rushes into a snare; he does not know that it will cost him his life. (Pr 7:21-23, ESV; Davids U, 51; McCartney, 107)

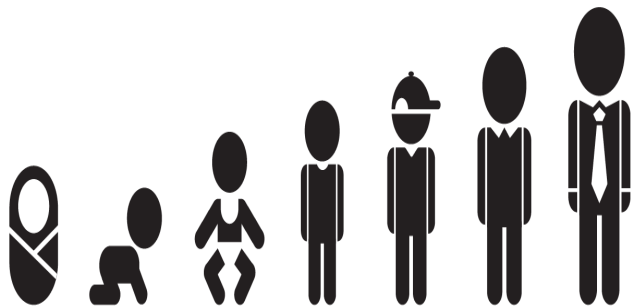


JAMES 1:15 THE “LIFE CYCLE OF SIN”

(BLOMBERG/KAMELL, 72)



- **Conceive** (συλλαμβάνω | *syllambanō*): “become pregnant” (BDAG, 995; EDNT, 285; cf. Lk 1:24, 31, 36, 2:21; NIDNTTE, 85).
- Desire/lust is the mother that begets sin (Moo T, 100; cf. Nystrom, 74; McCartney, 103, 107; Blomberg/Kamell, 72; Stulac 1:13; Guthrie, 222; Richardson, 82)
- Contrast: 18 In fulfillment of his own purpose he **gave us birth** [ἀποκυέω | *apokyeō*] by the **word of truth**, so that we would become a kind of first fruits of his creatures. (Jas 1:18, NRSV; BDAG, 114; EDNT, 134; NIDNTTE, 493; Johnson, 194; Martin, 36)
- May be an implied **union** between evil desire and the human will (UBS, 35; Davids N, 85; cf. Blomberg/Kamell, 72).
- **Sin** (ἁμαρτία | *hamartia*) more lit. means “failing to hit the mark” (Motyer, 52) (cf. Jas 2:9-11, 4:17; Martin, 30)
- 23 for all have **sinned** and **fall short** of the glory of God, (Rom 3:23, NIV; Motyer, 52)



JAMES 1:15 “LIFE CYCLE OF SIN”

(BLOMBERG/KAMELL, 72)



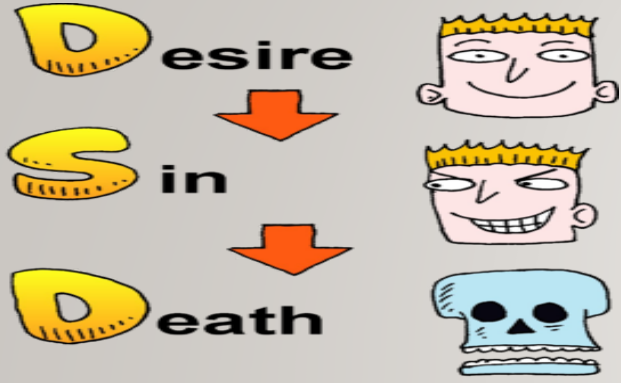
- **Bring to maturity** (ἀποτελέω | *apoteleō*): “**bring to completion**” (BDAG, 123; NIDNTTE, 470; EDNT, 146) -- a cognate of the word translated **perfect** in James 1:4 (Motyer, 53; Nystrom, 74; McCartney, 107; cf. Jas 1:25-26, 3:2; McKnight, 121; Martin, 37)
- **And let this perseverance bring about [its] perfect work, so that you may be perfect and complete – lacking in nothing.** (Jas 1:4, AT)
- When sin matures/grows up – it gives birth to death (Stulac 1:13; Osborne, 34; Moo T, 100; Adamson, 73; Richardson, 83).
Perseverance produces maturity/perfection, sin produces death (McCartney, 107; McKnight, 121; Martin, 37)
- James uses a rhetorical technique known as concatenation (Keener, 673) or *sorites* (Lockett/Evans, 268; Johnson, 194) where multiple items are linked in a step-by-step way before the final climax (cf. Rom 5:3–5; 2 Pet 1:5–7; Lockett/Evans, 268)
- Death is the “**grandchild**” of lust/desire (Guthrie, 222)



JAMES 1:15 SIN → DEATH



- Death likely means more than physical death, but eternal condemnation at the Last Judgment (UBS, 35; Motyer, 53; cf. 1 Jn 5:16-17; cp. 1 Cor 11:30; Davids U, 51; cf. Adamson, 73)
- “The ultimate consequence of sin is **death**” (cf. Dt 30:19; Job 8:13; Ps 2:12; Pr 2:18; 14:12; Jer 23:12; Lockett/Evans, 268; cf. Rom 5:12; Eze 18:4; Davids U, 51; cf. Rom 6:21; Davids N, 85; cf. Stulac 1:13; cf. Jn 8:21; Rom 5:21; 1 Cor 15:56; Johnson, 194)
- For the Lord watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked leads to **destruction**. (Ps 1:6, NIV; Lockett/Evans, 268)
- The wages of the righteous is life, but the earnings of the wicked are **sin** and **death**. (Pr 10:16, NIV)
- 23 For the wages of sin is **death**, but the gift of God is **eternal life** in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom 6:23, NIV; Stulac 1:13; Davids U, 36; Blomberg/Kamell, 72)
- Death is the **opposite** of the crown of life from James 1:12 (UBS, 35; Motyer, 53)



JAMES 1:15 SIN → DEATH



- “17 but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will **certainly die.**” (Gen 2:17, NIV; Stulac 1:13; Davids U, 51)
- “Death” often means “the **continuation** of a personal life but in a changed state” (Motyer, 53)
- “Sin, when mature, is a **fixed habit**” (Nystrom, 75; cf. Adamson, 74)
- Inevitability (in general): conception → gestation → birth (Motyer, 53; cf. Martin, 37)
- Sinful desire conceives sin → which matures → and gives birth to death (UBS, 35)
- Similar to what Paul writes in Rom 7:7-12 (UBS, 35; Davids U, 36; McKnight, 118, 122; Martin, 36; Richardson, 81)



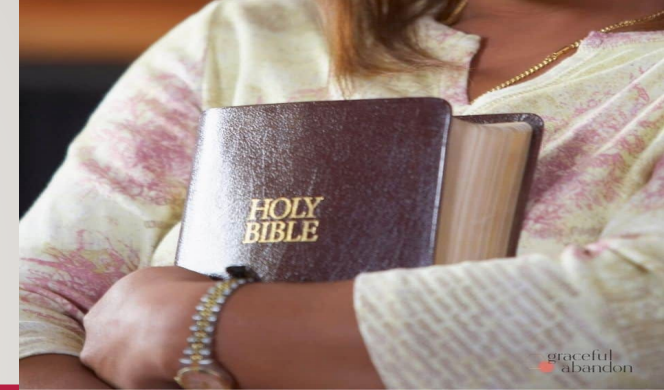
JAMES 1:15 LOSING SALVATION?



- Here, James is not necessarily talking about Christians losing their salvation (Stulac 1:13)
- “He is not telling **genuine** Christians that they may lose their salvation; he is warning that **genuine salvation comes by repentance and faith**” (Stulac 1:13)
- Genuine Christians will not continue giving in to temptation (Stulac 1:13). If one is continuing to live in sin unrepentantly, **one may not be a genuine Christian!**
- 9 No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God’s seed remains in them; they cannot go on sinning, because they have been born of God. (1 Jn 3:9, NIV)
- Jesus is our Savior **from** sin and also the One we must serve as Lord (Stulac 1:13). We are those who have **died to sin**; how can we **live in it any longer?** (Rom 6:2b, NIV)
- 21 “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven (Mt 7:21, NIV; Stulac 1:12)
- 46 “Why do you call me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ **and do not do what I say?** (Lk 6:46, NIV)



JAMES 1:15 DON'T TURN AWAY FROM SALVATION



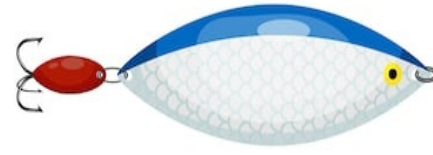
- Genuine Christians **will** persevere to the end (cf. Jn 10:28-29). We ought to encourage people to do so
- 13 Those on the rocky ground are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. **They believe for a while**, but in the time of **testing** [*peirasmos*] they **fall away** (Lk 8:13, NIV)
- 12 See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that **turns away** from the living God. 13 **But encourage one another daily**, as long as it is called “Today,” so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness. 14 We have come to share in Christ, **if indeed we hold our original conviction firmly to the very end** (Heb 3:12-14, NIV; *Osborne, 31*)
- 2 By this gospel you are saved, **if you hold firmly** to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have **believed in vain**. (1 Cor 15:2, NIV cf. Col 1:23)
- 19 My brothers and sisters, if one of you should **wander from the truth** and someone should bring that person back, 20 remember this: **Whoever turns a sinner from the error of their way will save them from death** and cover over a multitude of sins. (Jas 5:19-20, NIV; *Dauids U, 51*)





JAMES 1:13

BLESSED ASSURING, BEWARE OF THE LURING CONCLUSION



- It can be tempting to respond sinfully to various trials – especially when people do us wrong (Stulac 1:13). But, we have to trust in godly wisdom, not our human understanding or desire
- God does not tempt, He tests (Moo P, 71). We can't blame God – and we can't always blame Satan! Testing has a positive effect when we persevere faithfully; temptation has a negative effect when we succumb to sin (McCartney, 103)
- The **dynamics** of temptation: it comes from our sinful desire – not from God! (Stulac 1:13). We have to be honest with ourselves (Moo T, 104)
- The **action** of temptation: it lures and drags us away as if we were prey (Stulac 1:13)
- The **effects** of temptation: it leads to sin, which leads to death (Stulac 1:13; cf. Richardson, 82-83)
- Knowing that the crown of life will be awarded to those who persevere and continue to love (i.e. be loyally obedient) to the Lord makes it all **worth** it!
- Therefore, we can consider it all joy and consider ourselves blessed – even during trials (Davids U, 34-35)
- This section in James promises an eternal reward for those who persevere through trials – and an eternal punishment for those who do not (cf. Davids N, 80) – the logical choice is to choose the reward and persevere (Blomberg/Kamell, 76). Choose life! (cf. Dt 30:19)
- Temptation is attractive and destructive. Don't get hooked! Don't take the bait! (Moo P, 75)



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