

Session 2 | The Pressure of Temptation | James 1:13-18 | 9/18/13

- Review
 - Pressure of Trials.
- Opening
 - Temptation
- God does not tempt us | James 1:13
 - **Read James 1:13**
 - We spoke about trials last week and that temptation is also a trial. However there is a difference as God will test our faith in trials however as verse 13 states God will NOT tempt us. Temptation comes from the devil.
 - God is not going to dangle or flaunt your sins in front of you to see if you will act on your evil desires.
 - God WILL test our faith but not with sin.
 - God cannot tempt because to do so is to have evil within him.
 - If someone is tempted to sin a lie is usually involved.
 - As you see on page 22 (we'll look closer at in a bit) but temptations can promise you gain or event promise you that you will not get hurt, but it is a lie and God cannot lie.
 - Temptation looks good on the surface but it is really a lie.
 - God cannot lie
 - Hebrews 6:17-18
 - "Because God wanted to show His unchangeable purpose even more clearly to the heirs of the promise, He guaranteed it with an oath, so that through two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to seize the hope set before us."
 - To testify to the TRUTH is why Jesus came into this world.
 - John 18:37-38
 - "You are a king then? Pilate asked. You say that I'm a king, Jesus replied. I was born for this, and I have come into the world for this: to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice. What is truth? Said Pilate."
 - Jesus came to tell us the truth he cannot lie.
 - We have established the fact that God cannot tempt us, so who does the tempting then? Well that would be Satan he is the one who does the tempting and unfortunately none of us are immune to being tempted as even Jesus was.
 - Matthew 4:1
 - "Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the Devil."
 - Since we will always be tempted as long as we are here on earth **the key is how we handle** the temptation.
 - Satan WANTS us to fail and to give in, God wants us to stay true and to turn from our temptations.
 - **False promises of temptation (Page 22)**
 - **Temptation promises you some gain (Ask for an example)**
 - **Temptation promises you won't get hurt. (Ask for an example)**
 - **Question#2: If temptations promise good but never deliver, why do we so often say yes to them?**
- Temptation is different for each one of us, but the end result is the same. | James 1:14-15

- **Read James 1:14-15**
- The evil desires come from within.
 - Contrary to what some people believe that people are inherently good and they are corrupted from the outside.
 - While it's certainly true that outside influence can seem to persuade a person to do wrong it's actually the case where these sinful desires actually originate within us.
 - Let's read what Jesus says about it.
 - Mark 7:14-23
 - Jesus makes it clear that evil desires come from our heart and they are within us.
 - So as we seen in James 14 where he says "each person is drawn away and enticed by his own evil desires" he's speaking to the evil desires that originate from within you.
 - Each of us has evil desires of some sorts because sin is in the world. **No matter how a child is raised they will have some sort of evil desire within them** there is something that they can be tempted with. However the proper upbringing teaches them how to control those evil desires.
 - For temptation to succeed it must have power.
 - *If we have evil desires in our heart then temptation has power.*
 - *Likewise if we do not have evil desire in our heart for a particular sin then the temptation has no power.*
 - **Object lesson with water**
 - We all have specific "evil desires", the question is do we let it rule us? Or do we allow God to free us?
- We each have different "evil desires" that affect us differently.
 - I find it interesting that we all have unique weaknesses regarding temptation that we are more susceptible too. This is because we have different "evil desires" within our hearts.
 - You may have an individual that the temptation of lust doesn't even faze that person; they can keep their desires under control. But this same individual may falter at just the sight or smell of alcohol, they think that they have to give in and get drunk.
 - Likewise you may have someone who alcohol doesn't affect at all but they are easily tempted with lust.
 - Stealing is a good example I've read about people who are hooked on it career criminals for theft. It gives them a rush when they do it. It's just what tempts them the most it's their weakness.
 - You see the temptation is there if that evil desire exists in our heart, if the evil desire does not exist then it is not tempting to use.
 - **This is why God cannot be tempted by the devil because he has no evil desires within him, there is no evil desires to tempt.**
 - Sexual immorality?
 - While we certainly do share some common weaknesses to temptation but to what level they affect us does seem to be different from person to person.
 - The devil takes advantage of our weaknesses.
 - The devil is very clever and quite the war strategist.
 - Knowing our weaknesses regarding sin seems to be his specialty.
 - He knows what your weaknesses are what sins you are more susceptible to.
 - He knows the sinful desires of our heart.

- He then focuses his temptation on those weaknesses because he will have a much greater chance of success.
 - Why tempt someone with alcohol or envy when they don't have an evil desire within them for those things. The devil goes after your biggest weakness because he wants you to fail.
 - The vicious cycle of sin leads to death.
 - Verse 15 gives a layout of the vicious cycle of sin.
 - An individual has an evil desire in their heart and they choose to embrace this desire instead of turning away from it.
 - So the evil desire is conceived it is acted upon then it gives birth to sin.
 - You see it wasn't sin yet until it was acted upon, we all have a choice we all have our sinful flesh and the spirit that is good. They are always in conflict, if you let the flesh win then you sin.
 - Then that sin when it has been allowed to fester untreated it can rule your life and if it put up a wall between you and God it can even bring forth death.
 - God-given desires can be turned into sin if we ignore God's instruction.
 - As an intro to Question #3 in your book we know that God has given us natural desires for things that are good. But those desires can turn into sin if we disobey or neglect how we are supposed to use those desires.
 - **Question#3**
 - **"In what ways are we tempted to satisfy a God-given desire in a sinful way?"**
- God helps us to resist temptation | James 1:16-18
 - **Read James 1:16-18**
 - We are not to be deceived:
 - James tells us not to be deceived into thinking that God is the author of sin, because he is not. God is the author of all that is good, as he says that every good and perfect gift is from God.
 - God will provide the means for us to escape temptation not to bury us in them.
 - James also tells us that God is the father of lights who is unchanging and has no darkness within him.
 - God's gifts to help us resist temptation. (PSG:24)
 - A relationship with Christ
 - This is the greatest gift that God has given us.
 - Romans 6:23
 - "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."
 - Because of the gift of Christ because we can accept him into our heart we have a relationship with him.
 - As Christians we have the Holy Spirit living inside of us that will ALWAYS be there for us.
 - God's Word
 - The Bible gives us everything we need to combat the devil and how to resist temptation.
 - The scripture is our guide and everything regarding how to life a joyful life is I there.
 - Psalms 119:11
 - "I have treasured Your word in my heart so that I may not sin against You."
 - If God's word is treasured in our heart, which means we need to READ the Bible so that it will be in our hearts then we will have the ability to not sin against God.
 - An escape route

- God will always give us a way out of our temptations.
- 1 Corinthians 10:13
 - “No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to humanity. God is faithful, and he will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation He will also provide a way of escape so that you are able to bear it.”
- This scripture tells us that we will never be tempted more than what we can handle, God will not allow it, which then means that God will always have an escape route for the temptation.
 - When we are in a position of temptation and we think there is no way we can resist, immediately we should think well that’s not true. God has a way out for me I just have to find it.
- **The responsibility ultimately relies on us regarding the choice to give into temptation, God provides us gifts to help us through them, he gives us an escape route...all we have to do is to DO it.**
- **Questions:**
 - **Have you been in a position where you were tempted and you saw the way out but you failed to take it? How did feel afterwards?**
 - **Question#4: “How can you support and encourage someone struggling with temptation?”**
 - **Demonstration**
 - The water bottle of sin.
 - We have this bottle of water that is a symbol for all types of sin.
 - So God tells us that to drink this water is wrong, but Lane has a problem, you see he has a desire for this water even though he knows it is wrong.
 - When Lane sees this bottle he is easily tempted by it, in fact he longs for it yet he knows it is evil.
 - So me being a good friend I will help him out (drink water and tempt)
 - Ah that’s good!
 - Hey you want some?
 - So I being the good friend am pressuring Lane or enticing his desire for this sin.
 - So what usually happens? Well Lane gives in (give bottle to Lane)
 - Lane indulges in his sin, then what usually happens next?
 - Regret, Lane regrets what he has done and then he usually passes blame, he puts the blame in 1 of 2 things.
 - The sin itself, if it just didn’t look so good that money that was sitting on the counter or if that co-worker would have just been wearing more clothes I wouldn’t of had that lustful thought.
 - Or others if my good friend wouldn’t have flaunted it in front of my face I would not have given in.
 - While there is some truth to the fact that sin looks good and pressure from others can cause us to weaken they are not the TRUE source or power that caused you to give into temptation.
 - (Place water bottle in floor)
 - Does this bottle of water have any power in itself to make Lane drink from it?
NO of course not

- Same goes for jewelry it can't make you steal them, or a dirty movie doesn't MAKE you watch it. There is no power in the sin itself.
 - Can I Lane's good friend make him drink of it? NO I may pressure him but it's still up to Lane to give in.
- So where does the POWER for the temptation come from?
 - From the sinful desire in your heart.
 - That sinful desire that is within us is what gives power to the temptation. If we don't have the evil desire then that sin isn't tempting for us and it doesn't have power over us.
- So is Lane's assessment of putting the blame for him giving into his temptation because of the sin itself and others justified? No because ultimately it falls on Lane to make the decision on whether or not to give in.
 - It doesn't matter what sin is going on around us it ultimately is up to us to make the decision to give into the temptation.
- That is where the power of temptation comes from is because of the evil desire within your heart.