

THE SOURCE OF TEMPTATION, PT. 2, JAMES 1:16-18 (Ed O'Leary)

TODAY, ~ WE'LL FINISH OUR LOOK AT ~ JAMES 1: ~ 13-18.

IN THIS Q, ~AS SAID, ~ JAMES TURNS HIS ATTENTION ~ to the source of temptation.

▶▶ The passage consists of two subsections ~ that are each introduced ~ by an exhortation.

VV. 13-15, ~ COMPRISE THE FIRST SUBSECTION, ~ WHICH LOOKED @ COUPLE WKS AGO.

▶▶ The exhortation introducing it is [verse 13a](#).

▷▷ Here James exhorts believers not to blame God for their temptations.

▶▶ James goes on ~ to give two reasons ~ why we should not blame God for temptation, ~ [13b-14](#).

▷▷ 1st, ~ God is not temptable and does not tempt, ~ [13b](#).

▷▷ And 2nd, ~ an analysis of the temptation and sin process ~ ¶¶

↳↳ places responsibility for sin ~ squarely on humans, ~ [14](#).

→→ [But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire.](#)

▶▶ Finishes first subsection with a note detailing the dire consequences of succumbing to temptation, ~ [vs 15](#).

▷▷ [Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death. ⇔⇔ Various things unchecked sin can kill. ¶¶ 1/10](#)

VV 16-18 ENCOMPASS THE SECOND SUBSECTION, ~ WHICH WE'LL LOOK @ TODAY.

▶▶ Vs 16 contains the exhortation introducing this subsection.

▷▷ Here James shifts discussion from ~ that of which God is not the source ~ to that of which he is.

▶▶ Rather than the source of temptation, ~ he is the source of all that is good, vs 17.

▶▶ Then in v 18, ~ James identifies one of these good gifts.

THAT'S THE ¶ IN SUMMARY.

▶▶ Now let's unpack the 2nd subsection, 16-18.

AS NOTED, ~ VS 16 CONTAINS THE EXHORTATION INTRODUCING THIS SUBSECTION.

HERE JAMES SHIFTS DISCUSSION ~ FROM THAT OF WHICH GOD IS NOT THE SOURCE
~ to that of which he is.

▶▶ Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers.

▷▷ Also, ~ Don't be deceived, my dear brothers and sisters.

THIS VERSE IS THE FIRST TIME THAT JAMES CALLS HIS AUDIENCE "BELOVED."

▶▶ It means a person dearly loved and cherished.

▶▶ It is a term of affection ~ that helps to soften James' blow. 📖 2/10

▶▶ James is very tough on his original readers and us.

▶▶ But ~ that believers are dearly loved and cherished by James ~ tells us ~ 77

▷▷ that he is writing out of love.

↪↪ And therefore, ~ has our best interests at heart.

▶▶ Prov. 27:5, ~ Better is open rebuke than hidden love.

▷▷ If a person's love is genuine, ~ he will not fear ~ to tell his friend about a fault or correct him.

▷▷ Rebuking is to be preferred to hidden love. ⇔⇔ Lit., "closed up, withdrawn."

▷▷ IOW, ~ correcting or rebuking ~ is evidence of love.

▷▷ But failing to do so ~ shows one's love is withdrawn.

▶▶ Prov. 27:6, NASB, Faithful are the wounds of a friend, But deceitful are the kisses of an enemy.

▷▷ The pains of true friendship ~ are better than ~ professions of false love.

▷▷ When a friend confronts, ~ it may feel like wounds.

↪↪ But such wounds ~ arise from a heart ~ that is true and pure in its commitment to our welfare.

→→ Such were the words of Nathan to David (2 Sam. 12). 11 3/10

▷▷ In contrast are the supposed marks of commitment from an enemy.

↳↳ Like Judas to Jesus, ~ the false friend feigns friendship ~ to achieve a personal goal.

(VS 16) DON'T BE DECEIVED, MY DEAR BROTHERS AND SISTERS.

▶▶ This is a warning against self-deception.

▷▷ Do not deceive yourselves.

▶▶ This warning echoes [Jer. 17:9](#) that the heart is more deceitful than anything else.

▶▶ We are prone to deceive ourselves unless we constantly guard and preserve the truth.

▶▶ In a few ~ the truth we are to guard and preserve is the truth about God's character.

GRAMMATICALLY SPEAKING, ~ VERSE 16 GOES WITH VERSES 17-18.

▶▶ James does not want his readers ~ ¶¶

▷▷ to make any mistake about what he is about to say ~ about God as the source of all good gifts.

▶▶ But the warning also refers back ~ to the reminder about the source of temptation ~ in [vv. 13-15](#).

▶▶ It therefore serves as a transition ~ between the two subsections. ¶¶ 4/10

▶▶Believers, ~ James is saying, ~ must not deceive themselves ~ 77

▷▷into thinking that God himself is tempting them to sin.

↪↪On the contrary, ~ he is the invariable giver of good gifts to his children.

(V 16) IN GENERAL, ~ THE PERIL JAMES IS POINTING TO ~ 77

▶▶is the peril of deceiving our selves ~ as to the character of God.

▷▷Correct thinking about God ~ is the basis of right living.

↪↪Wrong thinking about God ~ makes possible lives of self-indulgence and sin.

▶▶At this time let's broaden the scope a bit from the inward workings of our sinful nature.

▷▷Attempting to distort our thinking about God ~ has been a tactic of Satan since the garden of Eden.

▷▷He cast doubt over God's character.

↪↪He suggested that God was jealous, ~ holding Adam and Eve back from their destiny.

→→They would become like God when they ate.

↪↪And God knew that, according to Satan.

▷▷Satan has not changed his tactics. 77 5/10

ONE MORE THOUGHT ON V 16.

▶▶ The present tense of the verb ~ likely commands a constant watchfulness.

▷▷ Always be on guard against self-deception about God's character.

RATHER THAN THE SOURCE OF TEMPTATION, ~ GOD IS THE SOURCE OF ALL THAT IS GOOD, VS 17.

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.

INSTEAD OF TEMPTING BELIEVERS TO SIN, ~ GOD IS THE GIVER OF EVERY GOOD AND perfect gift.

▶▶ The concept of goodness rules out the possibility ~ ¶¶

▷▷ that God would send an influence as destructive as temptation.

▶▶ God's gifts are marked by kindness and helpfulness, ~ not destructiveness.

▷▷ In line with Jesus' words in Jn. 10.

↪↪ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

▶▶ God's gifts are "perfect," which in this context ~ ¶¶

▷▷ excludes any possibility of moral evil, ~ ~ ¶¶

↪↪ such as tempting his people to commit sin. ¶¶ 6/10

▶▶ The point of James's statement is that nothing but good comes from God.

▶▶ The psalmist declared, ~ *For the Lord is good.*

▷▷ The false gods the heathen worshipped were not thought to be good.

▷▷ They were selfish and capricious.

↳↳ You could never know when they might turn against you and do you harm.

▷▷ Not so our God.

↳↳ The God of the Bible is and has always been good.

CONCERNING THE GIFTS, ~ THEY ARE VIEWED ~ AS CONTINUALLY "COMING DOWN from the Father of lights."

▶▶ The Greek verb ~ views each gift as originated and designed in heaven ~ ¶¶

▷▷ and then as descending in an unending succession.

▶▶ In Lamentations Jeremiah writes, ~ *The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.*

JAMES REFERS TO GOD AS ~ THE FATHER OF LIGHTS.

▶▶ The lights here are no doubt the sun, moon, and stars.

▷▷ As "the Father" of these lights, God is their source of being, and they reflect the glory of their Creator. ¶¶ 7/10

▷▷ David wrote, ~ *The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.*

▷▷ In fact, ~ Paul declares that the witness of creation renders humans to be without excuse for their sins.

↳↳ Rom. 1:18-20

▶▶ (V 17) As the heavenly lights' Creator & Sustainer, God is not to be identified with them.

▷▷ These shining celestial bodies must not be worshiped as God.

↳↳ But they testify to his shining nature.

▷▷ Their glory and dignity declare the nature and essence of God, that God is light.

▶▶ God is also the Father of all our spiritual illumination.

▷▷ We learn from Paul ~ that God, who said, "Let there be light in the darkness," ~ ¶¶

↳↳ has made this light shine in our hearts ~ so we could know the glory of God that is seen in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 4:6).

→→ Light = the illuminating power of the gospel.

AT THE END OF VERSE 17, ~ JAMES ADDS THAT GOD IS ~ Unchanging and unchangeable.

▶▶ With whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.

▶▶ Nm 23:19a, ~ God is not man, that he should lie, or a son of man, that he should change his mind. ¶¶ 8/10

▶▶ Mal 3:6a, ~ For I the Lord do not change.

▶▶ And what James say here ties in nicely with what the psalmist says in Ps. 102:25-27

▶▶ Unlike the shifting shadows that are caused by the sun, moon, and stars, God is unchanging and unchangeable.

▷▷ With him there is no variation at all.

▷▷ The shadows cast by the sun are minimal at noon.

↳↳ But just before sunset they stretch out for yards across the landscape.

▷▷ God is not like that. ~ He does not change.

↳↳ He is always the giver of good gifts, ~ ¶¶

→→ never a sadistic being who would entice his creatures to destroy themselves in sin.

↳↳ Satan is the one who tries to destroy us through sin.

IN VS 18, ~ JAMES GIVES US AN EXAMPLE OF ONE OF THESE GOOD & PERFECT GIFTS that God gives us.

Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

JAMES APPEALS HERE TO THE SPIRITUAL NEW BIRTH OF CHRISTIANS ~

▶▶ as a particularly striking illustration of the good gifts God gives. ¶¶ 9/10

▶▶ This new birth is motivated by the sovereign determination of God, whose will, ~ 77

▷▷ unlike the creation he made, is unwavering.

▶▶ The instrument through which God accomplishes this spiritual birth is the word of truth, ~ i.e., ~ the gospel.

▶▶ As the firstfruits, ~ believers are the initial harvest that anticipates creation's redemption.

▷▷ Rom. 8:20-22

ALONG W/ SPIRITUAL REBIRTH BEING ONE OF GOD'S GOOD & PERFECT GIFTS, ~ 77

▶▶ it also shows God's goodness.

▶▶ It is seen in that he chose to give us new birth.

▶▶ Would have been perfectly just to send us all to hell.

▶▶ But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus

OH, TASTE AND SEE THAT THE LORD IS GOOD! 10/10