

Epistle of James
Week 5 – January 17, 2010
James 1:13-18

notes from BibleGateway.com and EnduringWord.com commentaries on James

1:13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “When tempted” - <div style="text-align: center;">TRIAL => TESTING => PERSEVERANCE => MATURITY</div> <div style="text-align: center;">or</div> <div style="text-align: center;">TRIAL => TEMPTATION => SIN => DEATH</div> • God's character - He is holy and cannot be tempted by evil; God's will – He does not tempt anyone
1:14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The origin of the temptation</i> is the person's <i>own evil desire</i>. James's term is <i>epithymia</i>, a "desire" or "longing" especially with evil meaning. This is a call for us to take responsibility for our own lives and to deal with our sinful motives. • One of the most significant ways we resist the work of God for our growth toward becoming "mature and complete" is that we blame factors outside of ourselves for our sin. • <i>The action of the temptation</i> is to drag away and to entice. This is a hunting and fishing metaphor (dragged away as by a predator; enticed as by a lure).
1:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the effect of the temptation is sin leading to death <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - uses a childbearing analogy – showing how natural the progression is from sin to death - NOT a reference to losing salvation
1:16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Do not be deceived, my dear brothers” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do not be deceived about the origin of temptation – vs. 13-15, and - Do not be deceived about the origin of every good and perfect gift – vs 16-18
1:17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Father. . .who does not change like shifting shadows” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - James wants his readers to cling to the certainty of God's unchanging love in their suffering. • Especially in times of trial, is your image of God one of exalted authority, trustworthy constancy and unfailing generosity? Do you believe that God gives you good gifts? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fundamental truth: in the midst of the trials, God has good gifts for you. - Thought – God gives us what we NEED • “coming down from the Father of heavenly lights” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Greek is actually “the Father of <i>the</i> lights” - James evokes an image of looking up to receive something wondrous, in order that we may anticipate God's good gifts instead of looking only at the hardship of our circumstances.
1:18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “He chose to give us birth” – the new birth; salvation –“through the word of truth” • James may refer to his own generation of believers when he calls them firstfruits, especially as being mainly written to Christians from a Jewish background.

Sunday, January 10, 2010

Surrender: let go and let God work by Rick Warren

“The supreme example of self-surrender is Jesus. The night before his crucifixion Jesus surrendered himself to God's plan. He prayed, "Father, everything is possible for you. Please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will, not mine."

Jesus didn't pray, "God, if you're able to take away this pain, please do so." He began by affirming that God can do anything! He prayed, "God, if it is in your best interest to remove this suffering, please do so. But if it fulfills your purpose, that's what I want, too."

Genuine surrender says, "Father, if this problem, pain, sickness, or circumstance is needed to fulfill your purpose and glory in my, life or in another's life, please don't take it away!"

This level of maturity doesn't come easy. In Jesus' case, he agonized so much over God's plan that he sweats drops of blood. Surrender is hard work. In our case, it requires intense warfare against our self-centered nature."