

THE CHRISTIAN AND TEMPTATION

A sermon outlines

Presented to

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Text: James 1:12-18

Thesis: To encourage brethren to endure temptation.

INTRODUCTION

1. One of the greatest challenges of living the Christian life is dealing with “temptations.”
2. This is especially true for new Christians because it can be frustrating to know that your sins have been forgiven only to face temptations that threatens you to fall back into it.
3. In James 1:12-18, we find helpful words for the Christian.
 - a. A promise to those who endure temptations.
 - b. A caution not to wrongfully dispute the source of those temptations.
 - c. An understanding of how sin develops.
4. Out of these we will raise three main points in this sermon.

- I. THE PROMISE.
- II. THE CAUSTION.
- III. THE UNDERSTANDING.

DISCUSSION

- I. THE PROMISE (Jas. 1:12).
 - A. The man who endures temptation will be “blessed.”
 1. The Greek word for “blessed” is “makarios”
 2. Which means “happy, blessed”
 3. The nature of the happiness enjoyed is described as the verse continues...
 - B. For after he has been “proved” he will receive “the crown of life.”

1. The promise is that of “eternal life”
2. The promise is given by Him who cannot lie (Titus 1:2).
3. The promise is given to those who “demonstrate” (prove) their love for God by their endurance of the temptations.

II. THE CAUTION (Jas. 1:13, 16-18).

A. Let no one say they are tempted by God (Jas. 1:13).

1. Because that will mean to blame God for their temptations.
2. For God is so holy:
 - a. He cannot be tempted by evil.
 - b. Nor does He tempt anyone to do evil.

B. So don't be deceived into such thinking (Jas. 1:16-18).

1. God is the source of good, not evil!
2. Every good and perfect gift comes from Him!
3. As an example, it was of His Own will that He brought us forth which He did by the “word of truth” (the gospel) (1 Pet. 1:22-23).
4. So, we might be a kind of “first fruits” of His creatures.

III. THE UNDERSTANDING (Jas. 1:14-15).

A. How sin develops.

1. The first stage is temptation This stage involves two things (Jas. 1:14).
 - a. Lust which is a strong desire for something
 - b. Enticement which is an opportunity and encouragement to satisfy the desire.
 - c. Putting it into a mathematical formula: $\text{Temptation} = \text{Desire} + \text{Opportunity}$.
2. The second stage in the development of sin is sin itself (Jas. 1:15).
 - a. Temptation leads to sin only when you yield and act upon it.

- b. Sin therefore requires the added step of action.
 - c. Putting it again in mathematical terms: Sin = Desire + Opportunity + Action.
3. The final stage is the consequence of unforgiven sin which is Death (Jas. 1:15).
- a. This refers to spiritual separation from God, which is the “wages of sin” (Rom. 6:23).
 - b. Ultimately such “death” involves eternal punishment (Rev. 21:8).
 - c. Putting it once more in the form of an equation: Desire + Opportunity + Action + No Forgiveness = Punishment!

B. How to overcome sin.

1. Change our desires.
 - a. Since this is where the process of sin begins, it is the best place for us to begin
 - b. Bear in mind that it is a part of Christian growth to change our desires (Rom. 12:1-2; Gal. 5:24).
 - c. How do we change our desires?
 - i. Studying the Word of God helps in shaping people to overcome sin (Psa. 119:11; Mat. 4:3-10).
 - ii. As we read of sin and its damnable consequences, we come to hate it! (Psa. 119:104).
2. Limit our opportunities.
 - a. Remember, we are tempted only when there is both desire and opportunity
 - b. So, while we work on changing our desires, we should limit the opportunities to fulfill wrongful desires.
 - c. This can be done by asking for God’s providential help in prayer as Jesus taught (Mat. 6:13, 26:41).

3. Exercise self-control.

- a. Remember, it becomes sin when we yield to action in fulfilling our sinful desires.
- b. If we can control ourselves not to yield, then we can overcome sin!
- c. The Christian has no excuse for yielding to temptation (1 Cor. 10:13).

CONCLUSION

- 1. Indeed, we can overcome sin by stopping its development at any one of the four stages leading to the final punishment!
- 2. If you noticed carefully, you should have seen that at each of the four points in the development of sin, God is able and willing to help us overcome sin...!
 - a. God helps us to control our desires by providing His Word to renew our minds.
 - b. God helps us to limit the opportunities through His Providence as we pray for such.
 - c. God helps us to exercise self-control over our actions through His Spirit strengthening the inner man.
 - d. God helps us to obtain forgiveness through the blood of His Son as we repent.