

Temptations - Satan's Flaming Arrows

Intro: Take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one (Ephesians 6:16).

James 1:2-18

I. Where Do Temptations Come From? - v13-18

A. v13-15 - Satan produces temptations.

1. **Temptation** (πειράζω) = a test, a thought designed to produce evil action.
 - a. v13 says that God doesn't produce that!
 - b. Job's trials were given by Satan but limited by God (Job 1 & 2)
 - c. The temptations of Jesus came straight from the devil (Matthew 4:1-11)
2. v14 - But Satan uses your own attitudes as ammunition against you.
 - a. **Evil desire** (ἐπιθυμία) = lust.
 - b. **Dragged away** (ἐξέλκω) = lured, to draw out by beating the brush (hunters).
 - c. **Enticed** (δελεάζω) = to lure with bait (fishermen).
3. v15 - When these thoughts persist, they produce bad conduct.
4. As this sin continues, it produces death. Rom 6:23 - For the wages of sin is death.

B. God doesn't provide temptations. He motivates us by His kindness (Rom 2:4).

1. Good certainly isn't provided by Satan. **ILL: The Unpardonable Sin** (Matt 12:22-32)
2. v17 - Rather, God is the provider of every good & perfect gift.
3. v18 - God's goal is to use His Word to produce us as the first fruit of His creatures!

II. How are You to React to Temptation When It Comes? - v2-12

A. v2 - You are to consider it pure joy!

1. v3 - Because the testing of your faith produces perseverance. **ILL: The iron bar: worth \$2.50; as a horseshoe: \$5.00; as needles: \$175.00; as a knife blade: \$1625.00; as watchsprings: \$125,000.00!**
2. v4 - Because when perseverance matures, the result is a complete Christian who lacks nothing in his faith!

B. How can temptation be transformed into this blessing?

1. v5-8 - Through prayer.
 - a. God gives liberally to those who pray. **Consider Solomon.**
 - b. But effective prayer must be trusting prayer!
2. v9-11 - Through being content with where the Lord has you right now.
 - a. Proverbs 15:16 - **Better a little with the fear of the LORD than great wealth with turmoil.**
 - b. John the Baptist told the Roman soldiers to be content with their pay.
(Lk 3:14)
 - c. Paul learned to be content in whatever circumstances he was in (Phil 4:11).
 - d. Hebrews 13:5 tells us to be content with what we have!
 - e. So - accept the testing with joy, whether through temptation or affliction, with grace & discernment.
3. v12 - Through the hope that when you endure the testing you will be rewarded. **ILL: Diamonds are burnished for months with diamond dust before they are fit to be jewels for a crown.**