

FACTS ABOUT TEMPTATION

James 1:13-18

Introduction: There is a special battleground in every person's life and that is the battleground of "temptation." Everyone has desires, some secret, some open but not all desires are satisfied, not all are met, not all yielded to. Sometimes a desire overcomes reason and even physical abilities. Sometimes the desire is sexual, sometimes ambition, sometimes greed for power or money. At times we seem to lose all logic, reason and sanity and "jump in way over our heads" into that desire. We sing the hymn "Yield not to Temptation..." but yet are not always able to keep from yielding.

I. TEMPTATION DESCRIBED (*vv 13-16*)

1. First of all, God is not responsible for temptations for God gives that which is only good and perfect.
 - Everyone is a victim of temptation, some sexually, some material things, others positions, etc.
 - Temptation knows no barriers, no favorites, affects both husband and wife, executives, beggars, homemakers, salesmen, teachers, pastors, Church members.
 - Temptation is to entice to do wrong by a promise of pleasure or gain, to seduce, persuade.
2. A fact of temptation is that it is always present.
 - It is not "if" but "when."
 - It is inevitable and there is never a time when temptation will not be present.
3. Another fact of temptation is that it is never prompted by God.
 - God never tempts anyone to do evil.
 - God will test our lives to strengthen and develop them but God doesn't fool around with evil.
4. Yet another fact of temptation is that it always follows a constant pattern.
 - There is usually an external "bait" that becomes the object of our interest (catches our eye).
 - Then there is the "desire" for that which one is unable to have at that moment so lust or an intense interest is created in the mind.
 - There is the "allurement" where one is carried away, enticed, persuaded with the temptation.
 - It may be pleasure for only a short time for a growing emptiness is generated.
 - Solomon wrote about "vanity, all is vanity..."
 - Satan knows the precise "bait" for each of us, our exact weak areas.
 - Jesus is not the only "fisher of men..."
5. Finally there is the fact that temptation abounds with inconsistent thinking.
 - It's easy to be led down the wrong path when one's mind is not "thinking."
 - It's easier at times to believe a lie than the truth.
 - It's said that if one believes a lie, that person will soon begin living it.
 - A theoretical desire becomes hard reality if the mind continues to dwell upon it.
 - Once tasted of, that sin is easier to commit again later.

II. HOW TO OBTAIN VICTORY OVER TEMPTATION (vv 17-18)

1. First of all, dwell on the good (mentally).
 - God provides plenty of good and perfect things to think about and occupy the mind.
 - To live good, one must keep his/her mind on God's good things. (*Philippians 4:8*)
2. Then live the truth.
 - Live life according to the Word of God, not by the word of the world.
 - The Word of God is the only Book on earth that gives reliable counsel on victory over temptation CONSTANTLY.
 - Truth in the mind counteracts and defeats the evil, sinful thoughts.

CONCLUSION:

1. Every one of us faces temptation every hour of every day and night.
2. Everyone yields to temptation sooner or later.
3. God has provided a way to win over temptation.
4. Go to God's Word and fill your mind with God's truths.
5. Devote yourself to living each day with Jesus Christ as your example.
6. When you fail and yield to temptation, go immediately to God and ask for forgiveness, sincerely.