

- Church Web Site

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A just weight
and balance

are the
LORD'S:

Thus saith the Lord...

- The world's deadliest snake is the *black mamba*.
- It is found throughout many parts of the African continent.
- They are highly aggressive, and strike with deadly precision.
- They are also the fastest land snake in the world, capable of reaching speeds of up to 12 mph.

- These fearsome snakes can strike up to **12 times in a row.**
- The venom is a fast acting **neurotoxin.**
 - Resulting in death as fast as **15 minutes.**

- **Because they are so small**
people do not expect
to die from their bites.
- How can something so small
be so deadly?
 - In our passage today,
we are warned
about something very small
that can be very deadly:
our own desires.

- James 1:13

*Let no one say when he
is tempted,
“I am tempted by God,”
for God cannot be
tempted by evil, and he
himself tempts no one.*

- **Our desires**
are the source of
our temptations,
- And if nothing is done
about them,
there are
deadly consequences.

- James 1:13

*Let no one say
when he is tempted,
“I am tempted by God,”*

*for God cannot
be tempted by evil,
and he himself
tempts no one.*

- The idea here is that **God cannot be responsible** for our temptations because **He is a good God.**
- James writes first **a word of warning** and then a word **of comfort.**

- God cannot entice you to sin because He Himself **cannot be tempted with evil.**

- He doesn't face **temptations.**

- He doesn't have the **desire to sin.**

- He's perfect and **completely holy.**

- When Satan calls we must be careful lest we be pulled in by the hook and caught by Satan.
- Remember, there are no free lunches.

- What we need to see is that temptation and sin has a domino effect that is difficult to stop.
 - Each stage leads to the next stage.

- **Our desires**
give Satan the advantage
with which to entice us.
- **We cave into the temptation.**
 - If we keep biting the hook,
we become
separated from God
and eventually
spiritual death.

- God does not make **bad things happen to you.**
- Too often God is treated like he is the **“Karma God.”**
- We get a flat tire and **wonder what we did wrong** to make God mad.
- We think that we need **to do good things** so that good things will happen to us.

- But God is not karma.
- God tempts no one.
- Don't blame God.
- So where are all these temptations coming from?

- Not once have your temptations ever come from God.
- All that comes from God is good, because He is good.

- **James writes:**

“Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers. 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”
(James 1:16-17).

- James calls God “*the Father of lights.*”

- The earth turns, the sun gives light, but there are shadows that are to due the nature of the creation.

- But God **does not shift.**

- God does **not change.**

- **As light illuminates.**

- So the Father of lights **gives the light of reason.**

- **God is a holy God.**
- The Scriptures testify:
***“For I am the Lord
who brought you up
out of the land of Egypt
to be your God.***
- ***You shall therefore be holy,
for I am holy”***
(Leviticus 11:45)

- ***“Exalt
the Lord our God,
and worship at
his holy mountain;
for the Lord our God
is holy!”
(Psalm 99:9)***

● ***“And the four living creatures never cease to say, “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!”
(Revelation 4:8)***

- Why would James
feel like
it's necessary
to tell us
that God is good?

- Why does James feel the need to remind us that we can't blame God for our temptations because He is a good God?

- I think he has a twofold purpose in mind:

- (1) So that we understand who is truly responsible for temptations.
 - Have you noticed in this chapter that James has not mentioned the Devil?
 - You can't say "The Devil made me do it."
 - So who is the only one left?

- (2) So that we do not doubt the goodness of God during our temptations
- Adam tried blaming God:
 - “*The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate*” (v. 12).
 - “The woman said, “*The serpent deceived me, and I ate.*” (v. 13).
- Since the beginning of humanity mankind has not taken responsibility for sin.

- **1 Corinthians 10:13**

No temptation has taken you but such as is common to man, but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted above what you are able but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it.

- **So what is it**
that causes our temptations?
- Why are we always slipping up
on the same old sins?
 - James answers:
“***Each person is tempted
when he is
lured and enticed
by his own desire***”
(**James 1:14**).

- Trials and temptations are permitted to strengthen us.
- Make us stronger for God's service.
 - Compulsory service would be worthless.
 - So God demands voluntary service.
 - Herein lies conflict, and the secret of God's ways.

- **Isaiah 55:9**

***For as the heavens
are higher
than the earth,
so are my ways
higher than your ways,
and my thoughts
than your thoughts.***

- **The source of our temptation**
is our own desire.
 - **Desire**
is problem.
 - The problem lies
within us.
 - Desire
is not wrong.
 - What is wrong is
how it is fulfilled.

- "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness" is a well-known phrase from the United States Declaration of Independence.
 - All desire the "Pursuit of Happiness"
 - "Pursuit" is the KEY word.
 - But there are laws that limit that "desire".
 - One might decide to rob a bank.
 - Or murder an enemy.
 - And so forth.

- Notice James says that **“each person is tempted,”** meaning that everyone faces temptations. **(James 1:14)**
 - If you didn't, there would be no need for this passage of Scripture.

- James uses a **fishing metaphor** to describe what happens in temptation.
- Notice the language:
“***each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire.***”
(**James 1:14**)

- If we did not have the desires and weaknesses, then Satan would have nothing with which to tempt us.

- Satan puts the bait on the hook and drops the line in the water.

- The temptation comes from within us because we want the bait.

- A fish will have no interest **if I put a brussel sprout on the hook** and drop it in the water.
- Temptation only becomes effective **if we desire it.**
- **We all have desires** that Satan is using to try to pull us away from God.

- **God is not tempting us.**
 - We have a desire that **we want fulfilled.**
 - But we must find **godly ways** to meet these desires
- **And not Satan's ways.**

- **Desire is the problem.**
 - The Greek word for “**lured**”.
 - Literally meaning to be “**dragged away.**”
 - The Greek word for “**enticed**” means to “**set a trap.**”

- In Matthew 4
we find Jesus
alone in the wilderness.
- It is often when we are alone that
temptation is the greatest.
 - No one sees us.
 - No one
knows our secret.
 - So how did Jesus
handle His temptation?

- Matthew 4:1.
- “by the Spirit,”
cannot mean
“by Jesus’ own spirit”
- 1 Peter 2:22
“Who did no sin.”
- 1 John 3:5
“in Him is no sin”

- “*by the Spirit,*”
cannot mean
“by Jesus’ own spirit”
- But must mean
by the
Holy Spirit
(**Matthew 3:16**)

- Showing us that **it was God's will** for Jesus to face temptation.

- **Hebrews 5:8**

***Although he was a son,
he learned obedience
through the things he suffered.***

**5:9 *And by being perfected
in this way,
he became the source of
eternal salvation
to all who obey him,***

- **This passive verb** in no way expresses **a reluctance** on the part of Jesus to meet the tempter.
- It intends to bring out **the very opposite:**
- The willingness of Jesus **to do the divine will.**
 - **Hebrews 10:9**

“I come to do thy will, O God.”

- Here we have the **Battle of the ages.**
 - **Two Spirits:**
 - **God's Spirit**
and
the devil.
- **The human nature of Jesus,**
 - **Vs.**
 - **The Tempter**
of all humanity.

- And how did Jesus handle this test?
 - Jesus met every assault with a word of Scripture:
“*it is written*”.
 - And once written,
stands forever.
 - Jesus smites the devil with
***“the sword of the Spirit,
which is the Word of God,”***
(Ephesians 6:17).

- And why did Jesus need to under go this trial or temptation?
- The word used is a Greek word meaning “to test”.
- No one ever faced greater test than Jesus.

- Hebrews 4:15

*For we have not an high priest
which cannot be touched
with the feeling of
our infirmities;
but was in all points
tempted like as we are,
yet without sin.*

- How else would Jesus
be our example.

- Every temptation that the Devil threw at Jesus **failed.**
- It was His trust in **the word of God** that enabled him to defeat the evil one.
- By doing it in this way he enables all true believers **to follow his example.**

- We must not think **that in one temptation** Jesus conquered the tempter for ever.
- Remember Peter: **”Get behind me Satan.”** (Matthew 16:23).
- Jesus said to his disciples: ***You are they that have continued with me in my temptations;*** (Luke 22:28 ASV)

- **Temptation**

is not meant to make us sin;

- But enable us to conquer sin.
- It is not meant to make us bad,
 - But to make us good.
- It is not meant to weaken us,
 - But to make us stronger.

**“Most people
want to be
delivered from
temptation
but would like it to
keep in touch”**

(Reader's Digest [8/86], p. 35).

- 1 Corinthians 10:12 (NET)

*So let the one
who thinks
he is standing
be careful that he
does not fall.*

- In closing let us notice **the contrast.**
- **V. 12** “**Crown of Life**”
 - **V. 15** “**Death**”
 - The two paths may seem like just a **fork in the road.**
- But the destination **is far different.**

- For years, workers and visitors flocked to the sight of silvery dust flakes that floated to the floor in a mill where Joe Gutierrez worked.

- Joe said, “the snow danced in August.”

(“The Heat: Steelworkers’ Lives and Legends,”

- It was beautiful and enchanting,
- But it was soon discovered that it was **asbestos** floating in the air.
- “**Everybody breathed it,**”
Joe writes.

- Sin disguises itself as harmless as fluttering snowflakes,
 - But it is the mother of death for all who dance in its glow.
(James 1:14-15).

- Sin appears
beautiful and enchanting.

- *Everybody's doing it.*

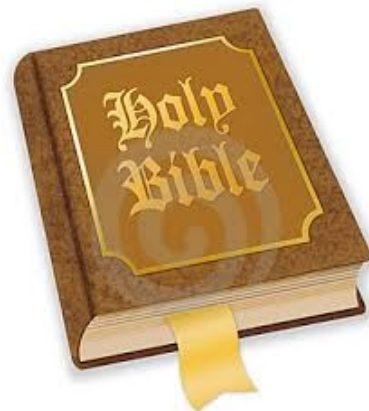
- Likewise,
Sin
is enchanting
but deadly.

- **Think on these things**
- **Philippians 4:8**

**The doors of the church
are open.**

**The Spirit and the Bride
Say
“Come”.**

Revelation 22:17



- “The Heat: Steelworkers’ Lives and Legends,”
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