

Before the Lesson

Read the Scriptures and overview below before your LIFE Group meets.

Scripture passages: James 1:12-18 and Genesis 3:1-13, Luke 4:1-12

Part of the Christian life involves facing trials and temptations, but from where do they come? This section of Scripture describes the origin of these two complications – the prescription for success, the reward for completion – along with a stern warning and reminder. Ultimately James is encouraging us to live lives of obedience to Christ and reminding us that though we are to *resist* through trials, we are commanded to *flee* from temptations.

So answer this question: Where are the “danger zones” in your life – areas where you don’t need greater willpower to resist but rather common sense and a decisiveness to avoid by turning from and running in the other direction? Our sinful appetites, attitudes, and addictions feed our curiosity. But remember, “curiosity killed the cat”! So let’s get a grip on temptation by defining it and learning to defeat it.

Focus questions: What are you drawn to? Who should you turn to?

Group Discussion

Note: As you read James 1:12-18, take notice that the Greek word being used for *trial* and *tempted* are virtually the same (trial: *peirasmos* – noun and tempted: *peirazō* – verb), but the context and what each word is paired with denotes the change in meaning. In verse 12 the context is *tests*, and we are reminded to remain steadfast under these tests so we can reach spiritual maturity. Conversely, in verse 13 the same Greek word is paired with *sin* and *evil*, which leads to death.

- TRIAL => TESTING => PERSEVERANCE => MATURITY
- TRIAL => TEMPTATION => SIN => DEATH

Read James 1:12-18 and discuss the following.

- Give examples of tests or trials you have experienced. How did you resist under this time of testing and what were the spiritual benefits?
- Give examples of temptations you have faced. Were you able to turn from the temptation and run toward God? How have you seen succumbing to temptations cause injury in your life?
- Read 1 Corinthians 10:13 and Hebrews 4:15. Who gives us the power to turn from and overcome the temptations from within?
- What does the Bible say about God’s power to overcome? (See 1 Chronicles 29:11, 2 Chronicles 20:6, Isaiah 40:28-31, Zechariah 4:6, Matthew 19:26, 1 Corinthians 6:14, 2 Corinthians 13:4, Ephesians 1:19, 3:20-21, 2 Peter 1:3-4.)

- What does the Bible say about God's grace to overcome? (See Romans 6:14, 2 Corinthians 12:8-10, Hebrews 4:16, James 4:6, 2 Peter 1:2.)
- According to Matthew 26:41 and Luke 22:40, how can we guard against being lured and enticed into temptation?
- Do you find yourself feeding or starving your fleshly desires? What are some other practical things we can do to guard against them?

Read the story from Luke 4:1-12 of Jesus being tempted by Satan in the desert, then discuss the following:

- What does the phrase from Luke 4:1, "Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit" mean? (See Galatians 5:16-25.)
- What weapon did Jesus use to defeat and defuse Satan's lure into temptation? (See Luke 4:4, 8, 10-11, & 12 with Ephesians 6:17.)
- According to Ephesians 6:1-18, what other tools of warfare do we have at our disposal? Should we be using these battle tools before we are tempted? Why?
- Look again at Luke 4 and the three times Satan tempted Jesus. What part of our human nature does each temptation represent? (See 1 John 2:16.)
- Identify your areas of vulnerability. Do they fit into one of those three categories? What will you do to prepare for these attacks in advance?
- How can you use what you have learned this week to help someone you know who is struggling with a temptation?

Further Study (to be used in your personal Quiet Time)

Contemplate these verses this week:

- What does James 1:12-18 teach you about God? about man?
- Read Ephesians 6:1-18 and review the weapons of warfare we have at our disposal. How does each of these weapons protect us from the enemy's schemes?
 - Belt of truth
 - Breastplate of righteousness
 - Shoes (Gospel)
 - Shield of faith
 - Helmet of salvation
 - Sword of the Spirit
 - Praying (Mouth)
- Read Hebrews 12:1-4. Who should we run to when tempted?
- Read Romans 8. How does this passage give you hope with regard to temptation and life transformation?

For additional resources, visit warrenlifenotes.com.