

# BLUEPRINT

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FOR A FAITH THAT WORKS

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Sermon-Based Study Guide  
Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church  
James 1.13-18 | June 23, 2019  
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## I. Introduction to this Study

This week we continue our series *Blueprint For a Faith That Works*, engaging the Book of James. Last week we thought together about trials, this week we engage temptations.

## II. Connecting with One Another

How would you differentiate between trials and temptations?  
What are examples of each from your own life?

## III. Study the Text

- a. In James 1.9-11, which we studied last week, James engages the temptation of pursuing wealth, which his older, half-brother Jesus discussed more than any other topic (ten times more than he talked about prayer!).

Why do you think it's so easy to put our confidence in wealth or possessions?

How are you tempted to do so?

How could wealth or poverty affect your relationship with God?

- b. Read James 1.13-15

How is the topic of pursuing wealth connected with these verses?

- c. Verses 13-14 set the record straight on the source of temptation.

Where does James say temptation comes from?

When have you seen this to be true in your own life?

Why do you think it was important for James to state that "God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone"?

- d. Last week we saw how testing produces perseverance, which brings about maturity and completeness (or, as we put it during the sermon: Testing → Perseverance → Maturity). James now uses descriptive language to discuss the perils of temptation. Fill in the blanks below:

We are \_\_\_\_\_ when we are dragged away by our evil \_\_\_\_\_. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to \_\_\_\_\_, which gives birth to \_\_\_\_\_.

What is the ultimate result of succumbing to temptation?

- e. God promises the crown of *life* to those who endure testing (see verse 12), but the end result of temptation is *death*.

How do you recognize when you are being tempted?



How can you avoid succumbing to it?

- f. Read James 1.16-18.

James again returns to the true character of God, warning us of being deceived by erroneous ideas. How is God described in these verses? How would you put this passage in your own words? Try it here:

Why is it important to remember the true character of God when we are faced with temptations of any kind?

- g. It has been written that the key variable in our temptations is trust: "What James is saying in this passage is that we must learn to trust God and his Word rather than the snares of the world."

What do you think? Is the key variable trust?

If so, how can we place our trust more in God and His Word?

- h. Reread verse 18, aloud preferably!

What did God choose to do?

How is this (re)birth different than the one described in verse 15? Think of as many differences as you can.

- i. Verse 18 implies that God's Word is like a medicine that we take within our bodies that heal our hurts and change our motivations, transforming us from the inside out.

Meditate on this work God has been doing in your life. Where do you see his changes already?

- j. What do you make of the phrase "that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created"? What is implied by the use of that term "firstfruit"?

What other image or metaphor could you use to explain this concept to someone who is not yet a follower of Jesus?

- k. Where do you currently need the presence of God's Holy Spirit in your own life to heal hurts or change motivations?

#### IV. Pray

- a. Thank God for his generosity as the Father of Lights, who gave the perfect gift of His Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ,
- b. Praise God for the promise that one day the firstfruits of creation will expand, transforming all of creation!
- c. Ask God to reveal and change the motivations within your heart that are not of His will.

