

**Theme: Gifts from God**

James 1:9–18 (NKJV)

<sup>9</sup> Let the lowly brother glory in his exaltation, <sup>10</sup> but the rich in his humiliation, because as a flower of the field he will pass away. <sup>11</sup> For no sooner has the sun risen with a burning heat than it withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beautiful appearance perishes. So the rich man also will fade away in his pursuits.

<sup>12</sup> Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. <sup>13</sup> Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. <sup>14</sup> But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. <sup>15</sup> Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.

<sup>16</sup> Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. <sup>17</sup> Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. <sup>18</sup> Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.

**Consider**

**1:9–11.** What does God tell us to do when we consider our condition or position here on earth?

We might understand why a poor person would "glory"<sup>6</sup> in his exaltation (1:9), but why should a rich glory in his "humiliation" (1:10)?

How does recognizing the temporal nature of things help us avoid envy, jealousy, and covetousness?

Compare the nature of life (described here) with the nature of God's eternal word (see Isaiah 40:6–8).

**1:12.** Why is the man who endures temptation called "blessed"? What promise awaits him when he meets the Lord? What does loving the Lord have to do with enduring temptation?<sup>7</sup>

**1:13.** What should we never do when we face temptation? What is God's relationship to evil and temptation?

**1:14.** What brings about the temptations that we face?

**1:15.** Chart the progression of sinful desire:  
 \_\_\_\_\_ is conceived and brings forth \_\_\_\_\_;  
 \_\_\_\_\_ when it is mature, brings forth \_\_\_\_\_.

Do you think temptation is a sin? Why or why not?

**1:16–18.** If God does not give evil gifts (temptation or sin), then what kinds of gifts should we expect from Him?

How is God described in these verses? Is God susceptible to change? What do you think James means by "no variation or shadow of turning"?

Think back to the discussion about facing trials in 1:1–8. How does answering the question above give us confidence for receiving the challenges He brings our way?

**1:18.** God "brought us forth" (birthed us) by His own will and by the word of truth. Jesus calls this (in John 3) being "born again." What is God's purpose for us ("that we might be \_\_\_\_\_")? What do you think this means?

How are we "born again"? (Romans 10:17; John 3:16–17)

**Ask Yourself**

When I look at the ups and downs of my own life, how can an eternal mindset train me to avoid the dangers of materialism?

Am I tempted to blame God for my sin? Is God ever at fault for my sin? When I sin, whom should I blame and what should I do?

Why should we be so careful to obey Romans 13:14 and "make no provision for the flesh"? Where does lust lead?

<sup>6</sup> The word "glory" (*kauchaomai*) from 1:9 means to take pride in something, to boast, or to rejoice.

<sup>7</sup> The word for "temptation" (*peirasmos*, see 1:2) is the same word for "trial" and can mean either a temptation to sin or a testing to reveal your true nature.

How can I keep from falling into the downward spiral of temptation?

How should I combat false guilt that might come from being tempted to sin? What should I remind myself?

When I look at what God has given and provided for my life, what should I believe about these gifts?

## Cross References

1 Samuel 2:7

The LORD makes poor and makes rich; He brings low and lifts up.

Proverbs 19:1

Better *is* the poor who walks in his integrity Than *one who is* perverse in his lips, and is a fool.

Isaiah 40:6–8

<sup>6</sup> The voice said, “Cry out!” And he said, “What shall I cry?” “All flesh *is* grass, And all its loveliness *is* like the flower of the field.

<sup>7</sup> The grass withers, the flower fades, Because the breath of the LORD blows upon it; Surely the people *are* grass.

<sup>8</sup> The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever.”

John 3:3–6, 16–17

<sup>3</sup> Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” <sup>4</sup> Nicodemus said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?” <sup>5</sup> Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. <sup>6</sup> That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

<sup>16</sup> For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. <sup>17</sup> For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

1 Timothy 6:17

Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy.

1 Corinthians 10:13

No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God *is* faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear *it*.

Romans 6:23

For the wages of sin *is* death, but the gift of God *is* eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:28–29

<sup>28</sup> And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose. <sup>29</sup> For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Romans 10:17

So then faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Romans 13:14

But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to *fulfill its* lusts.

1 John 1:9–2:2

<sup>9</sup> If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. <sup>10</sup> If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us. <sup>1</sup> My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. <sup>2</sup> And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.