

STUDY # TWO

GROWTH IS STUNTED BY SIN 1:13-18

KEY VERSE 1:15

Then, when the desire has conceived, it is giving birth to sin and this sin, when it has run its course, brings forth death.

MEMORY VERSE:

1:17

TEXT:

1:13-18

Let no man say, when he is being tempted, I am being tempted by God. For God cannot be tempted to do evil, and He, Himself, is tempting no one. But each one is being tempted when he is taken in tow and lured by his own desires. Then, when the desire has conceived, it is giving birth to sin. And this sin, when it has run its course, brings forth death. Stop being deceived, my brethren, beloved ones, every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of Light, with whom there can be no change or shadow cast by variation. According to His will He brought us into being through the word of truth to the end that we might be a kind of first fruits of his creatures.

EXPOSITION: Whereas we grow taller and stronger through testing, we are paralyzed and stunted by sin. James wants to be clearly understood here in this section that testing and temptation are from two different sources. Testing comes from the hand of a loving Father, meant for our good, and temptation comes from the evil one bent only on our ruin. His attacks either come through the physical, the mental or the spiritual.

1. Whereas it is possible for us to grow taller through testings, it is possible for us to be spiritual dwarfs simply because we have not handled temptation properly.

Verse Thirteen Let no man say, when he is being tempted, I am being tempted by God for God cannot be tempted to do evil, and He, Himself, is tempting no one.

1. James starts with a declaration that man is not to say when he is being tempted, he is being tempted by God. And then he gives us the twofold reason for this. First of all, "God cannot be tempted to do evil," and secondly, "He, Himself, is tempting no one."

2. William Kelly points out that never does God tempt anyone to evil. But it is too sadly common for His people to tempt Him by doubts of His mercy and active care.

3. Deuteronomy 6:16 You shall not put the Lord, your God, to the test as you tested Him at Massah.

4. When it comes to this matter of sin, it is awfully easy to look for someone else to accept the blame for our deficiencies. It is almost comical in the book of Genesis as Adam and Eve do this. Ethel Barrett says "Well, why not blame God? It's the easy way out and seems quite logical. He created everything. He must have thought up temptation, too." Omar Khayyam thought so. "Oh Thou who didst with pitfall and with sin beset the path I was to wander in." Robert Burns thought so. "Thou knowest. Thou hast formed me with passions wild and strong and listening to their witching voice has often led me wrong." They concluded that their conduct was all God's fault. He had created them the way they were. Let Him make the best of it. But James tells us emphatically a man must not say when he is tempted, God is tempting me. For God cannot be tempted by evil and does not, Himself, tempt anyone. Then who, and why? It started back in the Garden

Begins with Mind-Thought

Internal External Infernal

you can

tell the difference

between a test

& Temptation

because you won't

like the test but

you will the

temptation

Tempt Resisted =

Strength

Test Submitted =

Strength

Tests Find Source in the Father!

God you made me this way

of Eden and the culprit was Satan. "Has God told you you could not eat the fruit of every tree in the garden?" Satan asked Eve. And the implication was obvious. Here was something Eve could not have. "Every tree but one," said Eve. "God has told us not to eat of it or touch it or we will die." And Satan came up with the very first temptation. And it was most attractive and enticing. "You surely won't die," he said. "God knows if you eat it your eyes shall be opened and you shall be as Gods." The rest is history. She ate it. She gave some to Adam. He ate it. And immediately the talent for blaming someone else came to them - full blown. When God confronted Adam with his sin, Adam said, "She's to blame." And when God confronted Eve, she said, "The serpent's to blame." So we learn here that Satan is the one who tempts and he does it to bring out the bad. Whereas in our previous study, God tests us to bring out the good, Satan is endeavoring to stop our growth by temptation and God is desirous to hasten it by our testing.

6. James tells us further in Chapter 4:1 in answer to the question: "From what source do conflicts and quarrels among you come? Do they not come from this, namely your passions which are struggling in your members?"
7. Smith raises the question: "Dear Reader, do you know what the Psalmist knew? Do you know that God is for you and that he will cause your enemies to turn back? If you do, then go out to meet your temptation singing a song of triumph as you go. Meet your very next temptation in this way. At its first approach, begin to give thanks for the victory. Claim continually that you are more than conqueror through Him that loves you and refuse to be daunted by any foe. Shout the shout of faith with Joshua and Jehoshaphat and David and Paul and I can assure you that when you shout, the Lord will set ambushments and all your enemies shall fall down dead before you."

Verse Fourteen: But each one is being tempted when he is taken in tow and lured by his own desires.

James wants to make it quite clear where the real source of temptation is and that is each one is being tempted when he is taken in tow and lured by his own desires.

2. This agrees with what the Lord Jesus taught in Matthew 15: 18-20. "But the things that come out of a man's mouth come from his heart and mind and it is they that really make a man unclean for it is from a man's mind that evil thoughts arise. Murder, adultery, lust, theft, perjury and blasphemy. These are the things which make a man unclean."
3. Jeremiah 17:9 "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Who can know it."
4. II Peter 2:14-18 "No woman can escape their sinful stare and of adultery they never have enough. They make a game of luring unstable women. They train themselves to be greedy and are doomed and cursed. They have gone off the road and become lost like Balaam, the son of Beor, who fell in love with the money he could make by doing wrong. But Balaam was stopped from his mad course when his donkey spoke to him in a human voice scolding and rebuking him. "These men are useless as dried up springs of water promising much and delivering nothing. They are as

① Doubting God's Goodness.
② Attractive-ness or Obj.

Satan's Program
① Out of Family
② Childish

Resistance?
Involves Praise
+ Thanksgiving
That J.C. is
Totally Adequate.

Did we in our
own Strength Confide
I Pe 5:8

"Like A Roaring
Lion Seeking who
he May devour."

"And it came to pass in an evening-tide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house."—2 Samuel xi. 2.

AT that hour David saw Bathsheba. We are never out of the reach of temptation. Both at home and abroad we are liable to meet with allurements to evil; the morning opens with peril, and the shades of evening find us still in jeopardy. They are well kept whom God keeps, but woe unto those who go forth into the world, or even dare to walk their own house unarmed. Those who think themselves secure are more exposed to danger than any others. The armour-bearer of Sin is Self-confidence.

David should have been engaged in fighting the Lord's battles, instead of which he tarried at Jerusalem, and gave himself up to luxurious repose, for he arose from his bed at eventide. Idleness and luxury are the devil's jackals, and find him abundant prey. In stagnant waters noxious creatures swarm, and neglected soil soon yields a dense tangle of weeds and briars. Oh for the constraining love of Jesus to keep us active and useful! When I see the King of Israel sluggishly leaving his couch at the close of the day, and falling at once into temptation, let me take warning, and set holy watchfulness to guard the door.

Is it possible that the king had mounted his housetop for retirement and devotion? If so, what a caution is given us to count no place, however secret, a sanctuary from sin! While our hearts are so like a tinder-box, and sparks so plentiful, we had need use all diligence in all places to prevent a blaze. Satan can climb housetops, and enter closets, and even if we could shut out that foul fiend, our own corruptions are enough to work our ruin unless grace prevent. Reader, beware of evening temptations. Be not secure. The sun is down but sin is up. We need a watchman for the night as well as a guardian for the day. O blessed Spirit, keep us from all evil this night. Amen. |

#14

"Lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil [or the evil one]."—Luke xi. 4.

WHAT we are taught to seek or shun in prayer, we should equally pursue or avoid in action. Very earnestly, therefore, should we avoid temptation, seeking to walk so guardedly in the path of obedience, that we may never tempt the devil to tempt us. We are not to enter the thicket in search of the lion. Dearly might we pay for such presumption. This lion may cross our path or leap upon us from the thicket, but we have nothing to do with hunting him. He that meeteth with him, even though he winneth the day, will find it a stern struggle. Let the Christian pray that he may be spared the encounter. Our Saviour, who had experience of what temptation meant, thus earnestly admonished His disciples—"Pray that ye enter not into temptation."

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But let us do as we will, we shall be tempted; hence the prayer "deliver us from evil." God had one Son without sin; but He has no son without temptation. The natural man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upwards, and the Christian man is born to temptation just as certainly. We must be always on our watch against Satan, because, like a thief, he gives no intimation of his approach. Believers who have had experience of the ways of Satan, know that there are certain seasons when he will most probably make an attack, just as at certain seasons bleak winds may be expected; thus the Christian is put on a double guard by fear of danger, and the danger is averted by preparing to meet it. Prevention is better than cure: it is better to be so well armed that the devil will not attack you, than to endure the perils of the fight, even though you come off a conqueror. Pray this evening first that you may not be tempted, and next that if temptation be permitted, you may be delivered from the evil one.

unstable as clouds driven by the storm winds and are doomed to the eternal pits of darkness. They are full of boasting about their sins and conquests and using lust as their bait, they lure back into sin those who have just escaped from such wicked living."

- ✓5. Barrett points out in Verse 14 the authorized version says: "That every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed" and James is using a metaphor taken from hunting and fishing...to lure forth the game from its covert, to entice the fish with the bait. And it goes without saying the game so lured and the fish so enticed did not stay around long enough to make any plans. Satan does not hand you the temptation with a blue print showing the frustration, the failure, the alienation from God, the unrealized goals, the drug rehabilitation center, the unwanted pregnancy, or whatever the end might be. He suggests only the pleasure of the moment and it is implicit that somehow you are going to get away with it and come out unscathed. Temptation would be helpless if there were nothing in you to which it could appeal. It has to strike an answering chord. There is something in you that responds to the bait and that something is your own desire. Any con man will tell you that he can't con a person whose face isn't already streaked with larceny. Some of our own desires we jolly well know about. Some of them we are not aware of. But they are there in the pit stop getting gassed and oiled - ready at the drop of a temptation to get out on the track.

1 Samuel 11 gives us the record of David's experience with temptation. The following year, at the time when kings march forth, David sent out his officers under Joab with all Israel to devastate the Ammonites. They proceeded to lay siege to Rabbah, but David stayed in Jerusalem. Then one evening David got up from his couch and walked about on the roof of the royal palace. From the roof he saw a woman bathing and she was exceptionally beautiful. David sent to make inquiry about the woman and received a reply, "Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Elim and wife of Uriah, the Hittite." David ordered messengers to get her and when she had come to him, he lay with her. She then purified herself from her uncleanness and went back to her house.

In the matter of temptation, lust and lure work together to bring about the fruitage of sin.

Zodhiates points out that something within the individual translates the outer temptation into sin. Sin is something that begins with the desire of the heart.

My wife and I were fishing for bass one night on the lake at Pine Cove and when she threw the lure very close to shore, we noticed a ripple on the water and then she threw the plug back in the same area and all of a sudden there was a splash and she had caught the granddaddy bull frog. He was lured and enticed at first and hooked as a result of his action. This is what James is telling us in Verse 14.

"Each one is being tempted when he is taken in tow and lured by his own desires."

- ✓10. Guy King points that there is something in the steel that leads to the lure of the magnet. It is wonderful to know, however, that 1 Corinthians 10:13 says that there is no temptation that has taken us but such as is common to man but God is faithful who will not allow us to be tempted above that which we are able." The little arms

Try it you
will like it
① Pleasure...
② Get Away...
③ Unhurt...

Tests come
As You Struggle
Temptations come
As You Are Successful

Sailing Trip
Salmon escaped
Seal bite but
went for the
bait ... 8.
9.

1 Cor
10:13

10:13

When a trout rising to a fly gets hooked on a line and finds himself unable to swim about freely, he begins with a fight which results in struggles and splashes and sometimes an escape. Often, of course, the situation is too tough for him.

& Karl Menninger

of the child were being filled by the father with items that needed to be carried. The little child wanted more, but the father refused and the little child was heard to say, scurrying off "My daddy knows how much I can carry." Yield not to temptation for yielding is sin. Each victory will help you some other to win. Fight manfully onward, dark passions subdue. Look ever to Jesus. He'll carry you through. *Liquor - B.K.*

Verse Fifteen: Then, when the desire has conceived, it is giving birth to sin and this sin, when it has run its course, brings forth death.

- ✓ 1. The picture here in Verse 15 is, of course, one of union, birth and death.
- ✓ 2. Psalm 7:14 speaks in a very similar way. "The wicked man conceives an evil thought, labors with its dark details, and brings to birth his treachery and lies."
- ✓ * 3. When the will yields to the desire, conception takes place and the unwanted child that results from this union is sin, and this sin, when it has run its course brings forth death.
- ✓ 4. Romans 6:23 says "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ, our Lord." *Can't raise the wages of sin. you can't.*
- ✓ 5. Romans 5:12 "When Adam sinned, the entire human race was declared guilty." His sin brought death into the world and so everyone began to grow old and die. *No one can strike for higher wages for sin.*
- ✓ 6. When we are born into the family of God by the new birth, we are given life and not death. But when we yield to sin, the end is death. Proverbs 14:12 says "There is a way which seems right unto man but the end thereof are the ways of death."
- ✓ 7. Robert Johnstone says that the will consents to the wicked wish, prompting becomes purpose, desire, determination. And the fruit of the unhallowed union of will and lust is clear, well defined actual sin.
- ✓ 8. Nieboer points out that lust is the bud sin is the blossom and death is the fruit. Bezodhiates points out that the Lord is far more interested in keeping our hearts pure than supervising details of action. Conception requires two minds, two ideas, two desires. Ours to Satan. Sin is born when you and Satan work on your desire together. He that falls into sin is a man. He that grieves at sin is a saint. He that boasts of sin is a devil. Sin has the ability of growing rapidly like the physical embryo to its maturity and completion. Death is the result instead of life as was expected. *Xian = Physical death; sin unto death.*
- ✓ 9. The end result or goal in the period of pregnancy, of course, is for life and the fulfillment of this goal is thrilling when the first cry of the newborn child is heard. This is a beautiful picture of the new birth which we can experience through faith in Jesus Christ. The picture here before us, however, is the opposite picture of falling into temptation and sin which will ultimately lead to death.
10. Barrett points out that there is an old Chinese proverb that goes: "Sow a thought and reap the deed. Sow a deed and reap a habit. Sow a habit and reap a destiny."
- ✓ 11. George Sweeting in his book And the Greatest of These says: "I heard a story once about an American eagle that was observed magnificently in the sky. Shortly it faltered, stopped and plunged toward the earth dead. When the eagle was examined, it was discovered that a small weasel had dug its claws into the abdomen of the bird, risen with the eagle into the sky and drained the life blood while the eagle tried to escape. Sin is like that, it robs us of power and life itself. If we take a friendly attitude toward evil, then the Lord may take harsh measures with us."

Ps. 1:12 "Blessed is the man that walks not in the counsel of the ungodly nor stands in the way of sinners nor sits in the seat of the scornful."

TOPIC	REF #	TEXT
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Sin	Misc-68	(<u>Pilgrim at Tinker Creek</u> by Annie Dillard) New York, NY: Harper & Row. Copyright – Annie Dillard, 1974.
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A couple of summers ago I was walking along the edge of the island to see what I could see in the water, and mainly to scare frogs. Frogs have an inelegant way of taking off from invisible positions on the bank just ahead of your feet, in dire panic, emitting a froggy “Yike!” and splashing into the water. Incredibly, this amused me, and, incredible, it amuses me still. As I walked along the grassy edge of the island, I got better and better at seeing frogs both in and out of the water. I learned to recognize, slowing down, the difference in texture of the light reflected from mudbank, water, grass, or frog. Frogs were flying all around me. At the end of the island I noticed a small green frog. He was exactly half in and half out of the water, looking like a schematic diagram of an amphibian, and he didn’t jump.

He didn’t jump; I crept closer. At last I knelt on the island’s winterkilled grass, lost, dumbstruck, staring at the frog in the creek just four feet away. He was a very small frog with wide, dull eyes. And just as I looked at him, he slowly crumpled and began to sag. The spirit vanished from his eyes as it snuffed. His skin emptied and drooped; his very skull seemed to collapse and settle like a kicked tent. He was shrinking before my eyes like a deflating football. I watched the taut, glistening skin on his shoulders ruck, and rumple, and fall. Soon, part of his skin, formless as a pricked balloon, lay in floating folds like bright scum on top of the water: it was a monstrous and terrifying thing. I gaped bewildered, appalled. An oval shadow hung in the water behind the drained frog; then the shadow glided away. The frog skin bag started to sink.

I had read about the giant water bug, but never seen one. “Giant water bug” is really the name of the creature, which is an enormous, heavy-bodied brown beetle. It eats insects, tadpoles, fish, and frogs. Its grasping forelegs are mighty and hooked inward. It seizes a victim with these legs, hugs it tight, and paralyzes it with enzymes injected during a vicious bite. That one bite is the only bite it ever takes. Through the puncture shoot the poisons that dissolve the victim’s muscles and bones and organs—all but the skin—and through it the giant water bug sucks out the victim’s body, reduced to a juice. This event is quite common in warm fresh water. The frog I saw was being sucked by a giant water bug. I had been kneeling on the island grass; when the unrecognizable flap of frog skin settled on the creek bottom, swaying, I stood up and brushed the knees of my pants. I couldn’t catch my breath.

pp. 5-6

- ① Breaking of the...
- ② So much easier the 2nd time.
- ③ Drinking, Drugs, Moral responsibility.

Verse Sixteen: Stop being deceived my brethren, beloved ones.

1. Here James makes a strong appeal asking that they not be deceived any longer for it is true that God does permit circumstances in our lives to test our faith.
2. Paul says the same thing to the Galatians in Galatians 6:7: Be not deceived, God is not mocked for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.
3. James knows full well the deceitfulness of sin and how the devil, the master deceiver, uses the pleasantness and enjoyment of sin as a means to get good people to submit to temptation and sin.
4. John says in 1 John 1:8: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us."
5. II Corinthians 4:4 Paul says: "In whom the God of this world Satan has blinded the minds of them that believe not, thus the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine unto them." It is James' desire that we know full well the source of temptation and also that we recognize the consequences of such. This then leads James to his further statement in Verse 17.

Verse Seventeen: Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above coming down from the Father of Lights, with whom there can be no change or shadow cast by variation.

1. James is saying here that God is the source of the good, not the bad. For every good gift and every perfect gift is from above and it is coming down from the Father of Lights in like manner, we can then say that the bad comes from beneath and comes from the god of this world who is the father of darkness and instead of life he brings death.
2. Ephesians 2:8-9 "For by grace are you saved through faith, and that not of yourselves. It is a gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast."
3. John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life." Romans 8:32 "Since He did not even spare his own son for us but gave him up for us all, won't He also surely give us everything else."
4. John 10: 28-29 "I give them eternal life and they shall never perish. No one shall snatch them away from me. My father has given them to me and He is more powerful than any one else so no one can kidnap them from me."
5. Do not be deceived my brethren, beloved ones. The good gifts come from the Father of Lights.
6. James adds this characteristic statement following the title "Father of Lights" "with whom there can be no change or shadow cast by variation." We can count on God being unchangeable. The scripture teaches us that He is the Lord God and He changes not. We also see this quality in Jesus Christ, who is the same yesterday, today and forever.
7. Guy King in his book A Belief that Behaves points out that the Father of Lights is the maker and giver of these rolling spheres and He is a lavish benefactor of all who dwell beneath their golden radiance.
8. Eric Sauer in his book The King of the Earth says "Know if there is a God and the Bible, nature and personal experience are witnesses to His living, undeniable existence, then He must be the God of His whole creation, the God of all men, the ruler of the universe, the God of Heaven and Earth."
9. So James presents for us God as one who is a great giver, a Father of Lights, and who is without change and knows neither turning nor darkness.

Prov. 5:3 "For the lips of a strange woman drip as honeycomb, & her mouth is smoother than oil."
V. 4 "But her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two edged sword."

Rom. 8:28

II Cor. 9:15
① GIFT OF HIS SON

When Godly People Do Ungodly Things!

Arming Yourself in The Age of Seduction

Beth Moore

the first Passover night, Satan cannot enter our abode. Those of us who have received Christ as our personal Savior are the dwelling places of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19–20). Our doorposts are covered by the precious blood of our Passover Lamb. Neither Satan nor his demons can enter us.

The more we understand what the covering of Christ's blood means to us, the more we overcome a foe that is otherwise far too strong for us. Satan's worst nightmare is being overcome—particularly by measly mortals. He knows the Bible says we overcome our accuser in two primary ways. If he can do nothing about the blood of the Lamb covering the redeemed, what's a devil to do? Go for the word of their testimony! Satan is out to destroy the testimony of the believer in Christ. The more influential the testimony, the better. His murderous eye is on the sparrow, and he doesn't have much time. His strategy is to kill as many birds as possible with one stone.

We don't have to be rocket scientists to figure out that Satan's favorite prey is a person of godly influence. Peter spoke from the vantage point of personal experience when he said, "Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour" (1 Pet. 5:8). Satan had nearly eaten him alive. Peter continued, "Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings" (v. 9).

Allow me to jump ahead to subject matter we'll approach further in our study by saying that we are certainly not sitting ducks. Later in part 1, we'll learn why some godly people are more vulnerable than others. Then in part 2, we'll learn ways to guard ourselves against that kind of vulnerability.

For now I want you to take a look back at the final word in the Scripture I last quoted from 1 Peter 5:9. The word is *sufferings*. I don't know how many times I've repeated the statement I'm about to make, but I'll keep saying it until at least one skeptic hears: *Not everyone in a stronghold of sin is having a good time.*

Many people who by the grace of God have never been "had" by the devil wrongly assume that all departures from godliness are nothing but defiance, rebellion, and proofs of inauthenticity. They have no idea of the suffering involved when someone with a genuine heart for God slips from the path.

Tangling with a roaring lion who is trying his hardest to devour you can constitute real and authentic suffering. In fact, I have suffered more at the flesh-ripping paws of the raging lion than anything else.

I lived a measure of my young life in rebellion and in defeat, but I can say without hesitation that the times the enemy came after me most ferociously were *not* those times. During times of rebellion, all the devil had to do was cheer me on and tell me to keep up the good work.

The times in my life when I believe the powers of darkness raged most violently against me were seasons when I had never loved God more. I was not walking in sin previous to either of the times I fought my hardest battles with the kingdom of darkness.

At first I thought I was the exception. I can well remember my devastating failure in my college years. I thought I was the only young woman in the whole Christian world who ever fell grievously into sin after sincerely devoting her life to vocational ministry. I was completely devastated. Totally shamed. I had no

idea where to turn. With no outside help or a single explanation for what I had experienced, I did my best to pull it together.

Satan waited until I had accrued a much better track record, had grown a little more confident in a consistent walk, and looked suspiciously like God could make me slightly dangerous . . . then he hit me again. *Hard*. This time God said, "Have you had about enough, child?" *Affirmative*. "All right then. Now I'm going to teach you how to fight."

We've been at it for years. Many of those lessons will be shared through these pages. I'm no expert, but I'm willing to share the little I know. I believe with all my heart that if God can teach this former captive how to walk in victory and win horrific battles through the power of His Spirit, He can teach anyone.

Now that countless letters, frantic phone calls, and face-to-face testimonies have found their way to my office, I realize I am far from the only true lover of God whom Satan has tried to devour. Although I would never characterize myself as "godly," I will tell you that I loved God more than anything on earth at the times of greatest demonic assault.

I know plenty of others whom I would not hesitate to have called godly, yet they suddenly found themselves the object of an overwhelming assault of ungodliness. Oh yes, it can happen. In fact, I can't help but think Peter's words in 1 Peter 5:9 may apply to our generation like never before: "Your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings." Based on the findings landing on my desk, increasing numbers of dear brothers and sisters *throughout the world* are undergoing tremendous suffering at the paws of the roaring lion. Some of it comes in an unexpected, overwhelming season of temptation. Not

unlike the temptations Satan hurled at Christ, they can vary in type, but one thing is for sure: They are tailor-made to catch the believer off guard. Many sincere believers fall before they even know what hit them.

Can you imagine the horror and isolation of devout missionaries on the foreign field who stumble into well-disguised traps of the devil? What do they do? Where do they go? Will people help? Or will they throw them out in disgrace? What's a Body to do with godly people who unexpectedly turn to ungodly things? May we give some very serious thought to the answers to these questions as we turn the pages of this book.

Charles Spurgeon provided a fitting conclusion to our first chapter. Read it soberly:

There is nothing that Satan can do for his evil cause that he does not do. We may be halfhearted, but he never is. He is the very image of ceaseless industry and untiring earnestness. He will do all that can be done in the time of his permitted rage. We may be sure that he will never lose a day.²

Dear Body of Christ, it's time we put down the popguns of yesteryear's church. Satan is waging a worldwide nuclear war.

5

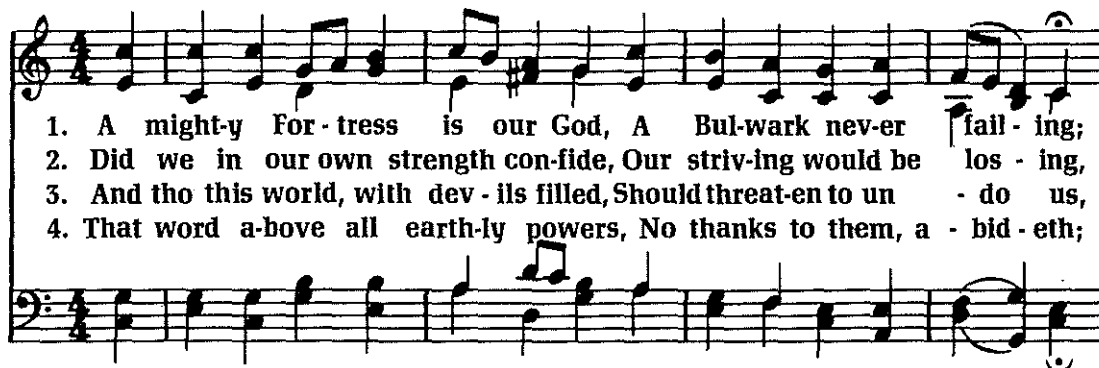
A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

EIN' FESTE BURG

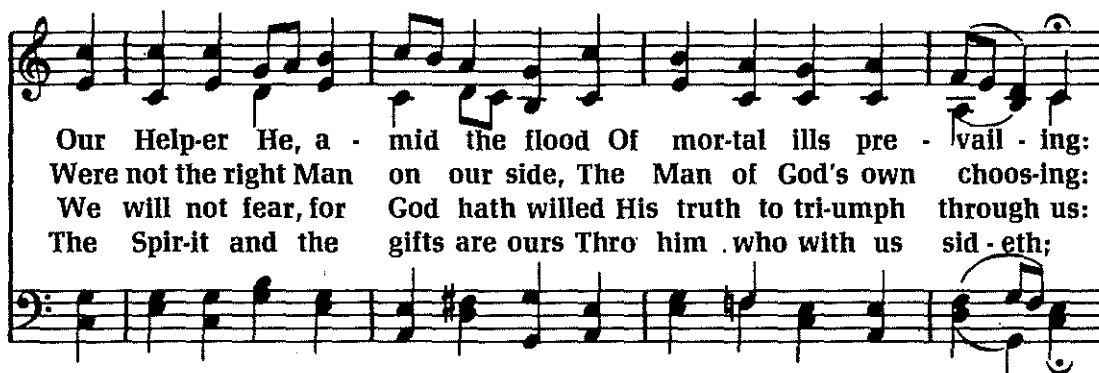
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Trans. by Frederick H. Hedge

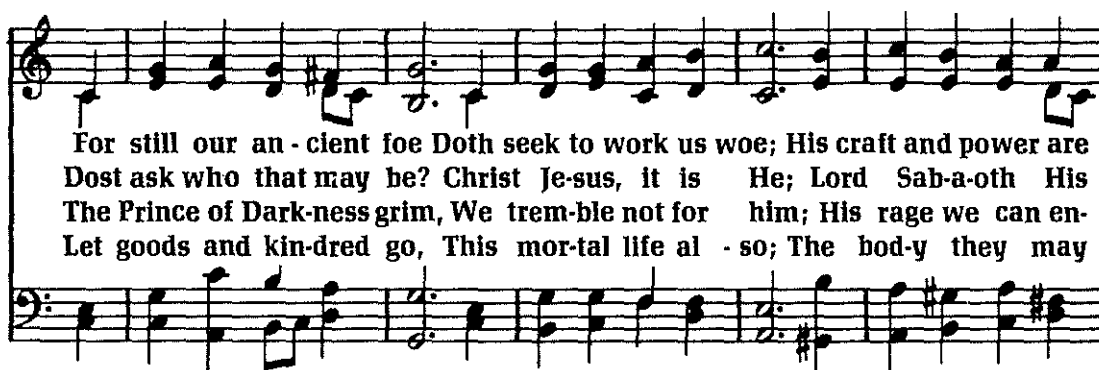
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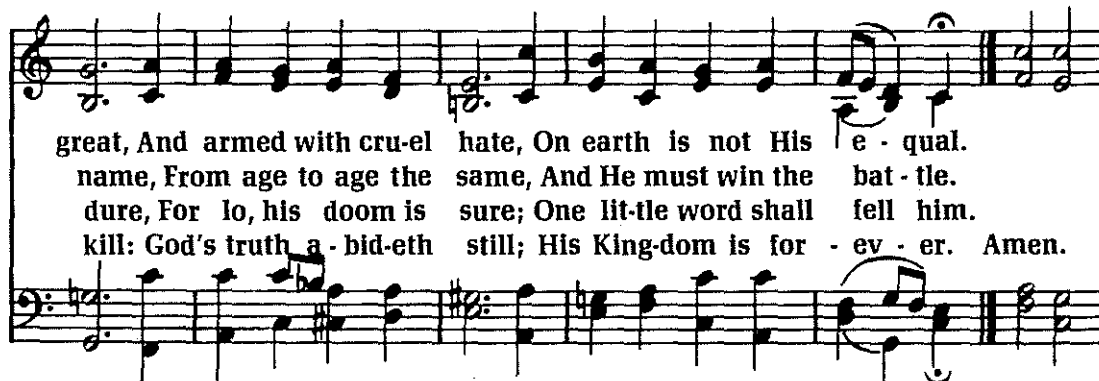
1. A might-y For-tress is our God, A Bul-wark nev-er fail-ing;
 2. Did we in our own strength con-fide, Our striv-ing would be los-ing,
 3. And tho this world, with dev-ils filled, Should threat-en to un-do us,
 4. That word a-bove all earth-ly powers, No thanks to them, a-bid-eth;



Our Help-er He, a-mid the flood Of mor-tal ills pre-vall-ing:
 Were not the right Man on our side, The Man of God's own choos-ing:
 We will not fear, for God hath willed His truth to tri-umph through us:
 The Spir-it and the gifts are ours Thro him who with us sid-eth;



For still our an-cient foe Doth seek to work us woe; His craft and power are
 Dost ask who that may be? Christ Je-sus, it is He; Lord Sab-a-oth His
 The Prince of Dark-ness grim, We trem-ble not for him; His rage we can en-
 Let goods and kin-dred go, This mor-tal life al-so; The bod-y they may



great, And armed with cru-el hate, On earth is not His e-qual.
 name, From age to age the same, And He must win the bat-tle.
 dure, For lo, his doom is sure; One lit-tle word shall fell him.
 kill: God's truth a-bid-eth still; His King-dom is for-ev-er. Amen.

Verse Eighteen: According to His will, He brought us into being through the word of truth to the end that we might be a kind of first fruits of his creatures.

- ✓ 1. Here James tells us that God is not the author of death, but of life, for according to His will He brought us into being through the word of truth.
- ✓ 2. John 1:13 "Who were born not of blood, nor of flesh, nor of the will of man but of God."
- ✓ 3. James does teach about the new birth and the experience of regeneration or being made alive spiritually.
4. The instrument that God uses is the word of truth. 1 Peter 1:23 "Being born again not of corruptible seed but incorruptible by the word of God which lives and abides forever."
5. Isaiah the Prophet speaks about the vitality of the word of God in Isaiah 55:11 "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth. It shall not return unto me void but it shall accomplish that which I please and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."
- * ✓ 6. Whereas by the new birth, life is given, we see that temptation and sin in Verse 15 bring forth death.
- ✓ 7. The end in view for this act of regeneration is that we might be a kind of first fruits of his creatures.
8. Ephesians 2:10 says "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works."
- ✓ 9. G. Coleman Luck in his book Faith in Action says God is seeking to perfect Christian character in us now in order that we may be specimens, if you please, of what he wants humanity to be and as samples of what He, through the Gospel of Christ, is able to make of ordinary human beings.
- ✓ 10. Ephesians 1:13-14 "And because of what Christ did, all you others too who heard the good news about how to be saved and trusted Christ were marked as belonging to Christ by the Holy Spirit who long ago had been promised to all of us Christians whose presence within us is God's guarantee that He really will give us all that He promised and the Spirit's seal upon us means that God has already purchased us and that He guarantees to bring us to Himself." This is just one more reason for us to praise our glorious God.
11. Robert Johnstone points out: "Can anything be conceived more foolish and blasphemous than to count Him the author of sin which is the spring of wretchedness and death?"

CONCLUSION: We have studied in this second Pointer for Progress the subject Growth is Stunted by Sin and our key verse has been Verse 15. "Then when the desire is conceived, it is giving birth to sin and this sin when it has run its course brings forth death." We have noted that temptation does not come from God but it comes from our own desires and these desires, when they have conceived give birth to sin, and sin brings ultimate death. Whereas the first verses of this section give the negative, the last verses give the positive because every good gift and every perfect gift is from above. It comes down from the Father of Lights and it is His will not to produce death but life in order that we might be a kind of first fruit of his creatures. Barrett says: "Through all the changes in this mad, mad, mad, mad world God remains steadfast, unchanging, completely dependable. His gifts are good and complete and the greatest gift He offers you is the privilege of being His child. When God said to Adam and Eve: "Don't do it" and Satan said: "Do it" and they did, they took themselves out of God's hands. It was their choice so by choice they were lost. That is what being lost is, out of God's hands.

②
GIFT
OF LIFE

First Fruits

And so everyone who was born after that was also out of God's hands.
In the course of time, when God was ready, He sent our Lord to die
for this lost mankind and He was punished in the place of every lost
person. This was God's gift to every person born. Your privilege as
a person is to accept this gift and thereby put yourself back into
God's hands. That's what makes you a Christian. The terminology is
 unimportant, but the transaction, no matter how you word it, is the
 most important one you'll make in all your life.

I trust that if you do not know Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour,
 that at the conclusion of this study you will invite Him to come into
 your life and become your Saviour and at this point you can begin
 following some of the Pointers for Progress that we are studying in
 the Book of James.

Are you at such a spiritual state that if you died
 tonight would you go to heaven.

If you met the Lord what would you tell him the reason you
 should get in.

Lesson #1 Human Nature tends to resist the test And
 respond to the temptation + God desires the
 reverse. --

Lesson #2 You won't like the test but you will the
 Temptation. --

Lesson #3 Temptation does not find its Source with
 the Father

Lesson #4 Temptation brings forth death. --

Lesson #5 Tests Come As You Struggle + Temptation
 As You Are Successful.

(Connecting: The Mentoring Relationships You Need to Succeed
in Life by Paul D. Stanley and J. Robert Clinton)

THE RACE
by D. H. Groberg

I.

"Quit! Give up! You're beaten!"
They shout at me and plead.
"There's just too much against you now.
This time you can't succeed!"

And as I start to hang my head
In front of failure's face,
My downward fall is broken by
The memory of a race.

And hope refills my weakened will
As I recall that scene;
For just the thought of that short race
Rejuvenates my being.

II.

A children's race--young boys, young men
How I remember well.
Excitement, sure! But also fear;
It wasn't hard to tell.

They all lined up so full of hopes
Each thought to win that race.
Or tie for first, or if not that,
At least take second place.

And fathers watched from off the side,
Each cheering for his son.
And each boy hoped to show his dad
That he would be the one.

The whistle blew and off they went!
Young hearts and hopes afire.
To win and be the hero there
Was each young boy's desire.

And one boy in particular
Whose dad was in the crowd,
Was running near the lead and thought,
"My dad will be so proud!"

But as they speeded down the field
 Across a shallow dip,
 The little boy who thought to win
 Lost his step and slipped.

Trying hard to catch himself
 His hands flew out to brace,
 And mid the laughter of the crowd
 He fell flat on his face.

So down he fell and with him hope
 He couldn't win it now--
 Embarrassed, sad, he only wished
 To disappear somehow.

But as he fell his dad stood up
 And showed his anxious face,
 Which to the boy so clearly said:
 "Get up and win the race."

He quickly rose, no damage done.
 Behind a bit, that's all--
 And ran with all his mind and might
 To make up for his fall.

So anxious to restore himself
 To catch up and to win--
 His mind went faster than his legs;
 He slipped and fell again!

He wished then he had quit before
 With only one disgrace.
 "I'm hopeless as a runner now;
 I shouldn't try to race."

But in the laughing crowd he searched
 And found his father's face.
 That steady look which said again:
 "Get up and win the race!"

So up he jumped to try again
 Ten yards behind the last--
 "If I'm to gain those yards," he thought,
 "I've got to move real fast."

Exerting everything he had
 He gained eight or ten
 But trying so hard to catch the lead
 He slipped and fell again!

Defeat! He lay there silently
 A tear dropped from his eye--
 "There's no sense running any more;
 Three strikes: I'm out! Why try?"

The will to rise had disappeared
 All hope had fled away;
 So far behind, so error prone;
 A loser all the way.

"I've lost, so what's the use," he thought.

"I'll live with my disgrace."
 But then he thought about his dad
 Who soon he'd have to face.

"Get up," an echo sounded low.
 "Get up and take your place;
 You were not meant for failure here.
 Get up and win the race."

"With borrowed will, get up," it said,
 "You haven't lost at all,
 For winning is no more than this:
 To rise each time you fall."

So up he rose to run once more,
 And with a new commit
 He resolved that win or lose
 At least he wouldn't quit.

So far behind the others now,
 The most he'd ever been--
 Still he gave it all he had
 And ran as though to win.

Three times he'd fallen, stumbling;
 Three times he rose again;
 Too far behind to hope to win
 He still ran to the end.

They cheered the winning runner
 As he crossed the line first place,
 Head high, and proud, and happy;
 No falling, no disgrace.

But when the fallen youngster
 Crossed the line last place,
 The crowd gave him the greater cheer
 For finishing the race.

And even though he came in last
 With head bowed low, unproud,
 You would have thought he'd won the
 Race to listen to the crowd.

And to his dad he sadly said,
 "I didn't do so well."
 "To me, you won," his father said.
 "You rose each time you fell."

III.

And now when things seem dark and hard
 And difficult to face,
 The memory of that little boy
 Helps me in my own race.

For all of life is like that race,
 With ups and downs and all.
 And all you have to do to win,
 Is rise each time you fall.

"Quit! Give up! You're beaten!"
 They still shout in my face.
 But another voice within me says:
 "GET UP AND WIN THE RACE!"

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Phil. 3:14

Joshua 4:24 " He did this so that All
 The peoples OF the earth might know
 That the hand OF the Lord is powerful
 And so that you might Always Fear the
 Lord Your God. "