

The Book Of James With Francis Chan: A 12-Day Video Bible Study

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Devotional

Watch Video At: <https://youtu.be/gAZI4W-QBww>

Did you ever use the excuse, “The devil made me do it!” after giving in to a temptation? We like to deflect blame from our own poor choices, don’t we? Some people in James’s day even tried to blame God for their own failures. As though He made it impossible for them to resist wrongdoing.

But God doesn’t work that way. James 1:13 clearly states that God is not the source of temptation. Rather, our own desires entice us to take what we want, when we want it. We know the feeling of being baited, like Francis pointed out—God says something is wrong or evil, but we want it anyway. We have a choice at that moment. Just like that fish that’s being lured away, either I go and I grab it, or I swim away.

Our heavenly Father is the source of “every good gift and every perfect gift.” He started by giving us life itself. His love gives us purpose and significance, just because we are His children. All the good things in life are just bonus, extra blessings He chooses to give us.

So don’t listen to the tempter’s deceptive words. Giving in to temptation takes us down a road from temporary pleasure to sin, which, if not stopped, will lead to death. What seems so small can have big consequences: Gossip could lead to a broken relationship. Gluttony can lead to chronic illness. Speeding can lead to car accidents. Our choices point us either toward life or death.

It’s hard to believe that God’s way is best when we’re being tempted. We get easily distracted by the glitter of more things, more attention, more pleasure, right? The promises of pleasure cause temporary blindness. But James tells us not to be deceived. Remember: God gives us a whole new life that is infinitely better than anything the tempter can offer. A kind word can pull someone out of suicidal thoughts. Healthy eating honors the body God gave us. Generosity combats our selfish tendencies.

We often assume that the best way to fight temptation is self-discipline. Grit your teeth and do the right thing. Just say no. And there’s nothing wrong with saying no. But maybe there’s a better approach—also saying *yes* to the kind of life God wants to give us.

Think about your best strategy to fight temptation. You will be tempted—no question about that. What can you do to prepare for temptation? What positive steps can you take today to obey and honor God's way?