

The Blame Game

James 1:12-17

Verse 13—“Don’t say you’re being tempted by God, because God can’t be tempted”—How is that a reason?!!!!

What?

Let trials make you fitter, not bitter

Better, not bitter—

The word “trial” that James uses over and over again can also mean “temptation”

“Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under a trial that has the potential of becoming a temptation”

13—Why does He say, “God cannot be tempted with evil”

James uses another word that can mean “tempt” or “test”

“Do not say ‘I am being tempted by God, because God’s motives cannot be tested by evil people’”

Then James paints a grotesque picture of where temptation and sin really come from in verses 14-15

Later in the epistle, he says, “Resist the devil,” which implies that Satan has a part in turning trials into temptations

Then James says, “Don’t be deceived; let me tell you what God is really like” in verses 16-18

So in our trials, God is not tempting us to sin, but inviting us deeper into life

Connection with Jesus—

Hebrews 4:15, ESV—For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin

The test of Jesus’ perfect Manhood also became a temptation to abandon His mission

The Big Question—What is God’s motive?

He may want to prove the faith of the believer to others, or even to the believer, or deal with pride, or produce growth

But does God want to prove our faith to Himself?—

Genesis 22:11–12, ESV—But the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, “Abraham, Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.” He said, “Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me”

No, God knew from eternity Abraham’s faith, but was announcing it in time when He saw Abraham demonstrate it

So What?

When the pain gets intense, you might cut yourself off from the fellowship of others, make rash decisions, spend money you don’t have, or even use substances or pornography, or just spew bitterness

All of this represents sinful unbelief toward God

Instead, seek wisdom from God and others, and preach God’s promises to yourself

The last word—

1 Corinthians 10:13, ESV—No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it

Now What?

Stoke your mind and heart with God’s promises
Pray for wisdom concerning God’s purpose and strength to persevere