

LESSON 3

EXCUSES, EXCUSES

JAMES 1:13–18



1 What is one of the funniest excuses that you have ever heard a small child try to use?

2 Describe a time in your childhood when you tried to blame someone else for a problem that you really caused. Did you get away with it? What happened?



Read James 1:13–18 and the following notes:

☐ 1:12–15 ☐ 1:13, 14 ☐ 1:13–15

3 What two arguments does James use here to demonstrate that God is not the source of temptation?

4 What is the ultimate source of temptation?

5 Why is temptation so dangerous?

6 How is it possible for Christians to be deceived?

7 How are temptations different from trials?



Temptations come from our own sinful desires as we are attracted and inflamed by the world’s values, people, and pleasures. These temptations lead us into sin and away from God. It should not be surprising, then, that we often try to blame God as the source of our temptations. This kind of attitude drives us even farther away from God. Don’t be deceived—shifting the blame will cause you to doubt God’s goodness.

8 God does not tempt us, but he will test our faith.

9 If God really does love his people, why doesn't he protect them from temptations?



10 When temptation comes, why do people tend to blame others and excuse themselves instead of taking responsibility for their sin and their actions?

11 What might cause people to blame God for their temptations?

12 Other than blaming God when we are tempted, what are some other ways we avoid taking responsibility for our own actions?

13 What specific activities awaken and encourage your sinful desires and lead to temptation? (For example, for some people it may be browsing at a magazine rack, watching certain television shows or movies, or envying others.)

14 In what ways do you avoid taking responsibility for your sin? What favorite excuses do you find yourself using?

15 What can you do to prevent yourself from falling into temptation?

16 What are some appropriate ways for Christians to respond after they have given in to temptation?

17 What resources has God given you for resisting and defeating temptation?



18 Think of one particular area of your life where you are consistently being tempted and led into sin. How can you stop excusing yourself? What can you do to prevent this from happening?

A What is Satan's role in the process of temptation? How can you resist his efforts in your life?

B What are some examples of being tempted but not sinning? How can you know when you are crossing the line?

C What ways does Satan use to lead churches into temptation and sin? What are some specific areas of concern for your local church?

D Why do you think James emphasized the goodness of God at this point? What good gifts has God given you that help you feel his love?

E What did James mean when he called his readers God's "choice possession"? Why do you think he used this phrase to describe believers?

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