

ii. God is the Father of Lights (1 John 1:5)

B. The answer to Folly's lie (18).

i. Our desires (passions) lead to death.

ii. God's delight or will leads to life.

iii. Ephesians 2:1-10

### LIVE THE STORY

*The Gospel is intended to be learned and lived in community.  
The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.*

- Explain how what some might say (though forbidden to) in James 1:13a is an example of good theology, mixed with foolish reasoning, that can lead someone astray.
- Read James 1:13-18. What comparisons and contrasts do you find? What words stand out? What themes connect to earlier parts of the chapter? What imperatives are in this section?
- Have you seen the tendency to always want to blame something or someone outside ourselves for what we do wrong? Have you seen it in yourself? Why does it hinder the spiritual maturation process?
- How are we tempted by evil, and why, therefore, is God completely *untemptable* by evil? How does 1 Corinthians 10:13 give additional insight into what is going on during trials and temptations?
- What are the types of desires that temptation uses to draw us into sin? [The following questions may help identify some of your own.]
  - ◆ What "makes you angry"? What is it you want in that moment that you are not getting (or feel you are not getting)?
  - ◆ What do you fear? What do you tend to worry about? What do you not want that you fear is coming?
  - ◆ Think of your last conflict. What did you want in that moment? What expectations were being ruined? What were you afraid of?
  - ◆ What tantalizes or terrifies you? What is the center around which your life orbits? Christ? Entertainment? Comfort? Peace? Solitude? Respect? Money? Power? Autonomy? Control? Being right?

## Faith that Turns Your World Right Side Up (Part 4) The Folly that Leads to Death... and the Truth to Combat It!

Jerry Cisar — May 29, 2016

Text: James 1:13-18

### Introduction: Trials Bring Questions

G.K. Chesterton: "...we often do not begin to question until the megaphone of suffering has awakened us from our sleep." "...questions rise to the surface during seasons of suffering," because suffering "shocks us out of our complacent attachment to the blessings of comfort and prosperity....When we see the reason for our pain, when we are finally given the meaning— the satisfaction will be a joy beyond words, a peace beyond understanding. But until then, the questions that grip us demonstrate the nature of our hearts and our fundamental need for the purification of our desires."

Chesterton: *For if we are to enter into the questioning life, we might begin by questioning ourselves....We ought not give ourselves the benefit of the doubt if we plan on doubting everything else.*

### I. Folly's Answer (1:13a)

- A. *Test/trial* can mean either an affliction from the outside, or *temptation*—something from the inside that entices you to do evil.

CSB James 1:13 *No one undergoing a trial should say, "I am being tempted by God." For God is not tempted by evil, and He Himself doesn't tempt anyone.* (Jam 1:13 CSB)

B. It's God's Fault!

- i. Good theology, mixed with foolish reasoning, can deceive.

Moo: *The tendency to blame God for temptation, and hence 'excuse succumbing to it,' was a familiar problem for a people who stressed the sovereignty of God—if temptation comes from God, how could one resist it? A century and a half before James, Jesus the son of Sirach was protesting against this tendency: 'Do not say, "Because of the Lord I left the right way"; for he will not do what he hates. Do not say, "It was he who led me astray"; for he has no need of a sinful man'....*

- ii. A biblical view of God's sovereignty means wrestling with God's complete non-responsibility for sin.
  - a) ... *the heart is deceitful above all things!* (Jeremiah 17:9)
  - b) Proverbs 19:3 LXE *The folly of a man spoils his ways: and he blames God in his heart.*
- iii. The *wisdom* that blames God for our sin is from below!

## II. Folly Exposed (1:13b-15)

- A. Why can't we ever say God is tempting me to sin?
  - i. *God is untemptable by evil.*

David Wells: *...there is not the slightest possibility that God can ever accommodate the evil he opposes. That is an idea we find in some Eastern religion [sic], but it is as far from biblical truth as anything could be....Evil is never an option for him and, indeed, it is ever and always opposed by him. (God in the Whirlwind)*

- ii. So He tempts no one.
  - a) God can never desire or want for you as a person to succumb to the temptation for that would be against His very nature.
  - b) 1 Corinthians 10:13

- B. If God isn't responsible, where does temptation come from?
  - i. Good news; Bad news.
  - ii. John 14:30
- C. What are these desires?
  - i. 1 Peter 2:11
  - ii. Galatians 5:16-17; 19-21
  - iii. James 3:14; 4:1

Ed Welch (Why Do I Do the Things I Do?): *Christian idolatry is more subtle than an outright, vocal abandonment of Christ. We may simply feel that Christ is not enough. We reason, He can be counted on for eternal salvation, but will He really give me the things I feel I need, like money, marriage, or personal pleasure? So, just to be safe, we spread our trust between the true God and various idols. It's like having a diversified stock portfolio. We cheat on our taxes, excuse our premarital sexual relationships, and avoid inconvenient people. It doesn't seem so bad because we haven't actually renounced Christ, but this compromised trust is equivalent to turning away from God.*

- D. Folly's Dysfunctional Family (15)

## III. Wisdom's Answer (1:16-18)

- A. What is a good gift? What is a perfect gift?
  - i. A good/beneficial gift causes benefit, and a maturing, completing gift is a gift that causes the one who receives it to mature, to become more complete in the image of God. Similar to: Happy occasion, glad tidings, a painful remark.