Sin is Bad, God is Good 8.30.09

13 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. 14 But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. 15 Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death. 16 Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers. 17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. 18 Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures. James 1:13-18

Overview of the Text: James gives a command *"Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God…"* & then he offers an explanation for that command. He then explains how temptation actually works and makes further comments about the character of God.

"Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," This is the same Greek word for 'testing' that we saw earlier.

P: Every trial contains both 'testing' and 'temptation.'

P: When we are tempted, we often look for others to blame.

"for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one." God cannot be tempted by evil because His nature is perfect holiness. If He can't be tempted by evil, then He certainly couldn't tempt anyone else with evil.

"But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed" Fishing and hunting terms. "Drawing fish out of their hiding place to catch them." "Baiting a trap."
"by his own desire." Ref. to our own human lusts and desires. Most often, not a normal-sized desire for a bad thing but an oversized desire for a good thing.

P: The problem in temptation lies inside of us, not outside of us.
Do we take ownership for this or do we try to blame others for our sin?

P: We are only tempted by the things that are attractive to us.
Do I know what my weaknesses and temptations are? Do I have a plan to address them?

"Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death." James changes to a conception/birth metaphor.

P: Sin has a sequence.

The Sequence of Sin:

1. We are lured by our own desires.
2. We sin. We "miss the mark." In that moment, we are treasuring something else more than Jesus. We are turning from our actual Savior to a functional savior.
3. That sin leads to death.

Where do I see that sequence unfolding in my life? Do I see the inevitable death that it can bring? What do I need to do to stop it?

Breaking the Sequence:

1. Immerse yourself in the Scriptures.
    a. They will strengthen your faith and allow you to fight like Jesus.
2. Confess your sins to God and someone else.
    a. Pray for each other and hold each other accountable. Check website.
3. Deal with the outside and the inside.
    a. All of our behavior comes from our hearts.

"Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change."
Lit. "Stop being deceived" Possible this has been happening. Increasingly good gifts. "Lights" – the celestial bodies (earth, moon, stars) change but He does not.

P: God is a good and generous Father whose character does not change.
Is this how I perceive God or am I allowing other experiences to cloud my thinking?

"Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures." Ref. to our regeneration unto salvation through the Gospel. Firstfruits: Could mean the first of many Christians to be saved or that we are a 'living example' of the Kingdom that is to come.

P: God is the initiator of our salvation.

P: We have been saved to be a living example of the Kingdom that is to come.

Is this being reflected in my life? If not, what needs to change?

Works Consulted: *Expositor's Commentary, , MacArthur Study Bible, ESV Study Bible, Message by Jonathan MacIntosh and Darrin Patrick*