



LET'S BEGIN HERE

If you're breathing, then you've faced the struggle against temptation.

You may be battling a lustful thought or fighting the urge to lash out in revenge, even as you begin this study. You are not alone. In fact, none of us are strangers to the constant assault of temptation. Thankfully, in this New Testament letter that emphasizes a *hands-on* Christianity, James confronted this menace head-on, offering both practical wisdom about the nature of temptation and genuine help for getting loose from its relentless grip.



Getting Started: The Nature of Temptation

When searching the Scriptures, a helpful first step is to gather resources that will guide you in your study. Make certain you have a Bible dictionary and a concordance handy, as well as a reliable commentary on the book of the Bible you're studying. For this study of James, we recommend you get a copy of *Swindoll's Living Insights New Testament Commentary: James, 1 & 2 Peter*. You'll find a description of that and other resources on the last page of this study.

NOTE: From time to time throughout this study, you'll notice bolded page numbers in parentheses next to a question or comment. These page numbers correspond to the section in *Swindoll's Living Insights New Testament Commentary: James, 1 & 2 Peter* where that particular point is discussed.

Take a few minutes to read through all of James chapter 1. Read it slowly, as if you're reading it for the very first time.

Quotable

James makes very clear that we simply cannot say, "The Devil made me do it!" That is definitely not a biblical response.

The lure of temptation lies deep within the shifting shadows of every human heart.

— Charles R. Swindoll





Helpful Hint

Remember: *Observation* is a critical beginning technique you will want to use to put together the pieces of a passage of Scripture. Paying particular attention to James 1:13–18, make some initial observations about what you see—for instance, *are there any repeated words? Did James use any connecting words that offer clues into what he was emphasizing?* Take some time to make notes on a separate sheet of paper about what you discover.



Your Turn in the Scriptures

James wanted us to understand the nature of temptation. He wrote, “Let no one say when he is tempted: ‘I am being tempted by God’; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust” (James 1:13–14).

Study the illustration below. Then go back and read James 1:13–15.

The Slippery Slope of Sin

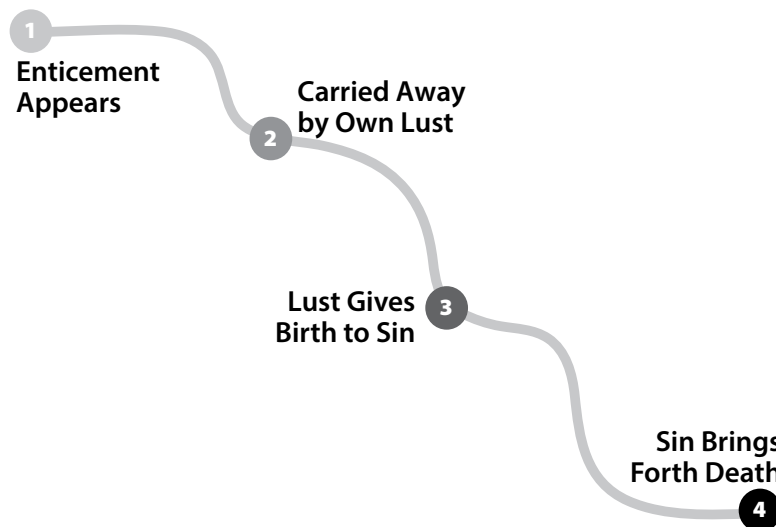


Chart taken from *Insights on James, 1 & 2 Peter* copyright © 2014 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc. Tyndale House Publishers. All rights reserved worldwide. Used by permission.



Now take a few minutes to respond to the following questions using the study resources you have available.

What observations can you make about how James described the nature of temptation? What verbs or action phrases did James use to illustrate temptation's slippery slope (**pages 28–31**)?

If you have a Bible dictionary, look up the word *lust*. Read through the definition and corresponding notes on the meaning of this word and the various passages in the Bible where it is used. Where else in the Bible is this word used?

How would you summarize its meaning, based on these multiple uses? (Remember: This is the very important aspect of *correlation* in the searching the Scriptures process!)

Obviously, lust is only one area of our lives in which we find ourselves tempted to sin. What are some other areas of temptation with which we as Christians struggle?

Once you've identified several areas of temptation, go back and read aloud James 1:14–15. Each time you read the word *lust*, replace it with another word that represents an area of temptation.

For example, *anger* . . .

“But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own [*anger*]. Then when [*anger*] has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.”

Or perhaps, *worry* . . .

“But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own [*worry*]. Then when [*worry*] has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.”



Now try a few on your own.

“But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own . Then when has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.”

As you heard in Chuck’s message, he identified two powerful applications that encourage us to embrace God’s provision for overcoming temptations. Read James 1:16–18. In the spaces next to these applications below, write down the words and phrases you find in these three verses from which you think Chuck draws these principles. Then explain your thinking (**pages 34–35**).

*Principle for Victory #1: **Victory comes through dwelling on the good.***

Chuck based this principle on what verse/word/phrase?

How would you explain your answer?

*Principle for Victory #2: **Victory comes through living in the truth.***

Chuck based this principle on what verse/word/phrase?

How would you explain your answer?

Imagine you are preparing to lead a Bible study on the principles for overcoming temptation, based on James 1:13–18. Write down two applications for each principle for victory above that Christians could use in their own lives.



Victory comes from dwelling on the good. (James 1:17)

Applications:

- 1.
- 2.

Victory comes through living in the truth. (1:18)

Applications:

- 1.
- 2.



A FINAL PRAYER

Turn to Psalm 139:23–24. Read these verses aloud as you close this study, and make these words your personal prayer for the Lord’s gracious assistance in helping you overcome temptation’s power.

Our Father, as David pleads in Psalm 139, by Your grace, help me overcome temptation’s power. Thank You for Your faithfulness in providing the truth and power to lift me from this struggle. I pray in the mighty name of Jesus Christ, amen.



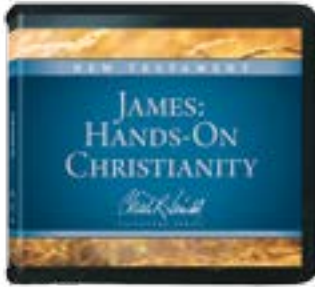
JAMES
Hands-On Christianity
Plain Talk about Temptation
James 1:13–18

SEARCHING
THE
SCRIPTURES

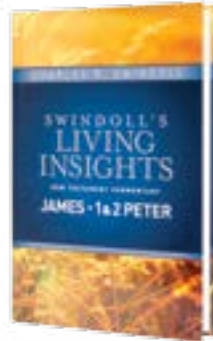
STUDY



Tools for Digging Deeper



**James: Hands-On
Christianity**
by Charles R. Swindoll
CD series



**Swindoll's Living Insights
New Testament Commentary:
James, 1 & 2 Peter**
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For the 2016 broadcast, this Searching the Scriptures study was developed by Mark Tobey in collaboration with Charles R. Swindoll based upon the original outlines, charts, and sermon transcripts..



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