

James 1:14

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

Analysis

But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Each person is tempted when drawn away (*exelkomenos*, ἐξελκόμενος) and enticed (*deleazomenos*, δελεαζόμενος) by his own desire (*epithymia*, ἐπιθυμία). James uses fishing and hunting imagery—bait lures prey outward. The battlefield is internal; sinful cravings hook the heart before external sin occurs.

This anthropology matches Reformed teaching on total depravity: temptation exploits disordered desires, not merely external pressures. Sanctification therefore involves mortifying sinful appetites and cultivating holy affections through the gospel.

Historical Context

Diaspora Christians surrounded by pagan festivals, economic pressures, and sexual immorality needed clarity on the source of temptation. James echoes Jesus' teaching that defilement proceeds from the heart (Mark 7). Paul's letters similarly warn believers to put to death earthly passions (Colossians 3:5).

Understanding temptation as an internal battle empowered believers to resist cultural harassment without blaming circumstances.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. What desires most often lure you away from obedience?
2. How can meditation on Christ's sufficiency weaken those cravings?
3. What boundaries or habits will you implement to avoid baited traps?

Interlinear Text

ἕκαστος	δὲ	πειράζεται	ὑπὸ	τῆς	ιδίας	ἐπιθυμίας
every man	But	is tempted	of	G3588	his own	lust
G1538	G1161	G3985	G5259		G2398	G1939
ἐξελκόμενος	καὶ	δελεαζόμενος·				
when he is drawn away	and	enticed				
G1828	G2532	G1185				

Additional Cross-References

Ephesians 4:22 (Parallel theme): That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

Matthew 15:18 (Parallel theme): But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man.

Hebrews 3:13 (Parallel theme): But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

Isaiah 44:20 (Parallel theme): He feedeth on ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?

Romans 7:13 (Parallel theme): Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.

Job 31:9 (Parallel theme): If mine heart have been deceived by a woman, or if I have laid wait at my neighbour's door;

Proverbs 4:23 (Parallel theme): Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.

Matthew 5:28 (Parallel theme): But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

Job 31:27 (Parallel theme): And my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand:

Romans 7:11 (Parallel theme): For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me.