



Is this what the Scriptures teach?

Notice how James places responsibility on the individual. **“Each one is tempted when HE is carried away and enticed by HIS own lust”** (James 1:14, emphasis mine). In the same way, James makes it clear that it is the individual’s responsibility to persevere.

(Romans 6:23). We have to understand what sin will do to us if we allow it into our lives!

### Personal Responsibility

If you read this article and only get one thing out of it, get this: *you are responsible for your own sins*. I think this is the point James is making in James 1:13-16. There are a lot of people in the world who try to blame others for the evil things they do! They want to blame God, Satan, the church, their family, etc.

In the same context he writes, **“Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once HE has been approved, HE will receive the crown of life”** (James 1:12, emphasis mine). Just as we are responsible for our own sin, we cannot expect to inherit an eternal reward based on the obedience of others. God, through Ezekiel, put it this way, **“Behold, all souls are Mine; the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is Mine. The soul who sins will die”** (Ezekiel 18:3).

Do we recognize our personal responsibility? James felt compelled to warn, **“Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren”** (James 1:16). Have we been deceived into thinking that we’re somehow not responsible for our sins against God? Have we convinced ourselves that we can indulge in our desires without consequence? If that’s the case, listen to James’ warning, and don’t be deceived!



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Faithful Sayings Issue 16.21 May 25, 2014

# Welcome Visitors

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ISSUE

# 16.21

BULLETIN OF  
THE OLSEN  
PARK CHURCH  
OF CHRIST

# Faithful Sayings

May 25,  
2014

## Services

Sunday: 9:30 AM

10:20 AM

6:00 PM

Wednesday: 7:00 PM



## Elders:

Pat Ledbetter  
Jeff Nunn  
Kyle Pope

## Deacons:

Eddie Cook  
Steve Dixon  
Jack Langley  
Neil Ledbetter  
Brady McAlister  
Walker McAnear  
Lance Purcell  
Rusty Scott

## Evangelists:

Kyle Pope  
Andrew Dow

## Don't Be Deceived: The Origin of Sin

By Andrew Dow

Where does sin come from? A cursory survey of the religious world will show a great deal of diversity in response to this question. Does sin come from our inherent nature? Is it forced upon us by some supernatural or divine being? Is it our own personal failing? With various ideas abounding about the origin sin, it is evident that **“the father of lies”** (John 8:44, NASB) has done an excellent job of deceiving men.

James writes concerning this very thing: **“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. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished it brings forth death. Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren”** (James 1:13-16).

### False Ideas About The Origin of Sin

Some people, based on other assumptions, are forced to conclude that God causes man to sin. Calvinism is a clear example of this. Calvinists will argue that if God is sovereign

(i.e., in absolute control of everything), then he must have pre-selected those who would be saved and those who would be lost. This is the doctrine of predestination. While you seldom hear Calvinists say, “I believe God causes man to sin,” this is the only logical conclusion to their argument. If God decided before I was born that I would be eternally lost in hell, then there is nothing I can do to change that fate. God is forcing me to live contrary to His will.

This seems to be the very problem that James is facing in our passage. **“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”** (James 1:13). James would go on to contrast this false idea with reality, **“Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights”** (James 1:17). God is not in the business of making his crowning creation fail. Rather, He **“desires all men to be saved”** (1 Timothy 2:4).

While not specifically addressed in our text, there are other false ideas about where sin comes from. Some want to blame the devil for all their problems. Comedian Flip Wilson once popularized the phrase, “the devil made me do it.” It’s true that the devil plays a role in our temptation. He is the devouring lion (1 Peter 5:8) and the great deceiver (Revelation 12:9). However, even when given extraordinary power over an individual, he does not have the ability to force someone to sin against God. Remember the story of Job. God said to the adversary, **“Behold, he is in your power, only spare his life”** (Job 2:6). Still, after Satan tore away Job’s family, wealth, and health we read, **“In all this Job did not sin with his lips”** (Job 2:10). The devil certainly encourages us to sin, but he does not cause us to act contrary to God’s law.

Still others will cast the blame on other men. Perhaps parents, family, or friends influenced us to sin. Perhaps peer-pressure became too great and we fell into to sin. Some will say that we are all sinners because Adam’s sin made us into

sinful creatures. Unfortunately, a day will come when God will declare to many, **“Depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness”** (Matthew 7:23). On that day it won’t matter who caused your sin, God will judge you based on your own lawless deeds.

### Where Does Sin Come From?

As was pointed out in the previous section, James is opposing the idea that God causes us to sin. In proving this point James doesn’t merely assert the fact, but he goes on to explain exactly where sin comes from! Perhaps we can easily break James’ explanation into three steps.

First, James writes, **“Each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust”** (James 1:14). The word translated “*lust*” is defined by Thayer as “*desire, craving, longing*” (pg. 238). Human beings have strong desires, which can be both good and evil. Scripture acknowledges these cravings and describes them as **“the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life”** (1 John 2:16). Desire is something we are born with, the problem comes when we are **“carried away and enticed”** by our desires (James 1:14). When trying to understand where sin comes from we must first acknowledge that sin is the result of our desires controlling us.

Second, when we allow our desires to take control of our lives we are setting ourselves up to (1) be tempted to sin, and (2) to fall into sin. We just noticed that temptation is the result of being

**“carried away and enticed”** by our desires, but James goes on to write, **“Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin”** (James 1:15). The control that sin has over our lives is compared to a pregnancy. When a man and a woman conceives, a child is the natural result! In the same way, sin is the natural result of giving in to our desires.

Finally, **“when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death”** (James 1:15). Death is never a pleasant experience. Death is unnatural. It is not what we were made for. Is it any wonder that many people are uncomfortable talking about death? Why is that those same individuals are happy to discuss sin openly (cf. Ephesians 5:12)? Paul wrote, **“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord”**

