

Scripture Reading:

Please go ahead and turn in your Bibles to **James 1, James 1** for our scripture reading today... We are in **James 1:13-18** for ...And I will ask you to please stand if you are able to do so for the reading of God's Word...

James 1:13-18

<sup>13</sup> 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. <sup>14</sup> But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. <sup>15</sup> Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death. <sup>16</sup> Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. <sup>17</sup> Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow. <sup>18</sup> In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we would be a kind of first fruits <sup>[1]</sup> among His creatures.

**Introduction:**

Good morning...Thank you for being here...I always enjoy being here at Calvary with this great church family...

**If you do not know, My name is Byron Bradshaw and I am privileged to be the pastor here...**If you are new here or visiting or if you want to become a member please feel free to approach me after the service in the hallway...

**My Sunday morning notes are now on our website along with video & audio sermon library.** If you are interested to download my notes you can go to our website and hover over sermons and then download the sermon you wish...

**I wanted to share something with you all...Laurel and I recently took some family photos...Here is one with my family...Didn't I marry up? Fortuantely Brynn got her mom's good looks...**

**and I thought one was especially cute of Brynn...**Oh and that Chalkboard happens to read Bradshaw Baby #3...Laurel is pregnant with our third child come in June of 2018...I thought I'd share that with you...Quite a treat for us...

My wife has been a real trooper thus far...Morning sickness been a bit of a difficulty but she has been a great aid in this transition...If I used the reason lately that Laurel isn't feel well...Well, she really hasn't...She has come to everything a sick mom of a 16 month old can...

**Thank you for being here this morning...**I always enjoy preaching and teaching the Word although I grow wildly nervous...

**Before we enter the text this morning, let us go to God in prayer...**

**Let us Pray together...**

**ME:**

**This morning I'd like to continue to talk to you about Lies...** This morning I'd like to talk to you about lies that we all believe... When we go through trials and difficult circumstances, there are lies and misconceptions that sneak into our mind and often fog our view of God...

**ME:**

**The reason I know this** happens is because it not only will be revealed in the scripture today but it happened in my own life...

Over the last two weeks, I have shared a personal trial that was very difficult for Laurel and I... With my son's death, came questions... Questions not only about life and my spiritual walk but even about my foundational understanding of God...

I knew who God was though... I knew it because I grew up here at Calvary... I knew God was pure and loving... I was trained to believe and to know that God never changes and that God truly does love me...

I grew up here at Calvary... I knew all the Bible verses on God's love... I knew all the right answers... I was trained at Dallas in Systematic Theology giving me the right knowledge about God...

But when tragedy struck... so did doubts... so did misconceptions... So did lies into my mind... The most evident lie that crept into my mind was that God cannot be trusted... that God cannot be trusted... That here I am a seminary graduate serving the Lord as a pastor on a Sunday morning when I get that phone call...

I spent my whole life serving God but then the Lord let me down... The thought came into my mind that I have done everything right... Yet the Lord betrayed me... HE CANNOT BE TRUSTED...

Fortunately, for me, over the last couple of years through the extensive study of the scripture the lie that was placed into my mind has been snuffed out...

**Transition: But Friends,** I'd like to dig down just a bit... I'd like to take it a bit further...

**WE:**

**Friends, I believe everyone of us in this room believes a lie... Friends listen,** the lies people believe about God do not just exist out there but also in here...

I believe everyone in this room believes a lie about God... I do not pretend to know every lie that a someone can believe about God but I guarantee you that everyone in here believes a lie about Him...

**For most in this room, the way I can tell which lie you believe is how you live your life...**

Listen friends, your view of God dictates your behavior...it does...

**Christians who view God as an overly harsh judge instead of a loving Father tend to be a bit** more legalistic and self-righteous...Putting on an outer shell of a self-righteous performance...while the inside is hidden away in a locked safe hoping never to be seen....

**Christians who believe God has changed over time typically end up feeling that God** cannot be trusted, these Christians often live their life being self-reliant...That if God cannot be trusted then they themselves are in charge of pulling themselves up by the boot straps ...These Christians typically become workaholics only entrusting themselves for their safety and security...

**Some Christians believe God is no longer a God of love or that God no longer values...For these Christians...**Most of them end up trying to find their value or love in other ways...Perhaps Christians who no longer believe God is a God of love eagerly seeking approval through others but ultimately ending up disappointed...Or those who believe God no longer values them then perhaps find value in a career or in a position of authority rather than acknowledging the lie within...

**Transition: When we go through trials and difficult circumstances,** lies and misconceptions toward God sneak into our mind and fog our view...

**Transition:** In last week's passage, James addresses lies that we believe in life pertaining to trials...James in the midst of addressing lies about life He provides us 5 practical steps to endurance...Consider, to Allow, to Ask, to Not Envy, and to Remember...

**However, when trials and difficulties come...trials not only fog our view of** our spiritual life but can also fog our view of God...And in this morning's passage, James wipes away three lies that we believe about God when difficulties come...

**Transition: We find the first lie toward God in verse 13...**Look at verse 13 with me...

**GOD:**

**Let us look at verse 13,** <sup>13</sup> Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted <sup>[n]</sup>by God"; for God cannot be tempted <sup>[o]</sup>by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone."

**What is the lie that James addresses? Lie #1: That when we are discouraged and tempted...The lie #1: is that God must be the one tempting us...**Now, culturally speaking in the Biblical world, this makes some sense....Perhaps James is addressing Jewish Christians that have been influenced by the Greco-Roman view of the gods...That gods can tempt and lead people to evil...That the culture has slipped into their churches and tarnished the view of the true God...

**And culturally perhaps at first, the Jewish Christians stood the test of time and believed the Bible** but once exhaustion set in then perhaps the lies did as well...

**But let us go a little deeper with this lie...What is the real lie that is at the heart?** That if God tempts...Then God is what? If the lie we believe when tempted is that God is the one tempting us then there must be a deeper lie which we are believing...**When we believe God is tempting us then we are believing that God must be evil...Now to so many of us this seems like an unimaginable idea...**

**But Believe it or not...This lie that God is tempting us and ultimately that God is evil is a lie that is easier to slip** into than you might think... 30 years ago a very famous New Testament scholar fell into this very bear trap...

**Story: A modern day famous uber liberal scholar slipped away from the faith due to this very issue...**This modern day notable liberal scholar did not start out as a liberal scholar...But rather this famous scholar actually started at Moody Bible Institute then onto Wheaton for his master's degree...

**But then, trials came into his life...I believe he lost a child...**and this trial began to cause doubt...which the doubt led to his belief in the lie that God is evil...And for him this lie became unshakeable...

**He has now forsaken his faith and is a self-professing atheist teaching the opposite of orthodox Christianity and publishing book after book about the theorized instability of the Bible and the lack of God's existence...**

**Friends, this man started at Moody Bible Institute...yet the temptation** and trials of life led him to believe a lie about God so much that it blinded and fogged him to the truth...

**Friends...God is not evil...Friends God does not tempt...Yet what is the proof? Look at verse 13,** "Let no one say when he is tempted, that I am being tempted by God for God cannot be tempted by evil and He himself cannot tempt anyone..."

**Why can't God tempt? Because God cannot be tempted Himself or enticed in any way by evil itself...**Evil to God is so wretched ugly and awful that it does not appeal to his nature in the slightest...

**So, if evil does not originate from God...and if it is a lie that God is evil...**then we must ask another wonderfully deep insightful question...Where does evil come from? Where does temptation originate? If God does not tempt me, then why am I tempted to quit and sin?

**Look at verses 14-15,** <sup>14</sup> But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. <sup>15</sup> Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin <sup>[p]</sup>is accomplished, it brings forth death."

**Why am I tempted? It is because of my fallen nature, right?** The reason sin is enticing is because we are broken...

**The people who say God is evil because evil exists...**The people who say this do not

understand the Bible...

**Who's fault is it that we sin? Who's fault is it that we die?** Who's fault is it that we go through pain after pain? Who's fault is it when we are hurt by another fallen person? Who's fault is it that we are tempted by evil?

Point to myself: It is our fault...Because God is perfect and good...He is not tempted by evil...

Friends, let us never forget...We are the ones in the garden that decided to rebel against God...

**The Garden reveals to us a two main things...#1: God is perfect proven through creating us in perfection...**The fact that God originally created everything in the Garden of Eden in perfection reveals to me that He is in His very essence perfect...Lacking nothing...

**#2: Man is evil and sinful proven in our desire to be like the Most High...Man is evil** because even though Adam and Eve were created in total perfection (proving the perfection of God) they still decided it wasn't good enough...They decided to eat a fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil ushering in death, trials, temptations, original sin...The problem of evil and temptation does not lie at the feet of God but lies at the feet of us...because we chose to rebel and we continually choose to do so...

**And notice the digression of our broken nature in verse 14-15...** “<sup>14</sup> But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. <sup>15</sup> Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin <sup>is</sup> accomplished, it brings forth death.”

**Perhaps an even more accurate translation for verses 14 and 15 is,** “But each is tempted as they dragged away and ensnared by their own private desires...” The word dragged away and ensnared are both present passive participles...

**Meaning this: That our private fallen nature...**Our private sinful longings are constantly, persistently tugging on us over and over again to sin...That our fallen nature is constantly, persistently tugging on us over and over dragging us toward sin...in a spiritual game of tug of war...

**Verse 15 literally reads...** “Then when your private desires are seized it produces sin and sin brings forth the end which is death...”

**Who's fault is it that we are tempted? Ours...****It is our inner fallen nature...**It is our inner selfish desires that drag us toward sin and then sin leads us to death...

**Transition: But friends, according to verses 13-15...is God evil?** Is it God causing us to be tempted and falling under trial? No...

**Friends, let us throw out the lies of the enemy...**the lie of our flesh that God is evil...Lie #1: God is evil- God is not evil because he is not tempted by evil...But rather it is us who have rebelled and continue to rebel proven through our death...

**Transition: So, James addresses the first lie that God is evil in verses 13-15...Friends let us always remember that** God is unequivocally pure, good and righteous proven through that He is not enticed by evil at all and in any way...

**Transition: But James does not just stop at addressing the lie that God is evil...But he also subtly addresses the second lie that we put on repeat in our minds...He addresses Lie #2 in verses 16-17...**

**Read James 1:16-17,** “<sup>16</sup> Do not be <sup>[q]</sup>deceived, my beloved brethren. <sup>17</sup> Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or <sup>[l]</sup>shifting shadow.”

**Notice verse 16...Let us not rush over it...What does verse 16 prove?** It proves James’ purpose for verses 13-18...James’ purpose in verses 13-18 is for them not to be deceived...Or to put it another way...James desires to fix the deception or to fix the lies that can slip in during trials...Friends, my goal for this message is for us not to be deceived...

**Notice also another question he answers...Where do all good things come from?** All Good things come from God... “Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above coming down from the Father of lights...”

**But I’d like to make a deeper observation from verse 16 and it is a different perspective than normal...I’d like to use this as a proof of God’s existence...**

**Think About It: The mere existence of good in a world of evil and darkness proves to me that there is a God #1 and that He is pure #2...**One proof of God’s existence is that there is good in a dark sinful world...The fact that we have anything that is good in a completely fallen world proves to me not only that God exists but that God is pure and righteous...

**But notice with me: what is another lie that James addresses specifically in verse 17?** Oftentimes, when we go through trials we can believe **LIE #2 God has changed**...That God is different than He was twenty years ago...That the God that we worshipped when everything in life was going well is different than the God that has given me the hand of difficulty...

**Or, we say,** “Well, the God that I have experienced in my life is changed or different than the God I see in the Bible...The God of the Bible gives only good gifts yet the God I worship has given me rotten eggs so he must have changed...”

**How does James address this deception? Look back at the last phrase** in verse 17, “Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.””

**Does God change?** Notice the phrase...”with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow...”

**God has no variation or shifting shadow...In other words,** God has never changed and will

never change...His nature has been consistent since before the beginning of time...That He is pure, transcendent, not tempted by evil...That He is consistently righteous, consistently loving, consistently providing good gifts...

**And Notice with me in the text...when James says, “with whom there is no variation...”**

**But let us be even more exegetically observant...Notice the next phrase...I believe James uses the next phrase to explain the phrase...“with whom there is no variation....” OR even in the slightest of SHIFTING OF SHADOW...”**

**Perhaps the most boring thing in the world to do is to watch a shadow for 5 minutes to see if you can tell is moving...**James is saying in verse 1 is That God’s nature does not even change even as slightly as a shadow changes within one minute...The change in day time shadow is so slow we cannot even notice it as we watch...God’s nature is so unchanging that he does not even change even in the slightest not even changes the slightest as a shadow changes minute to minue...

**Friends...Let us Combat Lie #2:...When we go through difficulties, let us combat the lie that God has changed...**

**FRIENDS, GOD NEVER CHANGES...EVEN IN THE SLIGHTEST...THE GOD WE SERVE AND READ ABOUT IN THIS SCRIPTURE IS THE SAME FROM GENESIS 1:1 to REVELATION 22:21...THE GOD THAT EXISTED BEFORE TIME WILL BE THE SAME GOD THAT EXISTS BEYOND TIME ITSELF...Listen friends, God eternity past beginning is the same as His eternity future ending...**

FRIENDS, When you go through trials combat that the LIE #2 that God changes...God Does Change...The Word of God Does not Change, Our Position as Christians with GOD DOES NOT CHANGE, HIS LOVE DOES NOT CHANGE, GOD’S WILL DOES NOT CHANGE, GOD’S CHARACTER DOES NOT CHANGE, HIS BEING DOES NOT CHANGE...NO...Listen Friends nothing about about God changes...

**Transition: But then James addresses a third lie that we believe when difficulties arise...**

**The third lie many believe when difficulties comes is that God doesn’t love us...** We say something like this... “How could a good loving God allow this to happen?”... That God does not really value me...since He allowed the loss of a loved one...That God doesn’t really love me since He allowed this illness into my life...That God doesn’t really love me since he allowed this financial collapse into my life...That God doesn’t really care for me since the person I trusted most in life betrayed me...

**But friends...This is a LIE...It is a lie that God doesn’t love you that God does not value you...**

**Proof of His Love is Found in verse 18...Look at verse 18, “In the exercise of His will, He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His**

creatures...”

**How did God create us? As a first fruit among His creatures...**In other words, we are God’s greatest creation... We are God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit’s greatest creation... The proof that God loves us is that He created us as the primary glory or image bearers in all of creation... That we humans...all mankind...everyone who has walked the earth are God’s greatest creations...

**It is a lie that God does not value or love you...**Do not let your fallen nature not the prince of the power of the air (our enemy) convince you otherwise...God provides proof of His love through creation...**WE are His prized possession...**

**Think about It:** What is the proof even beyond this verse that we are his greatest creation?

**#1: All Creatures Experience death but We are the only creatures provided salvation-** All other creatures die...all other creations experience death because of sin they are without hope of salvation...Romans 5:8...But God demonstrates His love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us...

**#2: We are the only creatures created in His image...**That God has created us in His image...In his likeness...That we are the only creatures to resemble our God...

**Listen, friends, God loves you despite you...God loves you despite what your circumstances say...** “Do not be deceived brethren...” God loves you despite what your circumstances communicate...And God proves His Love for you through good gifts, through creating you in His image, and through salvation...

**Friends, do not be deceived...**Do not be deceived by the lies the infiltrate our faith and minds when waves rush in...Friends, combat the lies of the enemy with truth...

**Combat the lies that God is evil, combat the lies that God changed and combat the lies that God cares not for you..**Combat those lies with truth...

**YOU:**

Friends as I head toward closing, I’d like to address two different groups of people...

**Group #1: Are those that stand hopeless in a dark world...Group #1: Are those that do not understand the full love of God...**Group #1 are those that stand hopeless to understand truth and hopeless to stand against the difficulties of life...Group #1 are All that people are hopeless without Jesus Christ in your life...

I had a staff member this week say, “I don’t know how people do it...I don’t know how people without Jesus overcome difficulties...”

**If you do not know Jesus the Christ as Your Personal Lord and Savior...**Then, You are hopeless because you are sinful... And your inherited natural sinful private desires drag you to sin...And that sin causes death...

**Listen friends, What is the proof that you are sinful?** The proof that you are sinful... that you need redeeming is that you die...Everyone of us dies therefore everyone of us is sinful...

**Everyone physically dies but not everyone spiritually dies...**All die physically but God gives us the opportunity to gain eternal life by faith...

**You gain salvation (or the rescuing from darkness)... You gain eternal life by faith in Jesus Christ... You gain eternal life at the moment** you believe in Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior... You have a choice... The choice God gives to you to believe...

**Transition: But there is also a second group** of people here this morning...

**Group #2: Are all those who wish to apply this passage to their life...** To you I will answer the question, "So What?" "What difference does this passage make in my life...?" So for the next 5 to 10 minutes or so on how to apply this scripture...

**My point today is to Combat lies about God with Truth... Combat the lies that comes with trials with the truth of God's Word...**

#### **Application:**

**I mentioned in the beginning of this sermon that everyone** in this room believes a lie about God... I firmly believe that everyone that has ever walked the earth struggles with a lie they believe about God...

**For some Christians in here today... Some could be struggling with the lie that God perhaps is just a mean self-righteous God...** That God rules over creation with a paddle ready to punish us for every misstep...

Or perhaps some of us here this morning are tossing around the lie that God isn't loving... That God really doesn't care for you... Perhaps you look at your circumstances and say, "God This is proof that you do not love me... Look at my husband... Look at my illness... Look at me..."

Or even perhaps some of you are struggling with the thought that He has changed, or even that He is evil...

**But before we exit through the doors this morning... Before we go back to our normal life... I'd like to do something a bit different this morning...** I want you to take a moment right now and think of a lie you believe about God... Everyone in this room has a lie they are currently believing about God...

And friends listen... That lie dictates your behavior...

**Combat that lie with truth- I want you to take a moment to** erase the chalk lie on the blackboard of your mind and write the truth found in the scripture instead... Take the eraser found through salvation and the forgiveness of sin and erase the lie which you believe...

**If you wish to combat the Lie that God is evil...** Then combat it with Truth...Erase the Thought...Take an eraser and brush over the chalk of your mind and write this instead

- God is pure- not tempted by evil – James 1:13
- God gives every good gift

**If you wish to combat the Lie that God has changed...** Then combat it with Truth...Erase the Thought...Take an eraser and brush over the chalk of your mind and write this instead

- God is the Same Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow...Hebrews 13:8
- God has no variation: James 1:17

**If you wish to combat the Lie that God doesn't really love you...** Then combat it with Truth...Erase the Thought...Take an eraser and brush over the chalk of your mind and write this instead

- God is Love: 1 John 4:8
- God Values You as His greatest creation: James 1:18
- God Proofs His love Through His image and Salvation Genesis 1:26

**Transition: Last week I closed with a story...** It was a great story illustrating endurance in the midst of pain... Well, I don't have another story like that... But what I would like to present to you is a closing thought... The thought is a quote from C.S. Lewis' book *The Problem With Pain*.... *The Problem of Pain* answers the universal question, "Why would an all-loving, all-knowing God allow people to experience pain and suffering...?"

**WE:**

“The problem of reconciling human suffering with the existence of a God who loves, is only insoluble so long as we attach a trivial meaning to the word "love", and look on things as if man were the centre of them. Man is not the centre. God does not exist for the sake of man. Man does not exist for his own sake. "Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." We were made not primarily that we may love God (though we were made for that too) but that God may love us, that we may become objects in which the divine love may rest "well pleased".”

— [C.S. Lewis, The Problem of Pain](#)