

JAMES

GENUINE FAITH ON DISPLAY

GENUINE FAITH CONSIDERS TRIALS AS JOY:
DISTINGUISH ACCURATELY BETWEEN
TRIALS AND TEMPTATION – PT. 1

JAMES 1:13-15

- There is a game played around the world and that is popular in every known culture.
- Can be played by just one person or with a very large group.
- Many play this game, no one who plays it ever really wins.
- Played in the highest levels of government and in the poorest of households.
- The humble rarely play this game, and wise parents don't permit their children to play it.
- This game is found in the Scripture, and it is recorded as the first game ever played.

The Blame Game

JAMES 1:13-15

¹³Let 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. ¹⁴But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. ¹⁵Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.

1. DON'T BLAME GOD FOR YOUR SIN (V.13)

A. The wrong statement

Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God”

Let no one say - currently happening and there must be a stop to it

➤ **Where did this accusation come from?**

OUTLINE OF JAMES

Section	James	Marks of Genuine Faith
	1:1	Greeting
1	1:2-18	Genuine Faith Considers Trials as Joy
2	1:19-27	Genuine Faith Receives the Word Humbly
3	2:1-13	Genuine Faith Loves without Favoritism
4	2:14-26	Genuine Faith Produces Good Works
5	3:1-12	Genuine Faith is Shown in Your Speech
6	3:13-18	Genuine Faith Exhibits a Humble Wisdom
7	4:1-10	Genuine Faith Seeks God's Grace
8	4:11-12	Genuine Faith Recognizes One Judge
9	4:13-17	Genuine Faith Understands Dependence on God
10	5:1-11	Genuine Faith is Patient in God's Timing
11	5:12	Genuine Faith Speaks Truth
12	5:13-18	Genuine Faith Prays Powerfully
13	5:19-20	Genuine Faith Calls Others to Genuine Faith

SECTION 1 OUTLINE

Genuine Faith Considers Trials as Joy (verses 2-18)

- a. Think Rightly Regarding Trials (2-4)
- b. Pray Expectantly During Trials (5-8)
- c. Maintain Perspective During Trials (9-12)
- d. **Distinguish Accurately between Trials and Temptations (13-18)**

JAMES 1:2, 12, 13

2 Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials . . .

12 Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

13 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. 14 But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust.

TRIALS AND TEMPTATIONS

Trial – to be tested or tried to learn the nature or character of something

- **Genesis 22:1** - Now it came about after these things, that **God tested Abraham** . . .
- **Deuteronomy 8:2** - “You shall remember all the way which the LORD your God has led you in the wilderness these forty years, that He might humble you, **testing you**, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not.

TRIALS AND TEMPTATIONS

Temptation – to entice to improper behavior

John Owen: “anything that, for any reason, exerts a force or influence to seduce and draw the mind and heart of man from the obedience which God requires of him to any kind of sin.”

- **External temptation:** when someone or something outside of us entices us to sin
- **Internal temptation:** our heart's desire for something that is sinful

BLAMING GOD

Faulty logic :

- 1) God brought this trial into my life for my testing (v.2-3).
- 2) If I didn't have this trial in my life, I would not have responded sinfully.
- 3) Therefore, God is to blame for how I responded.

Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God”

“by” – the indirect reason or cause

B. The wrong understanding

... for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone.

i. Incompatible with God's character - A right understanding of God should prevent a person from ever blaming God for temptation.

God is holy – this means he is both transcendent and morally perfect

Habakkuk 1:13a: Your eyes are too pure to approve evil, and You cannot look on wickedness with favor.

1 Peter 1:15–16: ... like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; ¹⁶because it is written, “YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY.”

➤ God's complete separateness from sin makes the idea of God enticing a person to sin absurd.

B. The wrong understanding (continued)

... for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone.

- ii. **Incompatible with God's actions** - A right understanding of God's actions speaks against God tempting anyone

Consider God's other actions in relation to sin:

- God sent prophets to warn men against sin (Isaiah 13:11).
- God brings judgment against men for their sin (Romans 2:5-6).
- God the Father sent His beloved Son to suffer on the cross. He crushed His one and only Son to pay the penalty of sin (Isaiah 53:10; 1 Timothy 1:15).

2. BLAME YOURSELF FOR YOUR SIN V. 14-15

James 1:14 - But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust.

A. The true source

Lust – strong desire or craving

- **unlawful desire:** a desire in your heart for something that God calls evil
- **inordinate desire:** a desire for anything above the desire to please God

Lust = internal temptation = wanting your way instead of God's way

Who is to blame for your lust? You are!

James 1:14 - But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust.

by – direct reason or cause

carried away and enticed – the dragging away and luring of an individual

Matthew 15:18–19: ¹⁸“But the things that proceed out of the mouth **come from the heart**, and those defile the man. ¹⁹“For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders.

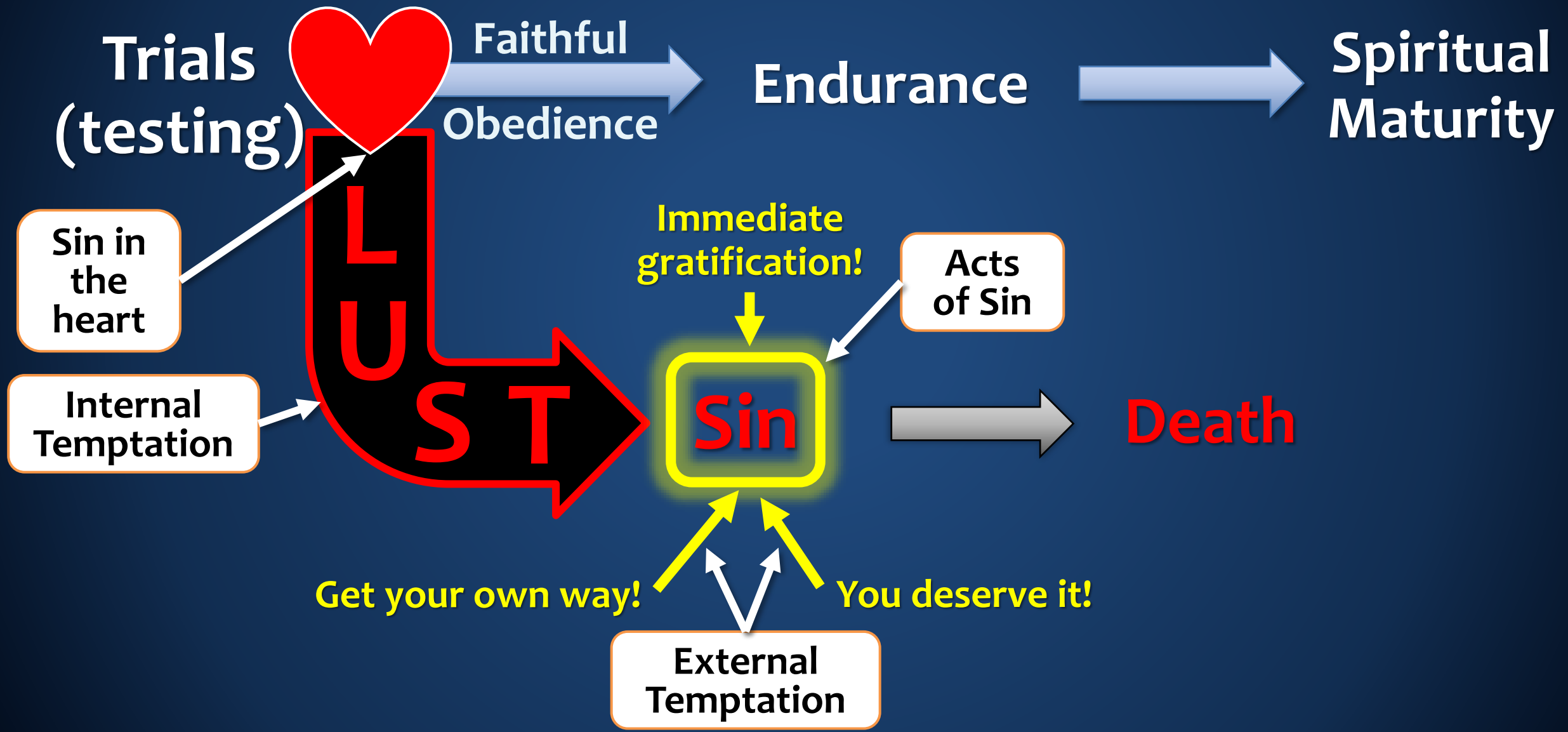
James 1:15 - Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.

B. The tragic sequence

- Lust leads to sin which leads to death

Sin – in James, sin refers to actions of sin

- “showing partiality” is committing sin (2:9)
- not “doing the right thing” is sin (4:17)
- prayer should be made for the forgiveness of sins “committed” (5:15)
- We must not mistakenly think that lust is “pre-sin.” Lust is sin and its result is sinful actions.



3. ANSWERING QUESTIONS ON TEMPTATION

A. Is temptation sin?

1 Corinthians 10:13 - No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.

Not all temptation is sin. External temptation is not sinful, but internal temptation, a lusting of the heart for sin, is sinful.

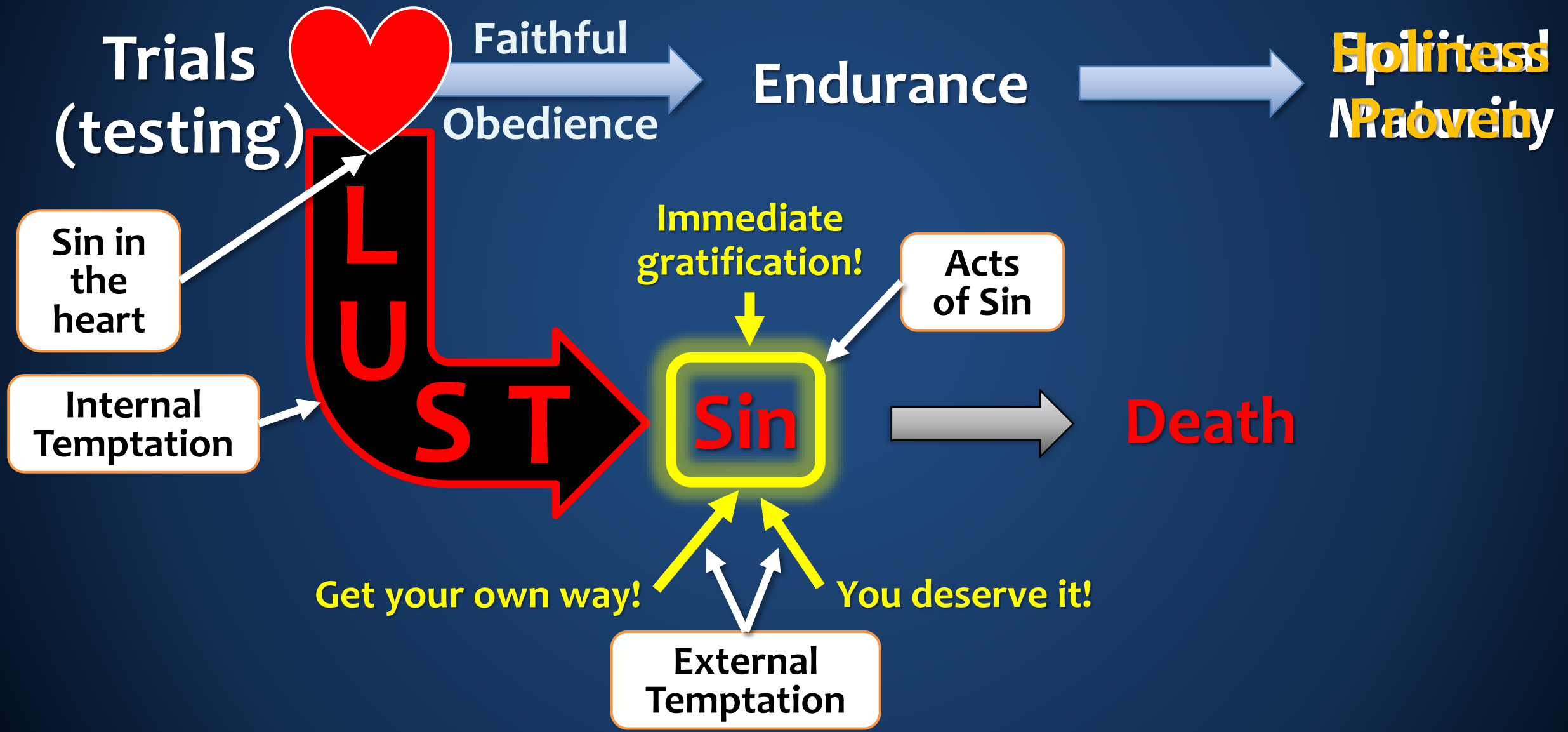
B. If according to James 1:13 God can't be tempted, then how do we understand Christ's temptation?

Hebrews 4:15 - For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.

- **Yet without sin** – this was external temptation, not internal desire toward sin

Christ faced external temptation but had no indwelling sin that lured his heart to lust. He was sinless in heart and deed.

When James 1:13 says God cannot be tempted, it is referring to internal temptation or lust, which is alien to Christ.



c. If God doesn't tempt us, why does Jesus teach us to pray "lead me not into temptation"?

The humble person, recognizing that God is in control of all things, will ask that no testing will come into his life because he desperately does not want to sin against God. This is a request that God will not allow trial to come where he will fail.

APPLICATION

- **Don't blame God or others for your sin**
- **Repent from your sin**
- **Change your appetite: die to sinful desires and delight in Christ!**