

Introduction: Ever wonder why really good people sometimes make really bad choices?

- **Good People - Weak Moments**

- **Trials vs. Temptations**

- **Thesis** - Under pressure, we are tempted to abandon God's character-building program of endurance and opt for "short cuts" that promise immediate relief, but deliver devastating consequences. (How does it happen?)

- **Deception** - The lies we believe that destroy our lives

Three Lies That Destroy Our Lives:

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.

¹⁶Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. ¹⁷Every 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. ¹⁸In 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.

James 1:13-18 (NASB)

Deception #1

We are deceived about the _____ of our sin.

James 1:13-14

- **The Lie** = "I'm not responsible for my sin. It's not my fault."

- **The Truth** = 1) God tempts no one. 2) The problem is not our external circumstances, but our internal desires.

- **Application** =

Deception #2

We are deceived about the _____ of our sin. James 1:15-16

- **The Lie** = “I can handle this! It’s not hurting me or anyone else.”
- **The Truth** = Sin is not simply an act; it is the result of a process.
- **Application** =

Deception #3

We are deceived concerning the nature and _____ of God. James 1:17-18

- **The Lie** = “I’ve got to ‘party’ and have my ‘good times’ now; I’ll get serious with God later.”
- **The Truth** = God is good and His will always has my highest and best interest in mind.
- **Application** =

God's Promise for You:

¹³No 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.

1 Corinthians 10:13 (NASB)

Some "Ways" of Escape Include:

1. Your conscience – heed it immediately.
2. Scripture Psalm 119:9-11
3. Prayer Matthew 6:13, 26:41
4. Flight 2 Timothy 2:22
5. Pre-decisions and Planning Romans 13:14

Application/Discussion Questions:

1. Define temptation. How does it differ from a trial?
2. Where are you vulnerable? What "short cuts" are you most prone to believe?
3. Discuss the cycle of sin [**desire** (lust), **deception**, **design**, **disobedience**, **death**] outlined in vs. 15-16. How do you see this cycle at work? At what point must we address sin if we are to overcome temptation? Why?
4. What provisions have you made to protect yourself from temptations?
5. Have you fallen? Do you need to ask God's forgiveness and help for a fresh start today? Have you taken advantage of Christ's offer of a spiritual "birth" that brings life?