

# The Devil Made Me Do It

by Shane Idleman

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*The devil doesn't make you do anything, he simply entices, and we must resist him by submitting to God and following His lead.*

**Duration:** 36:13

**Scripture:** Luke 4:13, 1 Corinthians 10:13, Ephesians 6:11, James 4:7-10

**Topics:** "Resisting Temptation", "Spiritual Warfare"

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## Description

The sermon focuses on the importance of resisting temptation and submitting to God, highlighting that the devil only entices but does not force actions. It emphasizes the need to humble oneself, resist the devil, and draw near to God to overcome sin and temptation. The message underscores the commonality of human struggles with temptation and the faithfulness of God to provide a way out. Practical advice is given on identifying opportune times for temptation and making no provision for the flesh.

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## Transcript

If you have your Bibles, you can turn to James chapter 4, James chapter 4. The title of the message is, The Devil Made Me Do It. The devil made me do it. And I'll tell you up front, that's not true.

The devil doesn't make you do anything. He simply entices. Just like a fish, you see the fishing lure in the water.

That's how you catch a fish, it looks enticing. But I need to read the context from, before I get into James chapter 4, verse 7. I'm going to begin at verse 1. We talked about James saying adulterers and adulteresses. Do you know that friendship with this world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

Or do you think that the scripture says in vain that the spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously for God, but he gives more grace. Therefore he says God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. And we talked about the possibility and the reality of cheating on God.

We can cheat on God spiritually when we give our heart to something else, worldly influences. And that was last week's message. But it's interesting, he says God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.

And one aspect of pride is loving the world, having a deep pleasure or satisfaction derived from one's own achievement or lifestyle. That's also pride. Look at what I've done, look at what I've accomplished.

So God resists the proud. So those of you who are proud, if you're fighting against God, I'm sure not the Wednesday night audience, right? But this will apply Sunday morning, I'm sure. A lot of prideful people there.

But we'll just listen then, just listen to what I'll tell them at some point. But pride is taking pride in what we've accomplished or what we've done, and the sense of haughtiness and superiority really, and looking down on others. And God actually resists that.

And people wonder, I've seen a lot of prideful people and they wonder, why isn't God answering my prayers? Why isn't, I feel like I'm fighting God. You are fighting God. God is resisting you.

He's not allowing certain blessings. He's not allowing things to happen in your place of peace and tranquility because you're resisting God. But he gives grace to the humble.

So when we humble ourselves and don't think like this, and don't pursue the things of the world, the grace of God floods in. If you, you've known the difference when you're prideful and you fight against God, and when you're humble, it just seems that God is filling your life with joy and peace. And that's what he's talking about here.

God will resist the proud. Then James 1.14 through 15. I'm gonna set up the, now we're gonna get into James 4.7 about the devil made me do it.

But we read weeks ago that each one of us is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires. He is dragged away and enticed. Then after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin.

And sin, when it is fully grown, gives birth to death. So that's what James talked about in the first chapter. Now he jumps in James 4.7, therefore submit to God.

So God's resisting the proud, but gives grace to the humble, therefore submit to God. Remember, we always want to know when it says therefore to find out what it is therefore. And he's talking about being arrogant, resisting God.

Submit to God, resist the devil, and he will flee from you. And I think that's one of the things we forget about being Christians is we somehow think temptation is easy. It's easy to say no, it's easy to resist, it's no problem at all.

But we actually have to resist, meaning there's a fight, meaning there's a struggle, meaning there's a battle. And we often go into that battle unarmed, unprepared, and untrained. And we fall on our face because we're not resisting.

So when the resistance gets a little bit tough, we give up. When actually God says, resist the devil, as we're submitting to God, we're resisting the devil, and he will flee from you. That's one thing about temptation.

Here's how temptation works, it's usually, it's pretty difficult, and then temptation reaches a point that is very difficult. And that is the defining moment in many of our lives. When you're fasting, and I'm pretty hungry, I'm pretty, and then three hours later you're starving, and that temptation, or the less of the flesh,

the less that temptation will start out, and it reaches a crescendo, that's the word I'm looking for.

You know, this high point, and it's at that point that we need to make the decision to flee and to resist. And that's the point. Once you get through that, and the temptation starts to minimize itself, the devil will flee away.

It's not like the devil is constantly tempting all, you know, all eight cylinders on this temptation, going, going, going the rest of your life. There's a point of victory, there's a point of battle. There's a point of another battle, there's a point of victory.

So as you're resisting the devil, at some point he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

God, James is pretty hard, isn't he? Or is he just being honest? And he's writing at a time when the church was fairly old at this time, and people can fall back into their ways. So he's saying, cleanse your hands, what you're doing. You sinners, purify your hearts, you double-minded.

So they were double-minded, loving the world, loving the things of the world, and actually engaging in sin. They were not resisting the devil. They were falling into temptation.

So James is giving a strong rebuke. Lament and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom.

Humble yourself in the sight of the Lord, and he will lift you up. Now personally, I think this is a lament. Why is he saying lament and mourn and weep? Don't be laughing.

Let your laughter be turned to joy. A lot of times when people are caught in sin, the party lifestyle, there's a lot of laughter, there's a lot of joy, and they're just mocking God. He says, let that laughter, the enjoyment of your sin, be turned into sorrow.

And really, this is how you get through temptation. Submit to God, resist the devil, he begins to flee. Then we draw near to God, and he will draw near to us.

It's this image we have. If I started walking towards you, you would actually, you wouldn't have to walk necessarily, but we're getting closer, aren't we? We're drawing, God's drawing near. So as I'm walking to anybody in this room, if I started walking to you, I would be drawing near to you.

And as a result, you're drawing near to me. And that's what God wants. He wants that relationship to draw near to him, and he'll draw near to us.

Lament and mourn and weep. It means, Lord, I'm sorry that I've been enjoying this and just laughing about the sin, but I'm humbling myself, I'm mourning, I'm weeping in some cases, and I'm humbling my sight. I'm humbling myself in your sight, and God will lift you up.

So it's really this passage is, is anybody wanting to overcome a besetting sin? Somebody trapped in sin. James is giving the antidote. This is it.

We submit to God. We have to resist the devil, because often when we're caught in a besetting sin, we're not resisting the devil. What are we doing? Oh, here it comes again.

I got to stop by the liquor store. I got to pick up this, or I got to look on the computer again. It's this constant falling into sin, because we're not resisting the devil.

And what I would do, I've talked to my mom before, too, because she counsels a lot of people, and the key is, a lot of times is when you feel that temptation coming, you change the environment, or you do something different. You don't keep feeding on that and building it and building and building. You walk away from, for example, if you're having a struggle on the computer, you just get up, you walk away, you go do something else.

If you're angry, upset, you can feel it, just, you're ready to, you're that volcano at home, then go take a drive. Grab Blessing CD on the way out, and just put that in. I guarantee after those five songs, you're not going to be very angry when you come home.

And you change that environment. I know I've talked, God's put people who are addicted on my heart with, I just met with a friend of mine today at lunch, and he's probably drinking three, four times a week, a large amount of alcohol. And it starts, you know, and he can feel it coming and feel it coming, and does he keep entertaining those thoughts and thinking about it? Where can he pick it up? And it's plenty, yeah, I'll just take tomorrow off.

And so he starts thinking, but he nips that in the bud right away. Now, he's not even a believer. So I believe you're in bondage, that's hard to break.

Willpower's not enough. He's got to get his heart right before the Lord. But that's what temptation does.

That's why James, I read earlier, what this little desire starts to build and starts to build and starts to build. And when we act upon those, that's how temptation gains a stronghold, by not resisting. That sin comes in, it gains a stronghold.

Submit to the work of the Spirit. Resist the pull of the world, the devil, and the flesh. So James is basically saying, talking about obedience, isn't he? And that's a word we don't like to hear in the church.

But I need to remind everyone in this room that obedience saved Noah. Wait a minute, Shane Faith did, yeah? But he had to build an ark. He had to obey God.

And we have this, sometimes this idea of, they call it hyper-grace, where it's just, you just take advantage of God's grace. It's no big deal, and you can keep on sinning. And don't talk about obedience, don't talk about these hard things.

It's just all grace. But grace is also followed by me living up to what God, not perfectly, but following God's commandments, and wanting to obey God, wanting to honor His word. And from that, that's how you begin to push away the devil.

Now, it is a challenge. Let me read one story I found many years ago, and it actually came up this week. I want to share it with you tonight.

It's about a little boy named Alexander. He was trying to save all of his pennies so he could buy a baseball bat. But he had a hard struggle.

One night when he was saying his prayers, his mother heard him say fervently, oh Lord, please help me save my money for a baseball bat. And God, don't let the ice cream man come down my street anymore.

Isn't that true? Lord, help me save up money for my baseball bat.

But don't let that ice cream truck come down, and he would spend his money on that. And that's what temptation looks like. Here's the interesting thing about temptation.

It takes from us, but at the same time, it looks so appealing. If it didn't look good, we wouldn't take the bait. So we, the devil, well, let me read commentator Clyne Snodgrass.

Interesting name. He said, mention of the schemes of the devil, which is the trickery of the devil. The deceit of the devil reminds us of trickery, by which evil and temptation present themselves in our lives.

Evil rarely looks evil until it accomplishes its goal. It gains interest by appearing attractive, desirable, and perfectly legitimate. It's a baited and camouflaged trap.

Temptation always looks like that. A young couple, like, let's just live together. I mean, I know it's not right, but we're saving on our taxes, you know, and we can get to know each other first.

And then they don't see the years of pain and regret that will bring later. Or a person might indulge in something and say, yeah, but you know, it just looks, it's not that big a deal. It's my off day, or it's this, or, I mean, I've heard every excuse in the book.

And I'm like, no, that's just an excuse. But it presents itself. That most affairs start by a person, whether, wherever it's at, and there's a relationship built, and it presents, it's like, well, this isn't a big deal.

This doesn't, you know, it looks fine. This isn't gonna result in anything. A book I've mentioned before by Steve Farrar, he interviewed 200 and something top people, Christian leaders who fell in Christian ministry due to usually sexual sin.

But in 80% of the cases, they all said it would never happen to me. They said, well, this will never, that will never happen to me. Why did it happen to them? Many times because they didn't, it was a baited and camouflaged trap.

The enemy's not going to show the hook on the bait. He's gonna show the bait. Now, here's how we get, because some people go, oh, then I'm always gonna be tricked.

No, it's very easy, actually. Only by comparing your thoughts and what your actions are going to be to God's word can we generate the motivation to resist. So once I say, okay, here's what God's word says about this.

Here's where this is going to lead me. Then I must make a different decision. Whether it comes to money.

Really, the enemy's gonna come after the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, covetousness, what the eye goes after, and the pride of life. Those are the three areas that he concentrates his attack. When the woman, Eve, saw that the tree was good for food, desirable to make one wise, and appeared attractive as well.

All three of those he used. And temptation always looks good, but I also believe that a believer has some kind of Holy Spirit umpire in him blowing the whistle. Don't go there yet.

No, no, don't go there. And we keep, be quiet, be quiet, be quiet. And we hear the conviction of the Holy Spirit leading us and guiding us in the right direction.

Now, be encouraged, though. Temptation is also an opportunity to do what is right by turning from it. Always.

Temptation is always an opportunity to do what is right by turning from it. Many times with temptation, you gotta know the plan before the temptation comes. And I've shared this before often.

My wife knows, because she can check my email whenever. But if I go to empty spam and it says, Hi, my name is, and I'm 24, delete. Blue hair, blonde, delete.

You just see, I don't need this. I don't care who you are. I don't need to see pictures that you sent me.

Who is this person? Delete, delete, delete. It just has to be that quick. But if you say, well, maybe this is a person from church.

That name looks kind of familiar. Well, it's in spam, though. I mean, we start to play these games.

So temptation, you gotta know what's your trigger. For one person, it's this. For another person, it's that.

And what's the trigger? For example, we went, my brother came in from Idaho. I helped him all day yesterday. It was a long day of moving, picking up 40 yards worth of trash.

And they invite us to pizza, and they order pitchers of beer. And you know, I just, the decision is no. It's not even an option.

I can't do that. So see, the decision's made before it even starts. But if you get there and you say, Well, I don't know, one pitcher won't hurt, right? Yeah, right.

I mean, you start, you see, your mind, it'll play with you. It'll start to, and you have to decide what God's Word says before it happens. That's part of overcoming temptation.

If you wait till you're in the thick of battle, like, what am I gonna do now? I don't know. And that's where, really, because when he gets you into it, he starts to plant thoughts. Like, you deserve this.

Or you've been working hard all week. Or they don't treat you right. Or when was the last time you did this? Or you need to tell.

And he'll start building on that temptation with those thoughts, those fiery darts of the enemy. So that's how the enemy works. And people say, Man, Shane, the devil made me do this.

No, they didn't. He didn't make you do anything. You did.

The devil made me got drunk. No, you made me. Did I say that wrong? The devil.

That's all right, okay. That's how it's like. But no, but then they head to Las Vegas for the weekend.

Or the devil made me spend all this money. No, you didn't budget. And you didn't do anything.

Oh, the devil is coming against my marriage. No, you are the meanest son of a gun I have ever met. And you backbite.

And you down talk your wife. That's the problem. The devil didn't make you do it.

Especially in charismatic circles. It's real big. The devil.

There's a spirit for everything. The devil, this, and the spirit of this. The spirit of lying.

The spirit of lust. The spirit of this. The spirit of, you know, all kinds of things.

Because if we can blame the devil, then I don't have to take responsibility. Well, the devil made me do it. He never, he can't make you do it.

All he can do is just plant thoughts, basically, in your mind. Or bring people, you know, situations. He can't make us do anything.

Now, to me, that's pretty, pretty safe. You know, you don't have to worry about that he's gonna make you like a puppet go and actually do something. And I've used to read, I've read stories of guys that are in jail for the rest of their life.

And they heard all these voices to go kill somebody. And actually, the voices and things started small when they were little. And would build.

Bundy, that guy Bundy, I think he was executed. He got started on just softcore pornography, like catalogs from Sears and JC Penney's. And then it turned into this.

And then turned into this. And turned, and it got worse and worse and worse. So that's what the enemy does.

He'll keep bringing those things. Because the ultimate goal is for the enemy is to kill, steal, and to destroy. That's what he, he's not concerned with a little this, a little slip up, or a little that.

He wants to kill, and steal, and to destroy. And submit and resist. Oh, I want to keep reading.

Temptation is also an opportunity to do what is right by turning from it. See, temptation isn't wrong. People sometimes be, Shane, where are these thoughts coming from? I've never had that thought before.

Right, there's a season of testing sometimes that the enemy will bring in thoughts. But being tempted is not sin, because Jesus was tempted. Jesus was tempted in all points like we are, but was without sin.

So the temptation, the thought to do something isn't the sin, it's when you go out and do it. That's when it crosses the line. 1 Corinthians 10, 13, no temptation has overtaken you.

This is gonna burst the bubble to some people. Because they think, nobody on planet Earth has ever went through what I'm going through. Nobody's had to resist what I'm resisting.

Well, Paul said, no temptation has overtaken you, except such as is common to man. But God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able. But with the temptation, he makes a way of escape that you may be able to bear it.

So there's a whole bunch of exit doors here. There's exit doors everywhere. But you have to bear it.

You have to, there's a price that has to be paid. There's a resistance that has to be won. The door of temptation swings both ways.

You can enter or exit. Submit and resist, what I talked about earlier. Like in dieting, when bad food is removed, a healthy choice has to be added.

Same thing in spiritual areas. When something is removed from your life, when you start to step back and pursue God and you remove things from your life, you have to add it with other things. For example, I've known people who have tried to get back on track with their life.

I'm just gonna go sit at home and watch TV. I'm not going back out into that party lifestyle of the world. Well, sitting at home with this can eventually back to that.

Because you're feeding your mind. You're not adding things. So what I would suggest is get plugged into a Wednesday night study, in a Sunday church, in a Bible study, men's group, women's group, and you get plugged in.

You're adding more things as you're taking things out. If you just go and remove things but don't add things, the enemy can come back in. Because idle hands are the enemy's workshop.

Idle hands are the enemy's tools. Idle hands, all those sayings are true. Because when we sit idle, we're bored.

And when we're bored, that's when temptation often occurs. The flesh is in rebellion against God. Okay, your flesh is in rebellion against God.

So feelings cannot be trusted. Okay, you don't trust your feelings. Puritan author John Owen said, secret lusts lie lurking in our own heart, which will never give up until they are either destroyed or satisfied.

That's what happens. Those lusts that are in our heart, they're lurking, they're ready, and they're not going to give up until they're either satisfied or they're crucified. That's how we have to handle things like this.

And C.H. Spurgeon said, beware of no man more than yourself. We carry our worst enemies within. So as we're talking about defeating the devil, submit and draw near to God regardless of how you feel.

Because I can tell you as a living witness that you will not feel like reading the Word, and fasting, and going to church, and all these things sometimes. Because we often say, well, I don't feel like it, so I'm not going to do it. I feel like going to the movies.

I feel like watching the news. I feel like going, you know, where do you feel like going? Some of those things are fine. But if you always just go where your feelings are going to go, you're rarely going to go into God's Word.

You're rarely going to go to church. You're rarely going to do the things that God wants us to do. If we just allow our feelings.

And that's why I think the enemy goes after feelings Sunday morning. And spouses go like this. Right? We take two cars now, so it's been a long time.

But I remember when we used to get ready for church, getting the kids ready. Oh, my. The devil just loves it.

What? Every all day is fine, or all week is fine. No problems at all. But come Sunday morning.

Where's it close? Where is this? We're running late. Forget it. Let's just not go.

And you go storming back in your room and slam the door. Nobody else does that. That was a long time ago, though.

2005. I don't think I'd slam the door. But we usually made it.

But sometimes it was like. Christians can be so fake. Well, because you're mad and this.

And then you get there. Praise you, brother. How's it going? Smiles.

Everybody's treating everybody nice. Oh, I love you. And wait a minute.

You're just fighting five minutes ago. See, it tells me you can't control the way you act. It tells me you can't control the way you act if you want it bad enough.

So that's the rebellion. The flesh is a rebellion. So we can't trust our feelings.

The devil doesn't make us do anything. As I said, he simply presents the bait. Blame shifting is very common.

The devil is coming after my finances. People say, yet they fail to budget and give and spend wisely. The devil is destroying my marriage.

Yet spouses fail to truly love and serve each other. See, I remember that earlier. Be aware of opportune times.

Here's where the rubber is going to meet the road. There's not probably not too much temptation going on right now. Usually it's when the opportune times present themselves.

Opportune times, Luke 4.13, and when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time. So the devil was tempting Jesus when he was hungry. All these things, the devil kept testing him and tempting him.

And eventually he left. But the Bible says he was going to come back for an opportune time. And in battle, the enemy attacks at opportune times.

You might say, Shane, what is an opportune time? Well, if you look it up in the Greek language, what it really means is it's talking about a favorable wind blowing a ship towards its destination. So there's a ship out to sea. The wind starts up and it's actually blowing the ship back to where it wants to go.

That's an opportune time. That's an opportunity there. So if we look, the devil is looking for that time when you're in a certain place or in a certain setting where that can happen.

For example, probably not gonna want a pitcher of beer right here. But last night, it's everywhere, right? You see the opportune times? There was an opportune time right now. That will never work.

But you throw me in that place 100 times and trying to deal with that all the time, depending on this and that. I mean, obviously, you know, as a pastor, you've got to have a policy of abstinence. People can enjoy beers now and then.

I'm not against that at all. But I have to be even more careful. So that would be an opportune time or an opportune time of where nobody's at or it's a vacation or... You know those times where he's going to... Nobody's considering looking at pornography right now, are they? No, nobody in this whole room.

You get home tonight, you go on Facebook where you read garbage, books that are out there, the Fifty Shades of Garbage and all this stuff. And see, that's an opportune time. Opportune time.

You can feel the anger in your home and you're about ready to explode. Oh, that's an opportune time. That you see, I'm just gonna go on a walk and pray.

You remove... So he's looking for the opp... And everybody's different. Everybody's different. Your opportune time might not be my opportune time and vice versa.

So he goes around looking for those times. And it's interesting. There's something called... They usually use it in addiction ministries, but it's called the HALT principle.

And they don't know it, but it's spiritual. They said, you're most apt to relapse when you're hungry, angry, lonely, or tired. And I said, oh, that's for us too.

Oh, that's exactly opportune times. Hungry, angry, lonely, and tired. Because you're tired, you're snapped.

You're lonely, you do things you normally wouldn't do. You're angry, you're upset, your emotions are going, hey, why are y'all... I'll show them. And he's looking for these opportune times.

So that's what the enemy did. He's going around looking for those times. And that's one reason as a parent, as you're raising children, you should minimize those opportune times in your house or the way your family's constructed as often as possible.

You don't want to give the enemy a foothold. You don't want to present and give them opportune times. Careful with what your kids watch in your home.

It's okay to have parameters and rules because you're there to guard them and shepherd them and avoid the enemy coming in. So maybe you struggle with an addiction. You're hungry, you're angry, you're lonely, you're tired.

Those will be times when he will go after you. And the final point, the source of our strength comes from the food that we choose. A daily diet of violence, lust, anger, and depression will fuel those very things in our lives.

See, this is the big reason, I'm like most of you, I know most of you here, that we're careful on entertainment because you see this big thing now with young adults on vampires and the occult and witchcraft. And I talk about that often, and that's why. Because as these kids feed on all of this stuff, you see MTV now, it's just garbage.

I mean, I was in an airport a year ago, and I haven't seen it since then, but just the garbage, it's unbelievable what we're filling the mind of young adults, what they're filling their mind with. Stuff that now

amuses us, amazed us years ago we would never allow. And so as they're feeding on this, that is an opportune time because as a man thinks, so is he.

The more we feed on certain things, that will either fuel temptation or help to quench it. So if you're watching certain things, and I remember, I hope I'm not being too repetitive because some of these things I've talked about back in Lancaster, but I remember at a men's conference where there was this man, he came up forward, he was crying, and his wife was leaving that weekend. Because of his problem with pornography, it's a huge issue.

And I was talking to him, and he said, you know, trying to isolate, you know, he goes, yeah, every time I love watching sports on ESPN, and that starts with the cheerleaders and the commercials, and that's where I keep, I said, okay, this is a no brainer. Go home, tell her you're unplugging the television, and you're gonna make the necessary changes that you need to do and remove those triggers that keep happening. And I was, I didn't know what to say to his response.

He looked at me, he said, I can't do that. Are you crazy? I'm a sports fanatic. And he kind of walked, I'm like, oh, Lord, what don't we get? That's why I like what A.W. Tozer said, don't come up here and cry about it, go home and live it out.

He's not gonna make those changes because he's a sports fanatic? And he's about ready to lose his marriage? I wanna, mm, man, right as he's walking away, the back of his head. But you see, that's what I was just talking about here. The source, that's why he's not doing well spiritually, that because they don't wanna let that go, and you don't wanna let that go because the flesh loves it.

The flesh doesn't wanna be submitted to God. The flesh doesn't want, the flesh loves all that juicy gossip about J. Lo and, is she even around? Angelina, Brad Pitt, and Lady Gaga, and Madonna, what they're saying about Trump, and oh, I just gotta watch all this stuff, gotta watch all this stuff, and it's just, the flesh likes it, but it's not healthy, it's not good. It's not good to sit and watch all of those things.

So just be encouraged, no temptation has overtaken you except what is common to man. The devil won't make you do anything, he's going to present the bait. And what you're going through is no different than what all of human history has went through.

But God is faithful, not you, not me, God is faithful. He'll give you the way of exit, he'll make it, but you're gonna have to bear it. There's gonna be a load to cross.

Somehow we have in this mindset that temptation's going to be easy. You wanna see how hard temptation is, try fasting for a day, and you'll see your flesh is just as, he's like a junkyard dog, pit bull. You know those junkyard, they're out there.

That's where your flesh just comes alive and just snaps, and people get moody and irritable. When you start telling the flesh no, no, I'm not gonna look at Facebook or the news, I'm gonna read my Bible. And you'll just start getting irritable, like what is this going, because the flesh hates those things.

So God says, I'll make the way of escape, there it is, but you're gonna have to bear it. It's almost like I'm carrying a hundred pound weight, okay, I'm gonna make it, but I've gotta carry something, I've gotta bear something, and I can make it to that exit. So God's faithful, the devil doesn't make you do anything, he's not stronger than God, and people say, I just couldn't resist.

Yes, you can. As a believer, I believe you can. I've seen, I've talked to people in more bondage than most of us have ever known, from heroin, or drinking every day for years.

And it's a harder struggle, but they can, they have the ability to tell the devil no. I mean, either that's true, or the word of God's not true. We can say no, we don't have to say, it's my one little vice, I always cave in.

We can take a stand on that. God will make a way of escape. Let me remind you, draw near to God, and he will draw near to you.

Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Double-minded, he's talking about, they're being double-minded here, they're saying one thing, but doing another. They're saying one thing, but doing another.

They're going to church, but going home and looking at something else. They're saying one thing, but being abusive at home. And they're double-minded in all of their ways.

Lament, and mourn, and weep over your condition. Let your laughter be turned into mourning, and your joy to gloom. Humble yourself in the sight of the Lord, and he will lift you up.

Cleansing is basically confession, repenting. Lamenting is a passionate expression of grief or sorrow for what we've done. Let your joy over sin be turned into mourning.

This is genuine humility. So that's how we, you understand that it is a struggle, but it's not impossible. It's difficult, but it's not impossible.

It's going to be challenging, but it's not impossible. And what I like, the more you say no on a certain area, the stronger you become. The more you say no, the more you resist the enemy, he starts to lose that power, and he withdraws.

So there's a battle. It's difficult, but you put on the full armor of God, which if we had time, we could go through that. All the things that God talks about in his word, as you put those things on and resist the devil, he will flee.

So let's leave it at that. I'll have a blessing and Jason come up, and we'll conclude in worship. But I would just do some inventory tonight.

Some people just need to be encouraged. Some people, this might not apply to as heavily, but some people, this might apply to real heavily, that they're caught in sin. And this sermon was hitting them head on.

James just says, cleanse your hearts, repent, renew that fellowship with God, begin resisting that temptation, but remove those triggers. You have to, this is so elementary. The Bible says, make no provision for the flesh.

That word provision, it's almost like pornea, pornea, poinoma, all these Greek words, I get them confused a little bit. But this one, make no provision for the flesh, is actually forethought or planning. You're not gonna plan ahead to lust.

You're not gonna plan ahead to sin. It reminds me of the person who always wants to lose weight, but has a pantry full of junk food. You're not gonna succeed.

You're not gonna succeed. You gotta remove that ice cream, remove that Twinkie, remove those donuts, remove that root beer float, you gotta remove all these things, out of sight, out of mind. It's the same thing in our spiritual walk.

We've gotta remove those triggers. That's not being weird, that's being biblical. Make no provision for the flesh.

Don't plan ahead. Remove those things, because if you plan ahead to fulfill something, it will happen. It will happen.

Because as our mind thinks, our feet go.

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