

DON'T BLAME GOD
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There was a comedian on TV back in the 70's by the name of Flip Wilson. He was famous for this line, "The devil made me do it." Funny, but wrong. The devil doesn't **make** us do anything. We **choose** to do it.

If you believe that God is tempting you, you are wrong. "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." (James 1:13)

"1 Paul, a bond-servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the faith of those chosen of God and the knowledge of the truth which is according to godliness, 2 in the hope of eternal life, which God, **who cannot lie**, promised long ages ago," (Titus 1:1-2, *emphasis added*)

To believe that temptations are from God is a belief contrary to the Bible. This is the nature of God. "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." (James 1:17) Paul reminds us, "What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? 2 May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?" (Romans 6:1-2) God is holy and cannot be associated with evil. Recognizing His nature helps us trust in His goodness and purity.

We all have a personal responsibility in temptation. As believers, we must acknowledge our own role in succumbing to temptation rather than attributing it to God. God has given us humans free will, and with it comes the responsibility to choose righteousness over sin.

Spiritual discernment must be practiced. As Christians, we must develop a discernment that recognizes the source of the temptations and responds appropriately. (Appropriately is to run from it.)

We are not strong enough on our own to combat Satan. If you think so, he has deceived you in a false security. The only way we can stand up to Satan is by relying on God's strength. We must rely on God's strength and wisdom to resist temptation. He provides the means to overcome, and we must actively seek His help through prayer and reliance on the Holy Spirit.

In times of temptation, believers are encouraged to rely on God's strength and seek His guidance through prayer and Scripture. James 1:13 settles the question of blame. Temptation is real, but it **never** originates with God. His holy nature makes evil repulsive to Him and excludes any possibility that He would entice us toward sin. We are responsible for our responses, yet God faithfully provides the grace and escape we need to stand firm.

We have the personal responsibility to acknowledge personal accountability in the face of temptation. We must not blame God or others, but rather take ownership of our actions and choices.

We must guard our heart. We have to be proactive in guarding our heart and mind against sinful desires. This involves regular prayer, scripture study, and accountability within the Christian community. One of those ways is to, **“7 Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.”** (James 4:7)

We must stay focused on His word. This helps us engage in the renewal of the mind through scripture and spiritual disciplines. This transformation helps align our desires with God's will, reducing the power of temptation. **“Your word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against You.”** (Psalm 119:11) And this other verse, **“Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path.”** (Psalm 119:105)

We learn from James 1:13 that temptation is a common reality, but its root lies within our own fallen desires. When those desires are unchecked, they lure us step by step until we are trapped. By acknowledging personal responsibility, fleeing the bait, and relying on God's promised escape, we can resist temptation and walk in the freedom Christ purchased for us. The ultimate consequence of unchecked sin is death, both spiritual and physical. This serves as a sobering reminder of the seriousness of sin.

We must emphasize personal responsibility in the process of sin. Believers must take ownership of their desires and actions, seeking God's strength to overcome temptation. Constant vigilance and reliance on the Holy Spirit are necessary to resist the progression from desire to sin. Regular prayer, Bible study, and fellowship with other believers are vital practices.

“Then after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and when sin is fully grown, it gives birth to death” (James 1:15, *emphasis added*) This verse sketches a sobering yet straightforward progression: entertained desire becomes deliberate sin; deliberate sin, left unchecked, develops into a lifestyle; that lifestyle culminates in death. The verse calls believers to interrupt the cycle early—guarding the heart, refusing the first surrender to sinful desire, and clinging to the life Christ freely offers. God is truth. Have a blessed week.

Goodbye Temptation:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YnJT5NXNdxQ&list=RDYnJT5NXNdxQ&start_radio=1