

# Maple Springs Baptist Church

## Series: Life Hacks for Tough Times & Rough Relationships

### Week 5: When Tempted

James tells us that when you are tempted, not if. The troubling truth is that I can be tempted.

Problem: **What tempts us is often the source of our tough times & rough relationships.**

**James 4:1-3.** At the core of tough times and rough relationships is our own selfish desires.

You know how I know that? Because they're often in the way of my selfish desires.

How many of us would just personally own the statement? I'm capable of being selfish.

James is about to help us understand how to win against temptation. **You can win before you sin.** You don't have to, if you can win temptation on the front end.

So how does temptation work? **James 1:13-17.**

#### Life Principles:

1. **You can know the right thing, but do the wrong thing.** **James 1:14** it's going to happen.

Greek –Picture of a baited hook and a fish. Fish sees the bait and remains blind to the hook.

Because when you want something really bad, your wants overtake your will. Your passions dominate your reason. Your immediate gratification overwhelms long term gratification. You remain blind to the hook and you take the bait. So, information is not what will change it for you, because you can know the right thing and do the wrong thing. That's how you can explain why so many of us eat at McDonald's.

You can know the right thing and still do the wrong thing. So what's your McDonald's temptation these days?

2. **You can choose if you fall, but you can't choose the fallout.** We start thinking ... “What's the big deal? Who cares if I fall into temptation? Who cares if I go do something stupid?”

You don't have to fall into temptation. You don't have to take the bait. You don't have to ... let selfish desires dominate your life and undo your marriage, your family, your friendships, business, your relationship with God.. You don't have to.

**James 1:15** –while you don't have to choose to fall the temptation, there will be a fallout if you do. And you don't get to choose the fallout.

It's the journey of the fish. The moment you grab the bait of temptation, you no longer get to make any choices because fallout is going to happen.

So what do you do? **3 life hacks.**

The first one is **Resist It**. Look at what he says in **James 4:7-8a** You are going to have to enter into a renewal of resistance against temptation. You need to know you're in the battle. You want to know how to resist? Draw near to God.

Other people want you to sin with them. In other words, they want to take you to their McDonald's. And they want to share their fries with you..

Young People: You are living in the most intense cultural battle for character our nation has ever known.

What they're telling you is that if you don't join them, you're judging them. And that's an absolute lie.

You are in a battle. How do I resist? **The best way to resist McDonald's is to never be in McDonald's**. In other words, stay away from the danger zones.

"I don't know how I fell into temptation," –truth is we put ourselves in the very place where we would be tempted because we wanted to. And then we pretend like we're going to resist when we fully intend to satisfy that appetite. And stupid has a fallout.

Stay away from the danger zones. But more than resist temptation, more than avoid wrong, do what is right.

**James 4:17**. Church, we're here for more than just resisting the wrong. We're here to rise up in doing right.

When temptation comes resist it. But, if you fail to resist it in a moment. If you sin, if you cross the line, do what? **Own it**. Don't excuse it. Don't blame others, or explain away my sin.

Golf story ... Because if you keep blaming the club, you'll never change your swing. Some of us keep blaming everyone & everything for our sin, so we won't change our lifestyle. **James 1:13b**

Thirdly, **Confess it**. **James 4:7-10**, We laugh off sin. We make jokes about it. We treat sin like it's entertainment when sin is Ebola and it'll kill you.

Deal honestly with it, confess it to God and seek forgiveness. **1 John 1:9**. The goal is that you would not sin, that you would resist temptation. But if anyone does sin, we have Jesus Christ who is a sacrifice over our sin... **1 John 2:1**. John tells us **1 John 1:6**—you can't be an intimate fellowship with God and be comfortable with sin. But **1 John 1:7**: What makes it possible for unholy, broken people to be in fellowship—relationship with the Holy God is the work of Jesus Christ. When it comes to temptation **Resist it**. But when you do sin **Own it** and **Confess it**.

**Where in your life do you need to rise up with the new resistance against temptation?  
Where do you need to own some things that you've been excusing?**