

It's Not God's Fault!

We as human beings have a natural tendency to look for self-gratification, even if it doesn't please God. We look out for our own needs, discounting completely God's will for us. We are instructed to **"live holy and godly lives"** by the apostle Peter in **2 Peter 3:11**. He calls on us to **"be holy"** because God is holy in **1 Peter 1:16**. That's a pretty tall order, but it would not have been commanded if it weren't possible.

We are to be live by God's Spirit, Paul tells us in **Galatians 5:25**, and think "spiritually." Our thoughts should dwell on good and not evil. However, we still sin and often blame God for it. "We're only human," we say, as if we sin because of God's gift of free will. James says this in **James 1:13-15**:

"When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death."

Sin is our fault—it is the fault of our weakness and our inability to overcome the temptation. God isn't the cause of sin, he is the cure for sin. Paul told the Corinthians in **1 Corinthians 10:13**:

"No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it."

The root cause of sin is Satan, who appeals to our natural instinct to self-gratify. John said in **1 John 2:16-17**:

"For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever."

And of course we all know who is referred to as the "god of this world" – Satan (**2 Corinthians 4:4 KJV**), that old deceiver. He uses his wiles to make us believe we cannot resist him. He appeals to the three things that are the Achilles' heel to humans:

"The lust of the eye" – things that look so appealing, we'll do anything to get them.

"The lust of the flesh" – the natural cravings within us, some good, some bad, that need to be controlled.

"The pride of life" – Our desire to be the best, no matter who suffers.

If we truly **"live by the Spirit"** as Paul says we should, the good within us should be able to combat the evil with which we are being tempted. Adam and Eve, as well as countless others, were unable to resist when tempted. **Genesis 3:6**:

“When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food (lust of the flesh) and pleasing to the eye (lust of the eye), and also desirable for gaining wisdom (pride of life) she took some and ate it.”

The result of her inability to resist Satan’s trickery caused her to sin. Adam’s inability to resist her temptation to partake resulted in his sin, the sin that forever changed our relationship with God. However, because of Jesus’ ability to resist the same type of temptations in **Matthew 4**, and His sin offering on the cross, we are given all we need to resist. Because of Christ’s example and words, along with the Spirit’s indwelling, we can, if by our free will we choose to, live the life we are called to live.

---Johnny Stephens