

Testing Your Faith [part 2] (James 1:12-18)

Scripture Text:

12. Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.
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.
14. But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust.
15. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.
16. Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.
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.
18. In 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 1:12-18 NASB)

Outline:

- I. The Source of blessings (v.12)
- II. The Source of Temptation (vv.13-15)
- III. The Source of All Good and Perfect Things (vv.16-18)

Worksheet:

- I. The Source of blessings through trials (v.12)
 - a. Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; (v.12a)
 - i. **Who** is being spoken of in this verse? *[discussion]* _____

 - ii. **What** can be expected by this person who perseveres under trial?
[discussion] _____

 - iii. "Blessed" – ***makarios*** – What does this word mean for the believer?

 - iv. "perseveres" – ***hypomeno*** - to remain; to tarry behind; to remain i.e. abide, not recede or flee; to persevere: under misfortunes and trials to hold fast to one's faith in Christ; to endure, bear bravely and calmly, ill treatments.

v. **What** are some examples of “trials” that believers experience that requires this “perseverance”?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

vi. Is “perseverance” the same thing as “will-power”? [discussion] _____

vii. Understanding what a word *does not* mean is often a good way to define what it *does* mean. Here are some Antonyms for the word

“perseverance”:

- | | | | | |
|-----------------|---|---|--|---|
| | ? | ? | ? | ? |
| 1. Apathy | ? | ? | ? | ? |
| 2. Cowardice | ? | ? | ? | ? |
| 3. Indifference | ? | ? | Does this Characterize the Church | ? |
| 4. Irresolution | ? | | Today? | ? |
| 5. Weakness | ? | ? | ? | |
| 6. Idleness | ? | | ? | ? |
| 7. Laziness | | ? | ? | ? |
| 8. Lethargy | | | | ? |

viii. If believers don’t consistently “persevere” in the midst of trials, they tend to demonstrate some, if not all, of these antithetical characteristics instead.

1. The steadfast of mind You will keep in perfect peace, Because he trusts in You. (Isaiah 26:3 NASB)
2. Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me. (Psalms 51:10 NASB)
3. He who is steadfast in righteousness will attain to life, And he who pursues evil will bring about his own death.(Proverbs 11:19 NASB)
4. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord. (1 Corinthians 15:58 NASB)
5. And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach— if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister.(Colossians 1:21-23 NASB)

6. Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints, (Ephesians 6:10-18 NASB)

b. for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. (v.12b)

i. **What** is meant by “approved” in this verse? **How** can a believer be “approved”? [discussion] _____

ii. The believer must be proven to be **genuine** and not **counterfeit** after being observed in the midst of trials.

iii. Self-examination and self-reflection – are you the “real McCoy” or a “nock-off”? What does the “real McCoy” mean? What is a “nock-off”? [discussion] _____

iv. “Approved” - **dokimos** - accepted, particularly of coins and money. accepted, pleasing, acceptable:

v. "In the ancient world there was no banking system as we know it today, and no paper money. All money was made from metal, heated until liquid, poured into molds and allowed to cool. When the coins were cooled, it was necessary to smooth off the uneven edges. The coins were comparatively soft, and of course many people shaved them closely. In one century, more than eighty laws were passed in Athens to stop the practice of whittling down the coins then in circulation. But some money-changers were men of **integrity**, who would accept no counterfeit money; they were men of **honor** who put only **genuine, full-weight** money into circulation. Such men were called **dokimos**, and this word is

used here for the Christian as he is to be **seen** by the world." (Donald Grey Barnhouse, Romans: God's Glory, p. 18.) [discussion] _____

vi. **What** is promised to those who have been "approved"? [discussion] _____

vii. **Who** will give it? _____

viii. **Who** is it promised to? _____

ix. For more information on the "Five Heavenly Crowns of Scripture" refer to: <https://www.gotquestions.org/heavenly-crowns.html>

II. The Source of Temptation (vv.13-15)

a. 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. (v.13)

i. Knowing that God "tests" believers through "trials" may cause some believers to incorrectly think that God is also responsible for _____ as well.

ii. When believers are tested by God, His intention is to "produce endurance" (v.3) in them, so that they may be "perfect", "complete" and "lacking nothing" (v.4). God's purpose is not to _____ believers so that they will **fall** and **fail** by giving into temptation, but rather His intention is for them to pass the test, so that they will **mature** and **master** temptation as they are tested, progressing in the development of their holiness in and devotion to God.

iii. James knew that the natural inclination of man was to blame God for allowing him to be in situations that could lead to temptation and thus falsely accuse God of tempting him. Man has been blaming God for his own sin since Genesis 3:12, so it is inherent for both men and women to do so even now in their fallen state.

And He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" The man said, "**The woman** whom **You gave** to be with me, **she gave** me from the tree, and I ate." Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" And the woman said, "**The serpent** deceived me, and I ate." (Genesis 3:11-13 NASB)

iv. **Why** should "no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"? [discussion] _____

v. **How** can this be reconciled with those who use as an argument against this assertion concerning the nature of God, Matthew 4:1-11? _____

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry. And the tempter came and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.'" Then the devil *took Him into the holy city and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, and *said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down; for it is written, 'He will command His angels concerning You'; and 'On their hands they will bear You up, So that You will not strike Your foot against a stone.'" Jesus said to him, "On the other hand, it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'" Again, the devil *took Him to a very high mountain and *showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; and he said to Him, "All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me." Then Jesus *said to him, "Go, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.'" Then the devil *left Him; and behold, angels came and began to minister to Him. (Matthew 4:1-11 NASB)

vi. Was Jesus ever **tempted** to do what Satan told Him to do? *[discussion]*

vii. **What** determines whether a "trial" is a "test" or a "temptation"? *[discussion]*

b. But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. (v.14)

- i. "each one" – Everybody, without exception; everyone, in every instance.
- ii. "carried away" – **exelko** - to draw out; metaphor - lure forth: in hunting and fishing as game is lured from its hiding place, so man by lure is allured from the safety of self-restraint to sin. In Jas 1:14, the language of the hunting is transferred to the seduction of a harlot.
- iii. "enticed" – **deleazo** - to bait, catch by a bait; metaphor: to beguile by blandishments ("sweet-talk"), allure, entice, deceive
- iv. Are believers carried away and enticed by the lusts of others or just influenced by them? Are the suggestions of others irresistible? Do the ideas, thoughts and suggestions of others render a believer powerless to resist them? *[discussion]*

- c. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death. (v.15)
- i. The imagery of human development is used to illustrate how _____, leads to _____, which ultimately leads to _____.
 - ii. Using the analogy of human development, match the concepts by drawing a line from one word to its corresponding word.

<u>Human Development (physical)</u>	<u>Temptation (spiritual)</u>
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- | | |
|---------------|-------|
| 1. Conception | Death |
| 2. Birth | Lust |
| 3. Maturity | Sin |

III. The Source of All Good and Perfect Things (vv.16-18)

- a. Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. (v.16)
 - i. James here gives a warning. **What** is that warning? _____

 - ii. About **what? What** specifically is he warning against, in *context* with this passage? [*discussion*] _____

 - iii. **Who** is this warning for? _____
- b. 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. (v.17)
 - i. “Every good thing” – James moves from the specific nature of God as it pertains to temptation and the source of it, to a broad statement about the source of “every good thing given and every perfect gift”. **What** does this verse say about “every good thing” and “every perfect gift”?

 - ii. **Where** do these things come from? _____
 - iii. “Father of lights” – This is a reference to creation. It is an ancient Jewish expression for God as the Creator, with “lights” referring to the sun, moon, and stars (Genesis 1:14-19). From man’s perspective, the celestial bodies have different phases of movement and rotation, change from day to night, and vary in intensity and shadow. But God does not follow that pattern. He is immutable, He changes not. (MacArthur, 2006)
 - iv. God is the consistent and ultimate source of light and does not cast a shadow, because He is Spirit and because there is no other source of light that is brighter! His character and integrity are impeccable!
- c. In 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. (v.18)
 - i. **What** is meant by “brought us forth by the word of truth”? _____

 - ii. **What** is “first fruits” a reference to? _____
