

Biblical Faith # 8 In Temptations

Given July 29, 2001

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Biblical Faith – In Temptations - Biblical Faith # 8 - July 29, 2001

We have been in a study on faith. We have tried to lay the foundation concerning Biblical faith. We saw that as we go through every passage of Scripture in the New Testament on the word faith, we could divide the passages into four major aspects of faith:

4 MAJOR ASPECTS OF BIBLICAL FAITH

- 1. FAITH - ITS ESSENCE**
- 2. FAITH - THE FAITH**
- 3. FAITH - PERSONAL**
- 4. FAITH - AS A PRINCIPLE**

The **essence of faith**. We looked at Hebrews 11:1 where it says that faith is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen. That faith, that is pure Biblical faith, is the substance of things hoped for; it is reality. The word “substance” there means reality.

And the things hoped for are the things of God. The word “hope” there means absolute certainty. So the Word of God comes at us and it is reality and it is absolute certainty. That’s where we get the essence of faith.

And then we saw another category of faith, “**the faith**”, where there’s a definite article in front of the word faith. What does it mean when it says “the faith” and there’s a definite article?

The faith in Scripture can refer to:

- 1. the essence of faith, the totality of God’s revelation to man**
- 2. a portion of the essence of faith, like the Gospel**
- 3. personal faith, resting in the essence of faith**

Well, we have seen so far that “the faith” could be referring the entire essence of faith, the entire revelation as given to us from the Word of God. Or, “the faith” could, and often does, refer to a portion of the Word of God. Or, the next and third aspect of the “the faith” was personal faith.

And that was the next aspect of faith; it’s one’s **personal faith**. That is, personal Biblical faith is that faith which rests and trusts in the essence of faith, that which is revealed from the Word of God.

Then, **faith as a principle**. This is the way God wants us to walk the Christian life. In Colossians 2 verses 6 & 7, the Lord gives us the walk of the Christian life. As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him.

We received Christ by the principle of faith. Personal faith, resting and trusting in what God has revealed through the Scriptures about our condition in Adam, who we were in Adam, and the conviction of sin. And Who Christ is and about the Person and Work of Christ. That is how we received Christ.

We’re to walk the same way. We’re to walk by the principle of faith, personal faith in the Word of God. We have seen that, in the time frame we are in, after we have received Christ, there is a whole process of sanctification. God is setting us apart. The word “sanctification” means to be set apart. He is setting us apart from sin unto Himself, and this is a process. So, that is the foundation we have laid.

Now, many questions have come up and we have documented the questions. We haven’t answered them, except for the first one.

Last week, we looked at what is non-Biblical faith, because you and I, as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, we are going to walk by faith.

And it’s either Biblical faith or non-Biblical faith, but we’re going to walk by faith, and it’s going to be one of the other.

Now that the foundation has been laid, I think you can answer many of these questions. What I would like to do today and next week is to tackle the last three questions, because these are the questions that most believers have concerning testing, concerning trials in our lives.

Then, the question is, how does faith determine our walk? As I said before, we are going to walk by faith and the object of faith is either going to be the Lord Jesus Christ or self. Those are going to be the two objects which we’re going to walk by, one or the other. Biblical faith is having the Lord Jesus Christ as our object. Non-Biblical faith is having self as the object of faith.

How is our faith energized? Is it by the pastor giving good sermons? I hope you don’t rely on me to energize your faith! But your faith gets energized, and we’re going to look at that next week.

QUESTIONS

- 1. WHAT IS NON-BIBLICAL FAITH?**
- 2. IS FAITH A GIFT?**
- 3. IS FAITH A WORK?**
- 4. ARE FAITH AND BELIEF THE SAME?**
- 5. ARE THERE DEGREES OF FAITH?**
- 6. DOES OUR FAITH GROW OR INCREASE?**
- 7. WHAT’S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FAITH & KNOWLEDGE?**
- 8. DOES GOD TEST OUR FAITH?**
- 9. DOES FAITH DETERMINE OUR WALK?**
- 10. WHAT ENERGIZES OUR FAITH?**

Ok, we want to look at trials and testing.

One of the most puzzling things in a believer's life is when trials and suffering come into their life and it overwhelms them. Does God allow testing? Does God allow trials? You betcha! In fact, in first Thessalonians chapter three, it says that we are appointed to suffering. We are appointed to trials.

We are appointed to trials - We represent Him & our heavenly home

It's a beautiful word there for appointment. It is like the president appoints an ambassador to another nation to represent him and the nation to another nation. We are appointed the same way. We are appointed to trials. We're appointed by the Lord to represent Him and to represent the country from which we come. It is not here, but it is there; our hope is in the heavenlies, seated with Him, and that's the country we represent.

1 Thessalonians 3:2 And sent Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellowlabourer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith:
3 That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are **appointed** thereunto.

Now, oftentimes believers say, boy, if it weren't for the trials and suffering in my life, I would have no problem living the Christian life. Really? My question is, then who is living the Christian life? Because if you are saying that "I" could live the Christian life if it weren't for these trials and sufferings, if it weren't for the circumstances coming at me, then you are attempting, out of self, to be living the Christian life.

Christ lives His life through us, He is our life

But what does Paul say? It's not I, but Christ. Not I, but Christ, Who lives the life. He is our life. And He is the One that lives His life in us & manifests His life through us. We don't live the Christian life; He lives the Christian life through us.

Galatians 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; **yet not I, but Christ liveth in me:** and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me.

In trials, this is the most frequent question I receive: why is this happening to me? Some people say, I thought I was a child of God, and God is allowing all this to happen to me. I'm kind of wondering now if I'm really His child. I can't believe that God would allow this to happen in my life.

Or, some would say: God must be in Hawaii, because He is certainly not with me! Not only that, but He doesn't have a clue about what I'm going through. Then, you see, what happens, all of a sudden, God is no longer omniscient. He no longer knows what is happening to you. He is no longer omnipresent, because He is in Hawaii and you are here, and He's not in your life anymore. All of a sudden, God isn't God anymore.

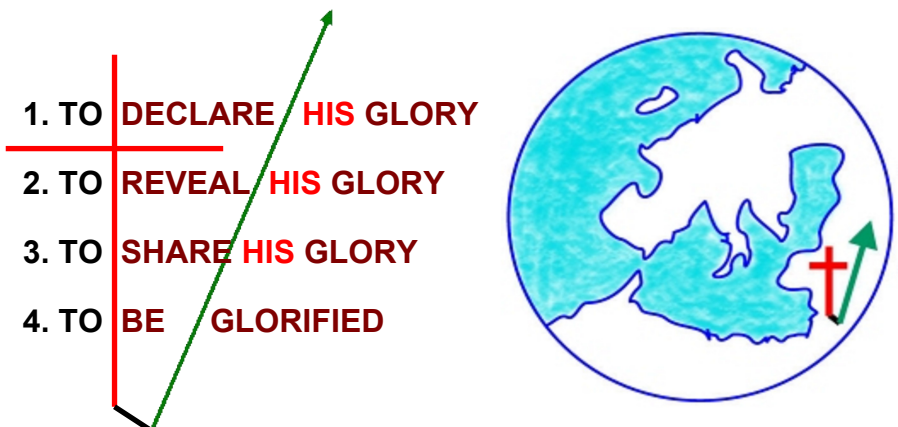
But here is the question we should be asking in the midst of the trials and sufferings: Does God have a purpose in these trials, in this suffering, and in the circumstances that are in my life? Then you have to ask, does God have an eternal purpose? You know He does, because we have covered this. I would like to review two aspects of His eternal purpose in terms of relating to trials and suffering.

As you look at God's eternal purpose, it's **to reveal God's glory**. How does He do that? How does God reveal His glory to you and me? It's **through the Word of God**. The Spirit of God comes along and takes the Word of God and reveals to us the truths of God and makes them very personal. So it's through the Word of God by the Spirit of God that He reveals to us the objective truth.

Another purpose is **to share His glory** with us, the glory that we can read out from Scripture. How does He do that? We've seen that we're to walk by the principle of faith, personal faith, total rest in what God reveals to us and to believe what God reveals to us, just to rest in what He says, we rest in the facts.

And it is through His word that He reveals the Lord Jesus Christ to us.

FROM ETERNITY PAST GOD'S ETERNAL PURPOSE



God's Spirit reveals God's glory through God's Word

God's Spirit shares God's glory by forming Christ in us as our personal faith is focused on God's revelation of Himself

As He does this, there is a process that is going on. **He forms Christ in us.** This is the whole process of sanctification, God forming the Lord Jesus Christ in us. Or, you could say, conforming us to the very image of His Son. And we're not conformed yet!

Is God's purpose in sharing His glory with us, independent of trials and circumstances and suffering in our lives? I mean, if this is His purpose, God's purpose is independent of all that. Yet, He allows trials and circumstances and suffering to come into our lives.

So, we ask the question, is God sovereign? And if the answer to that is yes, which it is, then there is no trial, there is no suffering, and there is no circumstance that comes into your life that doesn't go through the hand of God. Not one, because of His sovereignty.

God is sovereign, so God uses these things to share His glory with us

Then it must follow, that God uses these things to share His glory with us. Because that's His purpose, He must use everything He allows in our life for that purpose, to share His glory.

So we can say, that one of the purposes of trials, suffering and circumstances that come into our life is for God to share the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ with us.

How does He do that? It is a marvelous process! Scripture reveals this process to us. Next week we will go through that process, of how God shares His glory through trials and suffering.

Trials versus Temptations

Today I want to clear up a misunderstanding of the meanings of trials and temptations. The word for "trial" and the word for "temptation" are used synonymously sometimes in Scripture, so you can't tell the difference between the two. But oftentimes the words "trial" and "temptation" are diametrically opposed to each other and are used very differently from one another. We are going to try to understand how they are used in a different sense, not how they are used in the same sense.

So, we need to learn two words. The first word is dakemadzo. The second word is pieradzo. Pieradzo is used for the words temptation, or to tempt. Dakemadzo is used for the words to test or to prove. Dakemadzo is to test or to prove with a view towards approval. It's like if you take ore and heat it up and boil out the impurities. You're testing this; you're proving this, with a view towards approval. You do this because you want the pure stuff to come out and all the impurities to be boiled away. That's the sense of dakemadzo, with a view toward approval.

That's the way God tests us, or proves us, dakemadzo. Now, we're not going to use this word today, except when we close, so just put it in the back of your memory and we're going to be looking at pieradzo, pieradzo as it is used in the negative sense. It is used in the negative sense to tempt one to failure. Ok, one is approval, one is to failure. So you could say that pieradzo is a solicitation to sin. We will be looking at pieradzo in the sense of temptation, a solicitation to sin.

Now, here's an example. The Lord Jesus Christ was led into the wilderness. He was led into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil – pieradzo, with a view toward failure, with a solicitation to sin. So Jesus fasted 40 days and 40 nights. Then comes along the personification of pieradzo, the tempter himself, the devil. The devil comes with three temptations. One of those temptations was to fall down and worship Satan. The Lord responded to those three temptations with Scripture, and after the third temptation the devil left.

Matthew 4:1 Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be **tempted** of the devil. 2 And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He was afterward an hungred. 3 And when the **tempter** came to Him, He said, If Thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. 4 But He answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. 5 Then the devil taketh Him up into the holy city, and setteth Him on a pinnacle of the temple, 6 And saith unto Him, If Thou be the Son of God, cast Thyself down: for it is written, He shall give His angels charge concerning Thee: and in their hands they shall bear Thee up, lest at any time Thou dash Thy foot against a stone. 7 Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not **tempt** the Lord Thy God. 8 Again, the devil taketh Him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth Him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; 9 And saith unto Him, All these things will I give Thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. 10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve. 11 Then the devil leaveth Him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto Him.

Now, let's look at how we are tempted. James chapter one verse thirteen.

James 1: 13 Let no one say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God. For God cannot be tempted with evil. Neither tempts He any man.

Let no one say when he is tempted.. pieradzo or pierasmos in the noun form. These words will be the verb form, or the noun form or the adjective form, but it's going to be a form of pieradzo. Let no one say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God. For God cannot be tempted with evil. Neither tempts He any man.

God will never tempt to failure, God never solicits to sin

The one thing about pieradzo is that it's used in the negative sense in terms to tempt with the solicitation to sin, with a view towards failure, is that God will never, never, never, ever tempt us with a solicitation to sin. Never with a view to failure. He will never do that.

I want you to listen to some questions and some reasoning as we go through this temptation process.

The first question is: How are we tempted?

Along with that comes another question: Who are we tempted by? Who desires that we fail? Who solicits us to sin? In order for us to be solicited to sin, the "who" has to have the very strong desires, has to have very strong motives. The "who" must be capable of making sin very attractive.

Is the "who" Satan? Because a lot of people will say, "It's been tough. You wouldn't believe what Satan is doing in my life". It's as if believers think Satan is like God, that he is omnipresent.

But Satan is not omnipresent; he can only be in one place at one time. So, if he is at your house soliciting you to sin, he can't be at my house soliciting me to sin. So, who's the who?

Let's look at verse fourteen.

James 1:14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away.. how? .. of his **own** lust.

The who is ourselves

Who is the who? The who is ourselves! We can't blame Satan, I can't blame my wife, I can't blame my kids, I can't blame the dog. The who is ourselves, and it's out from ourselves that come these lusts.

The word for lust is epithumia; it means very strong desires, inordinate desires. From within ourselves are these strong lusts and strong desires. If you are like me, you know that they keep coming and coming. It's twenty-four/seven, they're always coming at us.

And so there must be a power source behind these temptations and behind these solicitations to sin. So, what's the power source?

The power source of our lust is the sin nature

I think Paul defines the power source in Romans chapter 6 and 7 as "the sin". If you look in the King James, the definite article is not there, but if you look in the Greek Interlinear, you will see the definite article in almost every case. I believe that "the sin", in the context that Paul is talking about, is the sin nature. So, the source of our lust is the sin nature.

Take a look at the process that goes on, in verse fourteen of James chapter one.

We start out abiding in Christ, we are walking in fellowship with Him, in communion with Him and we have this wonderful intimacy with the Lord Jesus Christ as we behold Him in His word, and the Spirit of God makes Him real to us.

But then, as verse fourteen says, we're drawn away by our lusts. So there's the lust, the very strong desires, (and, as I said, I believe the source is the sin nature) and we're drawn away.

The word "drawn away" is to be lured; it's to be lured away from another. We are being drawn away from abiding in the Lord Jesus Christ to not abiding in the Lord Jesus Christ.

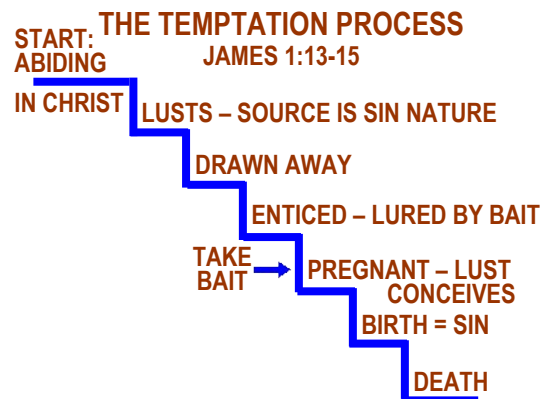
Look at verse fourteen: "when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed". The next word there is enticed. The word enticed simply means that now there is a bait. There's a bait out in front of you.

This power source knows what the bait should be. When you go fishing, you have to know what fish are going to be attracted to, worms, spinners, eggs, whatever. That old sin nature knows what the bait should be and puts that bait out in front of us. What are some examples?

The first thing we think of when we hear the word "lust" is sexual lust. Which is a very strong desire, especially with respect to men. There are so many of these desires that come at us every day.

How about self-preservation lust or desire? We're in the business of preserving our image. We don't want to be wrong and we want to look good in front of other people, in front of other believers. We want to look just as spiritual as they are. There's this self-preservation lust.

In my counseling, there are all kinds of desires that come to a person. That they don't realize that they're being drawn away or lured away from the Lord Jesus Christ. For example, women who have been abused, either sexually or mentally abused.



One woman when she was a young girl, was sexually abused by her father. Every time the word “father” came up, it triggered a reaction in her. It triggered a reaction of anger, of bitterness, of resentment. Those were the things that were drawing her away; this anger and bitterness because of memories of what happened to her with her father. These are enticements.

Look at verse 15: When lust hath conceived, it brings forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, brings forth death.

James 1:15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

When that lust, when that desire, conceives and the word in the Greek there is sulambano, meaning to become pregnant.

And so there’s a point where bait is out in front of us. Whether it is that woman walking by, or when we have to tell a little white lie to preserve our self-image, we take the bait.

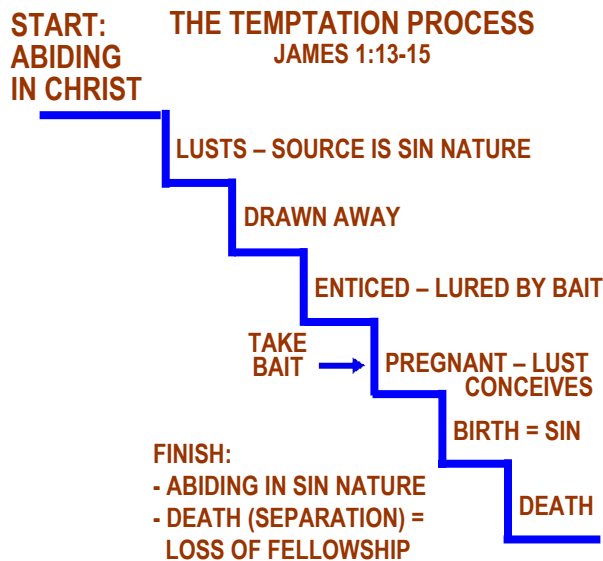
Or when the mention of one’s father causes anger and bitterness and we say, “I should be angry. I have a right to be angry and I have a right to be bitter and I have a right to be resentful!” we have just taken the bait.

So we take the bait, and then we become pregnant and lust conceives. And you know this: that when you become pregnant, there is no going back.

So you must go forward, and what happens? The baby is born and there is the birth. And the birth is sin. What happens then? The text says that sin leads to death. There is the process of temptation.

One woman said to me, “You know, that doesn’t picture my experience when I’m tempted. My experience is that there aren’t any steps going down like that. There’s a ramp and there’s grease on that ramp and I just slide right down it!” Do you find that to be true? I do.

Ok, so the question is, which death is death? Is it physical death? No, death is not physical death. Remember that death means what? Separation. So the question you have to ask is separation from what?



Death = loss of fellowship with God

Here’s the start, we’re abiding in Christ. There’s the finish line; that we’re abiding in that sin nature. That’s death. Death means separation and loss of fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now the question is this: How do we get restored back to fellowship and abiding in Christ? How does that happen?

I want you to take a look at how wonderful God’s plan is for us as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ.

So, here’s this temptation process.

Temptation is not sin, taking the bait is sin

Now, prior to taking the bait, this whole process of lust coming at us, these strong desires, this drawing us away from abiding in Christ, and even the bait, being lured by the bait, that’s temptation. That’s pieradzo, a solicitation to sin, but it’s not sin.

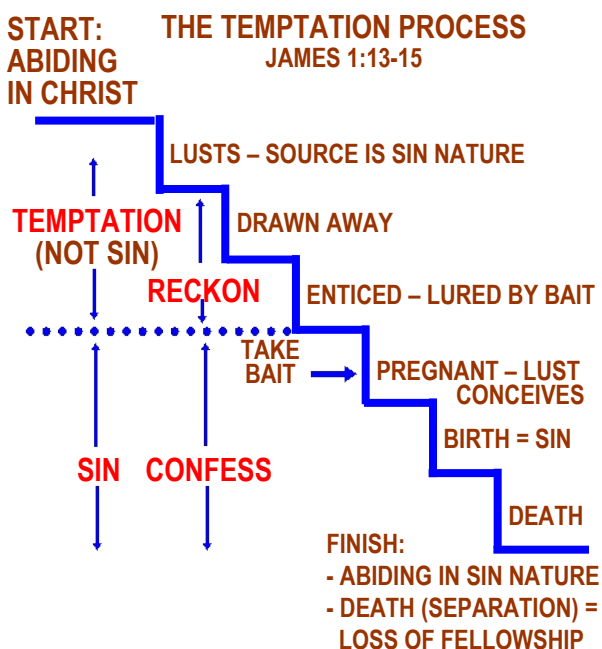
So many believers think that when they are tempted and there is a solicitation to sin that the sky is falling and they just lost their salvation. But temptation is not sin.

But, when we take the bait, then it’s sin. We have missed the mark. Sin is missing the mark. We have missed the mark and the mark is the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

How do we get back from death or separation and loss of fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ? God has provided for us.

In 1st John 1:9 it says, “if we **confess** our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from every unrighteousness”. And He may only convict us of one sin, or two sins, but He will cleanse us from every single sin!

Now, is the Christian life, then, going from abiding in Christ down to death, back to abiding in Christ, then to abiding in self, then confession, and then abiding in Christ, and then abiding in self, and then confession, and then abiding in Christ? Many believers live their Christian life that way.



I think I have told you the story of a woman who was here that she counted one day how many times she confessed her sin. I think it was something like 382 times! What does God want us to do?

Well, during the phase of temptation we should **reckon**.

Romans 6:10 & 11 is talking about reckoning. The word “reckon” means just to count it as true. Count what it says as true. How do we do that?

Romans 6:10 For in that He died, **He died unto sin** once: but in that He liveth, **He liveth unto God**.

11 Likewise **reckon** ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**We walk in the Spirit by the principle of faith in Christ Jesus
He has died unto the sin nature to set us free from the sin nature,
He is living unto God through us, because He is our life!**

Well, we walk by the principle of faith; personal rest and trust in the essence of faith, and the essence of faith are the things of the Lord Jesus Christ.

What are the things of the Lord Jesus Christ? In verse 10 it says that one of the things of the Lord Jesus Christ is that He died. And He died unto our sin nature. He condemned it. He rendered it inoperative. He cut us loose from it.

When we were unbelievers we were in union with our sin nature. When we put our trust and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, He set us free. He cut us loose from the sin nature, so we no longer need to be a slave to the sin nature.

And Romans 6 verse 10 goes on to say not only did He die unto (in relation to) the sin nature, but He lives unto (in relation to) God.

Then verse 11 follows and says, likewise, you, reckon yourselves, dead indeed, unto (in relation to) the sin nature and alive unto (in relation to) God.

**Personal faith when tempted,
is to count it as true that Christ died unto (in relation to) your sin nature,
you no longer are a slave to your sin nature,
and Christ is living His life through you**

Reckon yourselves that you are cut loose, that you no longer need to be a slave to the sin nature. So, when these desires come, when the solicitation to sin comes at you, you can reckon, you can count it as true by faith that you're dead to that sin nature. You don't need to be a slave to it any more.

Then what happens?

James chapter 1 verse 12. Blessed, happy, mature is the man that endures temptation, the solicitation to sin. Blessed is the man that endures that, for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life.

Better translated is: “having become approved”, that is by test, he becomes approved. The word in verse twelve for “when he is tried”, guess what that word is.. dakemadzo! A test with a view towards approval.

James 1:12 Blessed (mature) *is* the man that **endureth** (abides under) **temptation**:(to fail) for when he is **tried**, (having become approved) he shall receive the **crown of life**, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him.

It says blessed is the man that **endures**, another beautiful word, **to abide under**, that can abide under the temptation.

That temptation may be for a long period of time, but one is abiding under it. One is not going on and taking the bait, he is abiding under the temptation and he is reckoning himself dead indeed unto the sin nature, but alive unto God.

He is abiding under the temptation.

And what the Lord says is this: blessed is that man, having become approved, because this becomes, then, a test of one's faith.

Are you, by faith, going to reckon yourselves indeed, dead unto the sin nature, and alive unto God during temptation?

Look what he says in verse twelve:

He shall receive the **crown of life** which the Lord has promised to them that love Him.

God uses these things to share His glory with us

Amen? Amen.