



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

THE BLESSED MAN, Part 2 – JAMES 1:12

COLORADO

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Life is full of everyday disappointments and testing that comes our way. And it is often filled with deep trials and tribulations that pierce our hearts with pain. It will be this way until Christ returns. And when that pain is the deepest and we feel engulfed by the adversity we are struggling through, this becomes a testing and proving ground for our belief in God's sovereignty. We find our joy not in the heat of the fiery ordeal that comes our way, but in the fact that the Refiner's fire is purposeful. It is a purifying fire that brings about pure silver and we can endure, we can persevere with longsuffering because we trust Him. We can rest in the sovereignty of God and know that God is in control, even if life seems out of control. What man or woman does James say is blessed? They are the ones who persevere under trials.

I. THE BLESSED MAN: PART 2 - JAMES 1:12

“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.” James 1:12

Last week we saw that happiness is based solely on having favorable circumstances in life. If things go well, then we are happy, but if hard times come, we are not happy. Here James uses a much richer word to describe the believer than happy, for a truly blessed man or woman is one whom God has made fully satisfied, *not* because of favorable circumstances, which come and go, but through any circumstance of life. As a believer, our satisfaction comes from God Who lives inside us. What brings true joy and lasting satisfaction is Christ alone no matter what is happening and true joy, true blessedness can never be contingent on our circumstances.

A. ONCE APPROVED— JAMES 1:12B

“Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial, for once he has been approved...” James 1:12b

“**approved**” Greek word “**dokimos**,” means to recognize, to be proven, to be tried as metals are tried by fire, and thus are purified. Hence it refers to being approved as acceptable in the furnace of adversity, to be approved or accepted.

In James 1:4 we looked at the word “*approved*” and found this represented in the picture of a refiner who takes the crushed ore and places it in the melting pot, builds a fire and carefully watches over the ore. Slowly the ore softened and the silver liquefied. The solid impurities called dross would rise to the top of the molten metal and the refiner would skim it off the top. Then, the refiner would increase the fire to just the precise temperature because it would take a hotter fire for the silver to release more impurities. The goal

was pure silver and nothing less would be valuable or worthwhile. The process would continue until the refiner could look into the silver and see his reflection clearly. Then the silver was refined, was proven was approved. It was a process that took careful, guarded flames under the vigilant, refiner’s, watchful eyes to transform the ore to treasure. In the end it yielded the promised, precious metal without impurities. The picture in James is clear of our loving, heavenly Father as the Refiner and we are His precious silver. By His divine, purifying work in our lives, He transforms us through the flames of adversity into pure silver. He continues His transforming work until He can see His image clearly reflected in us. We are subject to troubles of every kind from every possible source, but all with the objective of refining and purifying our faith in God. For silver to be useful, it must be purified. To purify silver, it requires heat. For us to be useful for the Lord’s work, we must be transformed into the image of our Lord Jesus Christ. And so our Lord brings us through the fires of many different kinds of trials and testing for the one purpose of making us more like Christ. In the end, we are *approved!*

This approval comes as a result of God’s patient and consistent work in our lives. And we must submit to God’s work and will in our lives. We must “*give way*” to His refining flames that burn in our lives for our good and His glory. And as we do, we are approved and useful for our Lord’s work.

B. RECEIVES THE CROWN OF LIFE— JAMES 1:12C

“Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial, for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life...” James 1:12c

“**crown**” Greek word “**stephanos**,” meaning the crown of victory in games of a sporting event, not a kingly crown.

The crown James refers to is one received by persevering through an athletic event. It was a wreath placed on the victors head after the event was finished and won. Probably a more literal translation of this would be “*the crown which is life*” which would refer to eternal life. John McArthur, in his commentary on James (page 42) says, “perseverance attests to God’s approval, for it gives evidence of eternal life, (salvation). In other words, perseverance does not result in salvation and eternal life, but is itself the result and evidence of salvation and eternal life.” We are able to persevere through testing and trials because we have a relationship with God. The Holy Spirit indwells our hearts and empowers us to be able to endure and persevere through the fires of adversity. Surrendering to the testing God

BIBLE STUDIES

LEGISLATORS, GOVERNOR & SPOUSES: TUESDAY AT 7:15AM, CAPITOL BASEMENT, ROOM 0109

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brings our way leads us to the perfecting work God accomplishes in our lives resulting in maturity and becoming like Christ. We are tried as metal is by fire and purified, thus approved. The approving process, the refining process, the purifying work is the testing of our faith. This refinement, then, reveals our approval, reveals pure silver and the approval God gives brings the crown of life, which is eternal life.

C. ETERNAL LIFE IS FOR THOSE THAT LOVE GOD—

JAMES 1:12D

“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.” James 1:12

James clearly says that one who perseveres under adversity to maturity is the one who genuinely loves God. Proof that you love God is found in the way in which you go through trials. The evidence of our love for God is shown by our continued faithfulness to His will, even if that means enduring through trials and testing of any kind. Our love for God reveals a true faith and trust in the Lord because we will persevere through whatever comes our way, knowing we are in God’s loving hands.

The proof of our genuine faith in Christ is shown by the habit of our life, by how we live when the temperature is rising and the heat is on! When the pressure is on, what truly is in our hearts will be revealed. What will be revealed in your life? A faith that’s real, a faith that’s true will persevere to maturity, especially through the worst of times. The demonstration of our faith is found in how we live and one test is how we endure through testing and trials.

And keep in mind, not only will God use adversity to bring about maturity in our lives, but in His time, our suffering will come to an end. Eternal life is promised to those who love Him. And 1 Thessalonians 5:24 says, *“Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass.”* We can be assured of eternal life with Christ forever! Our suffering on this earth is short in light of eternity. And life with Christ is everlasting. We wait in eager anticipation to spend eternity with our Lord evermore. (Romans 8:18-25)

Proof that we love God is found in the manner in which we go through trials. In James 1:1-12, we are challenged to endure through testing and trials of every kind to maturity. James begins this section by exhorting us to consider, counting it all joy when we face various trials in our lives. (James 1:2) That’s hard to swallow. But then James concludes this section by encouraging us with why we can count it all joy through adversity. The result of persevering through trials, bring about true blessings, maturity and

receiving the crown of life, where we will spend eternity with Christ forever in heaven.

Lamentations 3:21-24 says:

“This I recall to my mind,

Therefore I have hope.

The Lord’s loving kindness indeed never cease,

For His compassions never fail.

They are new every morning;

Great is Thy faithfulness.

“The Lord is my portion,” says my soul,

“Therefore I have hope in Him.”

The prophet Jeremiah writes to a seemingly hopeless people in a seemingly hopeless situation. Even in circumstances of total devastation and grief, there is no end to our Lord’s loving kindness and no failure in His compassion. There is a hope because of Who God is and Whose I am. He is unceasing in His love and He is my portion forever. What more could there be then to have the Lord as my portion eternally. Whatever God asks of us as we go through life, we can have hope as we remember and recall the faithfulness of God given to us through life.

James teaches us that a faith that is real, a faith that is genuine endures to maturity. As we persevere through trials to maturity, our faith is proof that we love God. God is going to reward with eternal life, those who demonstrate that they possess true salvation by this faith that endures. The demonstration of our faith is in how we live and one test of that faith is how we endure adversity. Think about your life. What demonstration of your faith is revealed by how you live?