



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

A FAITH THAT ENDURES TO MATURITY, JAMES 1:4

COLORADO

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When adversity comes into your life and you wonder how God could let this happen, remember James who assures us it is the testing of our faith. Each of us will experience this in our lives. When we encounter adversity, we must understand that God has not brought this to shake and disturb our faith. If we respond correctly to the testing our loving Father brings, we will find our proven faith producing endurance in our lives. But it requires that we submit and bow the knee to God's sovereignty, trusting that He knows what He is doing.

I. SUBMITTING TO ENDURANCE- JAMES 1:4

“Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.” James 1:2-4

As we go through the testing, the proving of our faith, this produces an inner quality that is not willing to surrender, even under such a painful load. That inner quality of character is called endurance. As we will see in the next verse, submitting our lives to the Lord's work and will with hopeful endurance, produces a maturity and purity which brings honor and glory to God.

A. “LET ENDURANCE”— JAMES 1:4A

“And let endurance...” James 1:4A

“endurance” Greek word “**hupomone**,” means patient waiting as to things or circumstances. It is associated with hope and refers to the quality that does not surrender to circumstances or succumb under trial. “**hupo**” means under and “**mone**” means to abide or remain.

This Greek phrase is in the present active imperative commanding that we give way to, or submit to what and how God is working in our lives. These are easy words to say but hard words to actually live. It may seem unfair, and maybe it is. But James is calling us to give way and submit to all that God is doing in our lives with an attitude that represents joyous, trusting submission. We need to “*let*” God do what He wants to in our life. Often we may fight and resist the trials God brings our way. We may argue with God that this isn't right. Submit to His will and purpose in your life and don't resist His sovereign hand.

Remember that the “*testing of our faith*” from James 1:3 comes from the Greek word “*dokimion*” which refers to the test by which anything is proven, like silver which goes through the refining or “*proving*” process. In that refining process of purifying the precious metal, there can be two things that happen as noted by the following Greek words.

“**approved**” Greek word “**dokimos**” meaning to be tried as metal by fire and thus purified.

“**unapproved**” Greek word, “**adokimos**” which refers to reprobate, unworthy, worthless, rejected metal.

The picture here is of a refiner who takes the ore mixed with silver, picks up his hammer and begins to crush, to pound, to break the ore into smaller pieces. At the same time, the refiner builds a fire, keeping a watchful eye on it to make sure it heats up to just the right temperature. They had no thermometers in those days, only skilled refiners with watchful eyes who knew just what to do. When the fire was right, the crushed ore was placed in the melting pot and the refiner carefully watched over the ore. The temperature had to be perfect to accomplish the refiner's purpose. Slowly the ore would soften and the silver liquefied. Then the solid impurities would rise to the top of the molten metal. The impurities were called dross and the refiner would skim it off the top. Then, the refiner would increase the fire to just the precise temperature. 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. After scrapping off the dross once again, the refiner would look in the pot to see if his image was clear. If not, the silver would once again be heated. This process was done under the observing care of the refiner. Too hot a fire could ruin the silver. Not enough heat would be to no avail. The process would continue until the refiner could look into the silver and see his reflection clearly. Then the silver was refined, was proven. As long as the silver was subject to the flames, the refiner would never leave the precious silver for it could easily be damaged under the fire. It was a process that took time and great care, but in the end yielded the promised, precious metal without impurities. The impure silver had become pure silver with great value. But it took the careful, guarded flames under the vigilant, refiner's, watchful eyes to transform the ore to treasure.

The picture is clear. Our loving, heavenly Father is the Refiner. We are His precious silver. By His divine, purifying work in our lives, He transforms us

BIBLE STUDIES

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

STAFF, LOBBYISTS, JOURNALISTS & SERGEANTS: TUESDAYS AT NOON, CAPITOL BASEMENT, ROOM 0107

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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. Romans 12:1-2 says, *"I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."* For our lives to be transformed into the image of Christ, to be purified and useful it will require the fires of testing in our lives. And we must remember that throughout the flames of adversity, our Refiner never leaves His treasured silver. He carefully watches over us through each trial, never allowing the fire to be more than we can bear. We must know for certain the words in 1 Corinthians 10:13 are true: *"No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it."* 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. (Romans 8:28-29)

But James 1:4 says, *"And let endurance..."* **We must give way and submit to all that God is doing in our lives!** We must not resist His sovereign hand. We can easily be defeated by life's unavoidable disappointments and struggles *or* our faith in Christ can become stronger because of them. We can resist and fight the trials that come our way *or* we can recognize the adversity as God's tool to make us as silver refined. Psalm 66:10 says, *"For Thou has tried us, O God; Thou has refined us as silver is refined."*

Sometimes, the dross, the impurities were not allowed to be released and then removed from the silver. The silver would stubbornly cling to it no matter how hot the refiner's fire. So the silver became rejected silver, reprobate silver, unapproved or *"adokimos"*. It was impure and unusable. It was set aside and rejected for the refiner's use. The silver would not *give way* to the refiner's fire.

Paul was concerned about that very thing. In 1 Corinthians 9:26-27 he wrote, *"Therefore, I run in such a way as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; but I buffet my body and make it my slave, lest possibly, after I have preached to others, I myself should be disqualified."* The word Paul uses for *"disqualified"* is *"adokimos"* in the Greek, referring to reprobate silver that is set aside because it won't release the dross. Could there be anything more tragic than this; to be rejected for our Lord's use and set aside? If we cling

to our impurities, refusing the Refiner's fire to purify our lives, we cannot be useful for His service. The Apostle Paul was concerned that he could be disqualified and unfit for the Lord's use. This stands in direct contrast to the *"proving of our faith"* in James 1:3-4. It is that refining process whereby we *"give way"* to God's will allowing His refining purpose to purify our faith in Christ and we become His transformed treasure! And there is nothing greater in this world than to be used by God.

Yes, it is hard to *"give way"* to God's work and will in our lives. The adversity that comes can be so painful to bear or hard to swallow. But we must submit to our Lord's refining flames, trusting in His greater purpose! We must *"give way"* to His fire that burns in our lives for our good and His glory. We must trust Him fully with our lives and the lives of the ones we love.

May we have the heart of David expressed in Psalm 139. That we would invite God into our lives to search out even the hidden parts, that He could purify us to the depths. That we would hold nothing back and not resist God's work in our lives. As this study closes, I invite you to meditate on these words in Psalm 139:23-24. May this be our prayer and pursuit as well.

*"Search me,
O God,
And know my heart;
Try me and
know my anxious thoughts;
And see if there be
any hurtful way in me.
And lead me in
the everlasting way."*

Psalm 139:23-24