

THINGS NEEDED WHEN FACING TESTS OF LIFE
(James 1:12-18)

I. A remembrance of what God has promised (vs. 12).

- A. Temptations and tests come all the time and we better realize that quickly.
- B. When we are able to overcome temptation and remain faithful, God has promised a crown of life to those of us who love Him.
 - 1. Loving God means keeping His commandments.
 - 2. If we love God, we will seek to overcome temptations.
- C. The crown that is to be won is not the crown of royalty, but the crown of a victor.
 - 1. It symbolizes victory over temptation and sin.
 - 2. It is gained only through victory over sin and it is gained at the end of the race, which is our lives.
- D. If, when faced with temptation, we would remember what awaits us, we will better be able to deal with whatever is before us.

II. A realization of the source of temptation (vs. 13-15).

- A. Robert Burns, the poet wrote:
 - 1. Thou know'st that Thou hast formed me With passions wild and strong; And list'ning to their witching voice Has often led me wrong.
 - 2. He essentially blamed God for his misconduct, saying he behaved as he did because God made him that way.
- B. The old comedian Flip Wilson used to say, "The devil made me do it."
- C. God never tempts us with evil.
 - 1. He does test us and presents us with opportunities to make choices that show our faith or lack thereof, but He never tempts us to do evil.
 - 2. He is not tempted at all by evil and would never present evil before us because He can't be in the presence of such.
- D. Temptation comes when we are presented with the things we lust after in our hearts.
 - 1. It is no one else's fault when we face temptation.
 - 2. We face our own desires and get hooked by them if we are not watchful for these snares.
- E. What this tells us is that we need to be fully aware of our weaknesses.
 - 1. No one of us is untemptable as God is.
 - 2. We have weaknesses, each one of us different from the other, and we need to be aware of them.
 - 3. The worst thing we can ever be is blind to our own faults.
 - 4. We need to be aware of them and then avoid those things that entice us to give in to our desires that would be sinful.
- F. When we take the step of lusting, wanting it more than we want God, we step into sin.
 - 1. Our desire plus a weak will results in a conception of sorts.
 - 2. Sin is born out of this terrible union.
- G. James is not saying that temptation is sin.

1. He is not saying that the moment the desire sprang up it is sin.
 2. There are times things that are wrong simply pop into our minds and there is nothing we can do about that.
 3. What we have to deal with is keeping those fleeting thoughts from growing any larger and taking hold in our minds.
- H. When sin is allowed to grow it brings about spiritual death.
1. When sin is allowed to grow unchecked, we are spiritually separated from God.
 2. God can't be in the presence of evil and He won't be.
- I. We can't flirt around with temptation and remain spiritually clean.
1. We aren't strong enough to do this.
 2. We need to avoid it at all costs because it leads to sin, which, in turn, leads to death.

III. A recognition of what God does for us (vs. 16-18).

- A. We must never forget from where temptation comes and from where the blessings of life come.
- B. The reason we need to never be caught thinking wrong about this is that we could blame God for our sin and give in to it thinking there is nothing we can do about it.
- C. Every good thing we get in this life is from God.
1. Nothing you and I have that is good spiritually or physically comes from any other source but God.
 2. It all comes from above, from heaven.
- D. We should be thankful for everything we get, not just our food or our spiritual blessings.
1. If we obtain something such as shoes, it was because God allowed us to obtain the money to purchase them.
 2. Not only that, God allowed for the substances that make up the shoes to be found and put together to make the shoes.
- E. The God that blesses this way is a God of no darkness whatsoever.
1. There is only holiness with our God.
 2. He does not change His thinking like we do.
 3. There is no shadow cast by God because He is light.
- F. James ends this section with an interesting contrast.
1. Lust combined with a weak will conceives sin.
 2. God's word combined with a strong will conceives a Christian.
- G. God has allowed this to happen by His own will.
1. This is something he wanted to happen.
 2. He desires for people to be saved so He allowed for a means for such to be the case.
- H. When one takes in the gospel message and obeys it that person is begotten by God and becomes His offspring, or adopted child.
- I. He is then the pledge of a greater harvest to come.
1. This is the idea of firstfruits of one who has become God's.
 2. He is a pledge that there are others and many more of them that are or will be saved.