

James (Quality: Average)

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[0 : 00] My mind continues in the Epistle of James, 1st chapter, verses 12 to 15.

Verses 12 to 15, in the 1st chapter of the Epistle of James. Blessed is the man that endures temptation, for when he is trying, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them who love him.

Let no man say, when he is tempted, I am tempted of God, for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man.

But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust and entice. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, it bringeth forth death.

The 12th to 15th verses in the 1st chapter of the General Epistle of James. We considered the humiliating influence of the sovereign equality dealings by the Lord, last Lord's Day, in the evening, when the man that is the mother of low degree, appears to rejoice, verse 10, verse 9, appears to rejoice in that he is exalted.

[1 : 57] Let us consider, just for a moment, in the light of that scripture, the sister from our church that was passed away, the brother or sister of low degree.

Now, my friends, I do no violation of the reputation of our late sister Edith Packard, when I say, that she was a very simple woman.

She went in and out among us, and was visiting her in her dwelling, the dwelling where she was born, where she desired to die, was the most humble dwelling of our congregation.

No one lived in lowlier conditions. I would judge the need of action. But my friends, we shall be there for the glory of God, the presence of the most high, what an incredible condition.

Yesterday morning, I was informed by the undertaker that she passed away. I went down through the riddings estate, to Ward Lawrence Lane, where she lived, number 107.

[3 : 26] And I looked at the house, and I thought, what an unspokeness. The spirit, Edith Packard, went from that humble, to the city, which is beyond our comprehension, to describe, or to conceive, what it must be.

The Holy Spirit has employed language, sufficient to convey to us, that it is an inconceivably blessed, glorious, spot, glorious city, glorious dwelling, glorious country.

My friends, let's say this is heaven, that it's worthy of the God that lives there. Yes, it's worthy of the God that lives there. You know, in the descriptions of the word, we are clearly told, that the payments are gold, transparent glass, the purity, beauty, glory, and preciousness, the value of the places, inconceivably, are conveyed to us.

I think, now we seem to advance God. Now we have a veil over our understanding.

Although the Spirit may enlarge our understanding, so to speak, to a degree that extends our resources to the limit, yet we haven't, we haven't acknowledged, what it was made to be done.

- [5 : 27] Now transform from that humility, the humility, what? In hue, and the humble situation of that little God, transform back, to this inconceivable, rich, glorious, and eternal possession.
- What is that? What is that? What is that? What is that? What is that? What is that? What is that? Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted. I don't mind how mean the situation is.
- My friends, there's no mean place in heaven. There's no mean place in heaven. Though we may be, I was going to say, but a doorkeeper in paradise, it's fire and exaltation that's done.
- Any position, or any possession, that can be conceived, or possessed under the sun. You know, heaven is a process, which we should be continually applying our minds unto.
- Because, my friends, the alternative is incomprehensible poverty.
- [7 : 03] How poor and miserable is the portion of the lost. So I hope that these things in mind, you and I are pressing toward them.
- We're earnest in our profession. We're concerned about our souls. We're not just religious in a nominal fashion.
- There's nothing saving in that. My friends, God requires all our hearts to be engaged in these important, all-important consequences of life.
- And I hope we're not living indifferent to the all-important things while, as it were, we're in captivity to the comparatively non-important things which concern our statements here below.
- And we went on in verses 10 and 11, didn't we? But the rich in that he is made low because as a flower of the grass he shall pass away.
- [8 : 23] Now everyone goes to heaven for the most humble situation. Really. I remember I had a great affection for the late Mr. Herbert Dawson.
- His sermons were often read here because of the graciousness of his ministry the simplicity, as it were, of his testimony made his sermons very adaptable to reading services.
- And our late friend Mr. Horton often read the sermons by the late Mr. Herbert Dawson when it was his responsibility to read.
- But I went back to visit Mr. Dawson just before his end. And I found him in what may be termed a geriatric hospital that tempted him.
- This hospital was a converted or renovated workhouse. You know the type of place that that expression would compare.
- [9 : 49] And I felt somewhat in sense in spirit. that that very useful and very gracious and very conscientious pastor of a flock for some 50 years that has been would be found in such circumstances.
- And I came away disappointed at the environment in which I found in which I found that dear friend and fellow neighbour what I can say really is a father to me in the gospel ministry.
- But my friends I hadn't visited him but a couple of days when I heard that the Lord had called him to himself. before I thought of the situation he went from such a place to such a place.
- where we die matters little doesn't it? It's where we're going when we die that matters matters that matters matters.

And my friends that should be our concern where we're going when we die now the the poverty of circumstance matters little in that sense as if we wouldn't be indifferent to the comfort and care of the Lord's people.

[11 : 25] I hope that has been exemplified in the efforts that have been made locally over recent years and the labours that have been expended by many to provide these things for our old friends.

But my friends we don't consider that to be the beginning and end of our labour and responsibility do we? The great and all important issue is where we're going when we die.

Now the Apostle James gathers up these considerations and warns against being deceived warned against being deceived by riches in that he says the rich man will fade away in his ways.

Yes. The ways won't fade away necessarily but he will fade away in the ways. you see another illustration from experience I knew a man at Aldershop years ago who had a very prosperous business he came to retirement and he bought a very nice house with a beautiful garden garden was a picture garden terraces and greenhouses plenty of room plenty of opportunity to exercise both his and his wife's interests in horticulture and they went to town and the place was a picture I visited it on several occasions in the ministry and I walked down that garden with real relish as I have quite an inclination to gardening well

I hadn't been retired many years three or four years when I heard that the dear man had collapsed in his bungalow and had died the next year I visited his widow I hardly dare compare the situation outside of the bungalow that year from what it had been formerly my friends the garden didn't compare because the head garden had been called for time into eternity the rich man shall fade away in his ways the ways are there but he fades away in them it's gone it's gone now the apostle James goes on and he's still warning us really he's still in his mind is careful of our preservation in the true faith and in the narrow path he wants he wants us to be right he wants us to be well instructed he wants us to see light in

[15 : 05] God's light and not to be deceived by the arch enemy and the deceitfulness of sin within us and he comes to this point he said blessed is the man that endureth temptation for when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life which the Lord hath promised to them that love him one of the evidences of a gracious understanding by the spirit of God is how we view trouble how we view trouble there's a great difference between trouble as presented to an ungracious heart and a trouble presented to a gracious heart the apostle says blessed is the man that endureth temptation or adversity that word could be rendered quite correctly adversity those things that try the spirit those things that perplex the mind he says blessed is the man that endureth temptation now what a wonderful thing when the scripture says blessed should always rivet our attention because when the scripture pronounces blessed those those those that are within the compass of that pronouncement are blessed they're blessed and blessed eternally you go through the record of

Matthew 5 the sermon on the mount and see those characters addressed by the Lord as blessed blessed are the poor in spirit blessed are they that mourn blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness and they're all blessed people that fall into that category that fit into that mold they're blessed people how is it that they're blessed people well grace has made them what they are grace has fitted them into that mold grace has made them mourners grace has made them poor in spirit grace has made them hunger and thirst after righteousness and so on my friends it's a wonderful thing for you and I to be under the pronouncement of a blessing because even Valen was compelled to acknowledge that those that the

Lord had blessed were blessed and he says none can reverse it and if we are under the blessings of the scripture we shall be blessed it matters not what reason may say to the contrary or how the devil may tempt us otherwise blessed is the man that endureth temptation or endureth adversity why does the Lord permit his people to be tempted to be tried is it a profitable appointment of course it is of course it is the Lord doesn't allow anything to come to his people derogatory to them for we know that all things shall work together for good to them that love

God to them that are called according to his purpose listen to the apostle again in the twelfth of Hebrews furthermore we've had fathers of our flesh which corrected us and we gave them reverence shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the father of spirits and live for they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure but he for our profit that we might be partakers of his holiness my friends in the appointment of adversity by the permissive will of God in the lives of his people the Lord has this one object in view the profit of the person concerned but he for our profit that we might be partakers of his holiness that we might be delivered from our corruption and sanctified trouble has a purifying influence upon the spirit for now my friends blessed is the man that endures temptation it's not everybody that endures temptation or endures adversity is and James is going to come to that in his subsequent consideration the uneasiness of man under the yoke except as reconciled as made submissive as having his mind so graciously sanctified as to realize the purpose of God in these things and the needs before them acquiescing with

God in the appointments of his will though the appointment be adverse though the appointment be trying to receive and trying to endure blessed is the man that endureth temptation has any received a crown that's a stranger to the cross has any found yet an easy way into heaven not one not one blessed blessed is the man that endureth temptation the very expression endureth temptation conveys to us does it not that straight is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life and few there be that find it my friends but blessed is the man that endureth temptation he doesn't endure it in his own strength he doesn't come through the fires protected by his own ingenuity he doesn't as it were defend himself from the onslaught he proves his refuge is in

[23 : 44] God he proves the necessity of the promise when thou passest through the waters I will be with thee through the rivers they shall not overflow thee when thou walkest through the fire thou shall not be burned neither shall the flame kindle upon thee but blessed is the man that endureth temptation oh blessed is the man that endureth temptation and the apostle tells us what awaits such a character for when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life now look at that look at that when he is tried after the fires have done their work after every vestige of independency of God and of

Jesus Christ is consumed when the Lord is made his all and in all when he is totally dependent when he is absolutely confirmed in the doctrine that his salvation from first to last depends upon the sovereign goodness and grace of God when he is tried then he shall receive the crown of life which the Lord hath promised to them that love him what a promise the Lord has promised a crown of life a crown of life what does a crown convey to us well a conquest for one thing doesn't a conquest would I not be right in saying a kingdom for another a conquest and a kingdom the very expression the crown of life conveys to us doesn't and my friends this is the promised portion of those that have endured temptation they shall receive a crown of life now what about the cross doesn't the promise of the crown enable us to carry the cross doesn't it give us as it were that disposition of spirit that was found in the heart of

Moses choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward and what is the recompense of the reward the crown of life to be a citizen of the better country to be a possessor of the heavenly kingdom to be in possession of that crown of life which is a living crown in an eternal paradise of life and of love blessed is the man that endureth temptation supported by the grace of God upheld and strengthened by the promises of God feeding upon the word of God and knowing somewhat of the help of God blessed is the man that endureth temptation for when he is tried he shall receive not he may receive he shall receive the crown of life would you cast away your cross if there's no other way of obtaining the crown of course you wouldn't would you of course you wouldn't sometimes the cross is heavy sometimes its influence upon the shoulder chafes we feel sore we feel tried we feel tempted we feel harassed we feel perplexed at times through unbelief the question may rise in the heart is it worth it but oh if you could see that crown of life that question would immediately be quenched which the

Lord hath promised to them that love him blessed is the man that endureth temptation and what about your temptation what about your adversity it's an individual matter as we considered at the opening of this chapter crosses vary in their nature don't they some as observed by others may seem to have a very smooth and easy path but my friends they have a cross a personal cross something which perhaps is more secretive in its nature they're not free to speak about they're not free to divulge nevertheless it tries them to the quick it consumes their self-sufficiency and makes them daily turn to the Lord for enduring grace yes blessed it is the man that endureth adversity some have apparent adversities don't they some have contrary circumstances wherein as it were their spirits are not free they're like prisoners in a prison aren't they they're cut off and shut off you can be lonely in a crowd can't you some of you in business may realise this that you're like strangers in a strange land but there's a crowd about you nobody really understands you and your honest principles your sincere desire in the fear of God to do what is right in his sight as the prime principle of your approach why it isolates you as a strange being people don't understand people just can't interpret your approach

God knows God knows my friend you can be a lonely person in business you can be a lonely person in your home environment you can be a lonely person in many and various ways can't you you see blessed is the man that endureth temptation oh when he is tried for when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life which the Lord hath promised to them that love him has your temptation alienated your heart from God or has it drawn you to him sometimes you felt bitter but sometimes you felt sweetly reconciled if this is the will of

[32 : 14] God if this is the way of God if this is necessary to my improvement if this is the appointment of God's love oh Lord keep me from murmuring keep me from complaining reconcile my heart to it help me to take it up every day choose thou the way and still lead on nor leave me till I say father thy will be done I could not possibly enumerate the multitude of adversities that constitute the appointed lot of the church as we may look at the church overall but my friends there is grace sufficient in the Lord Jesus Christ to uphold maintain blessed is the man not blessed shall be the man not blessed was the man blessed is the man that endureth temptation but you say I have a job to accept that I'm a blessed character because the trial is so grievous and the fruits and effects of it within me are so ominous my friend is while there is that struggle within you to be reconciled to God while there is that desire to bow to God and to feel nevertheless a love to God and to the

Lord Jesus Christ as opposed to that natural working of rebellion and enmity I say there is good hope that the Lord by the oil of his spirit is working within your soul keeping those righteous desires alive that at length shall be granted shall be granted blessed is the man that endureth temptation for when he is dry he shall receive the crown of life which the Lord hath promised to them that love him God is faithful to his promises God is faithful to his promises there be no disappointment toward those that hang upon the faithfulness of God to the word that he has spoken you'll never deny the word that has gone forth out of his lips you can trust that my friend you can trust that you can live upon that you can die upon that that won't fail you see he's promised he's promised it to them that love him you may say well now this is a point of trial do I love the Lord or no do I love him or no well my friends spiritual things can be clearly defined in this that alternatives are very clear you either love him or hate him which do you into which category do you fall the natural heart is at enmity to

God it is not subject to the law of God neither indeed can you know my friends what is the reaction of the natural man to the adversities of the way well he hardens in opposition doesn't he we're going to come to that in the subsequent verses he blames God he says if God was a God of love why does God allow this to come to me the child of God says this my marvel is that my troubles are not worse and I see in the fact that my troubles are not worse hope and foundation to believe that God has a favour toward me you know my friends you may say well now this is an exaggerated conclusion but I don't believe it is else I wouldn't say it

I believe it is possible to see the love of God in the continuation of life now you may say well yes everybody lives on so aren't you exaggerating a conclusion by saying that the prolongation of your life is an indication of divine favour well my friends have you ever been at the point where you have marveled that the Lord has not instantaneously cut you off and have you not seen hope in the lengthening out of your days if so be the Lord is lengthening them out to fulfil his purposes of love and grace toward you blessed is the man that endureth temptation for when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life which the

Lord has promised to them that love him now I believe if you and I could see why the Lord chastens us we should love him in return whom the Lord loveth he chastens whom the Lord doesn't love he abandons he abandons they harden like Pharaoh in sin trouble unsanctified can have no other result but to alienate the mind from God harden the spirit against God but when the love of God is involved in the appointment and prosecution of the divine will my friends it makes tender the spirit it draws to God doesn't it and you see therein is the love of God whom the

[39 : 51] Lord loveth he chasteneth and scourgeth every son whom he receives can you hate God for loving you can you hate God for loving you loving you sufficiently not to give you over to your sins whereby you shall destroy yourself but loving you sufficient to correct you to bring you back to enfold you in his family what son is he whom the father chasteneth not if he be without chastisement then are you bastards and not sons blessed is the man that endureth temptation for when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life which the Lord hath promised to them that love him now we're going to turn from this point this evening if the

Lord helps me to the other aspect of temptation wherein a person's heart is alienated against God for the adversities of the why and James warns us against it he says let no man say when he is tempted I'm tempted of God for God cannot be tempted with evil and neither tempteth he any God doesn't try his people to bring out of them their corruptions he brings he tries them to manifest the grace that he's given to them and my friends that grace that he gives them glorifies his holy and worthy name may the Lord sanctify our troubles for the glory of his name amen