

The blessings associated with enduring temptation (Quality: Average)

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Preacher: Salkeld H (1898 - 1995)

[0 : 00] Would you kindly turn again to the chapter we have read together in the epistle of James, the first chapter, and as the Lord may in his great goodness and mercy grant needed help, may we seek to consider the twelfth verse.

Verse 12 in the first chapter, the epistle of James. 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.

Very much seems to hang on that last phrase, then, that love him. And perhaps some of us might be ready to say, well, do I love the Lord or no?

Am I his or am I not? Solemn question. But, dear friend, to whom is it a question? Surely not to the ungodly, not to the unrighteous, not to those who are full of self and have no time for God or godliness.

It cannot come from such hearts, can it? Then who is it who expresses themselves in such anxious ways? Surely it's those who do in their hearts already love the Lord, in whose hearts God has shed abroad his love within.

[1 : 54] And yet they tremble to receive it and to believe it. Yet it's true. So, it is, as the apostle here says, to them that love him.

Well, as the Lord may kindly help us, may we try and look a little into the various points here in this verse.

First, blessed is the man that endureth temptation. Who are the blessed? That's worthy, surely, of question, isn't it, and inquiry.

Who are they that are blessed? And then he goes on to say, the man, the one, the sinner, I take it that's right to see it so.

Blessed is that one, that sinner, that endureth temptation. And then may the Lord help us to notice what is temptation in its fullness.

[3 : 01] And then to notice that when the trial is ended, when God has finished his work, when the work of grace is done.

I take it that is implied here, when he is tried, when it's all finished. When the hand of God has done its mighty work in that sinner's heart and life, when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life.

What a wonderful promise. Indeed, the crown of life. After all that's gone before. And yet the promise is to such, he shall receive the crown of life, which God hath promised to them that love him.

Well then, first, who are the blessed? Here spoken of. Blessed is the man, that one, that endureth temptation.

I feel that the very clear description of this is given by the Lord himself. Jesus himself declared it in that first sermon of his on the mount.

- [4 : 21] We speak of it as his sermon on the mount. And you notice it in the fifth chapter of the gospel by Matthew.
- Right at the very beginning, it's the very opening part of that wonderful sermon where Jesus, we read, seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain.
- And when he was sent, his disciples came unto him. And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying, Well, who teacheth like him?
- And if the Lord is pleased to teach you and me, dear friend, this precious truth, then surely we shall never forget it. And what did he say?
- Right at the opening, blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. There, the very first point.
- [5 : 27] Those who are blessed of God are the poor in spirit. Poor sinners made poor by God, the Holy Spirit.
- Poor in spirit. And then he says, Further, blessed are they that mourn. Well, they are the blessed ones, the mourners. And what does that mourning consist of?
- Surely a mourning over self and sin, and a mourning after Christ, and him crucified, and risen, and ascended.
- Then he says, Further, blessed are the meek. And further, blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness.
- Well, where do you and I come in here, dear friends? We hope and trust we may be found here, poor in spirit, emptied of self, brought low before God.
- [6 : 32] Only the other day, at the home at Chippenham, where one is at present, the dear old lady, a dear old lady, a Mrs. Orchard by name, very, very frail and feeble.
- And she was able to come down most days. And after she'd come sat in her chair one morning, and another friend came up to speak to her, she said to the friend, Oh, friend, the Lord gave me such a help last night.
- And the friend said, Oh, in what way? Oh, she said, I was full of depression, and I felt very low in my soul.
- And then the Lord reminded me that David the psalmist was there too, when he said, I was brought low, and he helped me.
- And she said, Oh, he helped me then. And it did help to lift me up, out of my lowest state. Well, it's good to hear these things.
- [7 : 50] Blessed are the poor in spirit. Is that, near a friend, where you feel to be? And if so, then remember, it's a blessed condition.
- However low, you and I may feel in ourselves, yet it's a state which is blessed of God. Why? Because, it's from himself, you see.
- It's he who has brought it about. He brought it, in your poor heart, and I hope in mine, and brought us right down. Well, there is, you know, the hymn writer.
- He knew much of this, and it comes out in one of his hymns, when he says, Jesus, cast a look on me, give me sweet simplicity, make me poor, and keep me low, seeking only thee to know.
- Well, wasn't he among those blessed of God, surely? And so, will it be with you and me? If, such it is.
- [8 : 58] And so they that mourn, are you a mourner? Am I? In a right sense. Do we often find ourselves on our knees, sometimes in tears, before God, mourning a wicked heart, a fickle heart, a deceitful heart, seeking deliverance, and mercy?

Well, it's a blessed condition, you see. These are the ones, who come under this title, surely. And, they which hunger and thirst, after righteousness, the Lord, you see, himself, described them, in a wonderful way.

And so, going back, to the epistle of James, here, and this twelfth verse, we feel persuaded, that it's all one piece, isn't it?

Must be. Blessed, says James, and they're the same people, blessed, is the man, is that one, that endures temptation.

Endures temptation. Not only suffers temptation, but endures temptation. But then, dear friend, what does it really signify?

[10 : 22] This word, temptation. Surely, it would be right, to view it in two, ways, and yet, two ways that are, although they're two, and yet they're joined together.

First, those temptations, of the enemy, the devil, when he, tempts us to sin. You notice, the apostle describes that, a little further on.

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

But, every man is tempted, when he is drawn away, of his own lust, and enticed. Now, that's the work of the devil, isn't it?

The enemy, Satan. And, the dear Redeemer, Jesus himself, he suffered, that temptation, did he not?

[11 : 26] Especially, those 40 days and nights, in the wilderness, we read, he was tempted, of the devil, and, he was among the wild beasts, of the wilderness, all that time.

Then, says James, then, when thus death conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

Death. The wages of sin, is death. But, what a mercy, it doesn't stop there. But, the gift of God, is eternal life, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Nevertheless, dear friends, those, who, are blessed of God, with a poverty, of spirit, and a feeling, sense of need, a hunger and thirst, after righteousness, they are also, led, this way, they, shall know something, and often very much, of, those temptations, of the devil.

And, of course, when, you hope and trust, the Lord has opened your heart, to see, yourself in any measure, you have to realize, what a ready prey, each of us is, for the temptation, of the wicked one.

[12 : 56] and, who, ever among us, would ever stand, the moment, but, for grace, the grace of God.

Well, the apostle says, blessed, is the man, is that one, that sinner, that endureth, temptation, we suffer, temptation, and, the temptations, of the devil, near friends, looked at in that life, they cause suffering, to a living soul, don't they?

If, it is true, and, the word tells us it is, that the very thought, of foolishness, is sin, then, where do we come in, where do we stand?

If the very thought, of foolishness, is sin, then, how often, are we not tempted, in that way, thoughts, of foolishness, I don't know, how, you find it, dear friends, but, I must confess, that often, and often, when in the attitude, of prayer, yes, even in that, solemn, blessed attitude, of prayer, before God, sometimes, the thought, of foolishness, creeps in, and, thoughts, of wickedness, too, and, we're brought, to have to, shut our mouth, before God, and have to, confess, what sinners, we are, how, it does, cause suffering, doesn't it?

And, if we are alive, by grace, near friends, and the work, of the spirit, in our heart, we shall suffer, but then, James says, blessed is the man, that endureth, endureth, temptation, how can you endure?

[14 : 53] We suffer it, but all, what about, enduring it? Jesus, himself, he suffered, and endured, all those days, and nights, in the wilderness, didn't he?

And, at the end, we read, the angels came, and ministered, unto him. Now, just on that point, let us remember, dear friends, that, the apostle, writing to the Hebrews, speaks of the angels, and the ministry, of the angels.

And, he says, are they not all, ministering spirits, sent forth, to minister, to them, who shall be heirs, of salvation?

Now, as they ministered, to Christ, at the end, of that terrible trial, are they not the same? Has he not sent them? Well, they are, ministering spirits, and I believe, there are times, when you feel it so, when you feel strangely, and remarkably, helped, and upheld, and delivered, in the hour, of temptation, when the Lord, comes and sends, his ministering spirits, to your poor soul, and turns away, the power, of the enemy, and blunts his sword, and enables you, to rise up, against him, and fight, the good fight, of faith, and pray, for help, and deliverance, our prayer, what a wonderful, weapon it is, isn't it?

I have, at home, a volume, of children's progress, all in Dutch, in the Dutch language, and, of course, you can look at it, but you can't read it, but, there's some, striking illustrations, there, and one of them, is, of Christian, all clothed, in armor, holding his sword, and yet, he's walking down, the valley, of the shadow of death, and he's facing, Apollyon, the enemy, the devil, and, Christian, there, all in armor, is on his knees, on his knees, in the valley, and, lifting up his hands, before God, imploring divine help, at that moment, and, surely, prayer, is a weapon, for the feeble, feeble souls, can wield it best, how true it is, so,

[17 : 49] James says, blessed, is the man, that endureth, temptation, that is, that sort of temptation, but then, there is another, view of it, and, that is seen, very particularly, in the case of Abraham, you remember, when Abraham, was granted, Abraham and Sarah, were given the gift, of that son, Isaac, and Isaac, had grown up, young, fine, young man, I gather, he must have been, and then, the Lord, spoke, to Abraham, and said, Abraham, and he says, take thy son, thine only son, Isaac, or it must have, pierced his heart, to a mountain, which I will tell thee of, and, offer him up there, as a sacrifice, unto me, you, now, that, dear friends, was, another, sort, of temptation, we read, in the beginning, of that chapter, now God, did tempt,

Abraham, that is, he put him, to the most, solemn test, that any, poor sinner, surely, could ever be put, to, all, to offer up, one of your own, very flesh, and blood, as a sacrifice, before God, well, that temptation, was not only, suffered, by Abraham, you remember, but Abraham, was given grace, to endure it, and you notice, how he endured it, it was by faith, I believe, in the 11th chapter, of Hebrews, I believe, that's how it's stated, by faith, Abraham, offered up, his son, Isaac, unto God, believing, that he was able, even, to raise him up, from the dead, ah, so, blessed, is the man, that sinner, that endureth, temptation, dear friends, you and I, are called, to suffer, that temptation, temptation, because, it surely, is the path, through which, the Lord is pleased, to lead, all he loves, it's through, much tribulation, and that is, temptation, as they're seen, as the trial, of your faith, and,

Peter, puts it, very clearly, doesn't he, in one of his epistles, he says, that the trial, of your faith, that is the testing, of your faith, the tempting, of your faith, it's a word, nearer, friends, used in that sense, which isn't often, used today, but, I remember, a Mr. Henry, Atherton, years ago, who was, secretary, I believe, of the Sovereign Grace Union, in his day, when I was a young man, and he came, to our little chapel, at sale, once, to address us, on behalf, of the Sovereign Grace Union, now, he told us, that in his young days, he'd been a miner, in Lancashire, been down the coal mine, knew what it was, to go down, in the, cage, with other miners, up and down, and he said, you know, those cages, that are used, to let down the miners, into the pit, and to draw them up again, they're tested, every day, he said, even twice a day, the ropes, that draw the cages, up and down, have to be, as perfect, as it's possible, for men, to make them, lest there, should be an accident, and he says, when, the engineers, try out, the ropes, to see, if they're, secure, he says, in Lancashire, they speak of it, as tempting, the rope, they go to tempt, the rope, of the cage, that is, to try it, to test it, put it to a, severe test, well, and so, the Lord is pleased, to, cause you and me, beloved friends, as we, hope, we love the Lord, and fear his name, do not I love thee, said one, do not I love thee, dearest Lord, behold my heart, and see, and if you and I, can, utter those words, before God, dear friends, in humility, and godly fear, that means, in effect, that we do love, the Lord, oh, let us not, mistake it, let not the devil, take away, that precious, confidence, beloved friend, you do love him, or you never, have those feelings, and fears, those feeble desires, those wishes, so weak, it's Jesus, himself inspired, surely, and bids us, still see, so, blessed, then, is, that one, the man, that endures, temptation, ah, we have the trials, and, we know what it is, to suffer, those temptations, but dear friends, how can we endure them, how have you endured them, hitherto, do, you look back, let us look back, over life's journey, the past, and remember, those times, many a time, some of us, would have to say, we've been right down, in the deeps, and knew not, how, we would ever rise again, but, we did rise again, here we are, at this moment, witnesses, to the fact, that God Almighty, didn't leave us there, as we feared, as we dreaded, no, in due time,

he brought us up, did he not, and he granted strength, and he granted, grace to pray, to cry, to heaven, for help, and oh, how the help came, perhaps not immediately, but in due time, and we were, lifted up, and here we are, to, speak of it, and to humbly, thank God, for it, and, I, one doesn't like, speaking of self, but, perhaps one might be, permitted, just to mention here, that, so recently, you see, one, has been down, in the dark pit, and, when, the first day, in the hospital, at Bath, the Royal United Hospital, there, one of the largest, I believe, in the west of England, a place, where you can, lose yourself, in the corridors, now, well, the first morning, the bed I was in, was up by, one of the big windows, and there was a ledge, there, under the window, and I placed, my Bible, on the ledge, and the nurse, that came round, first thing in the morning, she said to me,

I see, you're a Bible reader, I said, yes, ah, she said, so am I, oh, I said, I'm glad to hear it, thankful to know it, she said, every day, every day, oh, it did me good, to feel there, young woman, there, serving others, to help them, in their, physical, troubles, a Bible lover, one, who read the word, of God, every day, and that, was her strength, no doubt, that I hope, was mine, and then, dear friends, further, when, the operation, was due, in the afternoon, of a special day, and, you know, we're all human, and, I know, I couldn't say, I wasn't without fear, at the prospect, it was a strange, new thing to me, never passed, that way before, and I remember, begging the dear Lord, to grant, some word of help, to, hold me up, and I, opened the word of God, at random, not knowing, where to look, but I opened, in Isaiah, and I, find it was, the 41st chapter, and, on looking down, the first verse,

[27 : 33] I looked at, and read, was verse 13, I believe, for I, the Lord, thy God, will hold, thy right hand, saying unto me, fear not, I, will help thee, and oh, how he did, you know, when the Lord, gives the word, and it comes as a word, in season, and you feel, it's a word, from God himself, it's then, it does you good, and, you know, it took away, every fear, in fact, I, feel it's strange, to say it, but I almost felt, as though, I'd already passed, through that operation, before it, was, undertaken, it was, as though, it was all over, all over, before they call, I will answer, says the Lord, and while, they're yet speaking,

I will hear, well, blessed then, is the man, that, not only, suffers, temptation, but, endures it, in, and by the grace, of God, with divine, health, and upholding, mercy, blessed, is the one, that endureth, temptation, for, when he, is tried, I, take it, near friends, that that, signifies, when, it's all, finished, when all, the temptations, have done, their work, the powers, of the enemy, and, the work, of suffering, through this, life, if, we suffer, says the apostle, we shall also, reign with him, if we deny him, he also, will deny us, if we believe not, or how close, it comes, if we believe not, maybe, dear friends, sometimes, you're convicted, of unbelief, yet, ah, what a mercy, yet, he abided, faithful, he cannot, deny, himself, so, when, he is, tried, it reminds me, here, of my, dear mother, who died, comparatively, young in life, and, and, as she lay, she lay, on the dying, bed, my dear father, begged her, to say, if the Lord, have appeared, and, she said, in a whisper, yes, and, this, is what he said, to me, thou, shalt see, my glory, soon, when, the work, of grace, is done, when, when, the work, of grace, is done, when, he is, tried, as,

James, puts it, partner, of my throne, shalt thee, say, poor sinner, love, thou, me, when, he is, tried, or, there will be an end, near friends, to those suffering, to all those temptations, they won't go on forever, and, the path of trial, and, tribulation, will have its end, yes, it'll come to a close, and, when you, have been tried, and, when the Lord, sees fit, to remove you, and me, from the path, of trial, and suffering, and affliction, when he is, tried, or, then what, well, you think of it, all the wonderful, promise, near friends, yes, the trials, won't end, in trial, the temptations, don't end, in temptation, not for a, a God-fearing, soul, not for one, who's blessed, to feel, their poverty, of spirit, and, blessed, to hunger, after Christ, no, the end, is this, he, shall receive, the crown, of life, the crown, of life, eternal, life, at his request, for every, saint, is given, all that's, the blessed end, and it's an end, which has no end, it's everlasting, the crown, of life, these poor souls, who, struggled on, through, this mortal life, fearing, that they'd never, reach the end, that they'd never, make a good end, often, fearing, they, would fall, by the way, but no, they endured, they endured, like Moses, it says, that Moses endured, and how did he endure, as seeing him, who is, invisible, as beholding, by faith, the precious,

Christ, the Lamb of God, and so, the crown, of life, which, the Lord, hath promised, to them, that love, him, the Lord, hath promised, one, of the, vital promises, of the word, of God, and, wasn't it, or isn't it, in Peter, one of his epistles, where he, speaks of, or writes of, those, precious promises, wherein are given to us, he said, in the word, exceeding, great, and precious, promises, now, what more, precious, a promise, can this ever be, to a poor sinner, who's struggling, on toward heaven, battling, against the powers, of hell, sin, and Satan, battling, often, against, adverse circumstances, adversity, knowing a lot, of the day, of adversity, ah, but the word, says, in the day, of prosperity, be joyful, in the day, of adversity, consider, for God, has set the one, over against the other, that man, should not find, anything, in him, and so, the crown, of life, which, he, hath promised, the Lord, hath promised, to them, that love, him, just briefly, one last thought, seems to drop, into one's, simple mind, the apostle, somewhere, says, for we know, that we, are of God, because we love, the brethren, because we love, the brethren, who do you love, dear friend, who are your companions, in life, who are they, that you seek, after, mostly, whose conversation, and fellowship, you chiefly, desire, is it the world, is it the wicked, is it the ungodly, or you say,

God forbid, that it ever, should be, I know, by nature, that's where, my natural, carnal mind is, but oh, I would desire, something better, I love, to meet, where, among them, who, in the theatre, in the pleasure-seeking throng, oh no, you say, I love, to meet, among these, poor sinners, these, who, I believe, are blessed, of God, and I, long to be blessed, with them, all, one of their number, may I be, now, and through, eternity, you say, well, those are the ones, I love, then here friends, have you ever thought, of it like this, this, itself, is one, of the sweet evidences, that we love God, love God himself, we love those, who love him, those who walk in his way, we want to be like them, though we feel, so far from them, well, you see,

[36 : 25] Ruth was there, wasn't she, she loved, her mother-in-law, she loved, her mother-in-law's God, she learnt, to know more of him, and although, she said, to Boaz, wasn't it, later, though I, be not like, one of thy handmaidens, or she knew, there was a difference, and yet, you see, a longing, to be among them, and with them, and share, their blessing, so, blessed is the man, that endureth, temptation, for, when he is tried, when it's all finished, when it's brought, to a gracious conclusion, and all in the hand of God, he, shall receive, the crown of life, he's had a cross, to carry here, a heavy cross, but, dear friends, it is said, you see, no cross, no crown, it's very true, the Lord's dear people, they have, many a cross, to carry, to bear, and the Lord has said, if any will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up that cross, and follow me, and bear, and suffer, what the Lord has appointed, so, when he is tried, he shall receive, the crown of life, which the Lord, hath promised, to them, that love him,

I feel, I must leave it here, and may the dear Lord, forgive, anything, uttered amiss, and grant his blessing, upon his sacred word, for his name's sake, amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Let's eat. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.