

Wednesday's in the Word
Digging Deeper
June 24, 2020
James 1:5-12
Enduring Temptation

While patience and wisdom are prominent terms in our text these few weeks, they seem to be but stepping stones following the long path to finding success in learning to endure temptation. Sorry for all my protracted sentences but the Apostle Paul got away with it so I take liberty. The term for enduring temptation in verse 12; *hupomone pierasmon* in the Greek; speaks of staying under or bearing up under a burden of trial or testing. We are all tempted and tested and rarely do we count it all Joy as we are commanded in verse 2. Could it be that the very core of our christianity is the joyful endurance of trial? We can rejoice when we succeed. We can rejoice when we please and honor the Lord. We know that the Gospel is our prime focus. We must share the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ. That's why we're here. (Mark 16:15-16).

But while we're here it seems our underlying mission is to follow His example of living in this evil world while joyfully resisting it's temptations and thereby glorifying God. If our lives point to God's holiness and Christ's sacrifice as the remedy for our sin and its consequences then we truly are fulfilling His will and pleasing His Soul. Our steadfast faith in the face of oppression from the enemy will act as a witness to the world of God's power in our lives. In this we rejoice. There forms a logical progression in the passage under study in chapter one. Pause to read verses 2-4. Falling into temptations, trials and testing are to be considered joyful experiences because they train us in patience which works toward our completion in Christ. In this we also rejoice. Note here that this does not allow for sin. Temptation causes us to sin when we turn from the Lord to pursue our own lusts. Confer verses 14-15. The wisdom and accompanying warning to exhibit free will faith found in verses 5-8 are connected to the patience previously required. It infers that we likely lack the wisdom to discern and allow the work of patience God is developing in us. We fail to see Him behind the scenes allowing trials in our lives to school us in growing to be more like Him. Yes. God lets us struggle so we can grow. (Philippians 2:10-16) Wisdom, by the way is the Greek word *Sophia* which is a broad and full intelligence. This is a root to our word; philosophy which is the love of wisdom. This Godly wisdom permits us to recognize the growth of patience and the necessity to endure trials without succumbing to sin. Study the success our Savior had against the Evil one as His ministry opened and note that the Holy Spirit led Him to be tempted. (Matthew 4:1-11) Satan tempts. God tests. We then grade our own papers. Are you passing or failing? Back to James 1. Verses 9-11 parenthetically interrupt our lesson to provide two extreme examples of testing. Poverty as well as riches will tempt us to sin. Christians can be poor or rich. Pastor has stated that God cares about our character, not our comfort. Bluntly, He doesn't care where you are socially or economically. He cares how you are using your position for His glory. Consider Paul's plight and admonition. (Philippians 4:11-13, consider also Proverbs 30:7-9) When looking at our own situation we must ask ourselves; How have I honored God with my resources or trusted Him in my lack? How has the comfort of riches caused me to sin perhaps by worshipping the false gods of prosperity? How

has poverty brought me to the idolatry of envy, jealousy or rage? Verse 12 closes this thought process by promising blessing on those who've endured any of this and come through without sin or even learned from their sin to turn to Him in repentance. Acknowledging our sin and failure brings us to the place we need to be in receiving His forgiveness and sharing His Crown of Eternal Life. Jesus is allowing us to share in His struggles to fully comprehend and even benefit by the experience. (Roman's 8:17, 2 Corinthians 1:5, Philippians 1:29, 3:8, 1 Peter 2:19-23) Hang in there gang. Jesus knows, cares and accompanies you in all your struggles. He will even use your endurance under temptation for His glory. Suffer it for Him and rejoice to do so.