

James 1

I have entitled today's message, "**Hard Times**" Part 7

James 1:1

Let us stand for the reading of God's Holy Word.

James 1:1-8

James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting.

2

My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;

3

Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.

4

But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

5

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

6

But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.

7

For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.

8

A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.

9

Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted:

10

But the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away.

11

For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways.

12

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.

Let us pray

You may be seated.

“Hard Times”

Life has its struggles but Heaven is glorious.

Some of the trials with which we must endure comes upon us by God’s appointment from the circumstances we are placed in, or born in, and many trials come which we have no control over.

We have training lessons in life. Often times with training wheels.

In our parents home - trials and temptations of our home life.

In the school we attended - trials and temptations of class mates.

Then we are out from under our parents authority, control, protection

We have left the nest and we find ourselves on the playing field of life without a security net.

With this freedom, come temptations and trials of our own making, of our own doing.

Many times our difficulties and hardships come by our own decisions, by our own hands.

James 1:14

But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

We reap what we sow. We have made our own bed, now we have to lie in it.

Our present world in many respects is a proving ground.

We are tried and tested and tempted.

When we arrive at verse 12.

We have arrived on the other side of the trial and difficulty:

We can arrive on that shore two ways:

As a failure in the trials and temptations

Or we can arrive as a success.

Most people are just glad it's over.

How do we arrive as a success? James taught us, the Bible teaches us 1:1-11

by counting it all joy.

Asking God for wisdom.

By looking at things in the right way.

By enduring and allowing God to use the difficulty to build character in our life or anything else that we may lack.

If we successfully arrive on the other side,

We are saying, Hallelujah, Praise the Lord, To God be the glory, we have made it through.

We have gone down into the waters, we might even drank some of the water, and we have come up on the other bank.

When we reach the other side of the trial, we fall to our knees with a holy gratitude.

Thank you, Jesus!

And God said, Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, when he is proven, when he has made it to the other side, he shall receive the crown of life.
Vs. 12

We shall receive a reward after we are proven.

We shall receive a reward after we pass the test.

We shall receive a crown after we are approved by God.

This reward for endurance is only for the “tried and true”.

After we have successfully and biblically endured, then we shall receive the crown of life.

This great and glorious reward is promised to the person who is faithful through trials.

This does not mean:

that we are not battered and bruised,
that we did not have some failures,
that we did not get knocked down,
that we did not stumble or stagger,

But we gained traction, developed trust, became stabilized and we began to fight.

To fight with our mind, emotions, fears, unfairness, weariness

We may have failed and even fallen but we got back up and kept going with the Lord and for the Lord.

After we have overcome, not before.

Blessed is the man
Happy is the man that endureth temptation.

God promises that person a CROWN of LIFE.

The **crown of life** awaits the person that endures, that finishes the course, that keeps the faith.

So when this life is over.

When we lay in that coffin, shriveled up like a dry root.

We do not know what we shall be, but God will give us a crown of life and it will be more glorious than we could ever imagine.

We do not know what that dry root will become, but we do know, it will be worth it all.

When troubled on every side and weighed down in this life, REMEMBER:

It will be worth it all, when we see Jesus,
Life's trails will seem so small, when we see Christ.
One glimpse of his dear face, all sorrow will erase,
So bravely run the race, till we see Christ.

It will be worth it all, if we endure!

We shall receive a crown.

Rev. 2:10

Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

Rev. 2:10 is the only other place in the Bible where the crown of life is mentioned.

Who will receive the Crown of life? Those who endure thru Hard times.

Is the crown of life delayed until our death? I believe so.

It is a future blessing/reward.

A person who lives victoriously in this life for Jesus Christ will be crowned in glory.

This crown of life is for those who undergo hardship, testing, tribulation, even death on His behalf.

There are many crowns spoken of in Scripture.

A second crown is found in

II Tim. 4:6-8

Notice this crown comes after death as well.

For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

7

I have fought a good fight, And it is a fight

I have finished my course,

I have kept the faith: I have stayed true

8

Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

This crown is for those who love the appearing of Christ, who anxiously wait and look forward to the day when He will return.

This crown is given to those who have lived a righteous life for God.

Notice a third crown in

I Cor. 9:25

And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.

This crown is given for how we run our race in this life. vs. 23

This crown is for a sacrificial life, for those who lay themselves on the altar of God.

This crown is called the incorruptible crown.

That means it is a perfect and pure crown. Imperishable Crown, everlasting crown

A crown that does not fade.

It is an incorruptible crown.

A fourth crown is found in

I Peter 5:4

And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

That is in context of pastors.

Pastors that endured, that are tried and true and faithful.

A fifth crown is seen in

I Thess. 2:19

For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?

This seems to be the soul-winners crown.

This crown is for those who faithfully witness of the Lord Jesus Christ and present the Gospel message to others.

5 Crowns

These crowns/rewards can be earned by believers, according to the New Testament, as "rewards for faithfulness in this life".

We can gain or lose a crown in this life and we are warned in Revelation:

Rev. 3:11

Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown (reward)

We are encouraged to stay the course, and do not lose it near the finish line of life or in the heat of battle.

The Lord is going to give a crown of life.

It is given to those that love Him. vs. 12

It will be given to those that endure and those that endure love the Lord.

The crown of life is promised to those who love God.

If we love our spouse, we will stay with them until death, no matter what happens.

We will keep our promises, we will be faithful, we will not be doing things that destroy our marriage.

Will our love for our spouse be tested? Yes or No

Will we be tempted in a way that could hurt our spouse?

We prove our love, not with cheap words or gifts, but with faithfulness.

It is easy to say we love, but love must be demonstrated.

God so loved the world that HE GAVE

God demonstrated his love toward us, **Romans 5:8** says “while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.’

Listen to what Jesus said,

John 14:21

He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me:

If we do not do what Jesus says, we have a love problem.

Obedience proves that we love God.

It is not just knowing the Word of God.

Knowing it is important. It is doing it.

James 1:22

But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

So when we find ourselves in the pressure cooker of life,

Will we fulfill the Scriptures? or

Will we abandoned the Scriptures?

It is not just knowing this Book, it is living this Book in the stormy seasons of life.

Trials are an opportunity to demonstrate our love for the Lord, for His Word and His Ways.

A love that cannot endure temptation is not love of God at all.

I am making choices during my trials and temptations, to go man's way or to go God's way.

We prove our love in difficulties.

Do we love the Lord?

Hard Times

Let us stand for closing invitation

Earthly crowns are temporary.

Too many people live for perishable crowns.

These rewards will fade away, Found in the back of the closet or in the attic or garage..

But for those who endure in this life,
For those that come thru the fire, there is a special reward.

Jesus said, take up thy cross and follow me.

If we will bear our cross in this life, we will wear a crown of life in the next world.

So eventually, our cross will be exchanged for a crown.

The crown is the fruit of the cross.

Our love for God sweetens the most bitter cup.

It lightens the heaviest burdens.

Gospel