

Your Daily Appointments With God

MONDAY

Read James 1:3-9. James is concerned with giving hope and encouragement to the suffering poor within his community. He not only encourages these people in humble circumstances, who are meeting trials of many kinds, to actively persevere (vs. 3). He also tells them that they must be steadfast in their exaltation - they must take pride in their "high position" (vs. 9). The poor, humble person of verse 9 is one of the persons undergoing trials in which verse?

TUESDAY

Read James 1:2-11. There appears to be a parallel between the first and second major paragraphs of this letter. For instance, verses 9-11 stand parallel with, and as an illustration of, the introductory overview given in verses 2-9. This becomes clearer if we can draw a parallel between the double-minded person in verse 8 with the rich person in verses 10 and 11. What is one of the marks of a double-minded person?

WEDNESDAY

Read Matthew 16:27. The crown of life pictures a victorious Greek runner who is rewarded with a wreath or crown being placed on his head. To the Greeks the crown was either a reward or an emblem of honor. Salvation is received by faith in the finished Word of Christ on the cross, *but rewards are given to believers based on their works*. How did Jesus refer to this truth in Matthew 16:27?

THURSDAY

Read Genesis 3:11-12. The classic illustration of blaming God for our sin occurred as a result of the very first temptation. How did Adam imply that God caused him to be tempted in Genesis 3:11-12?

FRIDAY

Read James 1:12-18. James concludes this section (vss. 12-18) with a positive counter-balance to the negative assertions in vss. 13-15. Now he confirms his point with the positive. Temptations could not originate with God, because He sends what?

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Faith That Works in a Fractured World!

Part 2 – James 1:9-18

Intro: In Part 1, James reminded us that as believers in Christ "*trials, tests and or temptations of many kinds,*" are a fact of life for us in a fractured, sinful world. They're "*inevitable*" and "*unpredictable,*" in our spiritual walk.

• Initially, James is concerned about how your faith in Jesus needs to *affect your daily behavior in life*. That we should ask the Lord continuously for WISDOM without any DOUBTS because He gives WISDOM or MATURITY generously.

➤ *Let us look only to Jesus, the One who began our faith and who makes it perfect.*
Hebrews 12:2 (NCV)

I. James Presents A Radical New Truth That Brings A New Perspective To God's Church

A. This perspective is most apparent in the church where there should NOT be any class distinctions between the rich or the less fortunate.

• That _____ believers share the privilege of being changed by the GOSPEL and desire to share the GOOD NEWS to the world.

➤ "*Believers who are poor should take pride that God has made them spiritually rich. vs. 10, Those who are rich should take pride that God has shown them that they are spiritually poor. The rich will die like a wild flower in the grass. vs. 11, The sun rises with burning heat and dries up the plants. The flower falls off, and its beauty is gone. In the same way the rich will die while they are still taking care of business.*"

James 1:9-11 (NCV)

B. For James in vs. 9, the humble circumstances of the poor is the one who is possibly meeting the most severe trials.

• James is concerned with giving _____ and encouragement to the suffering poor within God's community.

• He encourages those who are having trials of many kinds, to actively _____ and be _____ in their exaltation of God.

C. For James, we find true wealth by developing our spiritual lives, not by developing our financial assets.

• God is interested in what is lasting (our _____), not in what is temporary (our money and possessions).

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- “God blesses those who patiently endure testing and temptation. Afterward they will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.” James 1:12 (NLT)

D. There’s a reward, for enduring trials, tests and temptations in life.

- The reward is a _____ or translated being happy and receiving the “_____ of life” promised by God!
- Happiness comes from having your life under control, so that there is no bad habit that is devastating you. When you know how to say “no” to temptation it produces happiness in your life.

E. For James the theme of suffering continues to preoccupy his mind.

- It’s with this thought that James says the blessing is upon those who have a positive response when facing trials in life.
- Both words, *trials* and *temptations* are translations of the same Greek word, *peirasmos*.
- “Trials” refer to _____ suffering, while “temptation” has reference to _____ testing.

F. What’s very important for us to remember is that verse 12 is a pivotal verse in James’s opening letter to the believers.

- It’s part of an explanation as to how the sufferer responds to *trials*, *tests* and *challenges* in life.
- Because the response can be either *positive or negative*. And the sufferer can respond by _____ (vs. 12) or by being by blaming God, accusing Him of tempting the sufferer in verse 13.

- “I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.” Romans 8:18 (NIV)

G. For the believer in Jesus, while bearing the cross of Christ, we look forward to the “Crown of _____!”

- The symbolic cross may be *physical* when a person’s health is compromised; it may be *economic* – when you have little or no financial security; or it may be *social* and *relational* – when someone has been unfaithful or abusive.
- No matter what the symbolic cross or the trial, James calls for _____, and he promises a _____!

- “When you are tempted to do wrong, do not say, “God is tempting me.” God cannot be tempted. He will never tempt anyone. vs. 14, A man is tempted to do wrong when he lets himself be led by what his bad thoughts tell him to do.” James 1:13-14 (NLT)

H. In verses 13 and 14, the Greek word, *peirasmos* can be translated “trials” as well as “temptation.”

- Only the _____ can determine whether it refers to *external afflictions* or the *inner enticement to sin*.
- So up to this point (Vs. 13), James is primarily addressing external trials.
- Now he turns his attention specifically to _____ temptations.

I. The greatest gift the LORD has given to us is the “Gift of Salvation in Jesus.” Yet, the next greatest gift is “_____.”

J. WHY, then, do we sin? James says, “Each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed” (vs. 14, NIV).

K. Temptations could not originate with God, because He sends only _____ from above according to vs. 17. And since God “*never changes or casts a shifting shadow*” according to vs. 17, it’s impossible for Him to send evil.

L. Let’s not overlook TWO VERY IMPORTANT WORDS – James uses that highlight significant attributes of God - _____ and _____.
• First, whatever statements we make about God must begin and end with the fact that He is _____.
• Second, the view of God’s character remains _____. Under no circumstances will God ever be imperfect. He’ll always be the giver of good, and evil will never originate with Him!

M. So the blessings from above are twofold – _____ and _____ (vs.18).

N. As we close our spiritual journey James 1:9-18 focuses on how to see _____ changing circumstances versus God’s unchanging goodness.

- True blessings comes from _____ trials with faith, not from status or riches. James distinguishes trials from temptation, in other words, God may test, but He does NOT tempt.

O. **God promises in James 1:12 “the crown of life”** to those who love God and _____ trials. **In verse 17**, the Lord reassures that every good and perfect gift comes from above. **In verse 18**, God reminds us that He gives new life through His word of truth.

P. **Because “Faith That Works in a Fractured World!” means that this life-saving message is on God’s promise that faithfulness through trials - leads to _____, a crown of glory, and God’s good gifts!**
• It’s a strong theme of _____ beyond the trials.