

Salt Church
James 1:12-18
Peirazo'
July 19, 2026
The Fruit of Salvation

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Recap:

- We learned that God the Father desires to give wisdom **generously** to those that are fully committed to Him.
 - We also learned that He gives without reproach which means **He gives wisdom to people who are not perfect.**
- We discovered that wisdom is different than knowledge.
 - This led us to the conclusion that ***wisdom is knowledge applied.***
 - We also learned that **it is possible to have knowledge without wisdom.**
 - People who have knowledge but do not apply it to their life are unstable and double-minded.
 - These people should not ask for wisdom as they will not receive anything from the Lord.
- We closed out last week with a reminder from our brother James that **both the rich and the poor share a special position as children of God:**
 - For the poor they are made rich because of their position in Christ.
 - For the rich their position in Christ produces humility.

Now on to today's text:

James 1:12-18

¹² Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. ¹³ Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone. ¹⁴ But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. ¹⁵ Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and when sin is fully matured, it brings forth death. ¹⁶ Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers. ¹⁷ Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow. ¹⁸ In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures.

PRAYER

James 1:12-18

¹² Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial:

- Many of us need this word today
 - Many of us are just pushing through the everyday struggle, dreaming of the moment that relief comes.
 - Praying, hoping, begging, for relief

This promise of blessing which is made to those within the church, **is made to a body of believers that has real problems:**

- Some of them **did not have daily food** and were in need of clothing (**James 2**)
- Some came to church in **shabby clothes** and were **humiliated** when they were told to **stand off to the side** so that the wealthy could have the seats (**James 2**)
- **James 2** also says that some were even **dragged into court** by the wealthy.
 - This was a messed-up church.
- **James 4** tells us that there is **fighting and gossip within the church**.
 - There was **slander, pride, anger, and sickness**.

James will address it all and in this letter.

- In this letter there is a constant call to persevere.
 - Most people don't think of the book of James as a call to persevere.
 - ***Most would think of James a call to do.***
 - I would say it is a letter that calls all Christians to both **persevere and do.**
 - This will be made abundantly clear in the weeks that follow should the Lord allow.

¹² Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial;

- ***(peirozmos “noun” a very important word for us today)***
- ***It can be translated, trial, test, or tempt based upon the context***
- ***It means “putting to proof by adversity”***

- It is very important that we understand this word and to understand that **how this word is used determines its meaning**. (More on this word in a moment)

Now, why would a man be blessed if he perseveres under trial?

- This is not a natural way of thinking
 - This is a super-natural way of thinking
 - One of James' goals is to change the way his readers see trials and testing verses temptation.
- In James' day the Christian church was under persecution.
 - And to some degree all of us are going through, coming out of, or going into some type of trial.
 - It's very real and a fact of life.

Do you remember how the letter began?

James 1:2-3

² Consider it all joy, my brothers, when you encounter various trials, ³ knowing that the testing of your faith brings about perseverance.

- James desires for us to have joy when trials come, why?
 - Because these trials are ***the testing of your faith that produces perseverance***.
 - What do we know about perseverance?
 - The child of God will persevere to the end.
- So, we conclude that the testing of our faith strengthens our perseverance and faith.

12 Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved,

- What does that mean?
 - Approved, by whom and of what?
 - How do you get this approval?
 - These are very important questions.

he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

- **Wait a minute Pastor**, I thought when I placed my faith, hope, and trust in Jesus that was when the crown of life was promised.
 - That is a true statement and this is not the only time the Holy Spirit says it.

Revelation 2:10-11 (To the Church in Smyrna)

10 Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life. 11 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes will never be hurt by the second death.'

- So, how do we reconcile what James and John has said through the power of the Holy Spirit?
 - So far, we understand that if your faith is real, you will persevere and there will be a reward called the crown of life.

Pastor, what if I fail?

- You won't because you can't!
 - How do you know that, Pastor?
 - **John 10:27-30** ²⁷*My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. ³⁰I and the Father are one.*"
 - More on this soon but clearly James is setting the tone for what is to come.

I believe the key to understanding this text is found in the word "peirazo."

- As we have already discovered, the word can mean trial, test, or tempt.
- The translators do their best with things like this but I believe that our Father who gives wisdom generously can and will give us wisdom as we consider the possibilities of the use of this word. (Let's look at it together)

¹² *Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; (or testing or temptation) for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.*

- There is a very important rule that we must remember in determining the proper translation of this word “peirazo.”
- It is important to remember that **only God test.**
 - **Satan tempts**
 - And our hearts can be tempted without the help of Satan.
- It is also important to understand that **this determines** whether it is **testing** or **temptation.**
 - When God the Father allows us to be tested the purpose is to make us more like Jesus.
 - Like the jeweler that places the gold over the fire to burn off the trash, so it is with our Father.
 - The heat of testing is to purify us removing those things that are unpure.
 - **Satan, on the other hand, tempts.**
 - **His motivation is to kill, steal, and destroy.**

I think it is important that we define “temptation”

- **Temptation is desire**
 - It is possible to desire something and ***it not be sin.***
 - Hunger would be a good example.
 - You desire food because you’re hungry and that desire is not necessarily sin.
- Jesus was tempted in the wilderness after 40 days of fasting.
 - His desire was to eat and that is not a sin
 - So, why would Satan try to tempt Him to turn stones into bread?
 - The temptation was not in the desire for food

- The temptation would have been in the act of rebelling against the Father's will that He would suffer as a man.

Now, with all of that in mind lets continue:

¹³ Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone.

- This is where I differ with the translation of the word peirazo'.
- The translators translated it "tempted" I believe it would be better translated "tested."
- So, it should read

¹³ Let no one say when he is tested, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone.

- Keep in mind James does this throughout his letter.
- So, we will need to translate as we move forward.

Now, why is tested a better translation?

- When God puts us through the test, He does it in such a way that sin is not involved.

Consider Peter's denial of Jesus:

- Jesus told Peter that his time of testing was coming and Peter said he was ready to die for Jesus. (Sifted like wheat)
 - But Jesus said, Peter you will deny knowing me three times before the rooster crows.

- When the test comes, Peter is asked three times if he is a follower of Christ.
 - **There is no sin in that test.**
 - But there is sin in the response “I do not know Him”
 - Peter failed the test but God was not sinful for allowing Peter to be put to the test.

Consider the temptation of Judas:

- He wanted money and power not the will of God; **this was his desire.**
 - He wanted it so badly that he was willing to sin to get it.
 - He too would deny Jesus but the difference between he and Peter was repentance.
 - Judas never repented, he wept and felt sorrow but he never repented.
 - Thus the temptation was born in Judas,
 - It was fed, it grew, and when it was full grown it destroyed him forever.
 - Yes, Satan was behind Judas’ temptation.

But Pastor, didn’t God know what Satan was up to when Judas’ was tempted?

- Yes
 - So, how is that different from Peter’s testing?
 - Because asking someone if they are a Christ follower is not a sinful question.

- In Judas' case, asking his heart if he would like to take some money for and evil act is a sinful question. (See the difference?)

Back to our text:

¹³ Let no one say when he is tested, “I am being tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone.

- **God is holy, holy, holy**
 - Three times separated from sin
 - He does not use sin to test His people
 - He doesn't have to use sin to get His point across.

So, we conclude that sinful thoughts and actions are not the result of anything that God is doing but rather the origin of those things are Satan and our own sinful nature.

We must remember this:

- Satan attacks faith through sin
- God our Father test faith through sinless opportunity

A couple more things before we move on:

- James has a great big sovereign view of God the Father
 - Let me show you what I mean:

James 4:13-15

¹³ Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in

business and make a profit.” ¹⁴ Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. ¹⁵ Instead, you ought to say, “**If the Lord wills**, we will live and also do this or that.”

- James’ view of God’s sovereignty in our lives is so big, so strong that it is foolish for us to say “I’ll see you tomorrow.”
 - He would say “***You don’t know that!***”
 - James says we should say “***If the Lord wills...***”

James will continue this train of thought throughout this letter for we find in the last chapter James once again making his point about Gods sovereignty in our pain, suffering, testing, and reward for perseverance.

James 5:10-11

¹⁰ As an example, brothers, of suffering and patience, **take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.**¹¹ Behold, we count those blessed who persevere. You have heard of the **perseverance of Job** and have seen the outcome of the Lord’s dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful.

- What is James saying?
 - That God was behind the testing of the prophets and Job.
 - God allowed those prophets to be tested even unto death.
 - God allowed Job to be tested even unto the death of his children.

Back to our text

¹² Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

From this point forward James is going to make 4 points:

- **James' 1st point is this:**

- The testing, trials, and tribulations make us worthy of the crown of life.
 - Keep in mind this is a **victors crown** not a kingly crown.
 - Its like the gold medal in the Olympics.
- **But Pastor what is being tested?**
 - What does the text say that is being tested?
 - Is it faith?
 - Is it hope?
 - No,
 - It is love!
 - Love of who or what?

¹² Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised **to those who love Him.**

- The crown of life is only given to those that **love Him!**
- Many of you know what it is like to pass through the most difficult trials and testing:
 - You remeber went through the fire

- You remember your anger that burned towards God because He didn't rescue your loved one when they died
- When He didn't save your business from collapse
- When He didn't restore your marriage and your spouse moved on as if nothing ever happened.
 - You were mad at Him!

Pastor how does that prove your point?

- It proves my point because although you were mad at Him, ***He never stopped loving you.***
 - ***He never left you***
 - ***He never disowned you***
 - He stayed by your side even when you said you didn't want Him too.
- ***And what happened?***
- Eventually you begin to move as He walked you through the fire.
 - Eventually you came out the other side
 - ***And although you will never be the same you know without a doubt that He loves you and you love Him.***
 - ***You are His and He is yours***
 - ***and because of your love for Him there is a victors crown fitted for you.***

The scripture says, you get this crown because you have proven that you love Him more than:

- Your spouse

- Your children
- Your home
- Your job
- Your health
- Your wealth
 - You get the crown because God is your supreme treasure.

James' 2nd point:

- God test but He never tempts

¹³ Let no one say when he is “tested”, “I am being tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone.

¹⁴ But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. ¹⁵ Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and when sin is fully matured, it brings forth death.

No man should ever say God tempted me, why?

- It just not true (The Bible says so)
- The purpose of temptation is **complete destruction** (vs 15)
- The purpose of testing is that we would be **perfect and complete lacking in nothing.** (vs 4)

James' 3rd point:

- Do not be deceived!

¹⁶ Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers.

What does that mean?

- Don't be deceived about what?
- ¹³ *Let no one say when he is “tested”, “I am being tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone.*
 - The deception comes when ***we blame God for our sin.***
 - The clearest example of this is seen in the homosexual world in which they claim ***“God made me this way.”***
 - Which is the same in saying, ***“God has tempted me in this way by making me this way.”***
 - Sex is a choice and it always has been.
 - It is not like water, air, and food
 - will not die if you do not have sex.
 - **Therefore it is a choice made by an active and willful decision.**
- What we do know about all sexual sin is that it is always a choice and the consequences of those choices often are devastating.

So, do not be deceived into thinking that God is responsible for you succumbing to sin.

- ***All sin is a choice!***

James continues with his thoughts about deception

¹⁷ ***Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.***

- ***What does that mean?***
 - It means that God is perfect in every way.

- He is not out to destroy you.
 - And His testing is designed to produce a good and perfect strength within you that will help you be like Jesus by persevering through the difficulty of this very temporary life.

But Pastor, why does James refer to Him as the “Father of lights?”

- All through the Bible Gods glory shows itself as light.
 - Sin is always referred to as darkness.
- In fact Jesus will say that He is light.
 - James’ point is that God is the source of light and that His light never fades or shifts.
 - **Meaning, He never stops being light and He never changes His mind about what is sin.**
 - This is so important for us to understand as we live in a world in which so many teach that much of the Bible is only relevant to the culture of its day.
 - **Do not be deceived, God has not changed His mind about sin and He would never use sin to tempt us.**

James’ 4th point:

- **God’s testing gives birth to life**

¹⁸ In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures.

- The Greek word that is translated “**brought forth**” is only used one other time in the New Testament.
 - In verse 15 it says ***¹⁵ Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and when sin is fully matured, it brings forth death.***
 - Here in verse 18 God has brought us forth (same word) by the word of truth so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures.
 - What does that mean and why is that so important for us to understand?

The Greek word is:

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: apokueó

Pronunciation: ap-ok-oo-eh'-o

Phonetic Spelling: (ap-ok-oo-eh'-o)

It means to “give birth or breed forth”

- It is important because temptation can give birth to sin which leads to death (vs 15)

But God gives birth to life through the gospel of His Word.

2 Corinthians 5:17

¹⁷ Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.

We close today with this final point:

- **God gives birth to life**

- In this new life comes testing that produces in us the perseverance that is needed to make us more like Jesus.

What have we learned today?

James' 1st point is this:

- The testing, trials, and tribulations make us worthy of the crown of life.

James' 2nd point:

- God test but He never tempts

James' 3rd point:

- Do not be deceived!

James' 4th point:

- God's testing gives birth to life

In the end we must remember James 1:12

James 1:12

¹² Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

Close in prayer