

THE TRIAL OF FAITH

BIBLE TEXT : James 1:1-21; I Peter 1:1-9; 4:12-19.

LESSON 448 Junior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf" (I Peter 4:16).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

James 1:1-21

1 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.

Bible References:

Notes:

What We Learn

You boys and girls know what it is to pass a test in school where you learn English, Arithmetic, Social Studies and many things that will help you as you grow older to earn a living, keep a home, and be a good citizen of your country. In today's Sunday School lesson we read about tests in a school where we learn to love God and our friends and neighbours, and become good Christians.

Kinds of Tests

Now the very first instruction given in our lesson is, "Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations." What does the word temptation mean to you? Perhaps you think of some pleasant and seemingly desirable thing that is really wrong or sinful. That is one kind of temptation. There is another kind of temptation that tests or tries the Christian's faith in God.

When we first become Christians we have faith. We come to God and confess our sins and ask Him to save us. We have faith; we believe that God hears our prayer and that He does save us and will keep us saved all through our life. Then a trial or test comes to try that faith in God. Do we still believe that God will keep us saved even though the trial was fiery even though it is hard to bear?

When the Apostle James wrote the instruction, "Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations," he meant, Be glad when many different kinds of tests or trials come your way. Why? Because when you face the tests and trials of life with joy as you are told to do, you learn patience and that makes you a better Christian.

The first time you read a lesson in a textbook at school were you able to pass a test on it? No, you read it several times; you worked examples, or wrote a statement on the subject of the lesson. You answered oral questions. You went over it day after day, and then you were able to pass the test. Just so it is in God's school

-- you cannot learn to be a strong Christian in one lesson, so do not be surprised when one trial after another comes your way.

Made Stronger

As you read the lesson today, it is fresh in your mind; and if this very day a hard trial should come to you, you would perhaps remember to be glad and patient. But what about next week when you want very much to sing in the school chorus, and the teacher says you may not be included because each place in the chorus has already been filled? Do you bear the trial without giving way to the temptation to feel sorry for yourself? or to feel hard toward your teacher for not including you? or to be jealous of others who have the privilege you wanted very much yourself?

You will pass the test if you remember your first instruction, "Count it all joy," and keep firm the faith and trust you had in God when you were first saved. Your faith and love for God grows stronger as you pray and trust Him to make a way for you to have every privilege He knows is best for you. That makes you a

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

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

15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

16 Do not err, my beloved brethren.

17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

18 Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

19 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:

20 For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

21 Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.

1 Peter 1:1-9

1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,

2 Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

3 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of

stronger Christian, better able to face with patience, or firmness, other tests that are yet to come.

Another Test

Perhaps at the beginning of the new school term both you and your friend want to enrol in the typing class. The teacher accepts your friend's name for enrolment, but will not accept yours. You are keenly disappointed. The temptation to resentment comes again, but it is not so strong as in the first trial. You quickly remember how God helped you before and you keep firm your purpose to trust Him in this trial, too.

You are making progress toward the perfection that our lesson speaks about: a place where you will be satisfied, where you will be strong to trust God in every time of need.

God's Help

Then a harder test may face you. What if you are accused of stealing a schoolmate's purse? Perhaps even the teacher believes you took it, because you were the last one to leave the room. You feel very, very bad; your heart is heavy, but you know you are clear before God: you did not take the purse.

You pray and ask God to help you to wait patiently and to "count it all joys" until God brings the truth to light. You are strong to trust God as young David was when he went out to fight against the great Goliath, because, as he said: "The LORD that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine" (I Samuel 17:37). You have that same trust and faith in God because He helped you pass the other tests and you know God will help you in this one, too. When the guilty person was found out, how glad you were that you had kept a sweet spirit through the trial!

Wisdom Wanted

The Bible goes on to say that if at any time you feel you do not have wisdom enough to do what you should, you are to "ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." But when we ask God for anything, our faith must be steady if our prayer is to be answered. If one moment we think we want God to lead us and the next moment we want to have our own way, God does not answer such wavering prayers. Be sure to ask in faith, the same kind of faith and confidence that you had when you asked God to save you, and God will answer.

Endurance

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation." When a person endures, or bears temptation or trial without kicking back at the person or the circumstance that is hurting him, he is blessed. He is blessed of God. And if he continues to endure with patience, some day he shall receive the "crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."

Of course, we know that God never tempts anyone to evil. But people are tempted when they are drawn away by their own lusts, or strong desires. Many times they let those strong desires lead them into sin. But God leads people into right ways. Do you sometimes wonder if God is leading in what you are doing, or if your own desire is leading you? You can tell the difference. God will lead you upward and your own desire may lead you downward. Ask yourself, "Will this help me spiritually? Will it be for my benefit and for the glory of God? If it will be for the glory of God, then I will do it. But if a feeling or suggestion comes which leads away from God just flatly refuse it.

God wants to lead His people in small things, in every part of life. If we let Him, He will lead us and He will use us in the Gospel work, for He is the Giver of every good and perfect gift.

Jesus Christ from the dead,
4 To an inheritance incorruptible,
and undefiled, and that fadeth not
away, reserved in heaven for you,
5 Who are kept by the power of
God through faith unto salvation
ready to be revealed in the last
time.

6 Wherein ye greatly rejoice,
though now for a season, if need
be, ye are in heaviness through
manifold temptations:

7 That the trial of your faith,
being much more precious than of
gold that perisheth, though it be
tried with fire, might be found
unto praise and honour and glory
at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

8 Whom having not seen, ye love;
in whom, though now ye see *him*
not, yet believing, ye rejoice with
joy unspeakable and full of glory:
9 Receiving the end of your faith,
even the salvation of *your* souls.

1 Peter 4:12-19

12 Beloved, think it not strange
concerning the fiery trial which is
to try you, as though some
strange thing happened unto you:

13 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye
are partakers of Christ's
sufferings; that, when his glory
shall be revealed, ye may be glad
also with exceeding joy.

14 If ye be reproached for the
name of Christ, happy *are ye*; for
the spirit of glory and of God
resteth upon you: on their part he
is evil spoken of, but on your part
he is glorified.

15 But let none of you suffer as a
murderer, or *as* a thief, or *as* an
evildoer, or as a busybody in other
men's matters.

16 Yet if *any man* suffer as a
Christian, let him not be ashamed;
but let him glorify God on this
behalf.

17 For the time *is come* that
judgment must begin at the house
of God: and if *it* first *begin* at us,

Able to Save and Keep

We who are Christians have been born again by the Word of God and His Spirit, and in today's lesson are instructions that, if followed, will keep us true Christians to eternity. "Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath." Be ready and eager to hear what God says, but do not be quick to speak and let yourself be stirred up to wrath, or anger. Turn away from, or lay aside all sin -- big sins and little sins -- and read and study and obey the Bible, for God's Word is able to save your soul and keep you until you enter Heaven.

Value of Faith

The Apostle Peter speaks of the Christian's rejoicing in salvation and in his love for Christ Jesus even though at times his heart is heavy because of the temptations and tests that come to try his faith -- the faith he had when he first came to God, the faith that God would save him and keep him true all through his life.

This faith is very precious, very valuable, because it will enable the Christian to be faithful until Jesus comes to take him to be in Heaven forever and ever. So God tests and refines our faith by the fiery trials that come our way, very much as the natural gold that is dug out of the earth is refined by the extreme heat of a fiery furnace until it is like a mirror.

For a Purpose

We are not to think it strange, not to think it should not happen, not to be afraid, but to remember that the Lord is doing this that we might be proved and tried. We are to rejoice and be glad we have a share in the same kind of sufferings that Jesus went through. Jesus knows how we Suffer when temptation comes. He was tempted in every way that we are tempted, and is able to help us (**Hebrews 2:18** 18 For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted. **Hebrews 4:15** 15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are*, yet without sin.).

If people say cutting, slighting remarks about us because we are Christians, we should be glad. Hard things come at times to everyone in the world. Even hypocrites and sinners have hard things to suffer, but the Bible tells us not to suffer as sinners. Murderers, thieves, and people who put their noses in other people's business suffer, too, because of what they do. But if people speak evil of us and laugh at us because we do not go to theatres, because we do not dance, because we do not wear lipstick and do as the people of the world do, we are not to be ashamed.

Sometimes people try to make us ashamed because we live and act like Christians, but really the shame is upon them for living like sinners.

Our Faithful Creator

As Christians, we know that we must keep true to God every day in order to be ready when Jesus comes. Then what will be the end of the careless ones, those who do not try to do God's will? They can look forward only to God's judgment. But let us rejoice in the sufferings that come to prove our love to Him and to test our faith in God, the faithful Creator who is watching over us and will not permit more than we are able to bear (**1 Corinthians 10:13** 13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God *is* faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.).

QUESTIONS

what shall the end *be* of them that obey not the gospel of God?

18 And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?

19 Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls *to him* in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.

1. From what textbook do we learn these valuable lessons?
2. What are temptations?
3. What is the first instruction in today's lesson?
4. What do trials and tests do for a Christian?
5. What kind of prayer will God answer?
6. What will a person receive if he endures temptations with joy?
7. What causes a person to be tempted to evil?
8. What is the quality that is more precious or valuable than gold?
9. Why are we not to be ashamed if we suffer because we are a Christian?