

Tuesday, April 5, 2016 - Count It Joy...

James 1:2 - Count it all joy, my brethren, when ye fall into manifold temptations... It is hard to contemplate how we are to count it joy when we fall into temptations. The greek word used here (peirasmois) (pi-ras-mos') means both outward trials and inward temptations. Trials become the testing ground of our faith. Trials prove faith by enabling the believer to determine the extent and degree of willingness to endure and to be obedient to Christ

What is the purpose of trials? It validates our faith by testing its genuineness. It develops our patience, matures our character, rendering us more complete spiritually.

Instead of complaining or focusing on "why me", we should rejoice that we are counted worthy to face trials for being a Christian and use it as an opportunity to mature spiritually.

"Therefore let us also, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising shame, and hath sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Heb. 12:1-2)

"Blessed are ye when men shall reproach you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets that were before you" (Matt. 5:11-12).

"Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, ye have been put to grief in manifold trials, that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold that perisheth though it is proved by fire, may be found unto praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ: whom not having seen ye love; on whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice greatly with joy unspeakable and full of glory." (1 Pet. 1:6-8)

"And not only so, but we also rejoice in our tribulations: knowing that tribulation worketh stedfastness; and stedfastness, approvedness; and approvedness, hope: and hope putteth not to shame; because the love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which was given unto us" (Rom. 5:3-5).

How do count it joy when we fall into temptations? The answer is found in verse 12 when we're told the "joy" of James 1:2 is the opportunity to win; the "blessed" of James 1:12 is the "joy" of one who has won. Therefore, endurance shall be rewarded; so stay with it, pay the price, finish the course and fight the battle, endure to the end! Such a one is "approved of God." The reward of steadfastness is the crown of life, the crown of righteousness.

In every age the people of God have faced challenge and temptation, hardship and trial. The overruling providence of God uses this to test our faith, thus trials become the proving ground of faith. More often than not the Christian cannot explain the trial or understand the "why's" of the situation. But one thing the Bible teaches clearly: All trials and temptations are for our good and ultimately, if we persevere, we shall receive the crown of life.