

***<sup>12</sup> 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. <sup>13</sup> 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. <sup>14</sup> But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. <sup>15</sup> Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.***

You've chosen to be faithful instead of doubting. In that faith, you will be approved and you WILL receive the "crown of life" which God has promised to those who love Him. If you're going through a trial, God wants for you to keep on keeping on. He wants you to keep putting your faith in Him. He asks us just to be obedient and stay the course and keep loving God, being faithful, loving your spouse, working hard, day by day living for Him instead of yourself. God is the one Who gives us the ability to persevere.

Then James talks about temptation. He says WHEN you're tempted, it's born in our own flesh. It's not a matter of IF it will happen, but WHEN it will happen. Don't blame God. You have within you that Old Sin Nature with which you were born and God will not tempt you to sin. That would be entrapment. It is OUR own flesh from which it originates. We are so prone to blame others for our weaknesses.

Temptation is not sin. Martin Luther said, " it is when desire is mingled with my own lusts that sin is conceived. When my will accepts instead of resisting temptation, there is a conception that takes place. Sin is what is conceived. It is when my desire embraces temptation, my evil desire locks onto the temptation. The proper way to deal with temptation is to resist it. Sin is given birth and it grows and matures and ages, and when it is full grown, it brings for death in our lives. The aim of sin is destruction.

The only way to deal with sin is the cross. That's where we began today, and that is where we will end. Praise God we have the Holy Spirit. James is telling us how to minimize the impact of sin in our lives. I want to make it hard. I want to make "no provision for the flesh". So a way we can do this

*Hebrews 4:12 <sup>12</sup> For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. <sup>13</sup> And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account."(Hebrews 4:12 NKJV)*

God's Word will sift out what is an evil desire in your heart. Our desires come from our heart and the Word of God is the tool that God uses to cut those off. When we come under conviction, we can pray that through the power of the Holy Spirit, we will give no entrance to

things that will turn into wrong desires. Ungodly desires + temptation = sin. Let our desires be sanctified. We've got to be in the word, and we've got to be open to when the Holy Spirit talks to us.

*John 3:20 <sup>20</sup>For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. <sup>21</sup>But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God." (John 3:20 NASB)*

We do our evil in the dark. When we bring our sin into the light, it kills off the sin. When we confess our sins to one another we bring them into the light. Sin has a hard time living in the light. Christian accountability is a powerful tool.