



# Faith and Travail

## The Testing of Personal Faith

**Main point:** Perseverance in trials is rewarded with a joy in this life and honor in the next.

### Expositional Outline:

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**Review:** Perseverance in trials requires...

- *The proper attitude toward trials (1:2-4)*
- *The right use of prayer amid trials (1:5-8)*
- *The correct mindset toward life when facing trials (1:9-11)*
- *Love for Christ (1:12)*

A. The blessed in this life (*v.12a*)

*Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial;*

1. Who is the man the Bible calls "blessed"?
2. To whom does blessedness belong?

B. The blessed in the life to come (*v.12b*)

1. The reason

*For once he has been approved,*

2. The reward

*he will receive the crown of life*

3. The requirement

*which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.*

### Observations:

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Digging deeper

- Blessed**—The word "**blessed**" (*makarios*) appears frequently in the Psalms, Proverbs, and the Prophets. It occurs at least 50 times in the New Testament (*Ps.1:1, 32:2; 34:8; 40:4; 65:4; 84:5; 94:12; 112:1; Prov.8:34; Is.56:2; Jer.17:7; Job.5:17*).

In the very being of God, there is *blessedness* (*Ps.16:11; 1 Tim.1:11; 6:15*). Blessedness is not only found *in God Himself*, but it is also experienced by *operating according to God's will*. There is a satisfaction that comes to the creature when that creature fulfills God's intended design (*Gen.1:22, 28; James 1:25*). Blessedness is a *state of soul* amid adverse outward circumstances. It is an *inner quality of life*, a *joy and happiness* which is not dependent on favorable situations around you.

- Perseverance**—The word "**perseverance**" contains the idea of *staying power, stick-to-itiveness, standing firm, keeping at it*. It is a *refusing to give up*, but its more than *tenacity*. It is an *unwillingness to give in*, but it is more than just to "*grin and bear it*." Perseverance is a work of the Holy Spirit in a believer's life (*Luke 21:19; Col.1:12; 2 Tim.2:12*).

## Interpretative discussion questions:

- Make a list of *what a blessed man is not*. How does this list conflict with the current teaching heard in many pulpits today?
- Make a list of *the things that will truly make you happy*. Be honest. How does this list line up with a biblical understanding of what it means to be *blessed*? How does it need to change?
- What are some of the reasons people *fail to persevere in the faith*? What are the early warning signs?
- Read Romans 5:1-5. Who is the source of perseverance in the Christian's life?
- Read 1 Corinthians 15:57-58. What three things are we to do to participate in perseverance and why?

## Applicational project:

Think back on your life for a moment. Share a time of trial and how God helped you to persevere and what lessons you learned from it.

## Memory verse for lesson 5:

- **James 1:12**—*Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord promised to those who love Him.*



### Insights on Our Travail:

Keith Brazier

Storms that come with a forecast allow us to prepare and, for the most part, take our time to confer with others before choosing a course of action. We have the luxury of time which allows us to gather information and plan. When it is available, taking shelter, hunkering down, and riding the situation out can be a wise option. Those who find themselves in danger often are the victims of their own foolishness, impulsiveness, doubtfulness, or double-mindedness.

Other storms turn up suddenly, seemingly out of nowhere. These tend to cause more panic and outright fear. There is often a moment in the storm where one knows that it is about to get a lot worse. Every unsound choice from that moment will further complicate the situation and make the consequences more severe. To persevere through a storm is a conscious choice which requires faith in and the assurance of our Blessed Savior. Cling to the King in the storm. There is an endpoint and a very happy ever after.

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Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture references are from the New American Standard Bible: 1960, 1962, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1975, 1977, 1995 by the Lockman Foundation.