

He Didn't Do It (James 1:12-16)
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Introduction

1. In order to encourage the scattered saints, James addresses the suffering of difficult trials—what they are and how to cope while in them.
2. Trials are God's means to develop endurance in His people for their sanctification.
3. Endurance is possible when hope anticipates the reward as desirable and beneficial (v. 12).
4. What happens, however, when a believer stumbles in the trial—when he sins in it?
James proceeds to address the issue of temptation to sin (vv. 13-16).
5. We are looking at verses 13-16 in three messages:
 - a. Today we consider that temptation to sin can never be blamed on God. We sin because we are sinners and wholly responsible for our own sinning.
 - b. Next week we will consider an abortion that should take place. Indeed, it must take place!
 - c. The third message is a warning to take heed to ourselves and not be deceived by our supposed ability to run our own lives.

I. The Reward of Patience

- One's response to tested faith is a gauge to one's progress (discipline; Heb. 12:7) in holiness (v. 13).
1. The correct response is to persevere through the proper application of the principles of one's faith (wisdom).
 2. Such is the "blessed" person (exhibiting a Spirit-endowed attitude of determined courage unaffected by circumstances).
 3. He is blessed in two ways:
 - a. He is rewarded—
 - 1) The "*crown* (*stephanos*; the victor's crown; see Rev. 2:10; 1 Thess. 2:19; 2 Tim. 4:8; 1 Peter 5:4) of life," which is—
 - 2) The life of God presently possessed in its fullness (John 10:10) but not yet *crowned* (Heb. 12:1-17; note v. 14)
 - b. He is revealed—

As one who *loves* God—one who fears God, recognizing that He knows best and has a glorious purpose in all that He does (Gen. 22:12).

II. The Contrast

1. The terms, *testing* and *temptation*
 - a. The same word in the Greek (*peirazo*, verb, or *peirasmos*, noun) applies to trials, tests, and temptations to sin.
 - b. The context alone reveals how the term is to be understood.

2. God and evil

- a. From whence does sin originate, if not from God?
 - 1) God is *perfect*; whatever He does can have no taint of evil (Matt. 5:48).
 - 2) God is *good*; whatever is not good (sin) cannot be from God (Psa. 5:4; James 1:17, 18).
 - 3) God is *light*; there is no darkness (sinful tendency) in Him (1 John 1:4).
 - 4) Thus, sin is contrary to God's nature and character. He cannot and will not tempt anyone to sin.
- b. Nevertheless, God has ordained *all* that comes to pass, including evil, either—
 - 1) *Necessarily*—whatever is governed by laws (nature).
 - 2) *Freely*—the choices of rational and volitional creatures (angels and humans)
 - 3) *Contingently*—the consequences of actions (if/then; 1 Sam. 23:9-13).
- c. Thus, God uses evil originating from sinful creatures to fulfill His purpose to restore all things to their original sinless state.

III. Fool or Foolish

1. Fallen humans have a natural tendency to blame anything but themselves for their sins.
 - a. Adam blamed God for eating the forbidden fruit (Gen. 3:12).
 - b. Saul blamed the people for his disobedience in destroying Amalek (1 Sam. 15:15).
 - c. "When a man's folly brings his way to ruin, his heart rages against the Lord" (Prov. 19:3, see Sir. 15:11-13).

"Do not say, 'It was the Lord's doing that I fell away'; for he does not do what he hates. Do not say, 'It was he who led me astray'; for he has no need of the sinful. The Lord hates all abominations; such things are not loved by those who fear him" (the apocryphal book of Sirach 15:11-13).

Does this not sound like James?
2. Sin is the natural consequence of volitional creatures who desire independence from God and good.
 - a. Adam's sin so corrupted human nature that it is impossible for humans not to sin.
 - b. Even with volition (power to choose) humans can choose only what they are able to do.
 - c. This sinful proclivity is driven by the human animosity to everything contrary to his nature.
 - d. Sin is rooted in a craving self-centeredness that results in deep hatred for God because He demands full and undivided allegiance.
3. How do you overcome sin in your life?
 - a. Recognize that you are a sinner and unable to change yourself. Don't blame God but take full responsibility.
 - b. Flee to Jesus Christ and look to Him as the only hope you have to escape your indwelling sin.
 - c. Regeneration removes you from being a fool. Sanctification is God's process through Christ by means of His Spirit and His power to free you from being foolish.