

• When followers of Jesus respond to life's trials with joyful endurance, they will experience <u>God's reward</u>.

"Blessed is the one who endures trials, because when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him." (James 1:12) JAMES "Even when believers perceive nothing good coming from affliction in this life, they can look forward to a magnificent eternal compensation for their suffering." (Bloomberg & Kamell) JAMES

The crown of life?



The living crown



"Don't you know that the runners in a stadium all race, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way to win the prize. Now everyone who competes exercises selfcontrol in everything. They do it to receive a perishable crown..."

(1 Corinthians 9:24-25)

- "The crown which is life" (James 1:12)
- "An imperishable crown" (1 Cor. 9:25)
- "A crown of boasting" (1 Thess. 2:19)
- "The crown of righteousness" (2 Tim. 4:8)
- "The unfading crown of glory" (1 Pet. 5:4)

 JAMES

"To the one that conquers, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God." (Revelation 2:7)

"I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is going to be revealed to us." (Romans 8:18)

• When Christians allow such trials to turn into seductions to sin, they have only themselves to blame.

"No one undergoing a trial should say, 'I am being tempted by God,' since God is not tempted by evil, and he himself doesn't tempt anyone." (James 1:13) JAMES

"But each person is tempted when he is drawn away and enticed by his own evil desire. Then after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and when sin is fully grown, it gives birth to death." (James 1:14-15) JAMES

• Every trial carries its own temptation, a self-serving detour that appears alluring and feels right, but ultimately will lead to destruction.





"The heart is more deceitful than anything else, and incurable—who can understand it?" (Jeremiah 17:9)

"For from within, out of people's hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immoralities, thefts, murders, adulteries, greed, evil actions, deceit, self-indulgence, envy, slander, pride, and foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile a JAMES person." (Mark 7:21-23)

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• Due to human rebellion and the brokenness that exists in our world, each of us possesses desires that are disordered.

"Delight yourself in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the LORD, trust in him, and he will act." (Psalm 37:4-5)

"For though the knew God, they did not glorify him as God or show gratitude. Instead, their thinking became worthless, and their senseless hearts were darkened." (Romans 1:21) JAMES

"Claiming to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man, birds, fourfooted animals, and reptiles. Therefore God delivered them over in the desires of their hearts to sexual impurity, so that their bodies were degraded among themselves." JAMES (Romans 1:22-24)

"They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served what has been created instead of the Creator, who is praised forever. Amen. For this reason God delivered them over to disgraceful passions..." (Romans 1:25-26) JAMES

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• This is why we ask for God's <u>wisdom</u>. To persevere through trials, we must resist temptation and trust God's leadership.

"Let nothing disturb you, Let nothing frighten you, All things are passing away: God never changes. Patience obtains all things. Whoever has God lacks nothing; God alone suffices." JAMES ~ Teresa of Ávila ~

