

- b. The nature of prayer
 - (1) Associated with requests (Philippians 1:4; Philippians 4:6)
 - (2) Associated with praise (Matthew 6:9)
 - (3) Talking to God; simply put – prayer is talking to God. It may include questions, requests, confession, or praise, but it always involves talking to God.
2. The recipient recognized (James 1:5)
 - a. His name—“let him ask of God”—the responsibilities in prayer
 - (1) Of God
 - a) God the Father – the recipient of prayer (John 16:23)
 - b) God the Son – the authority of prayer; praying in Jesus’ name (John 14:12-14; John 15:16; John 16:23-24, 26); Note: This means that we come under His authority, because He sent us!
 - c) God the Spirit – the encourager and enabler of prayer (Romans 8:26; Galatians 4:6)
 - (2) Of Men – “men ought always to pray” (Luke 18:1).
 - b. His faithfulness
 - (1) He “giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not.”
 - (2) “[I]t shall be given him.”
 - (3) Note: Consider the rewards of prayer:
 - a) Answered prayers – “ye shall receive” (John 16:23-24; see John 14:13-14).
 - b) Fulness of joy – “that your joy may be full” (John 16:24)
 - c) Glory for the Father (John 14:13)
 - d) Help for the saint (Hebrews 4:14-16)
3. The requirement revealed (James 1:6-8)
 - a. The requirement stated—“But let him ask in faith” (James 1:6). Note: Consider the various hindrances of prayer:
 - (1) Doubt (1 Timothy 2:8; James 1:6-7; see also Hebrews 11:6)
 - a) In God Himself—“must believe that he is”
 - b) In God’s answer—“and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him”
 - (2) Disobedience (1 John 3:22)
 - (3) Discord (1 Peter 3:7)
 - (4) Praying outside God’s will (1 John 5:14)
 - b. The requirement defined—“nothing wavering” (James 1:6)
 - c. The requirement likened (James 1:6)
 - (1) He that wavereth
 - (2) Is like
 - (3) A wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed
 - d. The requirement neglected (James 1:7)
 - (1) “Let not that man [“he that wavereth”] think that he”
 - (2) “Shall receive any thing of the Lord”
 - e. The requirement permeated (James 1:8)
 - (1) A double minded man
 - (2) Is unstable in all his ways

IV. THE FRAILTY OF LIFE AND STATUS (James 1:9-12)

A. The Changes in Status (James 1:9-11)

1. The call for rejoicing (James 1:9-10a)
 - a. The people of rejoicing (James 1:9-10a)
 - (1) The brother of low degree (James 1:9a)
 - a) The contrast with the rich would immediately cause one to think that the brother of low degree is poor.
 - b) While they were likely poor, it was a secondary truth and not the initial trait defining the man.
 - c) A man of low degree is contrasted with a man of high degree (Psalm 62:9), but neither is impressive to the Lord.
 - d) Men of low degree are contrasted with men who possess power, authority, and might (Luke 1:52).
 - e) It is likely that at the time of the writing of this epistle, the people of low degree were being oppressed (James 2:6).
 - (2) The rich (James 1:10a)
 - a) These would have been people who likely had great wealth and, as such, had great power and influence.
 - b) It is crucial to remember at this point that riches do not make a man sinful, nor does poverty make a man righteous.
 - b. The circumstances calling for rejoicing (James 1:9-10a)
 - (1) The exaltation of the brother of low degree (James 1:9)
 - a) The word *rejoice* should serve as a reminder of the subject matter at hand.
 - b) These believers were admonished to “count it all joy” when they fell “into divers temptations” (James 1:2). These “temptations” (James 1:2) involved the trying of their faith (James 1:3).
 - c) Now the Lord turned the believers’ attention to specific types of temptations they might face.
 - d) The brother of low degree was to rejoice in that he was exalted. While this may seem awkward for us to understand, a rise in social status, power, influence, and riches will try a man’s faith just as much as any other present temptation.
 - i) Riches can cause men to deny the Lord (Deuteronomy 8:17-18; Proverbs 3:7-9).
 - ii) Riches often yield vain lives (Psalm 39:6).
 - iii) Riches often produce pride (Psalm 49:6).
 - iv) Riches often increase the desire for wickedness (Psalm 52:7).
 - v) Riches often bring new friends (Proverbs 19:4).
 - vi) Riches can fly away (Proverbs 23:5; 1 Timothy 6:17).
 - vii) Riches are corruptible (James 5:2).

- (2) The abasement of the rich (James 1:10a)
 - a) Because we lack understanding of the blessings and pitfalls of each social status, we struggle to see the exaltation of a brother of low degree to be a temptation. Only when we see that the rich is made low do we start to see a problem.
 - b) Before proceeding, we ought to break down the passage so that we do not miss an inference.
 - i) Let the brother of low degree (James 1:9) = But the rich (James 1:10)
 - ii) Rejoice in that (James 1:9) = in that (James 1:10)
 - iii) He is exalted (James 1:9) = he is made low (James 1:10).
 - c) The brother of low degree is to rejoice in his change of circumstances, but not because his circumstances changed.
 - i) He is to rejoice because he has come into a time of temptation that could help him grow.
 - ii) The same thing is true of the rich man.
 - d) The rich man does not rejoice because he lost his wealth or status, but because he was deemed worthy to be put in a place where he could grow.
 - i) Now the temptation is to trust the Lord in the absence of power, wealth, and status.
 - ii) His danger, at least in part, would be that he might (Proverbs 30:9):
 - (a) Steal
 - (b) Take the name of God in vain
2. The frailty of circumstances (James 1:10b-11)
 - a. The likeness presented (James 1:10b)
 - (1) In order to teach a spiritual truth—"because...he shall pass away."
 - (2) Using an earthly truth (see Job 14:2; Psalm 103:15-16; Isaiah 40:6-8; 1 Peter 1:24)
 - a) The flower of the grass
 - b) Passes away
 - b. The process presented (James 1:11a)
 - (1) The sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat
 - (2) It withereth the grass.
 - (3) The flower thereof falleth.
 - (4) The grace of the fashion of it perisheth.
 - c. The outcome presented (James 1:11b)
 - (1) The rich man will fade away in his ways.
 - (2) Just as the flower of the grass falleth
 - d. The cause presented (see James 1:10)
 - (1) The rich shall rejoice in that he is made low: **because...**
 - (2) A man can fade away in his ways, but the Lord allowing temptations speaks to growth and extended purpose.

B. The Call for Endurance (James 1:12)

1. The blessings of temptation
 - a. The requirements mentioned
 - (1) The presence of temptation
 - a) In this context, temptation is the trying of one's faith. In James 1:13, the context shifts to a temptation to sin.
 - b) The presence of temptation (in the sense of trying one's faith) suggests an active involvement on God's behalf to grow the one being tried (see Genesis 22:1 with Hebrews 11:17; 1 Peter 1:6-7).
 - (2) The perseverance in temptation
 - a) It is not enough to face temptations. Any Christian can lay claim to this. In fact, Jesus promised, "In the world ye shall have tribulation" (John 16:33). While tribulations are promised, "good cheer" is requested.
 - b) The blessings come as a result of enduring temptation.
 - i) Endurance of trials, persecutions, and tribulations serves as a manifest token that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God (2 Thessalonians 1:4-5).
 - ii) Endurance proves a man's validity as a good soldier of Jesus Christ (2 Timothy 2:3).
 - iii) Endurance yields the pity and tender mercy of the Lord (James 5:11).
 - iv) Endurance brings glory to God and is acceptable with Him (1 Peter 2:19-21).
 - b. The outcome mentioned—"Blessed is"; Note: In order to put some gravity to the importance of this subject, consider other uses of this phrase (Psalm 32:1; Psalm 33:12; Psalm 40:4; Psalm 128:1).
 2. The process of temptation
 - a. Your faith is "tried with fire" (1 Peter 1:7).
 - b. It is a "fiery trial" bringing you into the fellowship of Christ's sufferings (1 Peter 4:12-13).
 3. The rewards of temptation
 - a. The time of reward
 - (1) For when he is tried
 - (2) He shall receive
 - b. The requirement of reward—"that endureth temptation"
 - (1) If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small (Proverbs 24:10).
 - (2) We shall reap, IF WE FAINT NOT (Galatians 6:9).
 - c. The motive yielding reward—"which the Lord hath promised to them that love him"
 - (1) Love causes difficulties to pass more swiftly and seem far more insignificant (Genesis 29:20).
 - (2) Love for the Saviour is actually the key to endurance (2 Corinthians 4:8-18).

C. Special Notes on the Christian's Crowns (see James 1:12)

1. Obtaining a crown
 - a. Striving for the mastery (1 Corinthians 9:24-27)
 - (1) All do not win a prize (1 Corinthians 9:24).
 - (2) Our crown is incorruptible (1 Corinthians 9:25; see 1 Peter 5:4).
 - (3) Subjection of the flesh is a necessity (1 Corinthians 9:27).
 - b. Striving lawfully (2 Timothy 2:5)
 - c. Loss of crown (Revelation 3:11); crowns are not salvation.
2. Available crowns
 - a. The crown of *rejoicing* (1 Thessalonians 2:19-20; Philippians 4:1)
 - (1) This crown has often been called the “**soul-winner's crown.**” However, it seems to be more than that and is never called such in the Bible. In fact, the people were said to be Paul's crown.
 - (2) It is more likely that this is a crown for anyone who has led others to Christ or taught them in the ways of God.
 - (3) Believers whom you have led to the Lord or instructed in the words and ways of God are your rejoicing (2 Corinthians 1:14).
 - (4) It is possible that we will be involved in presenting those we have led to the Lord to Him.
 - a) Saints will be presented to Christ (2 Corinthians 4:14; 2 Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:27; Colossians 1:22, 28; Jude 1:24).
 - b) The apostle Paul is somehow involved in this presentation (2 Corinthians 11:2; Colossians 1:28). Note: Colossians 1:28 indicates that believers other than Paul are involved in this presentation.
 - b. The crown of *righteousness* (2 Timothy 4:8) – Given to those “that love his appearing”
 - c. The crown of *life* (James 1:12; Revelation 2:10)
 - (1) Given to those who are faithful (Revelation 2:10)
 - (2) Particularly in suffering (James 1:12; Revelation 2:10)
 - d. The crown of *glory* (1 Peter 5:1-4)
 - (1) Given to those who take oversight of the flock
 - (2) Particularly, they have to meet the following requirements:
 - a) They feed the flock of God (1 Peter 5:2).
 - b) They willingly take the oversight thereof (1 Peter 5:2).
 - c) They are ensamples unto the flock (1 Peter 5:3).
3. The crowning day
 - a. The time of crowning—at the end of the race (1 Corinthians 9:24)
 - b. The casting of our crowns
 - (1) No verse says what believers will do with their crowns, but a scene in heaven indicates that we will cast them at the Saviour's feet (Revelation 4:4-11).
 - (2) It may be unconnected, but Christ will come bearing “many crowns” (Revelation 19:12).