

# MARK JENKINS MINISTRIES

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Rejoice

Dear Friend,

Occasionally, I find myself coming across Bible verses that leave me scratching my head and wondering, “What in the world does this mean?” After walking with the Lord all these years and reading and meditating His word so extensively, it’s shocking to me when I see how much I have yet to understand. Thank God for the Teacher, the Holy Ghost who is able to bring revelation to these hard to understand verses. One verse that comes to mind can be found in James 1:2,

***“My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into diverse temptations”***

I can’t tell you how many times I have read those words over the years and until recently they seemed to make no sense. It isn’t that James used difficult terminology and the meaning isn’t clear. No, the meaning is very clear. My problem was never about understanding the words, but rather understanding the intent behind the words. Allow me to demonstrate what I mean using the following examples.

If you think about the principle of “cause and effect” you can understand that when you hit your thumb with a hammer the result is pain and you might even scream, I’ve done that a few times. Or, if you spend all day in the hot sun working and don’t use any lotion to protect you from the sun you might end up red and sun burned and look like a lobster. If you continue driving your car after the gas gauge reads empty you will eventually find yourself stranded on the side of the road with no gas. I’m sure you will agree; these examples are very easy to understand.

Something that’s not so easy to understand is this, “**How do I count it all joy when I fall into diverse temptations?**” The “cause and effect” seem to be polar opposites. It is like saying; “When I hit my thumb I start laughing.” This makes no sense. And yet James is telling us that when “A” happens then “B” is the immediate response. In other words, when temptations come, if we truly believe

what James is teaching about how this works patience in our lives, then counting it all joy is inevitable so long as we truly believe God's word.

My problem has been that when I am faced with temptations, tests and trials my immediate response **isn't**; "How wonderful; I'm being tempted, tested and tried by the enemy!" On the contrary, I'm wondering when will it be over?

So, why is it that I don't just throw my hands up and rejoice at the first sign of trouble? The only answer I can come up with is that I **just don't believe what the word says**. My problem is that I am still thinking too much like those who are not born again. What James is describing is something so foreign to natural thinking that it can only be received by revelation from the Holy Ghost.

Here's what Paul had to say about this kind of understanding. (I Corinthians 2:4)

***"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."***

Paul's words help us to see why James' instruction to "count it all joy when you fall into diverse temptations" seems so impossible; we are trying to understand with our natural minds what can only be spiritually discerned. So, let's see if we can receive the true meaning of this verse from the Spirit of God instead of struggling with our natural reasoning.

In our effort to better understand this verse we need to keep reading and see what comes after James 1:2. (James 1:3)

***"Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience."***

It would appear that there is a direct connection between our "counting it all joy when we fall into diverse temptations" and patience being worked into our life. What is the benefit of having patience? (James 1:4)

***"But let patience have her perfect work, that you may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."***

The end result for "counting it all joy when you fall into diverse temptations" is that patience is being worked into your character, which will in turn produce **contentment** to the point that you will want for nothing. Now, isn't the prospect of "wanting nothing" something we might be interested in pursuing?

What James is describing here is patience being developed in our lives to such a degree that wanting for things, especially the kinds of things that “drive” people, becomes non-existent in our lives. But, it doesn’t come because we ask God to give us patience. It comes because we are willing to stand against the enemy’s attacks, which he uses to try to lure us back to living out of the unrenewed part of our soul. Our willingness to withstand the enemy’s temptations results in the development of this precious commodity of patience, which in turn ushers in contentment and we want for nothing.

We can witness one beautiful example in the life of Jesus of what it looks like to resist the temptations of the enemy. Just after the baptism of Jesus by John in the Jordan, Jesus was directed by the Spirit to go into the wilderness where he spent 40 days fasting. At the end of the 40 days the enemy came to tempt Jesus to follow him and abort God’s plan for man’s redemption. Three times the devil approached Jesus with an offer to turn away from God and follow him and three times Jesus responded with the word. **The word of God is in fact that weapon we are to use against the enemy to fight temptation. It’s put to use by speaking it out our mouth.**

If we desire to go beyond “superficial Christianity” and live the life the bible describes it is inevitable that the enemy will come and challenge us to try and lure us back into living a defeated life like the rest of the world. It is our choice whether or not we are going to succumb to the pressure of the enemy or stand against him with the word of God coming out our mouth. If we are successful, the result will be a life of contentment that the world knows nothing about.

There’s no amount of money that can ever produce this kind of contentment. There’s no job, no level of popularity, no friendship, no nothing that can ever come close to producing in our lives what only patience can produce. It’s when we “want for nothing” that we have become unmanageable to the enemy. As long as we believe there is something or someone in the world that we need, the enemy can control us. When we come to the place where we know that we know that there is absolutely nothing or no one that we can’t live without, then we have taken away from the devil the very thing he would use to control us.

In conclusion, applying the principle of “cause and effect” to the temptations, tests and trials that we are faced with, according to James the reason we can rejoice is because we know beyond a shadow of a doubt that in the end we will enter into a new place of patience where we want for nothing. That is of course assuming that we don’t quit.

As long as the devil has a target at which to shoot, then in that area of your life you are not walking in contentment. Even the Apostle Paul experienced this as

it is recorded in his second letter to the Corinthians where the devil targeted him with buffeting. He wrote in the eleventh chapter the reason for the attacks was his care for the churches. (2 Corinthians 11:28) Paul's care for the churches made him vulnerable to the attacks of the enemy. When Paul ran to God and pleaded with Him for deliverance from Satan's attacks God responded with exactly the same answer He will give you; "My grace is sufficient for you." (2 Corinthians 12:9) In other words, you have everything you need to withstand the enemy's attacks. God could have easily told Paul what James wrote, "Rejoice!"

Finally, when you find yourself in the enemy's crosshairs and he has locked in on some weakness in you, use God's word and think about the good things being produced in you because you refused to give in.

You're becoming stronger, more content, lacking for nothing. With all these good things happening in you, rejoice!

~ Jesus Loves You!

*Mark Jenkins*