

Wednesday Night BIBLE STUDY

Wednesday, October 21, 2015 – First Baptist Church Buda
Midweek Prayer Meeting & Bible Study

TEACHING THE HYMNS OF FAITH
“When the Morning Comes – Dealing With Trials and Temptations”
James 1:1-4 & 13-16, Selected Scriptures

Charles Tindley was born near Berlin, Maryland, in July of 1851, the son of a slave, Albert Tindley, and a freewoman, Hester Miller Tindley. Charles' mother, Hester, passed away when Charles was only four, and a year later he was separated from his father. When he became old enough to work, he was hired out to work with slaves, although his status as "freeborn" was recognized. Little did the people of Berlin realize that a theological and musical giant was springing up in their midst. Tindley is often called a founding father of American gospel music. In 1902, after finishing his educational ventures and pastoring several churches in Philadelphia, he became pastor of the church where he had served as janitor 25 years earlier. After bearing eight children, his wife Daisy, passed away in 1924, the very day the congregation entered the new sanctuary for the first time. Initially struggling with her death, he would later explain, "one day I will understand it better by and by". Tindley based this great song on 1 Corinthians 13:12, **"For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known."** We can get so down and discouraged by the things that happen in this life but one day we will gain a new perspective on those things that discourage us. "When The Morning Comes" is one of the great negro-spirituals that still encourages the hearts of the down trodden even today. The music for the this old hymn of faith was written by the great Oklahoma song writer, B.B. McKinney

HYMN LYRICS: "When the Morning Comes" (Hymn #522)

Trials dark on every hand, and we cannot understand all the ways of God would lead us to that blessed promised land; but he guides us with his eye, and we'll follow till we die, for we'll understand it better by and by.

***By and by, when the morning comes, when the saints of God are gathered home,
we'll tell the story how we've overcome, for we'll understand it better by and by.***

Oft our cherished plans have failed, disappointments have prevailed, and we've wandered in the darkness, heavy-hearted and alone, but we're trusting in the lord, and according to His word, we will understand it better by and by.

Temptations, hidden snares, often take us unawares, and our hearts are made to bleed, for a thoughtless word or deed; and we wonder why the test, when we try to do our best, but we'll understand it better by and by.

*By and by, when the morning comes, when the saints of God are gathered home,
we'll tell the story how we've overcome, for we'll understand it better by and by.*

Questions from the song “When the Morning Comes”: Here are some of the questions the song leaves us pondering:

- (1) **How does the song describe “trials” and in your opinion is this an accurate description of “trial” that come in life? Why or why not?** Answer: verse 1, the song describes “trials” as being “dark on every hand,” and yes this is an accurate description of “trials” that come in life because they often feel like a dark cloud of gloom and difficulty surround our life particularly when we are going through them, but also “dark” because we can’t see outside the parameter of the trial to understand why they come or from where they come, or what might come from them... it can feel very dark, ominous and foreboding.
- (2) **According to this song, what is the biggest problem that we have with “trial” that come in our life?** Answer: verse 1, we don’t always understand the “why” of our trials, but according to this song of faith, one day we will. The word “dark” in verse 1 may even be an indicator of this truth.
- (3) **According to this song, what might be a reason that we can have hope in the midst of “trials?”** Answer: verse 1 speaks of how “we cannot understand all the ways of God would lead us to that blessed promised land” and how “he guides us with his eye.” These two statements indicate a reason for our hope in the midst of trial. We can see trial as a part of God growing and maturing us in our faith on the way to making us what He intends us as believers to be. And the song also reminds us that He doesn’t desert us in our trials, but rather that He guide us through our trials.
- (4) **What does this song tell us/remind us about “disappointments”?** Answer: verse 2, that we all have them/face them... disappointments, and that we have them “often” as may be the case.
- (5) **What does the songwriter indicate may be the source of “discouragements”?** Answer: verse 2, our failed “cherished” plans, things don’t work out like we thought, our dreams and plans come crashing down, and life doesn’t turn out like we expected.
- (6) **What does the songwriter indicate may be the outcome of “discouragement” and do you agree with this assessment? Why or why not?** Answer: verse 2, “we wander in the darkness, heavy hearted and alone” and yes I agree that this happens when we are discouraged because I think the reality is that when we get discouraged it almost always causes us to feel “heavy hearted” and like we are the only one going through this, and no one understands. This is the reality of all of us, I believe.
- (7) **What does the songwriter say is the way to handle this “discouragement” and the ensuing heavy heartedness and loneliness of soul?** Answer: verse 2, trusting in the Lord and trusting in His word... depending on the promises and truths we find in His Word.
- (8) **What does the song warn us concerning “temptation”?** Answer: verse 3, that “temptation” is often a hidden snare (trap), that they can come on us when we least expect it “often take us unaware,” and they leave us broken, injured and bleeding if we give into them.
- (9) **What does the song indicate Christians may wonder about concerning “temptation” in the Christian life and do you agree or disagree with this assessment? Have you ever ask God to just take the temptation away from you, yet you still struggle with the temptation from time to time?** Answer: verse 3, we wonder why God doesn’t just remove

the “temptation” from us, why we still struggle with these this (whatever it is), and yes I believe that this is an accurate assessment of how we often feel as Christians when we have struggled with a particular sin, have asked for forgiveness and received His forgiveness, yet we still struggle with the same sin and fall right back into it time and time again. Our prayer is often, “God, why don’t you just remove this ‘thorn in the flesh’ form me?” Have you ever asked God to just take the temptation away from you, yet you still struggle with the temptation from time to time?

- (10) **What, in your opinion, is the encouragement this song gives concerning “temptation?”** Answer: verse 3, “we’ll understand it better by and by” indicates to me a couple of things; (1) we don’t always understand in this life why we struggle with the things we struggle with, but God can use even that to build us, grow us and mature us in the faith if we seek Him in it, and (2) implied in the words “by and by” is that we are to not give up the fight but to continue to fight through the temptation and through confession, repentance, seeking God’s forgiveness when we fail and the good fight we will one day see what God was up too.

The Christian life is an overcoming life. Even though we will definitely have problems, trials, temptations and personal struggles in this life, we will be able to overcome because of Jesus. Because of Him, we have victory over the world, including sinful habits, bitterness, loneliness, guilt, fear, and discouragement... the trials and temptations that come our way in this life. The Apostle Paul writes in **2 Corinthians 4:16**, ***“Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.”*** No Christian is immune to the trials and temptations that come in this life. It usually hits us at surprising moments, yet there are times when we can almost predict it. Fighting it is never a pleasant experience... whether we are talking about trials or temptations. Some trials and temptations that come in our lives can be deep and complex – lasting for months, where we feel so low and down that it may even dip into discouragement and grow weary in the fight. On the other hand, sometimes temptations and trials can come on us suddenly without warning and really last for only a few minutes or hours. Sometimes trials and even temptation can have a lasting impact on our life and faith if we aren’t careful, and actually paralyze and cripple our walk as believers and stunt our growth... especially when we give in to temptation and let it take us down.

I. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TRIALS AND TEMPTATIONS (James 1:1-16)

Under the inspiration of God’s Spirit, James wrote to a group of people undergoing a number of difficulties. They had been severely persecuted for their faith and scattered and were no longer together in a secure group... that in itself brings loneliness and trials. In James 1:1-12, he addresses the problem of trials; in verses 13-16, he addresses the problem of temptation. There is a difference. In the original Greek text, the term “peirasmós” is used for both words. However, the context determines the proper thought... trials or temptations. They are often used interchangeably. After all, temptation is a trial (of faith), and every trial is a temptation (to grumble). Again, when the word appears in the New Testament the context helps us to see which interpretation is meant. There are therefore differences and similarities between trials and temptations. Many people are not sure of the difference between trials and temptations. While admitting that in some circumstances, the

difference may be difficult to delineate, the following can, at least, help tell the difference. Although we must not push the distinctions too far, here are examples of the differences:

Differences Between Trials and Temptations

1. **In their ultimate origin... temptations carry the fingerprint of your flesh; trials, in some way, carry the fingerprint of God** - Now the temptation part we all understand. The enticement to sin is all around us. It comes from within us. That's James idea in v.14 and following. But the thing you need to realize, however is that this aspect never comes from God. In James 1:13 it says "*When tempted, not one should say, 'God is tempting me.' For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He tempt anyone.*" Temptations do not come from God. This is not to say that God cannot grow us even through our times of temptation... He certainly can. Trials, on the other hand, are different. Trials are circumstances of life that are difficult and which cause us to have to depend upon God. God brings or allows trials into our lives not to hurt us but to help us. Listen to Proverbs 17:3, "*The refining pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold; but the Lord tests hearts.*" That's what He's doing – He's testing your heart. Will you trust Him? Will you realize that He is helping you to become more mature? So – "consider it all joy when you encounter various trials." And remember God doesn't tempt you – He tests or trials you. He allowed Satan to test Job (Job 1:6-12). Therefore when we speak of "trial" we see God's fingerprints; when we see temptation, we see our own—or the devil's. Any trial that God sends—death of a loved one or friend, financial reverse, loss, illness, misunderstanding, losing your keys, failure, disappointment, betrayal, abuse, unemployment, depression, accident, loneliness, missing the plane, rejection, not getting that important invitation, or any physical pain—should be seen as something God can use in our life to grow us and mature us in the faith... His fingerprint is on it!

3 Things We Are Not Saying:

- (1) **We are not saying that God delights in your misery** – When James says in James 1:2, "*Count it all joy, my brothers, whenever you face trial of many kinds...*" He is not saying that God enjoys your misfortune and difficulty... that God likes your problems, but rather than God can use your problems to actually grow you.
- (2) **We are not saying that every difficulty and trial that comes in your life is the direct hand of God** – If your home burns down tonight, God didn't burn your home down. He certainly knows it burned down. It didn't catch Him off guard. He didn't cause it, but He can use that experience in your life to grow you if you let Him. The truth is, we live in a fallen world where sin and the devil roam free, we are not immune to effect of this fallen world. The innocent often suffer along with the not-so-innocent. Nevertheless, God can put his hand (fingerprint) on your life in the midst of the difficulties and do amazing things in us and through us if we let him.
- (3) **We are not saying that trials and difficulty in your life should be seen as some kind of Holy retribution from God for something you have done or not done** – Although there may be times when God is trying to get ones attention through trials, or draw one who is away from Him back to Him; the reality is that there are times

when trials come on innocent, unsuspecting lives that are walking wholly consecrated and devoted to God. The saintly suffer to at times.

- 2. In their immediate origin... temptation comes from within; trials usually come from outside us** – As James says in verse 14, “*But each one is tempted when, by how own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed.*” In other words, it comes from our own evil desires within. Jesus, Himself, said in Matthew 15:18, “*But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart (within), and these make a man ‘unclean.’ For out of the heart (from within) come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander.*” Jesus is talking about what come from within. It is from these things that temptation comes. Trials, on the other hand, although sometimes are of our own making are usually those circumstances and challenges from without that come on our lives... sometimes without warning and totally unexpected. Job, is a good example of these kind of trials. His trial came not from within, but without.
- 3. In their moral relevance... temptation usually has considerable moral relevance; trial may be more morally neutral** – Here is what I mean, temptation usually has morality overtones such as the lure sexual sin, or the temptation to dishonesty, or cheating, or selfish ambition, or lying, or greed, or such... whereas, trials tend to deal more with questions of a morally neutral nature such as an illness or losing one's keys, or dealing with job loss. These, of course, can involve or lead to moral questions at times, but usually the trial itself is not really of a moral nature... not always the case, but usually.
- 4. With reference to what is tested... temptation will usually attack a weak spot, trials test our strength as well as exposing a weakness we may have been unaware of** – It seems that Satan always knows where to dangle the bait in our lives, doesn't He? That's is temptation and how it works. It picks on the place where you are the most vulnerable. Trials, on the other hand, usually prove our faith or where we are spiritually. They may reveal a weakness, but they are mean to grow us in that place.
- 5. Temptations appeal to and manipulate ones' affinity to pleasure; trials challenge one to pay the price for what he cherishes** – David's fall into sin with Bathsheba was begun with temptation, David's loss of the child conceived in that illicit affair was a trial.
- 6. Temptations are meant to be resisted; trials are meant to be endured** – I love 1 Peter 5:8-9, “*Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, stand firm in the faith...*” Do you see it? Satan and temptations he throws at us are meant to be resisted. And we are to “stand firm” in the trial of our faith.
- 7. In temptations, you are expected not to give in, in trials, you are expected not to give up -**

8. Temptations thrill us; trials grill us – Someone has said, “Sin is fun for a season!” Sin always has an allure, a draw. The hook is hidden inside. Trials, on the other hand, can really take us through the fire... we can really feel like we are being grilled and tested.
9. We pray: *Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil...* the trials. In other words, if it is temptation, avoid it; if it is trial go through it -
10. The Lord makes a way of escape for us if it is temptation; He gives us the strength to persevere through it if it is trial -

4 Principles That Apply to Temptation

1. Temptation is inevitable (v.13a) – ***“When tempted, no one should say...”*** (v.13a). Notice the issue is not one of “if,” but “when.” None of us can live without temptation. It is common to every man. The monk living behind the monastery wall wrestles with temptation just as the businessman who may work in a busy downtown area or a young teenage boy or girl struggle with moral limits. *Perspective: The Lord does not make us feel guilty because we have temptation or having tempting things come before us. In other words, temptation is not equal to sin. The issue has to do with our response when temptation comes before us.*
2. Temptation is never directed by God (v.13) – ***“When tempted, no one should say, ‘God is tempting me...’”*** (v.13). The question of agency is a particularly critical one in this discussion of temptation. How is God related to temptation? There are two different ways of describing agency in the original language of the New Testament... either directly or indirectly. James spoke of “indirect agency.” Put another way, he writes, “Let on one say that God is even indirectly involved in my actions.” The point is that God is not even indirectly engaged in bringing us into sin. When we sin it is solely our choice. Note the concluding phrase of ***verse 13, “For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone.”***
3. Temptation is an individual matter (v.14) – ***“But each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed”*** (v.14). Nothing is strong enough outside of us to alone cause sin. Sin occurs when we agree to the temptation and get involved with it. (see ***I Corinthians 10:13, “No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.”***)
4. Temptation that leads to sin always follows the same process (vv.14-15) – ***“But each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it give birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, give birth to death”***(vv.14-15). Put in simple terms here are four steps of that process:

4 Steps in the Temptation Process

Step 1: The outer bait is dropped

Step 2: The inner desire is attracted to the bait

Step 3: Sin occurs with the yielding

Step 4: Sin results in tragic consequences

Comment: Between the third and fourth steps, there is a temporary period of pleasure. Satan's lie is that we will receive pleasure or gain by involving ourselves in certain acts. The pleasure occurs, but he doesn't tell us that it is temporary... fleeting.

II. THE REASON FOR OUR TESTS AND TRIALS

The reality is that NOTHING that happens in the life of a believer is amiss with God. Now, what do I mean by that? I mean, God sees, and know all! You are never out of the care of the God who hold you in the palm of his hand. What Satan may mean for evil, God means for good in the life of believer. Remember Jesus prayer in John 17:15-19, “*My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.*” Despite the tests and trial that come our way, God is “sanctifying” us... that is “setting us apart for His purposes. There is actually a “sanctifying” reason that can emerge in the face of the tests and trials, that the “evil one” may be about to destroy us. Let me give you to good ones:

2 Reasons Behind Trials:

- (1) **Our spiritual growth and maturity in the Christian walk -** “*Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.*” – James 1:2-4 (NIV/red)
- (2) **Our heightened hope and deepened relationship with God -** “*Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.*” –Romans 5:1-5 (NIV/white)

III. THE HELP FOR OVERCOMING TEMPTATION

Temptation is counteracted by self-control... a character quality made possible by the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). The word literally means strength. In other words, self-control is inner strength. It comes from the Spirit, but we must pave the way for it in our lives.

5 Helps in Overcoming Temptation:

1. **Counteract temptation... do not tolerate it -** Romans 6:13 says, “*Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as an instrument of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness.*”

2. **Use the right resistance** – Here are some good examples for handling a wandering eye: Job 31:1, “*I made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a young woman.*” And Proverbs 4:25 says, “*Let your eyes look straight ahead; fix your gaze directly before you.*”
3. **Remind yourself that the final pain will soon erase the temporary pleasure** – Listen to what the great faith chapter says about Moses in Hebrews 11:24-25, “²⁴ *By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter.* ²⁵ *He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin.*”
4. **Control your thought life through memorizing God’s Word** - Psalms 119:9-11, “⁹ *How can a young person stay on the path of purity? By living according to your word.* ¹⁰ *I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands.* ¹¹ *I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.*” And in Matthew 4:1-11 we have the temptation for Jesus. How did Jesus respond to the temptations that came at Him? He quoted Scripture.
5. **Do battle on a daily basis** - Hebrews 3:12-13 says, “¹² *See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God.* ¹³ *But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called “Today,” so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness.*” And in 1 Corinthians 10:13, “*No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.*”

IV. THE RESPONSE TO OUR TRIALS AND TEMPTATION (1 Peter 4:12-19)

Facing trials and temptations in this life is never easy. We truly are often left scratching our heads, struggling along and singing “we’ll understand it better by and by.” And perhaps no one understood that better than the Apostle Peter. Peter, with his denial of Christ, perhaps provides one of the most heartbreaking (and distressing) New Testament examples the reality of this trial, the tests, the temptations that we as believers often go through as Jesus warned him that “Satan wanted to sift him.” We know that that “sifting” took place in Peter’s denial of Christ. We too face the reality of those moments in life when the trials and temptations come that threaten to undo us... as they did Peter. How can we respond victoriously!

Years later a restored, and spiritually mature Peter... leader of the early church would write these words that might help us in 1 Peter 4:12-19, “*Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trials you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or a thief or another kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name. For it is time for judgment to begin with the family of God; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God? And, ‘If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?’ So then, those*

“who suffer according to God’s will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good.” -1 Peter 4:12-19 (NIV/yellow)

A Healthy Christian Response to the Trials and Temptations of this Life:

- (1) **Don’t be caught off guard by them** – It truly rains on the just and the unjust. Christians are not immune to the difficulties and distresses in this life... as a matter of fact Peter knew that we are guaranteed them. You are still human and as such you will be tempted and tried.
- (2) **Learn to see the silver lining in them** – God can actually grow us more through the trials than through the more pleasant moments of this life. We seem to depend and look to Him more in those moments. And don’t forget that even in our struggles with those things that tempt us, we find growth in Him as we surrender more and more of ourselves to Him.
- (3) **Strive to stay faithful, because He has been so faithful to you** – Listen, for a believer, when we look at what God has done on our behalf through Jesus Christ and the promises that are ours now and in the life to come, our trials and struggles in this life.. no matter how heavy they may seem right now... are worth it all! We could never pay Him back for all that He has done for us!