

Pastor's Ponderings

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“WIIFM”

What's In It For Me?

by
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God blesses the people who patiently endure testing. Afterward they will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him. ¹³And remember, no one who wants to do wrong should ever say, "God is tempting me." God is never tempted to do wrong, and he never tempts anyone else either. ¹⁴Temptation comes from the lure of our own evil desires. ¹⁵These evil desires lead to evil actions, and evil actions lead to death. ¹⁶So don't be misled, my dear brothers and sisters.

¹⁷Whatever is good and perfect comes to us from God above, who created all heaven's lights. Unlike them, he never changes or casts shifting shadows.

James 1:12-17 (NLT)

Everyone's favorite radio station is WIIFM. It stands for, What's In It For Me? We are always concerned with our well being and our future prospects for well being. Most of our decisions in life are based on what we will get if we pursue a particular course of action. Of course, you already knew that. That's just human nature. If you plan to live a long and prosperous life, it's also wise. We ask ourselves such questions as: "What will I get if I do this?" "What will happen to me if I don't do that?" "Where will I end up if I go this direction?" "How will life treat me if I go that way?"

I mean, we're always tuned in to WIIFM. If the answers to the questions above aren't to our advantage, then we usually won't waste our time or effort in a particular endeavor. We'll say to ourselves: "Why bother?" "What am I going to get out of it?"

"That's just a waste of time!" "It's too dangerous." "It's too hard for me." Or maybe, "That's not my job!" Sometimes these are absolutely the right and wise positions to take. Sometimes they are not.



Maybe, when we come face to face with one of those challenges in life that seems too big for us to attempt let alone accomplish, it's God testing our character. I'm convinced God throws huge challenges in our life just to do that...test our character. And oh by the way, God doesn't do it to prove to God what your character is made of. God already knows. God challenges us with some pretty testing and trying times to prove to ourselves what we are made of.

When tests seem to be overwhelming, it's good to remember what God's ultimate plan for our lives is. God promises us the "crown of life" according to James.

James reminds us not to get discouraged about what is happening in our lives. He says God is the giver of "every good thing and every perfect gift" (NASB). He also says, God doesn't "change or cast shifting shadows" (NLT). God isn't going to give up on you, or take away eternal life, or "disown" you. You are a child of God if you've placed your faith in Jesus Christ. And if you haven't trusted Christ, maybe God has put a test in your life so that you will turn to Christ for help and hope.

There will be trials, tribulations, and tests in life. There will also be, "the crown of life for those who patiently endure." So, keep on keepin' on. God's promise is real.

WIIFM? The Crown of Life, that's what!