

FAITH IN ACTION

Growing through Trials

James 1:1-4

James' Introduction

James 1:1 (KJV) 1 James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting.

- James introduces himself James as a *servant* of God and the Lord Jesus Christ
- James was not merely calling himself a servant, but a bondservant, a slave, one that is owned by his master
- To James, Jesus was more than his half-brother, Jesus was his Lord
- On Calvary, Jesus purchased our salvation and He is our *Savior and Lord* and we are to live our lives serving Him
- James viewed being a servant of God as a high honor **John 12:26 (NLT) 26 Anyone who wants to be my disciple must follow me, because my servants must be where I am. And the Father will honor anyone who serves me.**
- James writes his letter the *twelve tribes scattered abroad*, meaning here to all Jewish people wherever they may be in the world

There Will be a Test...

Vs. 2 My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;

- In this life we are going to face temptations and trials
- Temptations here means *to tempt, to try, to test, to prove*
- Temptations and trials are not “a possibility”, but a *certainty*
- These temptations and trials will diverse
- There will not be an area of your life that will not be tested
- For example, God tests your faith:
 1. *Through difficulties* – the trials, temptations, pressures, and struggles of life **1 Peter 1:6-7 (KJV) Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: [7] That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:**
 2. *Through demands* – The commands that are recorded in the word of God
 3. *With dollars* – Will you be trustworthy with material resources God has given you? **Luke 16:11 (KJV) If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches?**
 4. *By delays* – Can you or will you wait on God?
- What should our *attitude* be when our faith is tested?
- James says we are to *count it all joy*, pure delight, when you fall into *divers temptations*

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- Is James saying we should celebrate when the trials, troubles and tests of life come?
- Joy is usually not the first thing that comes to mind when temptations and trials come
- But the text is saying we are to approach the trial or temptation with a spirit of joy
- The word *count* here means to evaluate
- Our *values* determine our *evaluations*
- Therefore, we must evaluate our trials and temptations in light of what God is doing for us
- You rejoice because your faith in God is *greater than* the issues you face and you are convinced that God will bring you through the trouble you face
- When trials come, and we must have a joyful attitude
- Your *outlook* determines your *outcome*; to *end* with joy, you must *begin* with joy

The Purpose of the Test

[3] Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.

- God want us to *know* (understand) the *purpose* of our trials
- God does not waste His time or ours with tests that have not meaning or purpose
- There is nothing God does or allows that has no purpose or meaning
- God's tests have a purpose; goal in mind
- What's God's purpose for trying or testing our faith?
 - To prove that we are truly born again
 - To make us stronger and more pure (i.e. more like Him)
 - To help you develop *patience* or *spiritual endurance* and the ability to keep going when life is tough ***Romans 5:3-4 (KJV) 3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; 4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope:***
 - To be approved by God; they word trying means approval. God's approval of our faith means our faith is real, it's genuine
 - There's no greater joy than to be approved by God ***1 Peter 1:7 (KJV) 7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:***
- The testing of our faith for the trials and temptations we go through in life is to make you more steadfast, more persevering, and to have the *endurance* to go the distance

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You Must Cooperate in the Test

[4] But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

- God can't develop us into the believers He wants us to be without our *cooperation*
- We must *let* or allow the trial to run its course in order for us to grow
- We must *surrender* our will to God's will during the trial
- It is through the testing of your faith that your patience or endurance begins to grow
- The only way the God can develop endurance and character in our lives is through trials
- Let patience do its work so you become mature and well-developed, not deficient in any way.
- You must say to yourself whatever God wants to develop in me as a result of this trial I'm willing to go through to the end
- Awesome things happen when we persevere and conquer a test:
 - You become more *perfect*, not a "perfect person", but perfect for God's purposes
 - You're spiritually mature to stand against trials and temptations *and* conquer them
 - You've become more fit, more sound, more spiritually complete
 - The trial identified *and* eliminated some your weaknesses and shortcomings.
 - You developed spiritual strength to endure trials and temptations
 - You've become more like Jesus
 - God has been working because He has plans for your life
 - God has been working:
 - *For you*, when He saved you
 - *In you*, in sanctification by building your character to help you become more like Jesus
 - *Through you, in service* because we were created in Christ unto good works
 - God builds character *before* He calls to service
 - God must work in us *before* He can work through us
- The key to *growing* through trials
 - *Counting* it all joy by maintaining a joyful attitude
 - *Knowing* that God has a purpose for this trial, my endurance
 - *Letting* the trial run its course to that you can become a well-developed, mature believer