

Text: James 1:1-8

Title: Maturity in Christ

I. Face trials with the right attitude (1-2)

II. Testing develops perseverance and leads to growth (3-4)

III. God gives wisdom to those who seek it (5-8)

- To live successfully in the world we must know how to face up to challenges and trials to become mature 成熟 in our Christian faith.
- James quickly gets to the point and directs his message to believers who were having difficult experiences they would never have chosen for themselves.
- Although beginning brief – again James does not beat around the bush, but gets straight to the point with issues in he desires to deal with.

Theme: Instruction for right living

Purpose for writing: Working faith – faith shown by fruit

A large part of showing fruit comes through when believers suffer 受苦

- But even when in difficulty – not let life get the best of you

I'm sure you have heard the statement: "When life hands you a lemon, make lemonade!" It is easier to smile at statement than to practice it

Throughout the Bible are people who turned defeat into victory and trial into triumph. Instead of being victims, they became victors. Patriarchs 先祖, Moses, David, Daniel, Paul, list goes on...

James tells us that we can have this same experience today.

No matter what the trials may be on the outside ([James 1:1-12](#)) or the temptations on the inside ([James 1:13-27](#)), through faith in Christ we can experience Joy. The result of this approach is Christian maturity.

I. Face trials with the right attitude (2)

James 1:2 ² My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials,

Declares - all joy (filled with joy / joy, gladness, happiness; cause or object of joy)

Christian's Attitude 态度 is important.

The kind of people we are and the behaviour we adopt are all determined by the inner 内里 attitudes and relationships we develop.

Do you have God centered world view 世界观 or man centered world view

God's concern is that our attitudes should be right ([Philippians 2:5](#)) for then our actions, for the most part, will take care of themselves

The phrase "when you fall into various trials," does not suggest an accident or misfortune.

Translate it "encounter or come across." That which a Sovereign God brings across the path of your life

(Our circumstances - in His hands)

Trials = adversity, affliction, trouble: sent by God and serving to test or prove one's character, faith, holiness

A key word is *count*. It is a financial term, and it means "to evaluate."

Paul know this concept

Philippians 3:8-9 ⁸ Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith;

When we face the trials of life, we must evaluate 鉴定 them in the light of what God is doing for us.

This explains why the dedicated Christian can have joy in the midst of trials: *he lives for the things that matter most.*

Even our Lord was able to endure the cross because of "the joy that was set before Him" ([Heb. 12:2](#)), the joy of returning to heaven and one day sharing His glory with His church.

A wise Bible teacher once said, "Sooner or later God will bring self-sufficient 自给自足 people to the place where they have no resource but Him—no strength, no answers, nothing but Him. Without God's help, they're sunk." He then told of a despairing man who confessed to his pastor, "My life is really in bad shape." "How bad?" the pastor inquired. Burying his head in his hands, he moaned, "I'll tell you how bad—all I've got left is God." The pastor's face lit up. "I'm happy to assure you that a person with nothing left but God has more than enough for great victory!"

Remember - God tells us to *expect trials*.

It is not "if you fall into various trials, but "whenever you fall into various trials"

What is your attitude? If your attitude is that of Job, then you are on the right track.

He lost His possessions and family (lost all his children!)

Job 1:20-22 ²⁰ Then Job arose, tore his robe, and shaved his head; and he fell to the ground and worshiped. ²¹ And he said: "Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked shall I return there. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; Blessed be the name of the LORD." ²² In all this Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong.

Face your trials with the right attitude -leads to Christian maturity

Do you have God centered world view or man centered world view

II. Testing develops perseverance and leads to growth (3-4)

James 1:3-4 ³ Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. ⁴ But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

James wrote his letter to God's "scattered 分散 people" and not God's "sheltered people," we must experience the stuff of life.

We cannot always expect everything to go our way. Some trials come simply because we are human—sickness, accidents, disappointments, and even tragedy.

1 Peter 4:12-13 ¹² Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; ¹³ but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.

The clear message: "Don't be surprised by trials" because those trials are doing something in your life

Know (active) - find out, learn, understand; perceive, discern 洞悉 to have knowledge; acknowledge,

Trying - act of testing; shows genuineness / faith real - if so then

Faith - active, as belief directed toward a person or thing confidence, faith, trust, reliance on 依靠

Produces - (present middle) do, accomplish; produce, bring about, work out; prepare, make ready; overcome, conquer (Eph 6.13)

Perseverance - patient endurance, steadfastness, resolve 解析, firm in one's mind, or determination.

What does God want to produce in our lives? He wants to produce patience, endurance, and the ability to keep going when things are tough.

Romans 5:3-5 ³ And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; ⁴ and perseverance, character; and character, hope. ⁵ Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

May God give us the resolve of heart to continue in the faith - even if all hell stands against us.

- Perseverance must finish its work

- You may be perfect (mature) and complete lacking nothing

In the Bible, perseverance is not a passive acceptance of circumstances. It is courageous in the face of suffering and difficulty.

Immature people are always impatient; mature people are patient and persistent.

Impatience and unbelief usually go together, just as faith and patience do.

Hebrews 6:10-12 ¹⁰ God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them. ¹¹ We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, in order to make your hope sure. ¹² We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised.

When the believer learns to wait on the Lord, then God can do great things for him.

Moses ran ahead of God, murdered a man, and had to spend forty years with the sheep to learn patience (Ex. 2:11). And Peter almost killed a man in his impatience (John 18:10-11).

The only way the Lord can develop patience and character in our lives is through trials.

Endurance cannot be attained by reading a book (even the Bible), listening to a sermon, or even praying a prayer.

We must go through the difficulties of life, trust God, and obey 顺服 Him.

The result will be patience and character.

God's desire for you is for you to mature in your faith through perseverance and trials

Must - is an imperative - vital, crucial, essential work

Perfect - complete, perfect, whole - grown, mature (of persons)

Brought to a place where we are not lacking anything.

Testing develops perseverance and leads to growth (3-4)

III. God gives wisdom to those who seek it (vs4-8)

James 1:4 ⁴ Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

– How do we define 'wisdom' - different than knowledge (how so?)

Knowledge:

1. Awareness or familiarity with someone or something
2. Understanding of a subject or range of comprehension
3. Acquiring 获取 facts and concepts into our minds

Wisdom:

1. Right use of knowledge
2. Skill and ability to do or say something

a. Wisdom 智慧 from God is available!

- We lack the wisdom so often to know how to handle the difficulties which come in the course of daily life.
- The reason we have sometimes made a mess of our handling things, so that they have not produced spiritual fruit, is that we have lacked God's wisdom.
- We have a heavenly Father who delights to give wisdom to His children.
- The wisdom Solomon knew was given to him as a result of his request to God ([1 Kings 3:9](#)).

1 Kings 3:9 "Therefore give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?"

Was not long - put to the test / two woman claimed same child / cut the child in two / able to discern who the child belonged to

God's wisdom is available / we access to the most High God and His desire is help us make good and right decisions in our lives
Believer = God's wisdom is offered to you

b. If you lack wisdom, ask!

- There is a basic and simple principle here: we must ask in order to receive – that is how God has purposely ordered 特意和秩序性的 things.
- Our heavenly Father, like all good fathers, delights to meet His children's needs and rejoices in the proper dependence we show upon Him as we come only to Him for our needs.

Since He is the source of all wisdom – He is the only wise God ([Romans 16:27](#)) – it is no surprise that the wisdom we require to respond properly to our trials is given in answer to prayer to our Father.

The Christian's most powerful resource is communion with God through prayer. The results are often greater than we thought were possible.

Some see prayer as a last resort 万不得已, when all else fails. This approach is backward.

Prayer should come first, because God's power is infinitely greater than ours. Do you have the good sense to seek it, especially since God encourages us to do so.

Wisdom begins with a proper understanding of God and our relationship with Him in Christ.

Job 28:28 And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.

Gives liberally / does not reproach / won't turn you away

c. We must believe and not doubt ([James 1:6-8](#)).

God never wavers or fluctuates 浮动 ([1:17](#)) and He requires that those who come to Him should aim at being the same.

James compares the doubting believer to the waves of the sea, up one minute and down the next.

This is the experience of the "double-minded man." Faith says, "Yes!" but unbelief says, "No!"

It was doubt that made Peter sink in the waves as he was walking to Jesus ([Matt. 14:22-33](#)).

Jesus asked him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?"

When Peter started his walk of faith, he kept his eyes on Christ. But when he was distracted 分心 by the wind and waves, he ceased to walk by faith; and he began to sink. He was double-minded, and he almost drowned.

Many Christians live like corks on the waves: up one minute, down the next; tossed back and forth. This kind of experience is evidence of immaturity.

The tragedy of the doubter – or the double-minded man – is that he receives nothing from God ([1:7](#)).

Do you desire wisdom? Do you desire growth in maturity and faith?

It comes as we desire to be made more like Christ

Face your trials 试炼 with the right attitude 正确态度

Develop a God centered world view and turn away from a man centered world view

When you face testing know that this develops perseverance and leads to important growth in your life

If you lack wisdom - understand that God gives wisdom to those who seek it with all their heart.

The Lord will work in your life so that you will mature in the faith Set your heart on Christ and, the Lord promises wisdom for today (v.5) and a crown of life for those who persevere (v.12).

James 1:12 ¹² Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.