

Text: James 1:1-4

Title: Joyful Trials?!

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

II. Testing develops perseverance (3)

III. Perseverance leads to growth and maturity (vs4)

Congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ

The book of James gives very practical direction for a Christian's daily living.

To live successfully in world we must know how to deal with various circumstances in life, whether we experience blessings or trials. In his epistle, James quickly gets to the point and directs his message to believers who were having difficulties - such as they would never have chosen for themselves.

Compare this epistle with many of Paul's it is very short and is missing elements found in an epistle - a thanksgiving prayer. Although beginning brief - James does not beat around the bush, but gets straight to the point to deal with issues of life and faith

Theme: Instruction for right living (Get to it)

Purpose for writing: Working faith - faith shown by fruit

A large part of showing fruit comes through when believers suffer

- But, do not let challenges you face overwhelm you

Throughout the Bible - many examples of people who turned defeat into victory and trial into triumph. Instead of being victims, they became victors. Patriarchs, 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 or the temptations on the inside, through faith in Christ we can experience peace and joy. As the church we have an attitude based on spiritual maturity.

Is he really saying - Joyful trials?! How so?

I. Facing trials with the right attitude

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 is important.

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

Do you have God centered world view 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 or faith

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

Paul know this concept

Philippians 3:8-9 ⁸ What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in him,

When we face the trials of life, we must evaluate them in the light of what God is doing for us. This explains why the dedicated Christian can have joy in the midst 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 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!"

So, when trials come, immediately give thanks to the Lord and adopt a joyful approach to your life. Don't play games - simply look at trials through the eyes of faith.

Remember - God tells us to expect trials.

It is not "if you face trials of many kinds, but "when you fall into trials of many kinds"

-If you ever think that as a believer that this Christian life easy in for a shock. Jesus warned His disciples, "In the world you shall have tribulation" ([John 16:33](#)).

Acts 14:20-22 And the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe. ²¹ And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, ²² strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God."

What is your attitude? - If why me / everything seems to be against me/ then wrong / If attitude is that of Job, then on right tract

He lost His possessions and family (lost all 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**

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

II. Testing develops perseverance (3)

James 1:3 ³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.

James wrote letter to God's "scattered people" and not God's "sheltered people," we 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 4:12-14 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. ¹⁴ If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified.

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; to have knowledge; acknowledge,

Testing - 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* (MT 9.2);

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

Patience - perseverance, patient endurance, steadfastness, resolve, firm in one's mind, or determination.

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

A little girl walking in a garden noticed a particularly beautiful flower. She admired its beauty and enjoyed its fragrance. "It's so pretty!" she exclaimed. As she gazed on it, her eyes followed the stem down to the soil in which it grew. "This flower is too pretty to be planted in such dirt!" she cried. So she pulled it up by its roots and ran to the water faucet to wash away the soil. It wasn't long until the flower wilted and died.

When the gardener saw what the little girl had done, he exclaimed, "You have destroyed my finest plant!"

"I'm sorry, but I didn't like it in that dirt," she said. The gardener replied, "I chose that spot and mixed the soil because I knew that only there could it grow to be a beautiful flower."

Often we murmur because of the circumstances into which God has sovereignly placed us. We fail to realize that He is using our pressures, trials, and difficulties to bring us to a new degree of spiritual beauty. Contentment comes when we accept what God is doing and thank Him for it.

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.

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

Testing develops perseverance

III. Perseverance leads to growth and maturity (vs4)

James 1:4 ⁴ But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

- Perseverance must finish its work
- You may be mature and complete lacking nothing

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

God desire for you is for you to mature in your faith and understanding of God and His truth

In the Bible, *patience* 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 For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister. ¹¹ And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, ¹² that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

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

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 this one), listening to a sermon, or even praying a prayer.

We must go through the difficulties of life, trust God, and obey Him. The result will be patience and character. Knowing this, we can face trials joyfully. We know what trials will do in us and for us, and we know that the end result will bring glory to God. **I will be made more like Christ**. We may not understand why, yet it is the will of our Father, who directs us to the desert place / barren place for a time.

We must never grumble against what the Lord permits. Instead, we must do all that He asks us to do. Jesus said that we are to take up our cross daily and follow Him (Luke 9:23).

When Burdens Become Bridges

Burdens, too, can often be stepping stones to higher ground! A biologist tells how he watched an ant carrying straw which seemed a big burden for it. The ant came to a crack in the earth which was too wide for it to cross. It stood for a time as though pondering the situation. Then it put the straw over the crack and walked over it! What a lesson for us! The burden can become a bridge for spiritual progress if we endeavor by God's help to live the overcoming life!

—H.G. Bosch

The Bible tells us to respond to difficult circumstances in a way that is directly opposed to our natural tendency.

Never easy viewing our difficulties with pure joy,

I don't know about you, but that's not the first thing that pops into my mind.

An attitude of joy is not based on what we feel but on what we know of God and His work in our lives.

Therefore, a painful process that yields a desired goal to make me more like my Saviour and be used for God's glory.

It's not the testing of our strength but the trying of our faith in Almighty God that develops our endurance.

Through it all, the Lord promises wisdom for today (v.5) and a crown of life for those who persevere (v.12).