

JAMES

James 1:2-8

Theme: ▶ **Trial, Steadfastness and Sanctification**



2 Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds,

- **What are Trials?** - Testing of your faith
- As Jesus was “tested” in the wilderness (Matt. 4:1–13), so believers are tested.
- **What is Faith?** - an endless hope and trust in the existence and promises of God. (Hebrews 11:6)
- **What is Joy?** - Complete faith, love and satisfaction in Jesus as our provider and risen Saviour.
- Worldly happiness is temporary, Joy from God is eternal.

Where does joy come from?

- 1) From the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22) “The fruit of the Spirit is ... joy”
- 2) From belonging to the kingdom (Romans 14:17) The kingdom of God is not eating... but righteousness & joy
- 3) From future reward in heaven. (Luke 6:22-23) “leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven”
- 4) From the sanctifying (purifying) effects of trials. (James 1:2-4)

3 for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. 4 And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

- **What is Steadfastness?** - relentless endurance or fortitude.
- Steadfastness leads to stronger faith and maturity in Christ.
- Trials (testing of your faith) = Steadfastness (relentless endurance) = Holiness (maturity in Christ)
- Believers are to grow in holiness (Sanctification). (Galatians 2:20)
- Sanctification - to make holy or Christ like. (Matthew 5:48)
- Our sanctification will be complete upon meeting Jesus’. (John 17:17) (Hebrews 13:12)
- God commands us to be holy through the power of the Holy Spirit. (1 Peter 1:15-16)

- 1) Our goal in trials should not be getting back to what feels normal or comfortable.
- 2) Our goal in trials should be to grow in Christ likeness. “mature and complete like Him”
- 3) Trials are meant to build and grow your faith.
- 5) Trials are joyful when glorifying God is our goal.
- 4) Learn to trust and rely on the resources only God can provide with your new steadfast faith.

5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach (disapproval), and it will be given him.

- Our wisdom is limited, God has infinite wisdom. (Romans 11:33) (Isaiah 43:13) (Matthew 19:26)
- Wisdom comes from the Lord. (Psalm 111:10) (Proverbs 9:10)

Where does Godly wisdom come from? 1) Scripture 2) Prayer 3) The Holy Spirit

6 But let him ask in *faith*, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. 7 For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; 8 he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

- James is commanding us to put our new steadfast faith into action. (Ask God for wisdom in trials.)
- Knowing the character of God, trust in Him, not the world or your own natural ability.
- When we doubt God we dishonour Him.

Ephesians 6:13

13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.

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James 1:9-11, 16-18

NOTES:

- Godly poor, Godly rich | Ungodly poor, Ungodly rich
- Was Jesus rich or poor? (2 Corinthians 8:9)
- Godliness regarding your wealth:
how do you get it, invest it, save it, tithe it, share it, spend it?
- It doesn't matter if you're rich or poor, It matters if you're godly or ungodly



Theme: **Poverty and riches in the church.**

9 Let the lowly(poor) brother(Christians) boast in his exaltation(Joy).

- James strongly encourages the poor to boast in their high status in Christ.
Q: I wish I was _____.(this indicates how you might feel lowly)
 - Your net worth does not determine your self-worth . (Genesis 1:27)
 - See yourself the way God sees you.
 - You are treasured , made in the image of God , bought with the priceless blood of Jesus .
- The lowly should take hope in the unimaginable glory to come.
 - The lowly brother will be exalted or vindicated by God. (Revelation 22:12)

10 and the rich in his humiliation, because like a flower of the grass he will pass away.

- James strongly encourages the rich to boast in their humiliation in two ways.
 - 1) by realizing that their wealth is temporary and that it brings them no advantage before God
 - 2) by identifying with the poor in their affliction.
- The church is to be a “counter cultural” community, which reverses the values of the world.
Q: What does it mean to be counter cultural? (reverse the values of the world)
- Poverty and riches bring enormous pressure on a person. (to focus on the world rather than on Christ.)
Q: What kind of pressure does poverty and/or riches bring on a person?
Q: Can we serve God and money? (Matthew 6:24)
- The humble will be exalted, and the exalted will be humbled.

11 For the sun rises with its scorching heat and withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beauty perishes. So also will the rich man fade away in the midst of his pursuits.

- Wealth, power and possessions will all pass away, all that will remain is the Kingdom of God.
(1 John 2:17) (Isaiah 40:8) (Matthew 24:35)
- Always live with eternity in mind.
- We will stand before God to give an account of what we have done with the life He has given us.
(2 Corinthians 5:10)

16 Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers.

- Christians can still be deceived . (Mark 13:5)
- “Beloved brothers” - valued Christians .

17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. Q What is this verse saying about God?

- God is unchanging .(James 1:17) • We are fickle _____.(Ephesians 4:13-14)
- God is light _____.(1 John 1:5) • We are conceived into darkness _____ . (Psalms 51:5)(Romans 5:12)
- God is perfect _____.(Matthew 5:48) • We are flawed _____.(Romans 3:23)
- Every good gift we have is given by grace from God.
Q: What is grace? A: The undeserved favor of God

18 Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

- The greatest gift from above is Jesus _____.
- People are a good gift.
- God sees us (Christians) as His first fruits. Q: Why would God see us as His first fruits?
- God desires you to desires Him.

JAMES



James 1:12-15

Theme: **Trials vs Temptations**

The original greek word (peirazō) means to test, to try which was its usual meaning in the ancient Greek. The word means either trial or tempt. Context alone determines which sense is intended, or if both apply simultaneously.

- Phonetic Spelling: pi-rad'-zo
- Peirazō - "tempt" (negative sense) in: (Matthew 4:1-11) (James 1:13-14)
- Peirazō - "trial" (positive sense) in: (Luke 22:28) (James 1:2, 1:12)

Q: What are trials? The testing of our faith (we are commanded to take joy during trials to build steadfast faith)

- God allows trials in order to strengthen the Christian's faith. {Hebrews 2:10}

Q: What are temptations? Deception from the enemy to entice our natural desire to sin.

- Temptation is not sin, it is the opportunity to sin. (Jesus was tempted but did not sin.)
- Temptation will come when you are at your weakest physically, mentally and spiritually.
- Temptation will come when you are isolated (alone).

Jesus was tempted {Matthew 4:1-11}

- Jesus remained steadfast and sinless during His temptation. (unlike our first parents Adam and Eve.)
- Jesus over came temptation with the strength of The Holy Spirit and The Word of God.

12 Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him.

- What does it mean to be "steadfast under trials"?
- Enduring and persevering when your faith is tested
- The reward for faithful perseverance is eternal life (the crown of life), with all its blessings.

13 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one.

- God is sinless. {2 Corinthians 5:21} (1 John 3:5) (Luke 1:35)
- Sin is direct opposition of God's will and word.
- God never creates, tempts or lures anyone to sin. (freewill allows us to chose to obey and/or disobey)
- We are never to blame God for our sin. (After the fall, Adam blamed God for sin.)

14 But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. (A fishing metaphor for drawing prey away from shelter in order to trap them with a deadly hook.)

- Temptations will always be something our flesh already desires.

15 Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death. (The metaphor changes to a birth/rebirth, as full-grown desire (temptation) bears its own child, sin, which itself grows into maturity and bears the grandchild, death.)

- Temptation → Desire → Sin → Death
- Sin turns life into death. {Romans 6:23} {Romans 5:12}
- Jesus died for sin, so put your sin to death. (1 Peter 3:18) (Galatians 5:24)
- The key to blessing and the "crown of life" is to grown in steadfast faith in trials and to rely on God and fight every temptation, so that God will receive glory in your life.

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James 1:19-27

Theme: **Know It and Do It! - Hearing and Doing the Word - Practical Christianity**

- » Obedience is the hallmark of a true child of God.
- » Jesus said “If you love me, you will keep my commandments.” (John 14:15)

19 Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger;

- » God gave King Solomon supernatural wisdom to lead the Israelites. (1 Kings 3)
- » James echoes King Solomon on the misuse of the tongue and the anger that can result.

- **Quick to hear:** God’s Word is valuable. (Psalms 119:105) (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
 - Wisdom comes from God. (Proverbs 2:6) (James 3:17)
- **Slow to speak:** The tongue is a power tool. (Proverbs 18:21)
 - The wise guard their speech. (Proverbs 10:19; 11:12; 15:1; 17:28)
- **Slow to anger:** Anger is not sin, but can lead to sin (Ephesians 4:26).
 - God is slow to anger. (Psalm 103:8-12) (Exodus 34:6)

20 for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God. 21 Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

- “the anger of man” - Natural human anger is quick-tempered and selfish, not righteous.
- Strip off the natural desire to sin and put on the righteousness of God.

Q: What is Meekness? A humble and submissive heart that relies on the strength of God.

Q: Why is the implanted word able to save your souls. Hebrews 4:12

- God’s words spoke the universe into existence. (Genesis 1) (uni - one, verse - spoken sentence)
- God’s Word and love brings forth fruit in our lives and leads us to eternal life with Him.

22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

- We are saved by grace and not by works. (Ephesians 2:8)
- We do not work for the love of God, we work from the love of God.
- The Word of God activates our Christ like actions.

23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. 24 For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like.

- Looking close at your “natural face” (imperfection) in a mirror and then forgetting what you look like demonstrates the foolishness of examining your heart in God’s “mirror” the word, and then doing nothing about it.

25 But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.

Q: What is the “perfect law”? God’s word is a command not an option.

Q: What is the “law of liberty”? God’s word is truth that sets us free from sin and death.

- Jesus is the word made flesh (John 1:14). The way the truth and the life (John 14:6).
- There are blessings in acting out The Word of God.

Q: Name some blessings in acting out the word.

- Assurance of Forgiveness (1John 1:9)
- Assurance of Salvation (1John 5:11)
- Assurance of Guidance (Proverbs 3:5)
- Assurance of Victory (1Corninthians 10:13)





26 If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless.

- Our faith will always transform the way we listen, speak, act, react and LIVE. (James 2:14-26)
- If our faith doesn't change the way we live it isn't real faith.

27 Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.

- Pure faith is to give, serve and love the weak and needy in their suffering, being lead by the Holy Spirit in truth to be like Christ. (Matthew 22:39)