

James #1: Faith When Trouble Comes

There is no way to avoid hardships in life, but following Jesus equips us to face even the most difficult adversities.

- The American dream is a trouble-free life, so we're usually ill-prepared when troubles come. But James 1:2 says "when", not "if" they come.
- Trouble can even be an occasion for joy (verse 2) because God uses adversity for a greater purpose in our lives.

Faith is proven not in church, but in how we face troubles every day. (Jas 1:4)

- When troubles hit: we have a basic decision to make.
 - Am I still going to trust God through this? Or will I just quit?
- **James 1:2** Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. **3** For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. **4** So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.
- "Perfect" does not mean flawless.
 - But: "perfectly prepared for your purpose"
 - God uses hardship to equip us to live life

Faith grows as we endure through troubles every day. (1 Peter 1:4-7)

- Endurance = the capacity to stick with it.
 - Endurance is necessary to develop maturity.
 - If we want the result, this is how God gets us there.
- It helps to keep the bigger picture in mind.
- **1 Peter 1:4** And we have a priceless inheritance—an inheritance that is kept in heaven for you, pure and undefiled, beyond the reach of change and decay. **5** And through your faith, God is protecting you by his power until you receive this salvation, which is ready to be revealed on the last day for all to see. **6** So be truly glad. [b] There is wonderful joy ahead, even though you must endure many trials for a little while. **7** These trials will show that your faith is genuine. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold—though your faith is far more precious than mere gold. So when your faith remains strong through many trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honor on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world.
- When Jesus returns, the final results will be revealed of how God used the trials we endure for a time in this life.

Endure through troubles by seeking God and his wisdom. (Jas 1:5)

- How do we increase our capacity to endure adversity?
- **James 1:5** If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking.
- When going through trials, become dependent on God in prayer.

Endure through troubles by keeping your focus on Jesus. (Hebrews 12:1-2)

- Jesus suffered far worse than we will, and he was able to endure.
- **Hebrews 12:1** ...let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, **2** fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.
- Jesus was able to endure the pain of the cross because he knew God had a larger purpose.
 - So let's keep our attention fixed on him.
- Whatever you're going through is not easy, but you can endure.
 - As you endure, God will bring growth / maturity into your life.