

# **View Trials as an Opportunity for Spiritual Growth and Maturity**

**James 1:1-8**

# Background Information

James is the half-brother of Jesus: the same mother (Mary) but different fathers.

- **Matthew 13:55** Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? <sup>56</sup> And are not all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things? (see also Mark 6:3).

# Background Information

**James became the leader of the church in Jerusalem.**

- Paul called him a “pillar” in the church (Gal. 2:9).
- James moderated the first church conference recorded in Acts 15.

**Church history tells us that he was martyred in 62 A.D. for his faith.**

- He was cast down from the Temple and then beaten to death with clubs.

# Background Information

- He died praying: “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”
- He wrote to Jewish Christians who lived outside the land of Israel who were having problems in their personal lives and in their church relationships.
- James call these problems – “trials” or “tests.”

# Background Information

- Here is a sample of the problems they faced:
- They were facing temptations to sin.
- Some of the believers were catering to the rich, while others were being robbed by the rich.
- Church members were competing for offices in the church, particularly teaching offices.
- They were impatient in difficulties— 1:1–4
- They were talking the truth, but were failing to live the truth— 2:14ff

# Background Information

- The failed to properly control their tongue— 3:1ff
- There was quarreling among them and coveting— 4:1ff
- Some were focused on material gain – 5:1ff

**James gives correction for all of these problems.**

# James 1:1-8

<sup>NIV</sup> **James 1:1** James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes scattered among the nations: Greetings.

<sup>2</sup> Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds,

<sup>3</sup> because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance.

<sup>4</sup> Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

# James 1:1-8

<sup>5</sup> If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.

<sup>6</sup> But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind.

<sup>7</sup> That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord.

<sup>8</sup> Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do.



# James 1:1-8

## I. A Joyful ATTITUDE Commanded (1:1)

<sup>2</sup> Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds,

- **The meaning of the words**
- “Consider it”
  - Our will and determination is involved – it is a command.
  - It is something we do with our minds.
  - James is telling us how to think about trials.
  - He did not say “enjoy” trials.

# James 1:1-8

## I. A Joyful ATTITUDE Commanded (1:1)

<sup>2</sup> Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds,

- **Joy – a fruit of the Spirit –**
- **Galatians 5:22** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, . . . .
- **Christian joy has a foundation:** “confident trust in an all-loving God who works for our good and His glory.”

# James 1:1-8

## I. A Joyful ATTITUDE Commanded (1:1)

<sup>2</sup> Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds,

- Joy can express itself in happy emotions, but one does not need to feel “happy” to be joyful.
- In Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus did not have “happy” feelings, but he did not lose his joy.

# James 1:1-8

## I. A Joyful ATTITUDE Commanded (1:1)

<sup>2</sup> Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds,

- **Hebrews 12:2** looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.
- **Christian joy has a foundation:** “confident trust in an all-loving God who works for our good and His glory.”

# James 1:1-8

## I. A Joyful ATTITUDE Commanded (1:1)

<sup>2</sup> Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds,

- Choose to rejoice no matter what happen to you.
- **Philippians 3:1** Further, my brothers and sisters, rejoice in the Lord!
- **Philippians 4:4** Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!

# James 1:1-8

## I. A Joyful ATTITUDE Commanded (1:1)

- **1 Thessalonians 5:16** Rejoice always.
- **1 Peter 1:6** In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials.
- **1 Peter 1:7** These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith-- of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire-- may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.

# James 1:1-8

## I. A Joyful ATTITUDE Commanded (1:1)

- **1 Peter 4:12** Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you.
- **1 Peter 4:13** But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.

# James 1:1-8

## I. A Joyful ATTITUDE Commanded (1:1)

<sup>2</sup> Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds,

- **Choose to rejoice no matter what happen to you.**
- **We can rejoice because of:** our “confident trust in an all-loving God who works in all things for our good and His glory.”



# James 1:1-8

## I. A Joyful ATTITUDE Commanded (1:1)

<sup>2</sup> Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds,

- “**whenever you face trials**” – “fall into”
- These are **accidental, unexpected, undesired, unwanted.**
  - **Luke 10:30** - man traveling from Jereusalem to Jericho and fell among thieves – he did not want to; wished it hadn’t happened; wasn’t fun; got beat up, robbed.

# James 1:1-8

## I. A Joyful ATTITUDE Commanded (1:1)

<sup>2</sup> Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds,

- “whenever you face trials” – “fall into”
- These are **accidental, unexpected, undesired, unwanted.**
  - **Acts 27:41** – a ship accident. “And falling into a place where two seas met, they ran the ship aground; the the forepart stuck fast, and remained unmoveable, but the hinder part was broken with the violence of the waves.

# James 1:1-8

## I. A Joyful ATTITUDE Commanded (1:2)

- The meaning of the words. (1:2)
- The motivation for “understanding” the command. (1:3)

<sup>3</sup> because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance.

- “know” – indicate the basis why we can “count it all joy”
- He doesn’t say, you “feel”, or you “hope” – rather, “you know.”

# James 1:1-8

## I. A Joyful ATTITUDE Commanded (1:2)

- The motivation for “understanding” the command. (1:3)

<sup>3</sup> because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance.

- James addresses our minds. We need to develop understanding minds.
- We need to know that trials test our **FAITH**.
- Choosing to rejoice in the midst of trials produces **PERSEVERANCE** - (endurance)

# James 1:1-8

## I. A Joyful ATTITUDE Commanded (1:1)

<sup>4</sup> Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

- God cannot build our character without our cooperation.
- If we choose not to obey, He chastens us into submission.
- If we choose to obey, He can accomplish His work in us.
- God's goal for us: to become "mature and complete"

# James 1:1-8

<sup>5</sup> If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.

- The “**wisdom**” you ask for is the ability to “count it pure joy” when going through trials.
- Wisdom enables you to “rejoice” in the trial, not because a trial is easy, but because **by faith** you know that if you learn to rejoice you will develop perseverance and develop spiritual maturity and lack nothing to be the Christian God want you to be.

# James 1:1-8

<sup>6</sup> But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind.

<sup>7</sup> That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord.

<sup>8</sup> Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do.

# James 1:1-8

- Trials – opportunities God gives us to mature spiritually.
- We need “wisdom” not to waste our trials!!
- Do not be “double-minded.”
- Faith says, “Yes!” but unbelief says, “No!”
- Many Christians live like corks on the waves: up one minute, down the next; tossed back and forth.
- This is characteristic of immaturity.



# James 1:1-8

- God's purpose in trials is spiritual maturity.
- <sup>4</sup> Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.
- If you wish to become spiritually mature, then:
  - “consider it”
  - “know”
  - “let perseverance finish its work”
  - “ask” for wisdom to be able to rejoice.

# **View Trials as an Opportunity for Spiritual Growth and Maturity**

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