

Count It All Joy (James 1:1-4)

- Most place the book of James written before the famous Jerusalem council
- James: likely the oldest of the 27 books in the NT: early Christian teaching
- Saving faith, justifying faith is living, it is faith that bears righteous fruit
- Law of liberty, the Gospel produces righteous fruit & gracious relationships
- James is the ½ brother of the Lord Jesus, son of Mary and of Joseph
- He uses the simple designation of himself as the bondservant of God
- He is writing to the 12 tribes scattered abroad: Jews & Gentiles displaced

I. James' Call: Have Faith's Perspective in your Trials (1:2)

- Our call in this world as Christians is to have eternal life but also to suffer
- James calls his readers “to count it all joy” facing trials of many kinds.
- It's a strange call: we are so accustomed to living easy Christian lives
- Jesus told us that if we are to truly suffer with Him we will suffer (Mt 5:11,12)
- James wants us to embrace suffering because of how God uses it to grow us
- “Consider” think about how God uses it (Heb 12:11; 2 Cor 7:4; Acts 5:41,42; 16:25) His means of causing us to live by faith (Col 3:2; 1 Cor 2:11)

II. James' Challenge: Consider the Purpose of Trials by Faith (1:3,4)

- James speaks of the “testing of our faith” testing – furnace refining gold
- Develops perseverance – staying power, heroic endurance, inward fortitude
- What does it do? It produces a dynamic maturity (v.4) not perfection here
- It is becoming more & more Christ like, the more we cleave to the Lord
- Acts 11:23; 2 Cor 3:18; 2 Tim 3:12; 1 John 3:2