

## James 1:2-3

**Intro:** In our day, with the softening of the Gospel, easy believism, the lack of true discipleship, it is understandable that with-in every true Bible believing, Bible preaching church, one might find many who do not have true salvation. Many have great assurance of their salvation until it is tested by hardships and disappointments. The way people handle trouble reveals the level of faith in which they are walking. Is their faith living and genuine or dead and imitation.

Anyone who lives in this world will suffer a measure of trouble, a consequence of the fall. Job's friend Eliphaz said, Yet man is born to trouble, As the sparks fly upward - Job 5:7 . Job said, "Man who is born of woman Is of few days and full of trouble - Job 14:1. David cried, Be not far from Me, For trouble is near; For there is none to help - Ps 22:11. Isaiah says, Then they will look to the earth, and see trouble and darkness, gloom of anguish; and they will be driven into darkness - Isa 8:22. Solomon writes, For all his days are sorrowful, and his work burdensome; even in the night his heart takes no rest. This also is vanity - Ec 2:23. God's saints are not beyond trouble. Even in the most intimate relationship, But even if you do marry, you have not sinned; and if a virgin marries, she has not sinned. Nevertheless such will have trouble in the flesh, but I would spare you - 1Co 7:28. Jesus said, "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world" Jo 16:33.

James writes this letter of exhortation to encourage the recipients to live what their lips espouse, to prove their faith is genuine. If faith is genuine, it will prove itself in the midst of trouble. If faith is a mere profession or based on sentiment and not on intelligent conviction of divine truth, it will burn up in the midst of fiery trials.

### II. From Trials to Triumph - Part 1

#### A. Eight purposes for trials

1. to test the strength of our faith
  - a. tests are meant to make us take spiritual inventory
  - b. our reactions demonstrate the condition of our faith
    - i. if we respond in resentment, bitterness, self pity, our faith is weak
    - ii. if we respond by turning more and more to the Lord for help in carrying the burden, our faith is getting stronger
  - c. God told Moses, "Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you. And the people shall go out and gather a certain quota every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in My law or not. - Ex 16:4
2. to humble us
  - a. to remind us to trust in the Lord
  - b. to keep us from presumption and spiritual self-satisfaction
    - i. we may conclude that blessings come b/c of our own accomplishments rather than from the Lord
    - ii. And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. - 2Co 12:7
3. to wean us from our dependence on worldly things
  - a. The more we accumulate possessions, knowledge, experience, and recognition, the more we are tempted to trust in things, reason, self instead of the Lord
  - b. Philip and the test of feeding the people - Jo 6:5-7 gave reasons why they couldn't feed the people
  - b. Moses after 40 years on the back side of the dessert gave reasons why he couldn't be God's choice- Ex 2:11-25

4. to call us to our eternal and heavenly hope
  - a. The longer and harder that trials are, the more we look forward to being with the Lord
  - b. Ro 8:18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.
  - c. 2Co 4:17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,
5. to reveal what we really love
  - a. Abraham offering Isaac
    - i. proved his faith
    - ii. Proved his love for the Lord
  - b. Lu 14:6 "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.
6. to teach us the value of God's blessings
  - a. we evaluate value based on reason and our senses
  - b. trials teach us to value the spiritual things of God, His salvation, His word, His care, His, provision, His strength, etc.
7. to develop the saint's ending strength for greater usefulness
  - a. While all things are quiet and comfortable, we live by sense rather than faith - Thomas Manton, Puritan
  - b. Paul says, Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong. - 2Co 12:10
8. to enable us to better help others
  - a. Peter - And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat. "But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren." - Lu 22:31-32
  - c. Jesus - For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted. - Heb 2:18
  - d. Paul - Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds through Christ. Now if we are afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effective for enduring the same sufferings which we also suffer. Or if we are comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation. - 2Co 1:3-6

## B. The Means for Perseverance - vs 2-11

### 1. A Joyful Attitude - vs 2

- a. *hegeomai* - to lead, command (with official authority); to deem, consider:-- account, (be) chief, count, esteem, governor, judge, have the rule over, suppose, think.
  - i. an imperative, due to the natural human response to trouble
  - ii. James has the most imperatives per words than any other book - 59/1742
  - iii. Not to just consider it joy, but **all joy**
- b. interpreted by some to count it pure joy, unmixed joy, complete joy, total or sheer joy

- i. from the context, all would fit
    - ii. Not some sort of religious masochism, but trust in the promises and goodness of God - Ge 50:20; Ro 8:28
    - iii. God graciously provides when His children willingly and uncomplainingly endure trials while trusting Him
  - c. no matter the depth of distress, God will always
    - i. use them for our benefits
    - ii. Use them for His glory
  - d. we are not to act joyful in reluctant pretense, but to be genuinely joyful
    - i. not a matter of feelings
    - ii. A conscience determined, commitment
    - iii. Empowered by God through the Holy Spirit as one humbly submits in thanksgiving
  - e. The more we submit to the lessons of the trials, the more we see trials as privileges, ultimately beneficial
  - f. Christ's example - for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, - Heb 12:2b
    - i. Joh 15:20 "Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also.
    - ii. Heb 12:3 For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls.
    - iii. Heb 12:4 You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin.
  - g. Christ's Teaching - the Beatitudes - Mt 5:3-12
    - i. Blessed - Oh How Very Happy
    - ii. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad - vs 12
  - h. When
    - i. **hotan** - whenever (implying hypothesis or more or less uncertainty); inasmuch as:--as long (soon) as, that, + till, when(-soever), while.
    - ii. subjunctive - carries the idea not just of possibility, but inevitability
  - i. fall into
    - i. **peripipto** - to fall into something that is all around, i.e. light among or upon, be surrounded with:--fall among (into).
    - ii. Usually unexpected
  - j. trials
    - i. **peirasmos** - a putting to proof (by experiment (of good), experience (of evil), solicitation, discipline or provocation); by implication, adversity:--temptation,
    - ii. Depending on context, could be positive or negative
    - iii. Verb form in vs 13 translated tempted
  - k. various
    - i. **poikilos** - motley, i.e. various in character:--divers, manifold.
    - ii. Could be internal or external
    - iii. The way one responds to the trials involves faith
2. An Understanding Mind - vs 3
- a. knowing
    - i. **ginosko** - to "know" (absolutely; experientially) allow, be aware (of), feel, (have) know(-ledge), perceived, be resolved, can speak, be sure, understand.

ii. Mr 13:28 "Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender, and puts forth leaves, you **know** that summer is near.

b. testing

- i. *dokimion* - a testing; by implication, trustworthiness:--trial, trying.
- ii. Carries the idea of testing in order to prove or disprove its genuineness or validity

c. patience

- i. *hupomone* - cheerful (or hopeful) endurance, constancy:--enduring, patience, patient continuance (waiting).
- ii. Patiently enduring trials while trusting the Lord develops endurance
- iii. Endurance is the permanent inner quality of strength that is developed each time trial are patiently and trustingly endured
  - Ps 40:1-2 I waited patiently for the LORD; And He inclined to me, And heard my cry. He also brought me up out of a horrible pit, Out of the miry clay, And set my feet upon a rock, And established my steps.
  - 1Co 10:13 No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.