

PLEASANT VIEW PROCLAIMER

March 13, 2022

James: A Faith That Works - Joy in Trials (1:1-12)

This morning we begin a new sermon series from the book of James entitled "A Faith That Works." This letter is regarded as one of the most practical New Testament writings in instructing Christians on how to take their faith in Christ and live it out day-to-day.

James immediately begins his letter to the "twelve tribes in the Dispersion" (1:1) by calling on them to find joy when they endure "trials" (1:2). In this context, a "trial" is anything that puts us to the test and would include difficult situations that we face like suffering and temptation (1:13-15). Now it is most definitely not human nature to find joy amid these types of trials, so what exactly is it that we should be happy about? Well, James goes on to explain at least three reasons why a disciple of Christ should find joy when enduring the very challenging trials of life.

(1) P _____ (1:3-8)

The first reason for finding joy in trials is that whenever we endure a testing of our faith it builds endurance (1:3-4). Trials and suffering are like an extreme workout for faith and can show us areas where our faith is weak and needs to be strengthened. The more that we endure trials, the more we know what to work on. For example:

- Spending more time in the Word and prayer / Praising God
- Taking ownership of a borrowed faith
- Seeking fellowship opportunities / Confiding in a brother or sister
- Being more active in helping others

The more we work on our faith, the stronger our faith will be, and the better we will be prepared to face future tests of our faith (Romans 5:1-5).

What do we do if we don't have the wisdom to see the benefit of a trial we are dealing with? What if we can't handle the trial we are facing? James instructs that in those situations we should pray to God and ask for wisdom (1:5). However, he also instructs that these prayers should be offered in "faith, with no doubting" (1:6). How do we "ask in faith?" Consider the words of Jesus to His disciples about prayer in Mark 11:22-24. He says "whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it..." What does this mean for us and

*let all that
you do
be done in
love.*

1 COR 16:18

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*"Not unto us, O Lord,
not unto us,
But to Your name give glory,
Because of Your mercy,
Because of Your truth"*

our prayers? Consider how Abraham lived his life after receiving the promise of God, even though he would not see the fulfillment of many of those promises in his lifetime. Paul explained that he lived his life "...fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised" (Romans 4:21). So, Abraham lived his life as though he had already received the promise, which is exactly how Jesus says we should approach prayer.

P_____ (1:9-11)

In the second place James explains that trials and suffering can change our view of what is really important in life. He does this by saying something that initially seems to be opposite of what should be true. He says that the poor man should "boast in his exaltation" and that the rich man should boast "in his humiliation." James goes on to explain that the wealth of the rich man, just like the flowering grass of the field, will wither away. The rich man puts his faith in his riches, and trials bring about an opportunity to see that faith in anything on earth is misplaced. The poor man is not tempted to place his faith in the things of this earth, so he naturally puts his faith in God. For us, the message is that we should allow trials to teach us about what is worthy of our faith in this life (Ecclesiastes 2:1-11; Matthew 6:19-21).

P_____ (1:12)

Finally, James explains that we should find joy in trials, because for those who remain "steadfast under trial" there awaits "the crown of life" (1:12). From the earlier verses we learned that the more we endure trials, the better we can remain steadfast under future trials. Here, James points out that our motivation for enduring is more than just building perseverance, but also that God has promised us a future home in glory with Him for all eternity. This is the reward for those who endure to the end without giving up their faith in God. Paul further explains in Romans 8:18 that the sufferings we endure in this life "are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us." This promise is worthy of our joy and should bring happiness in this life while enduring trials.

PRAYER LIST

- **Brayden Wagster**, a family friend of the Reeds, was in a bad wreck and was airlifted to LeBonheur
- **Richard Speakman**, a coworker of Charlie Baker's, passed away Wednesday
- **Isabel Johnson** remains in isolation.
- **Ethan Pennington**, Tammy's cousin, has brain cancer
- Continue to remember **Gaynell Walker, Rebecca Brown, Charlie Douglas, Kristine Garrett, John Hayes, Ann Reed, Jim Sims, and Faye Waller**

SERVING TODAY (March 13, 2022)

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Read: E. Walker
Prayer: C. Baker

WORSHIP

Read: J. Gupton
Wait On Table: M. Reed
Serve: J. Demonbreun, S. Shatto
Prayer: J. Baker