

JOY IN TRIALS **(James 1:1-4)**

I. The plea (vs. 2).

- A. Remember the purpose of this book: to encourage Christians facing trials living in a world that is against them.
- B. Because of this, James gets right into how to deal with tests or trials.
 - 1. The word translated “temptations” in the New Testament can be referencing either outward tests or inward temptations.
 - 2. This section is dealing with outward tests.
- C. He pleads with his audience to count it all joy when dealing with these outward tests.
 - 1. The word “count” means to reckon or regard.
 - 2. He is saying that they should think of trials as a joyful occasion.
- D. These are people that are dealing with trials because they are Christians.
 - 1. All they would have to do to avoid these trials is denounce their faith in Jesus.
 - 2. James says instead of giving in to the tests, regard them as something that is joyful.
- E. The word “fall” carries the idea of being encompassed with trials.
 - 1. When you are surrounded by trials, some possibly life threatening, deem it as joyful.
 - 2. How many of us would think to do that without this plea from an inspired writer?
 - 3. We moan and complain when someone makes fun of us for being a Christian or calls us a “Campbellite.”
 - 4. These people were being told to count it as joy to have their lives threatened.
- F. No matter what type of trial it is they were to be joyful.

II. The purpose (vs. 3)

- A. If someone just pleads with us to count trials of life as joyful and gave us no purpose for such a plea we would likely ignore them.
 - 1. It would be crazy to ask someone to think this way with no reason being given for such.
 - 2. We wouldn't put any stock into anything else that person said.
- B. Thankfully, James gives a wonderful reason for thinking in such a manner: our faith being proved brings about endurance.
- C. If I am going to view something in a much different light than I normally would, there must be a great reason for it.
 - 1. In this case, faith being tested leads to greater endurance when further testing comes.
 - 2. This word brings out the idea of steadfastness in the face of great difficulty.
- D. Christians, for the most part, deal with bad news better than any people I've ever met.
 - 1. Bad news about children, health, jobs or whatever.

2. When it comes, the truly faithful Christians deal with that type news better than any other people.
- E. The reason for this is because they have been through tough times and those times prepared them for worse times.
- F. The word “worketh” carries the idea of continual helping towards greater endurance.
 1. When listening to sportscasters talk about teams handling adversity well they generally talk about the same thing.
 2. Those teams that handle adversity well are said to have been through difficult times before.
- G. The same holds true for Christians and their ability to remain constant to Christ, no matter the test.
- H. The word “trying” is a word that comes from the process of putting metal through the smelting process.
 1. Metals are heated to great degrees to burn off the impurities they might contain.
 2. You want to get the impurities out to make the metal the strongest it can be.
- I. There definitely is a purpose for tests of faith in life: to make us stronger later.

III. **The promise (vs. 4).**

- A. The promise of these tests is that it will cause us to become complete or mature Christians.
- B. When we fight the refining process of these tests, we fail to allow ourselves to reach our full spiritual potential.
 1. We fail to have the faith that pleases God.
 2. We don't become all that we can in Christ.
- C. Instead of fighting against these tests, we need to let our endurance reach its full end, which is the idea of letting patience have her perfect work.
 1. When we rant and rave and call life unfair or fail the tests that are before us, we are not allowing our endurance to grow.
 2. There is a method to the madness of life James is telling us.
- D. We become complete Christians, having all that is necessary in life, spiritually speaking, when we allow our endurance to reach maturity.
 1. The word “perfect” was used for medical students who had completed their studies and now able to practice.
 2. The word “entire” was used for a baby being born normal and healthy.
- E. Christians, when going through trials properly, have the promise of being all that we can be and lacking nothing.
 1. We won't be behind any other Christian in any thing when we go through the refining process properly.
 2. We can and will be as spiritually strong as anyone else when we are refined.
- F. Something that we must understand though, is that the idea here is that there will always be trials and we must continually make our way through

them.

1. There is never a time in our spiritual journey when we can let up in dealing with trials.
2. We will be just as strong as anyone else as long as we keep giving the effort.