

James 1:2-4

Elevate: Enduring Joy Grows in Trials, Part 1

Introduction: An unexpected letter for the hurt (v 2)

1. James can hit nerves and step on toes
2. 55 Imperatives (Commands) in James: Highest %
3. The Lord does not always give what we want to hear, but what we need to hear
4. *My Brothers...*
 - a. James describes the Model Christian
 - b. He writes to those adopted, justified, being sanctified, secured in Christ for God's Kingdom
 - c. He writes to those indwelt by the Spirit and empowered to live a faithful and fruitful life
 - d. The Christian is someone who endures trials with joy to the glory of God the Father

Central Message: God is more concerned about Christians becoming Christlike than becoming Comfortable.

The Command Concerning Christian Trials

1. *All Joy!*
 - a. Emphatic position in the sentence: Sheer, Utter Joy
 - b. Strange to the Human condition: We would expect, "Count it all joy when you are blessed"
2. *Count it all joy... for you know...*
 - a. Thinking word – consider, meditate, deliberate
 - b. Evaluate the trial for the purpose of making a value judgment on it
 - c. The tense of the word: This is an urgent matter!
 - d. Think about Joy, ALL Joy (no mixture of anger or bitterness)
 - e. This does not mean you are giddy, exuberant
 - f. Rather, biblical thinking on joy created by the Holy Spirit within us, based in faith
3. Joy in the midst of pain is part of the Christian Life
 - a. **Rom 5:3, Heb 12:11, 1 Pet 1:6-7, Mat 5:11-12**
 - b. Joy grounded in faith in the God who ordains your trials, is sovereign over your trials & governs them
4. *When we meet...* not if
 - a. Not a hypothetical possibility, but an inevitability
 - b. "Meet" – Same word for the robbers in the parable on the Good Samaritan; Trials ambush, overtake

5. If you are not in a trial, you will be or you are just coming out of one
6. *Various Kinds...* (many kinds, different, multicolored)
 - a. The Christian life is a mixture of joy and sorrow
 - b. **See 2 Corinthians 6:4a, 10a; Acts 16:25, 5:41**

The Divine Nature Of Christian Trials (v 3)

1. *You Know... Testing of your faith*
 - a. Our Wise and Good God Tests Your Faith by Trials
 - b. No suffering, no trial, no pain is wasted in this life for the Christian
 - c. The Holy Spirit empowers you to think biblically, by the Word of God
 - d. God ordains the trial and HE counts you worthy to go through the trial

The Goal Of The Tests With Christian Trials (vv 3b-4)

1. *Trials by Divine Testing Produces Steadfastness*
 - a. Through trials God produces an Enduring Faith
 - b. God is interested in your faith enduring to the end
 - c. The pain in this life is momentary, the joy in the Kingdom of God is eternal (**1 Cor 4:17, Rom 8:18**)
 - d. Do you trust the Lord?
2. *Steadfastness Produces Christlikeness*
 - a. *Let steadfastness...*
 - i. 3rd Person command – not giving permission, rather Steadfastness MUST have its full effect
 - ii. Do NOT defeat the purpose of the trial, but it must perform its full work in you
 - iii. To abandon or deny the trial is to abandon the Lord's discipline
 - b. *Perfect and Complete...* Christian Maturity
 - i. God's main concern: You become like His Son
 - ii. Christlikeness is the only thing that will last, everything else is temporary
 - iii. God flushes away anything not like His Son
 - iv. Trials cause you to be conformed and transformed into the image of the Son of God
 - v. Trials make you fit for the presence of Christ
3. Christ did what He calls us to do in a more difficult way
 - a. He bore our weightier and greater burdens at the cross – in order for you to experience eternal joy
 - b. With the Joy Set Before Him (**Hebrews 12:1-6**)