

James 1

Jesus

- **Date:** 46AD? Before destruction of Jerusalem by Titus Roman/Before Paul's Epistles
- **Author:** James the Just
 1. Half-brother of Jesus
 2. Brother of Jude
 3. Leader of Church in Jerusalem
- Did not believe until after Jesus' resurrection

John 7: 5 ... even His brothers did not believe in Him.

1 Corinthians 15:7 After [resurrection] He was seen by James, then by all the apostles.

- **Death**
 1. Pushed off highpoint of Temple/lived only to be...
 2. Beaten to death while praying for his attackers

I. Profiting from Trials

1 James, a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad: Greetings.

- Half-brother of Jesus now **Bondservant to Jesus**: Wholly given over to Jesus
- God's people now scattered by escalating persecution ...

Acts 1:8 ... you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the **end of the earth**.

2 My brethren, **count it all joy** when you **fall into** various trials, 3 knowing that the **testing of your faith** produces **patience**.

Fallen into a Hard Time? Count it all Joy

Lit. Greet the Trial as Pure Joy knowing God allowed it for Good

- **Trials** Test authenticity of our Faith in a Good God

1 Peter 1:6 In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a **little while**, if need be, you have been **grieved by various trials**, 7 that the **genuineness** of your faith, being much **more precious than gold** that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ...

- **Faith** Assurance God will intervene for Good
- **Patience** Endurance produced by passing the current test

Counting it all joy is **faith's response to a time of trial**. [Guzik]

Romans 5:3 [Paul] ... **we also glory in tribulations**, knowing that tribulation **produces** perseverance; 4 and perseverance, character; and character, hope...

Persevering in Trials leads to Character

- **Choice:** Get Bitter/Get Better

4 But **let patience** have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

Purpose of Trials? Make us Complete/Whole/Mature

- **Let** patience do its work? Choice to trust God will come through
- **Question during a Trial?** Do you really believe God is working for Good?

Philippians 1:6 ... He who has begun a **good work** in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ

Romans 8:28 And we know that **all things work together for good** to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. 29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be **conformed to the image of His Son**

- **If it's good, why does it hurt?** Conformed from image of Adam to image of Jesus
- **I don't get it...**

5 If any of you lacks wisdom, **let him ask of God**, who gives to all **liberally** and **without reproach**, and it will be given to him. 6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting...

- **Wisdom:** Application of Knowledge
- **Lack Wisdom?** Ask and God is happy to give...
 1. **Liberal** Loves to dole out wisdom to teachable
 2. **W/out Reproach** Desires to bless those who ask...

Matthew 7:7 Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

- Praying for Wisdom is Wise

1 Kings 3:9 [Solomon] ... give to Your servant an **understanding heart** to judge Your people, that I may discern between **good and evil**.

Proverbs 2:4 [Solomon: Value of Wisdom] ... 4 If you **seek her** [Wisdom] **as silver**, And search for her as for hidden treasures; 5 Then you will understand the fear of the Lord, And find the knowledge of God. 6 For the **Lord gives wisdom**; From His mouth come knowledge and understanding...

- **Conditions to Receive Wisdom** [anything else in prayer]
 1. **Ask in faith**/w/ expectation Wisdom is coming
 2. **NO doubting:** Indicates a choice to believe [Lord help my unbelief]

[I can't believe?] O unbeliever, you have said, 'I cannot believe,' but it would be more honest if you had said, '**I will not believe.**' The mischief lies there. Your unbelief is your fault, not your misfortune. It is a disease, but it is also a crime: it is a terrible source of misery to you, but it is justly so, for it is an **atrocious offense** against the God of truth. [Spurgeon]

6b... for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and **tossed** by the wind. 7 For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; 8 he is a **double-minded man**, unstable in all his ways.

- **He who doubts?** Opposite of Complete/Whole/Mature
 1. **Tossed Around:** Waves of Sea...Back/Forth
 2. **Double-Minded:** I think I believe/Maybe/Yes, I do/I guess/What's on TV?

...let not that person suppose they will receive **anything from the Lord**

SUMMARY Profiting Through Trials

- **Trials** Tests the authenticity of our Faith in God
- **Faith** Assurance God will intervene for good
- **Patience** Endurance produced by choosing to believe God is working for good

To Make you Whole/Image of Jesus

II. Being Content in Every Situation

9 Let the lowly brother glory in his exaltation, 10 but the rich in his humiliation, because as a flower of the field he will pass away. 11 For no sooner has the sun risen with a burning heat than it withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beautiful appearance perishes. So the rich man also will fade away in his pursuits.

- **Poor Brother** Glory as God provides
- **Rich Brother** Glory as God takes away

Job 1:20 [Job loses everything] Then Job arose, tore his robe, and shaved his head; and he fell to the ground and worshiped. 21 And he said: "Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked shall I return there. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; Blessed be the name of the Lord."

- **Contentment is a learned art...** finding all we need in Presence of Jesus

Philippians 4:11... for I have **learned in whatever state I am, to be content:** 12 I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

- Rich men focused on more riches...fade away

Matthew 6:24 No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

Matthew 13:22 [Seed of thorns] ... he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the **deceitfulness of riches choke the word**, and he becomes unfruitful.

1 Timothy 6:10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

III. Do not be Deceived

12 Blessed is the man who **endures temptation**; for when he has been **approved**, he will **receive the crown of life** which the Lord has promised to **those who love Him**.

James 5:11 ... we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord—that the Lord is very **compassionate and merciful**.

Close Connection between **Loving Jesus** and **Enduring Trials/Temptation**
Those who love Jesus have power over Temptation/Sin. Receive Crown of Life

This describes the motive for resisting temptation, because of our love for God. The passions of sinful temptation can only really be overcome by a greater passion, and that is a passion for the honor and glory and relationship with God. [Guzik]

So that those who endure temptation rightly, endure it because they love God. They say to themselves, 'How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?' They cannot fall into sin because it would grieve him who loves them so well, and whom they love with all their hearts. [Spurgeon]

- Man has always sought to **blame God** for Temptation/Sin
 1. It was the **Tree**
 2. It was the **Serpent**
 3. It was the **Woman You gave me**

Don't be Deceived...It was you. Take Responsibility

13 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. 14 But each one is **tempted** when he is drawn away by his **own desires** and **enticed**.

Don't blame God for your sin...Our sinful desire looks for opportunity.
When Desire and Opportunity meet/Love at first sight

Satan certainly tempts us, but the only reason temptation has a hook in us is because of our own fallen nature... [Guzik]

- **James:** Don't blame God/devil/others for your sin
- **Desire meets Opportunity:** Come here often?

15 Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, **brings forth death**.

Romans 6:23 ... the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

16 **Do not be deceived**, my beloved brethren.

It was not God who tempted you/caused you to sin...It was you. Own it.

In fact, God desires your best even when you don't...

17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.

Immutability of God. He is Unchanging

Malachi 6:6 ... I am the Lord, **I do not change**

Hebrews 13:8 Jesus Christ is the **same yesterday, today, and forever.**

If someone has turned/changed it was not God

18 Of His own will He brought us forth by the **word of truth**, that we might be a kind of **firstfruits** of His creatures.

- Birthed when you believed the **truth of the Gospel**

Ephesians 1:13 In [Jesus] you also trusted, after you heard the **word of truth**, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise,

- **Change:** From Darkness to Light

Ephesians 5:8 ... you were **once darkness**, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. ...

- **James is practical/pragmatic. If you are born again you will act like it**

SUMMARY Loving God Under Trials

Close connection between Loving Jesus and Enduring Temptation

Those who love Jesus have power over Temptation and Sin. Receive Crown of Life

IV. Qualities Needed in Trials

19 So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be **swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath**; 20 for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

- **Swift to Hear**...Be Teachable
- **Slow to Speak**...Be Humble

Proverbs 10:19 In the multitude of words sin is not lacking/he who restrains his lips is wise.

Proverbs 17:27 He who has knowledge spares his words...

- **Slow to Anger**...

You don't have an **alcohol problem**
You don't have a **gossip problem**

you have a sin problem
you have a sin problem

... don't love God
... don't love God

You don't have an **anger problem** you have a sin problem ... don't love God

1 Thessalonians 4:4 ... each of you should know how to **possess his own vessel...**

Proverbs 14:17 A quick-tempered man acts foolishly...

Proverbs 16:32 He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, And he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.

Ecclesiastes 7:9 Do not hasten in your spirit to be angry, For anger rests in the bosom of fools.

- **It is wise to but away anger...**

Outbursts of anger never end well...but only lead to more anger

21 Therefore lay aside all filthiness [speech] and **overflow** of wickedness...

Colossians 3:8 [Paul/James agree] ... put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, **filthy language out of your mouth.**

21b... and **receive** with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

- **Talk less/Listen more:** One mouth but two ears
- **As Practical/Pragmatic as James is... he also knows without a doubt...**

**It is Only the Word of God taking Root in our Hearts
That will cause a Permanent Change in our Actions/Speech**

- **Receive Word Meekly** Teachable/Humble/Yielding Good Fruit **vs...**
- **Receive Word in Pride** Wielding sword to hurt others/no change/self-deceived

Meek and Teachable: What Good Soil Looks Like

22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; 24 for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was.

Luke 6:47 Whoever comes to Me, and **hears My sayings and does them,** I will show you whom he is like: **48 He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock. 49 But he who heard and did nothing** is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great."

Romans 2:13 [Paul/James agree] ... It is not the hearers of the law are just in the sight of God, but the **doers of the law will be justified**

James 2:20 But do you want to know, O foolish man, that **faith without works is dead?**

Those who know the Word/Don't act on the Word... are Self-deceived

- **Sin seen in the mirror of Word?** Disregard it or say it's for someone else?

Mirrors don't/can't cleanse...Fountain of Living Water is what Cleanses

Humbling Ourselves Under the Cross of Christ

- **Or...**Walk out of church and forget everything God said...

Sometimes we think because we know it/Can repeat it/That we actually did it. Not so

25 But he who looks into the **perfect law of liberty** and **continues in it**, and is **not a forgetful hearer** but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.

- We are not under written code bringing death but under Grace: Law of Liberty

Romans 8:2 ... the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.

John 13:17 If you know these things, blessed are you **if you do them**.

James 2:12 ...speak and so do as those who will be judged by the **law of liberty**. 13 For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

- **Perfect Law of Liberty:** Freed from sin by God's Grace...**alone**

Since we are saved by grace...In what ways are we reflecting Grace to others?

- **Doer of the work?**

1. Those saved by Grace look for creative ways to show grace
2. Read Word/Listen for/to the Spirit/Do the Word/**Be Blessed**

- **False Religion** Emphasis on self Personal Holiness leading to ...nothing
- **True Religion** Emphasis serving Seeing others grow in Holiness

26 If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's **religion is useless**. 27 Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

All Talk and no Walk... is useless

- **Pure Religion:** Manifest in our lives both Outwardly/Inwardly

1. **Outward** Loving those in need as led by the Word/Spirit
2. **Inward** Hating/Keeping from those things God hates...

- What does God hate? What makes us spotted/dirty?

Proverbs 6:16 These six things the Lord hates, Yes, seven are an abomination to Him: 17 A **proud look**, A **lying tongue**, Hands that shed **innocent blood**, 18 A heart that devises **wicked plans**, Feet that are swift in **running to evil**, 19 A **false witness** who speaks lies, And one who sows **discord among brethren**.

SUMMARY James Chapter 1 Highlights

- Greet trials as pure joy knowing God allowed it for good
- **Trials** Test the authenticity of our Faith in a Good God
- **Faith** Assurance God will intervene for Good
- **Patience:** Future endurance produced by passing the current test
- **Purpose of Trials?** Make us complete/whole/ready for anything
- Close connection between Loving Jesus and Enduring Trials/Temptation

Be Doers of the Word... Not Hearers Only