

## When Trouble Comes

### Read [James 1:2-4](#) (ESV)

*Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.*



### Reflect

*Can you think of difficult things that you have gone through that you look back on now and can see how it was used by God to mature you and grow your faith in Him?*

Some people are led to believe that when they become Christians, all their problems will disappear. But when we go back to the Bible, we see that the Bible does not teach this at all. Quite the opposite, in fact! In the above verses, James said that we should consider it all joy when we meet various kinds of trials in life. He says it is *when* not *if* we encounter troubles. Jesus affirmed this when He said that in this world, you will have trouble ([John 16:33](#)). Peter also told us not to be surprised or think it strange when fiery ordeals come to test us. ([1 Peter 4:12](#)).

As believers in Jesus Christ, we should expect all different kinds of trouble and James tells us what we should do when trials come our way. He said that we should “count it all joy.” But how in the world can we consider our problems joy? Depending on what you are going through, you may find what James said offensive. You might be thinking, “Really, I am supposed to count it all joy that someone I love has cancer?” Or “I am supposed to be glad that I lost my job and don’t know how to provide for my family?” And if you feel that way initially, I understand. But stay with me.

James went on to explain the reason why we can rejoice when trials come our way—they have the potential to be beneficial to us. He said that trials test our faith and this testing produces steadfastness. To be steadfast means to stand firm and unwavering. Trials increase our faith and spiritual maturity. As Warren Wiersbe said, “Trials work for the believer, not against him.”

In [Romans 5:3-4](#), Paul explained more about how trials can benefit us: “we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope.”

Paul also wrote: “For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal ([2 Corinthians 4:17-18](#)). What you are going through right now may not seem “light” or “momentary” and no one is trying to minimize the pain and suffering that God’s people often must go through.

Imagine putting our earthly troubles on one side of a scale and the “eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison” that awaits us on the other side of the scale. The scale will tip drastically in favor of eternal glory. Our problems will seem light and temporary by comparison.

And as we endure our troubles and wait for that eternal glory, God is using the trials of life to perfect us and make us complete. This is a life-long process called sanctification. God uses everything that comes our way to mold us and shape us and make us more like Him. We won’t be perfect until Jesus returns but we will make progress every day.

Friends, the troubles we face in this life, no matter how difficult and painful, are opportunities for spiritual growth. We can trust that God is using these hardships to work on us. He is strengthening and maturing our faith, He is teaching us to stand firm, and He is making us more like Him. If you are in the midst of trial and trouble, I encourage you to trust God and trust His process. When trouble comes, count it all joy because He’s making you stronger.

### Respond

*Lord, trials are hard and painful. But I know that through my troubles, you are working in my life and strengthening me. Plus, I know that You will never leave me. Help me to never waste a trial so that I can continue to become more and more like You. Amen.*

### Reveal

Write a short, honest social post about a time of personal hardship and how God used it to strengthen you. End with a gentle invitation: “If you’ve ever wondered where God is in suffering, I’d love to talk.”