

#ADULTING

THE BOOK OF JAMES

REFLECTION- Adulting when times are hard

Passage: James 1:2-4

9/19/2025

James 1:2-4 | Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. 4 And let endurance have *its* perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

- Trials are not an *if* but a *when*- we do not enjoy when they come but we see God intends purpose for them
 - Paradoxical truth- we see that patience helps you endure trials but patience is also produced by those trials. One feeds the other.
 - Stability does not come from a lack of hardship, but of faith in the midst of it.
- How are we commanded to respond to trials?
 - “Consider it all joy” - this sounds absurd!
 - This is not our first response to trials. We value our comfort more than developing character through the difficult times.
 - What is joy?
 - A deep sense of contentment. Not based on what is happening around us.
- How can we have joy during trials?
 - “Knowing the testing of faith produces endurance”
 - Understanding that our faith is tested and it is being used to do a work for us, not against us.
 - God *tests* us to bring out the best. Satan *tempts* us to bring out the worst.
 - Endurance is the ability to keep going when things are hard. It can only be achieved through life experience- trusting God and obeying Him every step of the way. Knowing He is right there with us is joyous!
- Are you cooperating or resisting God in the trials?
 - “Let endurance have its perfect result”
 - God’s goal for our lives is maturity. God cannot build our character without our cooperation.
 - Example of cooperating: Joseph- He faced a life of trials but he recognized that God had purpose behind all the difficult moments. “...But God meant it for good” (Genesis 50:20)
 - Example of resisting: Jonah- He was given a difficult task but refused. God chastened him into submission. Jonah still did not obey God from the heart and did not grow in the experience. (see Jonah 1-4)

Begin your study time with prayer. Ask God to reveal Himself to you, help you understand what you are reading, and transform you with His Word (Ps 119:18).

1. Read James 1:2-4 in multiple translations (NASB, ESV & Amplified are all great options- you can easily compare in the Bible app or on biblegateway.com). Let the Scripture wash over you. Pick out words/phrases that stand out. If you don't know the meaning of any words, look them up.
2. How does James instruct believers to feel about trials? How do you react when various forms of testing come in your life?
3. Read John 16:33, Romans 5:3-4, 1 Peter 1:6-7, 1 Peter 4:12-13. What do these verses have to say about trials/tribulations?
4. What is the purpose of trials according to James? What does it mean to remain steadfast in trials? What is the result of maintaining steadfastness through trials?
5. What do you turn to in the midst of trials (ex: solitude, substances, experiences, community, the Bible, prayer, etc)? Do the things you turn to bring you closer to or further from God?
6. If you truly believe that trials are shaping you into someone "perfect and complete", how would that change your response to adversity? What is one thing you will do differently this week because of this truth?