

Joyous Trials
James 1:2-12
May 26, 2024
Sermon 2

Good morning / Welcome you to LCBC / Welcome you on this Memorial Weekend

Well good morning everyone! We welcome you this morning to Lake Chelan Bible Church! It is wonderful to have you here with us this morning. If you are visiting with us this morning on this Memorial Day Weekend we want to welcome you!

Speaking of / open service with prayer / honor those who have fought and passed

Speaking of Memorial Day, I'd like to open up service with a time of prayer as we honor those who have fought for our country and have since passed away. Many of those who have fought for the freedoms of our country have left behind loved ones who ultimately face the reality of the sacrifice on a daily basis.

Let's Pray!

Series of tests / authenticity of a diamond / tests on various stones / pass and fail

There are a series of tests that can be ran on the authenticity of a diamond. When tests are placed on various stones, they may pass some of the tests but fail others. The diamond however, when put through the series of tests will pass each one of them.

One test / strength against glass / diamond across surface / scour / cut / diamond not impacted

One test that can be ran on a diamond is by testing its strength against glass. When a diamond is run across the surface of glass it will scour it and eventually, cut through it. This test not only compromises the glass, but it doesn't impact the diamond.

Another test / flame for 30 seconds / heat causes fake to spider / diamond unblemished

Another test that can be ran is putting it to a flame for 30 seconds. The heat stress on a fake diamond will cause the diamond to spider when it is looked through, not giving it the clear and pure appearance with the naked eye. A diamond on the other hand when the soot is wiped away will be unblemished by the stress of the heat.

3rd test / stone in glass of water / counterfeit sinks slowly / bobs / buoyancy / diamond sinks

A third test you could run is dropping the stone in a glass of water. A counterfeit diamond will slowly sink and may even bob on the way down, bounce off the bottom of the glass demonstrating its buoyancy. A true diamond on the other hand will sink to the bottom of the glass like a rock.

Ladies / time comes / man of dreams / propose / take ring / glass of water / lighter

So ladies, when that time finally comes when the man of your dreams is to propose to you, take the ring from him and then pull out a glass of water and a lighter and put him to the test by putting it to the test.

Many other tests / validity of a diamond / some stones pass some or most /

There are many other tests you can run to prove the validity of a diamond where some stones will pass some or most of the tests but the diamond will pass all of the tests every single time which will tell the person that the stone is in fact a true diamond.

True of life / litany of tests / planned tests / anxiety, angst, unease / pressures of test

One thing that is true of this life is that we are faced with a litany of tests throughout our time on this earth. Typically, those who are faced with a planned test experience some form of anxiety, angst or unease with pressures of the approaching test.

Uneasy feelings amplified / pop quiz / teacher in school / loved pop quizzes / frustrating

These uneasy feelings are amplified when faced with a pop quiz. All of us have probably had a teacher in school who loved to throw out a pop quiz periodically and how frustrated most were with the lack of warning.

If we are honest / tactics of teacher / pop quizzes at any time / makes student ready

If we are honest with ourselves, the tactics of the teacher letting the student know that there could be a pop quiz at any time drives the student to always be ready.

Nice if life's television broadcasting system / warn us / sound about to hear / only a test

Wouldn't it be nice if our life's television broadcasting system could warn us like the old days that the sound you are about to hear is simply a test.

True of life outside academia / test of life are often unplanned / out of blue /

This is true of life outside of academia as well. Most of the time the tests of life that we often face are unplanned and out of the blue. These tests can be difficult, discouraging and a cause for stress in our lives.

If prepared / tests strengthen us / cling to Lord / unprepared / fail test / run to anything but the Lord

If we are prepared, the tests strengthen us and cause us to cling to the Lord even more. If we are unprepared, we fail the test and cling to anything that brings us temporary comfort but the Lord.

Let's take a look at our main text in:

James 1:2-12

² Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, ³ because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. ⁴ Let

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perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. ⁵ If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. ⁶ But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. ⁷ That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. ⁸ Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do.

⁹ Believers in humble circumstances ought to take pride in their high position. ¹⁰ But the rich should take pride in their humiliation—since they will pass away like a wild flower. ¹¹ For the sun rises with scorching heat and withers the plant; its blossom falls and its beauty is destroyed. In the same way, the rich will fade away even while they go about their business.

¹² Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him.

Pray with me

Many of us / people / beat around bush / lack boldness / people / tell it as it is / grow in /

Many of us probably have people in our lives who beat around the bush when they communicate maybe even lacking boldness. We also know people who tell it as it is and communicate with directness but could continue to grow in **softening their tone.**

Book of James / clear / direct / intentional / in our grill / communicates in love /

The book of James communicates to us in a very clear, direct and intentional manner, even getting into our grill at times. Though James is communicating to us in love, **he doesn't want to leave room for a variety of interpretations that take away from the intent of his instructions.**

Pastor Steve / opened with intro to James / 1:1 / Tone of humility / James intro /

Pastor Steve opened up with our intro to James last week as read verse 1 of our first chapter in James. James sets the tone of humility right off the bat by introducing himself as **"James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ."**

James / didn't mention / ½ bro of Jesus / same bedroom / dinner table / games together

James didn't mention anywhere in there that he was the half-brother of Jesus. He didn't mention that he may have grown up sleeping in the same room, eating at the same dinner table or playing games together as young boys.

James rather opens up with humility at his position and posture toward his Lord and Savior.

James dives right into challenges of life / first 10 words of 1:2 / belief something great

From there James dives right into the challenges of life that I discussed a few minutes ago. To the reader the first 10 words of verse 2 give us cause to believe that something great is **to come in the temporary.**

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“Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, when you...”

When you get to enjoy your family and friends?

When you welcome a new bay into the family?

When you land the job of your dreams?

When you sit down to your favorite meal?

No the finish on this verse is:

James 1:2

² Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds,

Other translations say consider it all joy or sheer joy...

Whenever you face trials of many kinds or various kinds.

James 1:2 / Right out of gate / When / not if / when

In other words, James 1:2 comes right out of the gate telling us that WHEN we face trials...not if, but when.

Back to teacher analogy / Pop quizzes in life / HS / college / no more pop quizzes /

Now lets go back to that teacher analogy I brought up in the introduction. We are going to get pop quizzes in life. If you thought when you graduated from high school or college that tests were no longer a part of your world then you have set yourself up for failure WHEN the test comes not IF but WHEN.

Warren Wiersbe / former pastor / Moody Church / Chicago / commentaries

Warren Wiersbe, a former pastor at Moody Church in Chicago said this in one of his commentaries:

“Our values determine our evaluations. If we value comfort more than character then trials will upset us. If we value the material and the physical more than the spiritual, we will not be able to count it all joy. If we live only for the present and forget the future, trials will make us bitter not better.”

James 1:2 / trials we face / variety / all shapes / sizes / many angles / out of blue

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James 1:2 tells us that the trials we face are going to be of variety. In other words, they are going to come in all shapes and sizes, come from many angles and will often be out of the blue.

Physical trials / mental / emotional / spiritual / in this lifetime

You are going to face physical trials, mental trials, emotional trials and even spiritual trials in this lifetime.

Why / James tell us to count it as pure joy / dreadful trials

So why does James tell us to count it as pure joy when we face such dreadful trials?

Verse 3 / James / starts with 'because' / conjunction that links verse 2 and 3

In verse 3 James starts with the word 'because'. This word is a conjunction which links verse 2 and 3 together.

Verse 2 / trialing issues / going to take place / approach in this way / BECAUSE...

Verse 2 says these trialing issues are going to take place in your life so approach these trials in this way because...

Because / tells us we are about to hear why / Count it all as joy

We are about to hear why James wants us to count it all as joy when trials come our way.

James 1:3

³because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance.

Trials / place pressures / on faith / produce perseverance

The trials that come and put pressures on your faith will produce what is called perseverance.

Back to diamond illustration / how diamonds are formed / deep in earth /

Going back to our diamond illustration, it is interesting *how* diamonds are formed in the earth. Diamonds are formed deep within the earth **between the earth's crust and the earth's super-heated core in a layer called the Manta.**

Earth's intense pressure / change molecular structure of carbon / crushing atoms /

It is here that the earth's intense pressure changes the molecular structure of carbon by crushing its atoms together **and forcing them into a new lattice like structure.**

Under extreme pressures and temperatures, carbon becomes diamonds.

Temperatures have to reach 2,700 degrees F / weight of over 4,000 men on foot

The temperatures have to reach 2,700 degrees Fahrenheit and the weight of over 4,000 grown men standing on your foot.

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Illustration / new meaning / trials diamond goes through / before finding way on your finger

This illustration can bring new meaning to the trials you might wear on your ring finger that a diamond had to go through before becoming such a precious stone!

Do you think diamond had joy in trials?

Now do you think the diamond had joy in the trials it went through to become a diamond?

What is Joy? / back in December / Joy different / happiness / temporary feeling /

What is Joy? We talked about this back in December. Joy is different than happiness. Happiness is a temporary feeling **based on our circumstances and emotions.**

Joy / not determined by circumstances or emotions / Joy present despite

Joy however is not determined by our circumstances or emotions. In fact, joy is something that is present despite **our circumstances or emotions.**

Joy / state of well-being / contentment / As a Christian / well-being found in Lord

Joy is a state of well-being or contentment. As a Christian this state of well-being is found only in the Lord.

Illustration of Horatio G. Spafford

When the great Chicago fire consumed the Windy City in 1871, Horatio G. Spafford, an attorney heavily invested in real estate, lost a fortune.

About that time, his only son, age 4, succumbed to scarlet fever.

Horatio drowned his grief in work, pouring himself into rebuilding the city and assisting the 100,000 who had been left homeless.

In November of 1873, he decided to take his wife and daughters to Europe. Horatio was close to D.L. Moody and Ira Sankey, and he wanted to visit their evangelistic meetings in England, then enjoy a vacation.

When an urgent matter detained Horatio in New York, he decided to send his wife, Anna, and their four daughters, Maggie, Tanetta, Annie and Bessie, on ahead.

As he saw them settled into a cabin aboard the luxurious French liner (Vee-la do ahh-vra) Ville du Havre, an unease filled his mind, and he moved them to a room closer to the bow of the ship. Then he said good-bye, promising to join them soon.

During the small hours of November 22, 1873, as the (Vee-la do ahh-vra) Ville du Havre glided over smooth seas, the passengers were jolted from their bunks. The ship had collided with an iron sailing vessel, and water poured in like Niagara.

The (Vee-la do ahh-vra) Ville du Havre tilted dangerously. Screams, prayers, and oaths merged into a nightmare of unmeasured terror. Passengers clung to posts, tumbled through the darkness, and were swept away by powerful currents of icy ocean.

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Loved ones fell from each other's grasp and disappeared into foaming blackness. Within two hours, the mighty ship vanished beneath the waters.

The 226 fatalities included Maggie, Tanetta, Annie and Bessie. Mrs. Spafford was found nearly unconscious, clinging to a piece of the wreckage.

When the 47 survivors landed in (Car-diff) Cardiff, Wales, she telegraphed her husband the words: "Saved Alone"

Horatio immediately booked passage to join his wife. En route, on a cold December night, the captain called him aside and said, "I believe we are now passing over the place where the (Vee-la do ahh-vra) Ville du Havre went down." Spafford went to his cabin but found it hard to sleep. He said to himself, "It is well; the will of God be done."

He later wrote his famous hymn, "It is well" based on those words.

Many / have faced trials / tragedy / some in extreme ways / despite testing /

Many of us have faced trials and tragedy. Some of us have faced these in extreme ways. Despite the testing of our faith in the small and large trials, **James begs the question: Is it still well with your soul?**

James 1:4

⁴ Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

James / tells us / turn hardships into learning / tough times / teach skill of perseverance

James tells us to turn our hardships into times of learning. Tough times can teach us the skill of perseverance.

Romans 5:3-5

³ Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; ⁴ perseverance, character; and character, hope. ⁵ And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

2 Corinthians 6:3-10

³ We put no stumbling block in anyone's path, so that our ministry will not be discredited. ⁴ Rather, as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: in great endurance; in troubles, hardships and distresses; ⁵ in beatings, imprisonments and riots; in hard work, sleepless nights and hunger; ⁶ in purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love; ⁷ in truthful speech and in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left; ⁸ through glory and dishonor, bad report and good report; genuine, yet regarded as impostors; ⁹ known, yet regarded as unknown; dying, and yet we live on; beaten, and yet not killed; ¹⁰ sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

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2 Peter 1:3-9

³ His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. ⁴ Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

⁵ For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; ⁶ and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; ⁷ and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. ⁸ For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ But whoever does not have them is nearsighted and blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their past sins.

I mentioned this quote back in October when we were in Hosea that:

“Character is revealed when pressure is applied.”

In other words / you see a person’s character / adversity / many facing adversity today

In other words, you see a person’s character surface in times of adversity. Many of you here today may be experiencing adversity in your life.

When this adversity sets in what is it that comes to your mind?

What roles out of your mouth?

What may cause you to do something you wouldn’t normally do had the situation been more relaxed?

Can’t know depth of character / see how we react under pressure

We can’t really know the depth of our character until we see how we react under pressure.

Easy to be kind / others / all is well / can we be kind / others treat us unfairly?

It is easy to be kind to others when everything is going well, but can we still be kind when others are treating us unfairly?

If you haven’t had the chance / Bait of Satan / John Bevere / Every believer /

If you haven’t had the chance as a believer to read a book called the “Bait of Satan” by John Bevere I would encourage you to pick up a copy. This is a book that every believer **should** have in their library to refer to as it focuses on living free from the deadly trap of being offended.

All of us / been offended / someone said or did / Is it right / hold offense? /

All of us have been offended by something someone has said or did to us. Is it right of us a believer to hold an offense **against another believer even if we were truly treated unjustly?**

Season of Christ’s return / Don’t know specific date / shouldn’t try to figure out /

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It is clear that we are in the season of Christ's return. We don't know when that specific day will come nor should we try and figure that day out **as we were reminded back in 1 Thessalonians.**

Through prophesy / fulfilled / confidently say / we are in season of return / Matt 24

Through prophesy being fulfilled we can confidently say that we are in as season of Christ's return as Jesus lays out in Matthew 24.

As we look at signs of Christ's return / Matthew 24:4-10 / It says

As we look at signs of Christ's pending return in Matthew 24:4-10 we can see that it says:

Matthew 24:4-10

⁴Jesus answered: "Watch out that no one deceives you. ⁵For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Messiah,' and will deceive many. ⁶You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. ⁷Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. ⁸All these are the beginning of birth pains. ⁹"Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. ¹⁰At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other.

The KJV of verse 10 says:

Matthew 24:10 (KJV)

¹⁰And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.

In verses 11 and 12 of Matthew, he continues on:

Matthew 24:11-12

¹¹and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. ¹²Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold,

The love being referred to here / agape love / tells us it is believers / offended /

This love that is being referred to here in Matthew 24:12 is agape love which tells us that it is believers who will become offended, **who will betray one another and who will hate one another because their love will grow cold.**

People in my life / all can relate / no matter how kind, forgiving, generous / response /

I have had people in my life, and I am sure all of you can relate, that no matter how kind, how forgiving, how generous you have been to someone, the response **is returned in anger, bitterness, and even betrayal.**

Again / I ask the question /

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So again I ask the question: **As believers, should we justly hold an offense when we have done all things Biblical and yet it is returned with evil?**

Galatians 6:8-9

⁸Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. ⁹Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

Now let me reread James 1:3-4:

James 1:3-4

³because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. ⁴Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

When you do good / undeserving people / pray for those who have sown evil / gossiped / slandered your name / have hurt you deeply /

When you do good things to people who are underserving, when you pray for people who have sown evil, maybe have gossiped or slandered your name, who have hurt you deeply...**when you persevere through this trial you will become more mature and complete.**

Matthew 5:43-48

⁴³“You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ ⁴⁴But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. ⁴⁶If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? ⁴⁷And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? ⁴⁸Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

This, my friends, IS the test!

Tests / not easy / more we pass / easier it is the next time

Tests aren't made out to necessarily be easy. The more often we pass the test, the easier the test is.

God wants to make us mature and complete, not to keep us from all pain.

Instead of complaining about struggles / see as opportunities for growth

Instead of complaining about our struggles, we should see them as opportunities for growth.

Thank God / promising to be with you / rough times / Ask for help / strength to endure

Thank God for promising to be with you in the rough times. Ask him to help you solve your problems or to give you the strength to endure them.

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Be patient / God will not leave you alone with your problems / He will help you grow

Then be patient. God will not leave you alone with your problems; he will stay close and help you grow.

James explains / trials / a reason for rejoicing / wholesome effects produced

James explains that trials are a reason for rejoicing because of the wholesome effects they produce.

Trials we face / difficulties from within / temptations to sin / outward difficulties /

The trials we face may be difficulties from within such as temptations to sin or they could come from difficulties we face externally **such as persecution.**

Persecution / major theme / scripture / Look at apostles / lives ended for sake of Gospel

We see persecution as a major theme throughout scripture. If you simply look at the apostles and how their lives ended for the sake of the Gospel you see the persecution that took place.

Simon, Andrew and James were a part of Jesus' inner circle.

John 21:18-19 / Simon / martyred / crucified on cross upside down

John 21:18-19 tells us that Simon was martyred by being crucified on a cross upside down.

Andrew / crucified / St. Andrews cross / shape of 'X' / tied to it / hung for days until passing / preached until the end

Andrew was crucified on what was called a St. Andrews cross. The cross was in the shape of an 'X' and he was not nailed to it but tied. He hung there for days until he passed away. It was said that Andrew preached while hanging on the cross.

James / not Jesus' brother / one of 12 / beheaded / King Herod I / persecuting Christians / Acts 12:1-3 / James first martyr among the 12

James (not the brother of Jesus that wrote this book but one of the 12) was beheaded by King Herod I after launching a new persecution of Christians campaign in Acts 12:1-3. James was the first martyr amongst the 12 apostles.

Luke 6:22-23

²² Blessed are you when people hate you,
when they exclude you and insult you
and reject your name as evil,
because of the Son of Man.

²³ "Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven. For that is how their ancestors treated the prophets.

As Christians / how we face trials / important to pass / fail / test / cling to Lord / run

As Christians, how we face our trials is important to whether or not we will pass the test or fail which will lead to whether you cling more to the Lord or walk away.

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Past couple of years / brought to attention / high profile believers /

Over the past couple of years we have brought to your attention high profile believers, pastors, musicians, evangelists who have walked away from the faith when trials came their way.

Some of these trials / internal / external / in the end test was failed / walked rather than cling

Some of these trials were internal trials, some were external trials. In the end these individuals failed the tests they were given and walked away rather than loving Him more by clinging to the Lord.

Loving God / key to enduring / trials of life / stronger bond of love / more Christian can endure

Loving God is the key to enduring all of the trials of life. The stronger the bond of love is for God the more the Christian can endure.

No matter trial / struggle / difficulty / endure because love holds them fast

No matter what the trial, the struggle, the difficulty, they endure because love holds them fast.

We can see / in any relationship / even on human level / strong bond of love = ability to weather storms

We can see this in any relationship even on a human level. When there is a strong bond of love between two people they can endure almost any storm that comes their way.

The bond / ties man / woman / to God / bond of love / not / superficial affection / sentiment that is selfish / as long as I get what I want I'll endure / true bond that endures any trial

The bond that ties a man or woman to God is the bond of love not just superficial affection, not just sentiment, that is selfish, as long as I get what I want from you I'll stick around but a true bond of love that can endure any trial.

Gardner Spring / former Pastor / New York City / asks these questions / enduring

Gardner Spring, a former Pastor in New York City asks these questions in a sermon about enduring:

1. Do you love God for what you imagine Him to be or for what He is?
2. Are you pleased with His character and do you love every part of it?
3. Do you love His holiness as well as His grace, and His justice as well as His mercy?
4. Do you love Him merely on account of His love to you, or do you love Him because He is, in Himself, lovely?
5. Do you love Him merely because you hope He will save you, or do you think you should love Him if you supposed He would damn you?
6. Is your love to God supreme?
7. Whom do you love more than God?
8. In whose character do you behold more beauty?
9. Whose blessedness is the object of warmer desires or more vigorous exertion?
10. To whom are you more grateful?

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James is saying, the people who endure trials are those that love Him.

There are some things that don't prove true love:

- Outward morality
- Theological knowledge
- Religious activity

What proves? / James Epistle tells us / gives series of tests on our love for God

What does prove true genuine love? This is what James' Epistle is all about. He gives us a series of tests on our love for God:

- The test of blame and temptation
- The test of how we respond to the word
- The test of an impartial love to others
- The test of righteous works
- The test of the tongue
- The test of humble wisdom
- The test of worldly indulgence
- The test of dependence
- The test of patience
- The test of truthfulness
- The test of prayfulness

All are tests / person who truly loves God will pass / perfection? / no / persevere? / yes

All of these are tests of which a person who truly loves God will pass. Does it mean we are perfect at these no, but do we persevere through them, yes!

James / transitions / topic of wisdom / verse 5 / shift connected to main theme / trials

James then transitions to the topic of wisdom in verse 5 however, this shift is still connected to our main theme of how we face trials.

James 1:5

⁵If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.

Repetition of word "lack" / James still on 'trials' / v.4 assures readers /

The repetition of the word "lack" shows that James is still discussing the subject of trials. In verse 4 he assures his readers that when perseverance has finished its work, the believer will lack none of the needed virtues and strengths.

v.5 / James speaks of period of testing / before perseverance has completed work /

In verse 5 however, James speaks of the period of testing before perseverance has completed its work. During such testing, if anyone lacks "wisdom," he or she may have it by asking.

People facing trials often lack wisdom / don't need wisdom of philosophical system /

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People facing trials often do lack wisdom. What they need is not the speculative wisdom of a philosophical system, **but the kind of wisdom that plays such a large part in the book of Proverbs.**

Proverbs 1:2-4

(The wise words of Solomon)

- ² for gaining wisdom and instruction;
for understanding words of insight;
- ³ for receiving instruction in prudent behavior,
doing what is right and just and fair;
- ⁴ for giving prudence to those who are simple,
knowledge and discretion to the young—

Proverbs 2:10-15

- ¹⁰ For wisdom will enter your heart,
and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul.
- ¹¹ Discretion will protect you,
and understanding will guard you.
- ¹² Wisdom will save you from the ways of wicked men,
from men whose words are perverse,
- ¹³ who have left the straight paths
to walk in dark ways,
- ¹⁴ who delight in doing wrong
and rejoice in the perverseness of evil,
- ¹⁵ whose paths are crooked
and who are devious in their ways.

Proverbs 4:5-9

- ⁵ Get wisdom, get understanding;
do not forget my words or turn away from them.
- ⁶ Do not forsake wisdom, and she will protect you;
love her, and she will watch over you.
- ⁷ The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom.
Though it cost all you have, get understanding.
- ⁸ Cherish her, and she will exalt you;
embrace her, and she will honor you.
- ⁹ She will give you a garland to grace your head
and present you with a glorious crown.”

It is God given wisdom / enables a person / avoid wickedness / live in righteousness

It is God given understanding that enables a person to avoid the paths of wickedness and to live a life of righteousness.

In the context of wisdom / understanding nature / purpose of trials / knowing /

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In this context wisdom is understanding the nature and purpose of trials and knowing **how to meet them victoriously.**

Wisdom available / to one who / asks God / not once by repeatedly / God's promise of wisdom

Such wisdom is available to the one who will “ask God” for it, not once only, but repeatedly; the promise is that wisdom “will be given to him.”

It is God's practice / give “generously” / “without finding fault” / does not scold /

It is God's practice to give “generously” and “without finding fault.” He does not scold **his children for asking or berate them for their deficiency.**

James is saying / verse 5 / if you don't know how to handle trial / don't /

What James is saying in verse 5 is that if you don't know how to handle a trial that is going on don't **look it up on google, don't ask artificial intelligence, don't phone a friend or ask the audience.**

Get Wisdom From God!

James then communicates to us how to ask for wisdom in verses 6-8.

James 1:6-8

⁶ But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. ⁷ That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. ⁸ Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do.

First of many / James uses nature as illustration / to make point

This is the first of many times where James uses nature as an illustration to make his point.

To / “believe & not doubt” / means / not only believing God's existence / believing in His loving care

To “believe and not doubt” means not only believing in the existence of God, but also believing in his loving care.

Includes relying on God / expecting / he will hear and answer / when we pray

It includes relying on God and expecting that he will hear and answer when we pray.

Must put away critical attitude when we approach God / He does not grant every selfish request

We must put away our critical attitude when we come to him. God does not grant every thoughtless or selfish request.

We must have confidence that God will align our desires with his purposes.

Word / double-minded / translated / dipsuchos / “two spirited” / “vacillating” /

The word translated “double-minded” is dipsuchos which means “two spirited” or “vacillating”. **A double-minded person is someone who wavers, doubts or is uncertain on the truths of God.**

James / only one in NT / use this word / double-minded / one other time / Psalms

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What is interesting is that James is the only one in the NT to use this word and it is only used one other time in Psalms.

Psalm 119:113

¹¹³ I hate double-minded people,
but I love your law.

Double-minded people / can't make up minds / good and evil

Double-minded people cannot make up their minds between good and evil.

When it comes to obeying God / no middle ground / must take a stand / obeying or not

But when it comes to obeying God there is no middle ground; you must take a stand. Either you are obeying him or you are not.

Either doing what he wants / or undecided / choose to obey God / say with psalmist /

Either you are doing what he wants, or you are undecided. Choose to obey God, and say with the psalmist, "I love your law".

James saying / when you ask for wisdom / when in a trial / don't toggle between /

James is saying, when you ask for wisdom when you are in the midst of a trial, don't toggle between your motives and God's motives, between what the world thinks you should do and what God thinks you should do. Ask for the wisdom of God alone!

How many times do we find ourselves doing this? God is the last resort for wisdom?

James 1:9

⁹ Believers in humble circumstances ought to take pride in their high position.

Christians who aren't in high positions / in world / should be glad / great in Lord's eyes

Christians who aren't in high positions in this world should be glad, because they are great in the Lord's eyes.

"believer in humble circumstances" / person without status / wealth / overlooked

This "believer in humble circumstances" is a person without status or wealth. Such people are often overlooked, even in our churches today, but they are not overlooked by God.

James 1:10-11

¹⁰ But the rich should take pride in their humiliation—since they will pass away like a wild flower. ¹¹ For the sun rises with scorching heat and withers the plant; its blossom falls and its beauty is destroyed. In the same way, the rich will fade away even while they go about their business.

Poor / glad that riches mean nothing to God / otherwise / people would be unworthy

The poor should be glad that riches mean nothing to God; otherwise these people would be considered unworthy.

Rich / should be / glad money means nothing to God / money easily lost

The rich should be glad that money means nothing to God, because money is easily lost.

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We find true wealth / developing spiritual lives / not financial assets / God interested

We find true wealth by developing our spiritual life, not by developing our financial assets. God is interested in what is lasting (our souls), not in what is temporary (our money and possessions).

Mark 4:18-19

¹⁸ Still others, like seed sown among thorns, hear the word; ¹⁹ but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful.

The Lord promises that he will take care of us.

Church, this is yet another test!

Matthew 6:25-34

²⁵ "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? ²⁷ Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life? ²⁸ "And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. ²⁹ Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. ³⁰ If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? ³¹ So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' ³² For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. ³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. ³⁴ Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Worship Team Back Up

Fairly often / after preaching / people wonder / read their diary

It is fairly often that after preaching a sermon we have had people approach us wondering if we had read their diary before writing the sermon.

Some wondering / when preacher / scanning congregation / as he presents sermon /

Some even wondering when the preacher is scanning the congregation as he presents his sermon that "is he possibly looking at me more than others?"

Can assure you church / value of preaching in expository manner / only Lord brings timing of word

I can assure you church that the value of preaching in an expository manner is that it is only the Lord that brings the timing of the word to our lives.

If it were true / preacher's gaze at individuals / linked to implications / individual's life /

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If it were true that preacher's gaze at individuals in the congregation is in fact linked to the implications of what is going on in the individual's life, **then this morning, I would be receiving the full stare down of today's content.**

James 1:12

¹²Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him.

James concludes / testing of faith / promise of reward / to one who stands the test /

James concludes his discussion of the testing of faith with a promise of the reward to be given to the one who successfully stands the test. **This verse is to be related to the preceding verses on the subject of trials.**

Expression / blessed is the man / reveals authors familiarity / language of OT

The expression "Blessed is the man" reveals the authors familiarity with the language of the OT.

We see this in /

We see this in **Psalm 1:1; 32:2; 34:8; 84:12; Proverbs 8:34; Isaiah 56:2; Jeremiah 17:7 and probably most familiar with the beatitudes in Jesus' sermon on the mount in Matthew 5:3-11.**

Blessed / distinctive religious joy / benefit of salvation

"Blessed" speaks of the distinctive religious joy that is a benefit of salvation.

This word describes / privileged state / person who does not give up / confronted

This word describes the privileged state of the person who does not give up when confronted **with trying circumstances but remains strong in faith and devotion to God.**

"Stood the test" / process of testing precious metals and coins / resulting approval / genuine

"Stood the test" suggests the process of successfully testing precious metals and coins and their resulting approval as genuine.

Perseverance under trial results in approval, and approval results in "the crown of life"

"Crown" / can designate kingly crown / more often / crown given to victorious athlete

The reference to "crown" can designate a kingly crown but it more often refers to the crown given to a victorious athlete.

James / word refers to reward given / believer who are victorious / struggles against trials

In James, this word refers to the reward given to believers who are victorious in their struggles against trials.

Closing

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Homegroup Questions

1. Discuss a trial that you have had in your past that was extremely difficult to find joy in. Were you able to eventually find joy in the trial? How?
2. Have you found it easier to persevere through trials now that you have gone through past trials?
3. How has the Lord used the perseverance of your trials to minister to others going through similar trials?
4. When was a time you found yourself in a trial and you had no idea how to work through it where you had to receive wisdom from the Lord? Did you look to other sources before you sought the counsel of God?
5. If wealth, power and status mean nothing to God, why do we attribute so much importance to them and so much honor to those who possess them?
6. If your material possessions were gone, what would you have left?