

James 1:1-3  
“Help Me To Understand This” (Part #1)

~ READ TEXT ~

AS YOU SETTLE IN...

- Turn to the book of **(James 1:1-3)**

~ LET'S PRAY ~

NOTE TAKERS...

- I've titled today's message: **“Help Me To Understand This”** (Part #1)

~ INTRO ~

THE OPENING VERSES OF THIS LETTER...

- Jumps right into the topic of *Trial*s...
  - Without wasting any words.

SO... IN ORDER FOR US TO GRASP...

- The flavor of this book...
  - We need to spend a little time unwrapping it.

~ BACKGROUND ~

LET ME START BY...

- Sharing that James is the half-brother of Jesus.

BUT... THE BIBLE ALSO RECORDS...

- That James didn't believe who Jesus said He was **(John 7:5) NKJV**.
  - James was a good Jewish man yet skeptical of Jesus' claims!

IN FACT...

- James and the entire family said Jesus was crazy **(Mark 3:21) NLT**.

**POINT BEING:**

- **Proximity to Jesus doesn't guarantee faith!**
  - James was raised in the same house & still dismissed Jesus!

PERHAPS THAT SPEAKS TO YOU THIS MORNING...

- Maybe your like James who believed in God...
  - But rejected his need for forgiveness of sins by Jesus!

James 1:1-3  
“Help Me To Understand This” (Part #1)

ONCE JAMES...

- Saw Jesus for who He is (1 Cor. 15:7) NKJV.
  - Everything changed from that point!

JAMES BECOMES...

- A leader & pillar in the early church in Jerusalem (Gal. 2:9(a) NLT.

JAMES... THEN WRITES...

- Exhorting Christians to live an authentic faith in a hostile world!

SO... THE MAIN THEME IN THIS BOOK...

- Is *Real Faith That Produces Genuine Works*.

HE SAYS...

- If you've accepted Jesus Christ as your savior...
  - Then let your life give evidence of that belief!

IN TODAY'S TERMS...

- We could cover all the bases with these phrases:

- 1) Become a Christian (get saved)
- 2) Join the mission of Jesus (serve)
- 3) Bring your friends (tell others)
- 4) Choose community (fellowship with other Christians)
- 5) Give generously to the work (weekly tithes & offerings)

THE EPISTLE OF JAMES...

- Boldly declares...
  - Let your actions reflect the inward reality you claim!

AND YOU KNOW WHAT...

- He's the perfect guy to say such bold thing!
  - Because he's lived in both camps.

SO... JAMES DEALS WITH...

- The **practice** of the Christian faith...
  - **NOT** rules intended to regulate behavior.

James 1:1-3  
“Help Me To Understand This” (Part #1)

- He focuses on the positive side with – “*this is what Christians do!*”
  - NOT you better do this or else!?!

LISTEN... YOU CAN'T MAKE A TOSTER...

- Be a blender.
  - And if you ARE a Christian this is what you do.

THE EXPRESSION OF YOUR FAITH...

- Is just a demonstration of who you are!

**JAMES SAYS...**

- IF... you believe in Jesus...
  - Then where's the evidence?

NOW... OUT OF THE 108-VERSE IN THIS BOOK...

- 54 of them are imperatives (urgent calls to action).
  - Literally, every other verse IS an action to take!!!

THIS GUYS IS PREACHER & PROPHET...

- All in one package!
  - Scholars say he was similar to John the Baptist.

**I LOVE IT!!!**

OK... ONE FINAL NOTE...

- Which is **super important** before we begin. (It's Key)

IT'S ONLY THRU... BOTH PAUL & JAMES...

- That we have a full-picture of faith on earth.

**PAUL WRITES ABOUT...**

- Justification & the first steps of inner-saving-faith...
  - From God's perspective.

**JAMES WRITES ABOUT...**

- Outward SERVING faith... from man's perspective.
  - Stating... that faith is active & noticeable (James 2:14) NLT.

NOW...

James 1:1-3  
“Help Me To Understand This” (Part #1)

- With all of that we begin the book.

**POINT #1 – BUILDING BLOCKS:** (v.2)

TRIALS ARE NOT ENEMIES TO DESTROY US...

- But they’re building blocks to develop our Faith.

OK... LET’S DISTINGUISH BETWEEN...

- *Trials* vs. *Temptations*.

THOSE WITH A (KJV)...

- Your Bible uses the word *Temptations*
  - Which is a poor use of an English word here.
    - The other translations seem to get it right.

TRIALS = Come from outside.

- Trials are to be seen as tests for “*proving*” who we are.

TEMPTATIONS = Come from inside.

- They’re solicitations to sin in areas of weakness.
  - This is what Satan loves to entice humans with.

RIGHT NOW...WERE TALKING ABOUT TRIALS!

GOD BRINGS TRIALS FOR TWO MAIN REASONS:

- 1) To show us where we are in the faith.
- 2) To increase our strength.

TRIALS HELP US IN FOUR WAYS:

- 1) Trials develop our endurance to handle pressure.
- 2) Trials bring us to full-development.
- 3) Trials create opportunities for prayer (ask for God’s help).
- 4) Trials help us exercise our faith.

NOW...

- What (v.2) gives is nothing more than perspective!

James 1:1-3  
“Help Me To Understand This” (Part #1)

HE SAYS *Count...*

- Which means to consider & evaluate.
  - Literally, think carefully about what’s happening.

*“Count it all joy”*

THE PERSPECTIVE IS...

- He’s instructing believers to an intentional recognition...
  - Of WHERE our joy exists!
- Our joy exists in a sphere unrelated to circumstances.
  - Our joy resides in an unchanging relationship with Jesus!

(Rom. 8:37-39) NLT

AND THIS IS WHY...

- We count it all joy!
  - Because the trial reveals what we’re made of...
    - By exposes our faith & hope in Jesus!

THE TRIAL DOESN’T TAKE AWAY OUR HOPE...

- It increases & deepens the longing for Jesus!

SO... GOD’S GOAL IN THE TRIAL...

- Is to produce a genuine faith that is stable!
  - No matter what obstacles a believer faces!

AND THE TOOLS...

- God uses to shape us are pressure points:

- a) Suffering
- b) Sickness
- c) Sorrow
- d) Frustration
- e) Perplexity

ALL OF THESE ARE USED BY JESUS!

~ IN CLOSING ~

James 1:1-3  
“*Help Me To Understand This*” (Part #1)

LET ME REMIND YOU OF THE GREAT HOPE AHEAD...

- For Christians **(Rev. 21:3-4) NLT**

IF YOU DON'T KNOW JESUS...

- May you surrender your life to Him today.

**~ LET'S PRAY ~**