

A. Wisdom: v.5

Everyone lacks wisdom in a trial. That is part of what makes it so hard.

The wisdom God gives bring the insight and understanding we need to endure.

This wisdom transcends our trial and changes our lives moving forward.

The wisdom of God never comes by itself. It brings two friends named humility and compassion. See James 3:17

B. Single minded faith: v.6-8

Trials and suffering build the quality of our faith removing the doublemindedness that plagues us. It burns away the things that keep us from trusting God fully and experiencing Him more deeply.

X. Conclusion:

I. Introduction:

How we deal with the pain of trials can define our entire lives for good or ill. We will be changed by suffering one way or the other.

For this reason the Scriptures devote much time to this subject. God is not silent about our pain

II. James 1:2-8

These verses are designed to give courage in the face of pain, wisdom in the face of confusion, and peace in the midst of the madness.

III. What is Joy? v.2

A. Joy is not found in the suffering itself.

Suffering in this life comes from the far reaching effects of sin and evil that are more profound than we ever imagined.

It took nothing less than God on a cross to deal with it and bring ultimate victory over it.

B. Definition of Joy: "A deep seated confidence that God knows what He is doing and that the results will be for His glory and our good." – Theodore Epp

***God's glory and our good are never separated**

IV. What Kind of Trials? v.2

A. "Various" means all kinds: Trials we bring on ourselves, trials others bring upon us and trials that come through circumstances we have no control over.

- B. “Encounter” and “trials” indicate serious difficulties. Taken together these words mean under pressure, surrounded, hard pressed, no way out and taking a beating.

V. What Are Trials Designed to Do? v.3

- A. Trials are designed to “test” our faith by revealing the quality of it.

You cannot rely on something that has not been tested.

- B. The quality of our faith dictates the kind of Christian life we will live.

The kind of relationship we have with God and with fellow believers, the kind of fruit we bear, the kind of witness we have and the kind of reward we receive.

VI. Trials Not Only Reveal The Quality Of Our Faith, They Also Build The Quality Of Our Faith. v.3

- A. It is endurance that builds our faith

Endurance is not passivity, resignation, grinding it out or playing the martyr.

It is a growing and steadfast hope that brings us closer to the true nature of faith. Hebrews 11:1

Faith is focused on who God is and what He says apart from what is happening to us and around us.

- B. Enduring as we grow in faith can get ugly, especially in the early and middle stages. It exposes things:

1. Things we trust in more than God

2. Things we believe about God that aren't true

3. Sin patterns in our lives that are deeply ingrained and destructive.

VII. The Two Great Dangers We Face In Suffering. Hebrews 12:5

- A. Taking it lightly – Rebellion

- I will call God into account
- I will have it my way
- I will blame others
- I will not face what needs to be faced.

- B. Growing faint hearted – Quitting

- God is not who I thought He was
- I am being paid back for my sins
- Nothing matters
- There is no hope

*Everyone falls into the ditch on the road of endurance because no one suffers perfectly. The key is don't stay there!

VIII. What Do We Experience If We Endure? v.4

- A. “Perfect” – mature, full grown, able to be and do. So much so that we are able to help others
- B. “Complete” – fully developed and whole, rough edges rounded off, gaps filled in, not disfigured or damaged
- C. “Lacking in nothing” – nothing left behind or left out that would hinder us from fulfilling God's will in our lives