

# **“How to Face Trials”**

## **James 1:1-12**

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### **I. Introduction**

- A. The book of James has been called “The Epistle of Applied Christianity”
  - 1. “Be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only” (James 1:22)
  - 2. “...faith without works is dead” (James 2:20)
  - 3. The book of James is for those who are long on theory but short on practice
- B. The theme of James is “faith that works”
  - 1. The first place James says “our faith should work” is in how we face trials
  - 2. How do you handle the hardships of life?
    - a) “Yet man is born to trouble as surely as sparks fly upward” (Job 5:7)
  - 3. James gives us some commands to follow to help us face our trials
  - 4. Who is James? (v. 1)
  - 5. Who is he writing to? (v. 1)
  - 6. When was he writing?
    - a) Early AD 40’s
  - 7. What was he writing?
    - a) Christianity 101
    - b) That real faith works
    - c) What better place to see your Christianity work than in the trials and testings of life
    - d) How do you respond when the heat is turned up?
  - 8. James tells us five things we need to do to face trials

### **II. A Joyful Attitude (James 1:2)**

- A. “Trials” (v. 2) and “temptations” (v. 2)
  - 1. It’s “when,” not “if”
  - 2. Our trials are different
  - 3. What should our attitude be towards trials?
    - a) Not to complain, gripe, or whine
    - b) We should “rejoice” and “count it all joy” (v. 2)
    - c) It’s a command
    - d) “Count” is a financial term. It means to evaluate. (v. 2)
    - e) It’s all about what you value. Our values determine our evaluations
    - f) Jesus said, “rejoice and be...” (Matthew 5:12)
    - g) “We glory in tribulation” (Romans 5:3)

### **III. An Understanding Mind (James 1:3)**

- A. What do I need to know?
  - 1. That my trials are designed by God to test my faith
    - a) “The trying of your faith” (v. 3)
    - b) Illustration- To prove its real

- c) If it cannot be tested, it cannot be trusted
- d) Illustration- Abraham (Genesis 22)
- 2. That my trials will make me strong
  - a) “Worketh patience” or “steadfast endurance” (v. 3)
  - b) Illustration- Like steel in the fire
  - c) Trials are for our good and God’s glory
  - d) Trials are to prove our faith and produce patient endurance

#### **IV. A Surrendered Will (James 1:4)**

- A. The great danger when we face trials: Don’t resist God’s working in your life. Let Him have His way (trust Him).
  - 1. Illustration- Like clay in the Potter’s hands
- B. If we surrender to God, two things will happen
  - 1. We will grow up
    - a) “That ye may be perfect” (v. 4)
    - b) It’s “mature”
    - c) Illustration- Fully ripe fruit
  - 2. We will be equipped to help others
    - a) “...and entire or equipped lacking in nothing” (v. 4)
    - b) Suffering equips us to serve
    - c) Illustration- Jesus’ words to Peter
    - d) (2 Corinthians 1)

#### **V. A Prayerful Heart (James 1:5-8)**

- A. What is one of the things we need most when we are going through a trial?
  - 1. Wisdom
  - 2. That’s not what we often want
  - 3. Like Paul’s thorn in the flesh, we ask for “escape”
    - a) Remember, it was given to Paul by God to keep him humble
  - 4. Pray for wisdom
    - a) That God will use it to teach you
    - b) That God will use it to humble you
    - c) That God will use it to wean you from the world
  - 5. James gives us four encouragements for prayer (v. 5)
    - a) God gives to all (v. 5)
    - b) God gives liberally (v. 5)
    - c) God doesn’t reproach (v. 5)
    - d) God will answer
      - 1) “...and it shall be given Him” (v. 5)
      - 2) God answers prayer
      - 3) Jesus said, “ask, seek, knock”
      - 4) James on prayer in chapter 4
      - 5) “Thou art coming to a king” – John Newton
      - 6) James tells us to ask in faith (vv. 6-8)

#### **VI. Keep Your Eyes on the Prize (James 1:9-12)**

- A. Two groups who are tried
  - 1. Poor man (v. 9)
    - a) “Brought up”
  - 2. Rich man (vv. 10-11)
    - a) “Brought down”
  - 3. Trials teach us the value of spiritual blessings
  - 4. Will you go to Heaven? Heaven is our eternal reward.

## **VII. Conclusion**

- A. Heaven or Hell?
  - 1. Illustration- The rich man and Lazarus
- B. Do you love Him?
  - 1. He first loved us!