

**"True Faith Grows in Trials"**

**Part 3**

**James 1:2-12**

**Introduction:** Several weeks ago we started a study in the book of James. We have talked about the recipients of the letter and the theme of the letter. The recipients were Jewish believers who had been scattered because of the persecution and the theme of the letter is **"How Faith Responds in Everyday Life Situations"**.

This letter tells us how to respond to everyday situations and at the same time it causes us to look at our faith closely to be sure our faith is not a false faith. You see in this letter James tells us how true faith reacts when faced with different situations.

Now for the past 2 lessons we have been looking at how "True Faith Grows in the Midst of Trials". We are looking at James 1:2-12.

**Notice James 1:2**

The word "temptations" here does not mean the temptation to do evil. It means "trials" or to bring it directly into our lives it refers to anything which comes into our lives that disrupts our daily routine. That can be from something small right up to a life changing event.

**Notice James 2:12**

The word "temptation" here is the same word we find in verse 2 so therefore verses 2 and 12 are sort of brackets and everything in between pertains to the trials which we face in our lives.

Now there is another very important word in verse 2 also. It is the word "when". James does not say "if" we have trials, but instead he says "when" and this tells us that trials are inevitable.

Let me refresh your memory about the struggles of life if I could.

**Genesis 3:17-19**

*<sup>17</sup> And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground **for thy sake**; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life:*

<sup>18</sup> Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;

<sup>19</sup> In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.

This is the curse that came on the entire human race because of sin and in it God told Adam as well as us that it is all "for our sake". That means that the trials of life all have a purpose which is for our benefit.

Now listen to this:

1. Before salvation they are designed to drive us to God.
2. After salvation they are designed to keep us dependent upon God.

But there is far more for the Christian than just keeping us dependent upon God and this we will see today.

The Last time we were together we started to look at the different points which James gives to help in this text to help us as we face the trials of life. Last week we looked at:

## I. Attitude and Focus

### Notice James 1:2

This is a command given by James that we are to count it all joy. The word "count" means "consider". The idea is that when we find ourselves in a trial we are to think it through and look to the end result. Last week I gave you 3 examples of Biblical characters who did that very thing in the midst of the trials they were in.

#### 1. Job

#### Job 23:10

<sup>10</sup> But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.

#### 2. Paul

#### Romans 8:18

<sup>18</sup> For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

### 3. Jesus

#### Hebrews 12:2

<sup>2</sup>Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Let us now move on to the next point which James gives us for help in the midst of trials.

## II. Knowledge

### Notice James 1:3

James now tells his readers the reason why they can count it all joy when they find themselves in the midst of the storms of life is because from experience James knows that the trying of their faith works patience. The word "patience" here means "endurance". The idea is this that for the Christian every time their faith is tried and tested the trial is used to build spiritual endurance.

Now I want to focus upon the word "knowing" for a few moments. The "knowledge" which James speaks of here is so important in our lives as we face the storms of life.

Let me borrow your mind for a few moments. James tells us here that the trying of our faith builds endurance. He knew this from experience. He had lived this building of endurance. But listen to this-James knew from experience that God allowed every trial to come and every trial which God permitted in James' life was used for James' spiritual growth. But the main point I want you to see here is that James knew God was at work and that God was using every trial he faced in his life.

Application:

Now listen to what I am about to tell you. Knowledge is a great source of comfort in the midst of trial when the knowledge is knowledge about God.

Let me explain what I mean.

The more we know of God's Word the better we will handle the trials of life. Let me point out some things we need to know when facing the trials of life.

#### 1. God loves us with an everlasting love.

**Jeremiah 31:3**

<sup>3</sup> The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.

**John 17:20-23**

<sup>20</sup> Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

<sup>21</sup> That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

<sup>22</sup> And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:

<sup>23</sup> I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

God loves us as much as He loves His own Son Jesus Christ.

**2. We are never alone.**

**Hebrews 13:5**

<sup>5</sup> Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

**Deuteronomy 31:6**

<sup>6</sup> Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.

**3. God is always at work in our lives.**

**Philippians 1:6**

<sup>6</sup> Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:

**4. God uses everything for our good.**

**Romans 8:28**

*<sup>28</sup> And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*

**Romans 8:35-39**

*<sup>35</sup> Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?*

*<sup>36</sup> As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.*

*<sup>37</sup> Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.*

*<sup>38</sup> For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,*

*<sup>39</sup> Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

This is all seen in the life of a man by the name of Joseph. It all started when he had a dream which he told to his family and in the dream his entire family was seen bowing down to him. His brothers hated the dream which by the way was of God. They then took him and through him into a pit.

**Genesis 37:23-24**

*<sup>23</sup> And it came to pass, when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stript Joseph out of his coat, his coat of many colours that was on him;*

*<sup>24</sup> And they took him, and cast him into a pit: and the pit was empty, there was no water in it.*

Next they decided to sell him to a group of Ishmeelites going down to Egypt.

**Genesis 37:27-28**

*<sup>26</sup> And Judah said unto his brethren, What profit is it if we slay our brother, and conceal his blood?*

*<sup>27</sup> Come, and let us sell him to the Ishmeelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother and our flesh. And his brethren were content.*

*<sup>28</sup> Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty pieces of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt.*

You can see the protection of God working through Judah.

In Egypt Joseph was sold to Potiphar.

**Genesis 37:36**

*<sup>36</sup> And the Midianites sold him into Egypt unto Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's, and captain of the guard.*

In the house of Potiphar he served in a way that honored God and he was elevated to the top position among Potiphar's servants.

**Genesis 39:1-4**

*And Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hands of the Ishmeelites, which had brought him down thither.*

*<sup>2</sup> And the LORD was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian.*

*<sup>3</sup> And his master saw that the LORD was with him, and that the LORD made all that he did to prosper in his hand.*

*<sup>4</sup> And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand.*

But while he was there he was falsely accused by Potiphar's wife and he was then taken and cast into prison.

**Genesis 39:19-21**

*<sup>19</sup> And it came to pass, when his master heard the words of his wife, which she spake unto him, saying, After this manner did thy servant to me; that his wrath was kindled.*

*<sup>20</sup> And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were bound: and he was there in the prison.*

*<sup>21</sup> But the LORD was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison.*

In the prison he interpreted 2 dreams of the butler and the baker. The baker was executed but the baker was taken out of prison and he served Pharaoh but he forgot Joseph.

**Genesis 40:23- 41:1**

*<sup>23</sup> Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgat him.*

*And it came to pass at the end of two full years, that Pharaoh dreamed: and, behold, he stood by the river.*

So Joseph is forgotten for 2 full years. It is at the end of those years that Pharaoh had a dream and then the butler remembered him and Joseph was taken from the prison to stand before Joseph to interpret his dreams. When he revealed the dream to Pharaoh Joseph was then promoted to 2<sup>nd</sup> in command in Egypt.

**Genesis 41:39-44**

*<sup>39</sup> And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art:*

*<sup>40</sup> Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou.*

*<sup>41</sup> And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt.*

*<sup>42</sup> And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck;*

*<sup>43</sup> And he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had; and they cried before him, Bow the knee: and he made him ruler over all the land of Egypt.*

*<sup>44</sup> And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I am Pharaoh, and without thee shall no man lift up his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt.*

Now let us look at how long this entire process took.

**Genesis 41:46**

*<sup>46</sup> And Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt.*

This all happened over a 13 year period. It started when he was 17.

**Conclusion:**

God was doing a work in Joseph's life. He had a position for Joseph to fill which would be one of great importance. To get him there his faith was tested severely on several occasions. Throughout the 13 years Joseph endurance continued to grow.

Listen now. This is recorded here for our learning. The knowledge you need in the midst of trials is the knowledge of God's Word found in accounts just as this. The more you sit under the teaching of God's Word the more prepared you become for the trials of life. The more you read God's Word the more prepared you become.

The more we study the Word the more we come to know that the trying of our faith builds our endurance and all we go through is appointed by God for that very task.