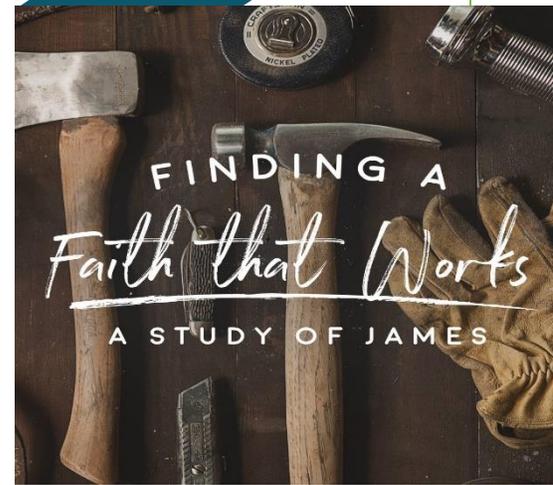


# JAMES: FINDING A FAITH THAT WORKS

## Lesson 2 - Trials to Grow- James 1:2-17

### INTRODUCTION/THOUGHTS

- Remember that as we study James, we are asking God to grow our faith in Him. True faith produces faithful Christ-like works.
- This week, we are going to examine something that we do not naturally enjoy: trials. However, God clearly teaches that He uses our trials to grow our faith.
- In these verses, ask the big question, **“As Christians, how are supposed to view and respond to trials.”**
  1. Even the most mature Christians face trials. No one is exempt. (Many of us are facing trials right now.)
  2. God uses trials to lead to spiritual maturity.
  3. Trials should help us be deeply aware of our need for God. They should not cause us to cast blame on God. He does not lead us into trials to tempt us or dare us to sin. God is for us!



### A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A TRIAL OF FAITH AND A TEMPTATION OF LUST

- It is important to note from the beginning that God does not lead us into trials to tempt us to sin. Trials are to grow our faith. Within a trial, we can be tempted to sin, but the text makes it clear that temptation comes from our sin nature. **God does not tempt us with sin. God is for us!** – vs. 13-14
- The results are different as well. **When we trust God through trials, it leads to His glory and increased endurance in our faith.** (vs. 3-4, 12). When we fall to temptation during our trials, it leads to self-gratification, spiritual weakness, and sin. (vs. 14-16)

### LESSONS FROM THE TEXT.

Vs. 2 - “My brethren, count it all joy...” - Two things we know about trials...

- Christians face them.
- God can use them for growth and joy in Him.

Vs. 3 - The trying of your faith works patience. - The word *works* means “to accomplish or work out through labor” and *patience* here does not mean to wait politely. It has the meaning of endurance or persevering with steadfastness.

*Untested faith has the potential to lead to weak faith.*

Vs. 4 - “Let patience have her perfect work.” - In other words, let trying work, this enduring work completely finish so that you can be mature and complete.

“Wanting nothing” or lacking nothing - Think of a project that you started but were not able to finish. I think we have all had things sitting around that we could not use for a while. A Christian who gives up in the midst of a trial will seem like an unfinished project.

Vs. 5-8 - **We need wisdom to face trials, but God does not leave us to figure things out on our own.** He is commanding us to seek His wisdom and he promises to give generously and not grudgingly (upbraideth not). We are to ask God confidently knowing that He is for us!

We are given an illustration for those who ask God doubtfully or live doubtfully before God. They are like an object tossed around in the ocean. They have no stability or footing in life. **Let's ask God to destroy doubt in our lives. We all struggle with doubt at points. We can either focus on our doubts and glorify our fears, or we can glorify our God and see our doubts fade away.**

**Our families, our church, our community, and our world need Christians who fully rely on their God and are not unstable in their ways. If we plant one foot on God's Word and one foot on man's opinion, we will fall!**

Vs. 9-11 - **Trials make us vulnerable. Trials humble us.** However, God teaches that He lifts those who are humble. As difficult as it may be, we can rejoice in the humbling work of trials. Why?

- **The greatest benefit of trials is that they make us deeply aware of our need for God.**

Vs. 12 - God makes a promise to those who endure trials. A distinct part of this promise that we often miss, however, is that trials will end. Notice the tense: "for when he is TRIED..." It will end. Trials do not last forever. Hang on tightly to the Lord. He is guiding you to something greater.

Vs. 13-16 - Notice the dangers we face spiritually during a trial.

1. Giving up. (vs. 4)
2. Begrudging God. (Vs. 13) - God never tempts with sin, and is never tempted by sin!
3. Relying on self and giving into our sin nature. (vs. 14-16)  
Our natural response to a trial is to panic, lash out, hurt others, promote self, seek satisfaction, and do whatever it takes to escape on our own.

It is dangerous to only seek the end or easement of a trial.

Infection and Pain Illustration - If a wound is not tended to because of the pain that will be endured, infection will set in and can cause far greater damage. Sometimes the trials we face are God's way of cleaning out our lives of what can harm us.

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## FAMILY DISCUSSION / PERSONAL STUDY

The Book of James teaches us that true faith reveals itself by works. What we do in our Christian life is fueled by what we believe.

Take *time* together as a family in God's Word. *Think* throughout the day to reinforce the main truth of the week. *Remember* significant ways God has worked in your lives.

### TAKE TIME

- Read 1 Corinthians 10:13. What does this verse reveal about God, His relationship with you, and His desires for you? (Hint: God is for you!)

### THINK

- Think of some trials that you have faced, maybe even trials from the current circumstances of life. Now write out how those trials have led or could lead to joy in Christ.

Trial	Joy

### REMEMBER

- Meditate on ways you have been tempted and how God has provided ways to escape. Think toward future temptations and ways that God can help you escape.