

The book of James

1:2

✧ **James 1:2** *My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials,*

Welcome back to our study in the book of James.

You may think it odd that I would be starting with the opening verse that we are going to be studying this week.

I have to tell you; God is too cool. It seems a lot of times when I am teaching on a subject, the Lord will allow me to go through some of the things I am teaching on that week. I have to tell you this is true for this week's study. If you have been following along in all these studies each week, then you know that I update the studies once a week, usually on the weekend. Well some of you may have went to the study and found it has been the same for the last two weeks. That's where this week's verse comes in.

✧ **James 1:2** *My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials,*

The Lord has allowed me to go through a particular trial the last week.

You see, last weekend my computer crashed. Bad, yes, but even worse is I do not have any of it backed up on USB or in the cloud.

Glory be to God; all the material that is on the website I can access. But everything on my computer is a different story. Including the devotionals (a years worth) I do each week, along with three books I am currently writing, not to mention my personal finances and a lot of other things that, God willing, I will be able to recover.

Now I'm not telling you these things to feel sorry for me or even to boast in what the Lord is doing in my life. I tell you this because as devastating as it is, I still have joy in my life and in what the Lord is doing.

You see with a new study just starting out, means a new me and how the Lord is dealing with me personally and with this web site. I have no fears even if I am unable to recover everything off my old computer's hard drive. You see, through this I was able to get a new computer that is better than the one I had.

That is an interesting thing also which I must also tell you about.

When I determined that I was unable to fix my old computer, I went shopping for a new one, asking the Lord to guide me and allow me the best deal.

So I searched the Internet and went to a few places, the one I wanted was fairly inexpensive but it would have taken a week to get. But because of the studies here, I didn't have a week to wait.

So I went somewhere else and still the one I wanted was still fairly inexpensive, but still it would take a few days to get it. Finally, I found one that was less expensive and I was able to take it home right away.

Did you get what you wanted? No, but I got what I needed.

In this the Lord has taught me that I don't need the fastest, top of the line computer. I was able to get the least expensive one which fits better for me financially.

You see, we think we need or deserve the best of everything. After all, the world tells us we deserve the best and should have the best. But God knows what we need, and what may be the best in the world's eyes is not what we really need.

Think of your children, if they had it their way they would have cake and ice cream for breakfast lunch and dinner. Now cake and ice cream are not bad for them, but it's not what they need. We as adults know they need good nourishing food and a little cake and ice cream for dessert afterwards every once in a while.

We look at the neighbors and see what they have and want the same thing, but God knows what we need. So we may not always get what we want, but God always give us what we need.

What does all this have to do with this week's study? Nothing, but it may be just what you need to hear this week.

So back to James.

✂ **James 1:2** *My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials,*

“OK Steve, that's the third time we have read this. So what does it mean?”

I'm glad you asked that.
The KJV calls “trials”, “temptations”.

In the Living bible it reads as follows.

✂ **James 1:2 (Living)** *Dear brothers, is your life full of difficulties and temptations? Then be happy,*

So how in the world can we be happy when we are tempted or going through trials? Well, in the world there is no joy or happiness. Sure there may be a temporary or false joy that the world gives, but it never sticks around and it's usually a covering for the pain we are enduring.

Some people go out shopping when they are going through problems, some will drink or take drugs, some will eat, some will go find a new boyfriend or girlfriend, some will move and/or change their jobs, some will... well you get the idea.
But if you think about all these things, or other things people do, you realize that they are only a temporary fix or a covering for the problem.

But God has a better way.

✧ **James 1:3 *knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.***

God allows us to go through various trials and temptations to help us grow as His children, and one thing He teaches us is patience.

So how did God teach me patience in what happen to me?

Well I could have gone out and paid more money for a computer, but had to wait a week before I could get it. The patience came in when I decided that this is not what the Lord had for me. So with prayer and patience I continued to look until I knew what the Lord had for me.

If I had not been patient in the Lord, you wouldn't be reading this right now and would have to wait another week.

“OK Steve, but you're just talking about a computer. I have had some real problems that you just would not imagine.”

You are right, it is just a computer and even though there may be a lot of lost work, it's not life threatening, or what most would call a real trial.

Allow me to share another, very personal thing in my life that happened about ten years ago. Over 25 years ago, my dad went to be with Jesus. If any of you have lost a loved one, then you know what I am talking about.

My dad lived in another state and he had a triple bypass heart surgery, he lasted about a month before he passed away. But one week before he died (physically) he called me on the phone.

Now, because of what he went through with the operation, when he talked he was talking as loud as he could but I could only hear a whisper. At that point I knew my dad didn't have much longer to live.

One week later he went to be with Jesus. I was upset because I just lost my dad for a short time, because I know that I will see him again in heaven, but the Lord allowed me to have a peace I just can't explain. The tears were few because I knew my dad was no longer in pain, and in fact when someone goes to heaven, they are totally happy and with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ!

That's where the peace and joy comes in during these times.

But maybe there are other trials you are going through even right now. It could be financial, or problems in your marriage or with your kids. Maybe you are being attacked at work, or even in your neighborhood.

There are a few misconceptions that people have when they are going through a trial or temptation.

The first is, why is God doing this to me?

‡ **James 1:13** *Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone.*

We will go over this verse more in detail when we get to it, but we must understand that God does not tempt us. It doesn't mean that God won't allow us to be tempted. Another misconception is that satan is attacking me. Now don't get me wrong satan is the tempter.

‡ **Matt 4:3a** *Now when the tempter came to Him.*

But it's not always the case which we will also see as we continue on in James.

A third is that God is punishing you or you have done something wrong that's why you are going through what you are.

This may be true, but then it may not. If you go out drinking and driving, then you get in an accident, then you brought this on yourself. But if you are just out driving in your car, and someone else crashes into you because they were drinking and driving, then you did not bring that upon yourself.

So still we don't know how to have joy during these times. If you read verses 2 - 4 this may give you a better understanding.

✧ **James 1:2-4** *My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.*

As I have said before, the world says we need everything and we need it now. When we go through trials it can cause us to take our eyes off of Jesus and others and put them on ourselves. But in order to have joy in your life you must remember the word joy. What does joy mean?

Jesus
Others
Yourself

You see if you try to have joy any other way then you no longer have joy.

Jesus
Yourself
Others

Yourself
Jesus
Others

No matter how you arrange it, unless you put Jesus first in your life, then put others next and have yourself as last then you will never have joy.

Why is this so important when you are going through trials?

If you put Jesus first, then you are putting your trust in Jesus and that He will get you through whatever you are going through.

If you put others next, then you will always have friends there by your side to help comfort and support you.

Then when you put yourself last, you don't have time to think or worry about your trials because you are focused on Jesus and others.

Another key thing James is speaking of here is not ordinary everyday trials or temptations, but the ones that test your faith.

✚ knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.

We won't go to it, but I would encourage you to read the book of Job.

Here is a man who was the perfect example of what James is talking about.

Ok we will go to a little of Job.

✚ Job 1:8-12 *Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?" So Satan answered the LORD and said, "Does Job fear God for nothing? Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face!" And the LORD said to Satan, "Behold, all that he has is in your power; only do not lay a hand on his person." So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.*

Satan was not just attacking Job, but he was attacking Job's faith in God, but if you read it through, we find that Job was a man of faith.

✚ Job 1:22 *In all this Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong.*

We always say and think that we would like to be like Jesus, perfect and complete.

✚ But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

It's during these times of trials and temptations that we become more like Jesus, because as we go through them we become strengthened spiritually.

As a Christian we should have joy, because as Christians we have the Holy Spirit in us,

and part of the fruit of the Spirit is Joy.

† ***Gal 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness.***

But perfect peace comes from the Lord.

† ***Isaiah 26:3-4 You will keep him in perfect peace,
Whose mind is stayed on You,
Because he trusts in You.
Trust in the LORD forever,
For in Yah, the LORD, is everlasting strength.***

To end this week's study, I have one question for you. When you are going through trials and temptations, are you trusting in the world or the Lord to see you through. If you said the world, then you will never have joy. If you said the Lord, then know that's where your joy will come from.

This week's study was an introduction to trials, next week we will study this more as we continue on in the book of James.

May the Lord grant you His perfect peace, which surpasses all understanding!