

# The book of James

1: 2-8

✠ **James 1:2-8** *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. If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.*

Welcome back to our study in James.

This week we will go over verses 2-4 some more and then continue on.

Last week we learned that we as Christians can have joy when we go through trials because of the Lord in our lives.

We also learned that by going through these trials we are strengthened as long as we do it with patience.

Have you ever wondered why we have to go through trials and temptations?

Why can't God just make us perfect when we accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior?

God has given us a free will to love Him and serve him. If we were changed, we would no longer have that free will.

Paul also gives us this example as a race.

✠ **1 Cor 9:24-27 (NLT)** *Remember that in a race everyone runs, but only one person gets the prize. You also must run in such a way that you will win. All athletes practice strict self-control. They do it to win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for an eternal prize. So I run straight to the goal with purpose in every step. I am not like a boxer who misses his punches. I discipline my body like an athlete, training it to do what it should. Otherwise, I fear that after preaching to others I myself might be disqualified.*

Suppose you were in a race with a bunch of other people, but your dad was in charge of the race. As soon as the starting gun went off you knew you would win, because your dad put you at the finish line just as others are getting started.

If you knew that, then you wouldn't train, but would just sit back, eating chips and candy not training at all for the race.

When the others get to the finish line and see you there, they will know how you got there, not by training, but by cheating.

You see, God has given us a free will, but He also wants us to be strong spiritually, and not flabby, lazy Christians.

With no training then there is no strengthening.

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

People will ask why they can't make it through certain things. A lot of times it's because they are not in God's word, they don't fellowship with other believers, and their prayer life is all about talking to God only when they want something.

If you are in a race and never prepare by practicing, eating right and exercising, then you can be sure you will come in last place. But as Paul says: ***You also must run in such a way that you will win.***

When we go through trials and temptations, you will notice that they get progressively more major. It's all part of the growing process as a believer.

Remember our study in Genesis, where Joseph seems to go through trial after trial? They started off small and seemed to get worse and worse. God knew just how much Joseph could handle and allowed him to go through each trial to be prepared for the next one. The end results we saw was that Joseph was a man who loved God no matter what he was going through, and he was very strong spiritually. We also see the end results, which was Joseph being second in command next to Pharaoh. If Joseph hadn't gone through what he did, he wouldn't have been able to handle the task God had laid before him. What was that task? To save hundreds of thousands of lives from starvation because of the seven years of famine. Look what Joseph says about it.

† ***Gen 45:7-8 And God sent me before you to preserve a posterity for you in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you who sent me here, but God; and He has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.***

† ***Gen 50:19-20 Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive."***

So how does this apply to us, or maybe what you may be going through right now? There have been many times that I have gone through things that I didn't know what God was doing in my life. But as I went on I could start to see what God was doing with the particular thing I was going through. Maybe you are going through something and see no hope in sight. You may be almost ready to throw in the towel and give up. Let me encourage you not to give in. Satan wants you to think that it's the end of the world or that God doesn't love you or care about you. After all, if God really loved you, He wouldn't allow this to happen to you, right? WRONG! Sometimes we go through different trials or temptation to learn and grow spiritually.

- † **2 Cor 4:17-18 (NLT)** *For our present troubles are quite small and won't last very long. Yet they produce for us an immeasurably great glory that will last forever! So we don't look at the troubles we can see right now; rather, we look forward to what we have not yet seen. For the troubles we see will soon be over, but the joys to come will last forever.*
- † **John 16:33** *"These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."*
- † **Deut 8:2-5** *And you shall remember that the LORD your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD. Your garments did not wear out on you, nor did your foot swell these forty years. You should know in your heart that as a man chastens his son, so the LORD your God chastens you.*
- † **Ex 20:20 (NLT)** *"Don't be afraid," Moses said, "for God has come in this way to show you his awesome power. From now on, let your fear of him keep you from sinning!"*

But sometimes we bring trials upon ourselves. Just as a child does something wrong and is disciplined by their parents, so our heavenly Father disciplines us.

- † **Heb 12:5-6** *And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons:  
"My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD,  
Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him;  
For whom the LORD loves He chastens,  
And scourges every son whom He receives."*
- † **Psalms 119:65-68** *You have dealt well with Your servant,  
O LORD, according to Your word.  
Teach me good judgment and knowledge,  
For I believe Your commandments.  
Before I was afflicted I went astray,  
But now I keep Your word.  
You are good, and do good;  
Teach me Your statutes.*

But no matter what the reason you are going through what you are, just know that the Lord loves you and will never leave you. He is demonstrating His love through teaching you or by correcting you because you are His child!

† **Romans 8:16-17 (NLT)** *For his Holy Spirit speaks to us deep in our hearts and tells us that we are God's children. And since we are his children, we will share his treasures--for everything God gives to his Son, Christ, is ours, too. But if we are to share his glory, we must also share his suffering.*

When we go through trials and temptations, James instructs us to seek God and His wisdom on what to do.

✎ **James 1:5-8** *If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.*

But when we ask for wisdom. We must believe that God will answer us and give us that wisdom. As James explains here, if you doubt God, then you are like the waves of the sea.

Did you see the movie the Perfect Storm? Even if you haven't it, you may have at least seen the commercials for it, where this little fishing boat is being tossed by this huge wave, and as the commercial shown that the little boat was about to be swallowed by this huge wave.

That's the same way we are when we doubt God. We are overcome by the world until the problem seems so huge that we are swallowed up in it. Today, if you have doubted God, let me remind you that the Lord was the only one who ever calmed the seas.

† **Matt 8:26-27** *But He said to them, "Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?" Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. So the men marveled, saying, "Who can this be, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?"*

Today Jesus may be asking you, **"Why are you fearful?"**

God also says:

† **Psalms 118:6** *The LORD is on my side;  
I will not fear.  
What can man do to me?*

† **Heb 13:6** *So we may boldly say:  
"The LORD is my helper;  
I will not fear.  
What can man do to me?"*

If you have doubted God, then:

✎ *For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.*

The NLT puts it this way.

✠ **James 1:8 (NLT)** *They can't make up their minds. They waver back and forth in everything they do.*

It's like the girl sitting in a field with a daisy in her hand, pulling off each petal as she says, "*He loves me, he loves me not. He loves me, he loves me not.*"

You may be asking yourself, "*Will God help me this time or won't He?*"  
It's not a matter of, if He will or not, it's a matter of if you believe He will.

Next week we will ask, is it ok for a Christian to be rich?

May God richly bless you in His Love, Grace and Mercy!