



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

Joy In Trials

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The Epistle of James (AD 45-50), like other general epistles in scripture is named after its author. James was the leader of the Jerusalem church (Jewish believers in Christ). In this epistle James is addressing the twelve tribes and specifically attempting to be encouraging to the believing Jews who were struggling with trials and had scattered to all parts of the world. In many of his letters, the apostle Paul, addresses how people come to salvation through God's grace through faith alone in Jesus Christ, James begins to address the Christian walk and the how salvation can be verified by testing and the righteous reactions during difficult times through total faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (Jm. 1:1-8) NASB). So who was James?

James, a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad: Greetings. (1:1)

James was a humbly man. James was not an apostle or one of the disciples and did not believe in Jesus until after seeing Jesus post resurrection. James could have described himself as the half-brother of Jesus Christ; leader of the Jerusalem church; leader of the Council of Jerusalem. But rather, he said that he was, "a bond-servant (*doulos* Gk. - slave), of God and the Lord Jesus Christ." What did James share about troubles and trials that will be experienced in a believer's life?

Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. (1:2-5)

Consider trials and troubles in our lives as a test and opportunity to grow in our faith. James says when, not if, believers face challenging times and trials that they should consider it joy.

The human response is not to consider it joy, so it takes a conscious evaluation and decision to address them with joy. Believers can consider the trial and testing of their faith with joy when they truly can rely upon the Lord for their strength, having a living faith that the Lord will see them through the trial with the ultimate outcome of the trial producing a stronger growing mature Christian. These trials produce endurance in the genuine Christians walk. Trials reveal the believer's faith and can grow the believer's faith and character. The believer's faith is built on love for Christ and that love is tested to show the validity of his faith in Christ. Nothing can separate a believer from the love of God (Rm.8:38-39). Wisdom can be defined as knowing the right thing to do during the trial. James shares that if you don't know the correct wise decision during a trial or test, ask God. How do we ask?

But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways. (1:6-8)

Ask God in faith without doubt. A believer does this through pondering of the scriptures and fervent genuine spirit-filled prayer with an expectation of answered prayer. The Christian is to have a believing heart and not a hesitant or doubting belief that God will not answer prayer. James describes that a person attempting to have a foot in the world and a foot in God's kingdom will not make wise decisions.

For Your Consideration:

- Do you see your trials and troubles as opportunities to grow in your walk with God?
- During the trials and troubles do you have faith and seek out God's wisdom?
- When you pray, do you pray in faith with expectation or rather with doubt and hesitation?

BIBLE STUDIES

LEGISLATORS: WEDNESDAYS (SESSION OR HEARING DAYS) AT 7:30AM, STATEHOUSE ROOM 44

STATE STAFF AND LOBBYISTS: WEDNESDAYS AT 12:10PM, STATEHOUSE ROOM 44