

Midweek Study

Notes



No Pain, No Gain

James 1:1-4

Introduction to Book of James

WHO WAS JAMES? James, the oldest half-brother of Jesus.

WHEN WAS JAMES WRITTEN? 48-50 AD – One of the oldest books of the New Testament. (James 2:2 – the word “synagogue” is used, indicating an early date.)

WHAT IS THE THEME OF JAMES? 1:22 – “But be ye doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.” The theme of James is to be a doer of the Word of God.

James 1:1, “James, a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad: Greetings.”

- “bondservant” (Gk. Doulos) lit. “slave” meaning, “one that is owned by another without any rights of his own.”
- “Lord” – He is Master; “Jesus” – He is Mediator; “Christ” – He is Messiah
- James is writing to Christian Jews of all the tribes living outside of Palestine
- “Greetings” or be joyful or be happy.

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

“Trials are not electives in God’s school; they are required courses.” – John Phillips

“count it all joy”

- IT’S WHAT JESUS DID (Heb. 12:2 – “who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross.”)
- IT’S WHAT PAUL DID (2 Cor. 7:4 – “I am exceedingly joyful in all our tribulation”)
- IT’S WHAT PETER DID (1 Peter 1:6 NLT – “So be truly glad. There is wonderful joy ahead, even though you have to endure many trials for a little while.)

“To REJOICE is a CHOICE!” – Adrian Rogers

Notes

“fall into” – same word found in the Good Samaritan story “He fell among thieves”.

1 Peter 4:12 – “Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you as though some strange thing happened unto you.”

James 1:3, “knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.”

“patience” means “endurance” or “perseverance” (“active overcoming” not “passive acceptance”)

William Barclay points out that the endurance of the early Christians was not a passive quality:

“It is not simply the ability to bear things; it is the ability to turn them to greatness and glory. The thing which amazed the heathen in the centuries of persecution was that the martyrs did not die grimly; they died singing.”

A faith that can't be tested can't be trusted.

James 1:4, “But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.”

- Let that perseverance continue in your life until it has finished its work in order that you might be “perfect” (not sinlessly perfect, but “to be equipped to do God’s will”). Until we come to the place where we can fully serve God and serve man.”

- Through unswerving constancy, bit-by-bit, you win the victory over sin, character is built and you mature to the place that you are worth something to God and to man.

Satan's tempts us to bring out the worst in us. God tests us to bring out the best in us.

Temptation to sin is sent by the devil to cause us to stumble.

Trials are sent by God to cause you to stand.

Satan's temptations are meant for your misery. God's trials are meant for your maturity.

Satan wants trials to defeat you. God wants them to develop you!

Job 23:10 – “but He knows the way I take; when He has tried me; I shall come forth as gold.”

You can:

1) Escape, by pursuing endless distractions to dull the pain, or by denying the existence of the trial, refusing to exercise your faith in God.

2) Endure, by grinning and bearing it, waiting for the season of suffering to pass.

3) Enjoy, by putting our trust in God during the trial and rejoicing that in the end you will look more like Jesus.

***GOD will make this trial a blessing, Though it sends me to my knees
Though my tears flow like a river, Yet in HIM there's sweet relief
There's no need to get discouraged, There's no need to talk defeat
GOD will make this trial a blessing, And the whole wide world will see***

- Written by Terry Tidwell, sung by The McKameys

What trials or difficulties have you experienced in your life?

What good has ever come out of a difficult situation in your life?

What do you think God is teaching you through the tough times you are going through right now?