

Growing in Times of Adversity



James 1:2-4

- We started a Series “Anchored Through Adversity.”
 - Purpose – to teach us how to overcome the tests and trials while remaining anchored in Jesus Christ and His promises.
 - Goal – to strengthen our faith in Jesus Christ so that we don’t lose hope in times of adversity.
- The Lessons Learned:
1. What does the word “adversity” mean?
 - A state of hardship, difficulty, affliction, misfortune, or tragedy that one deal with in life.
 - It is true that one of the best tests of a believer’s maturity is trials and tribulations. (James 1:2-4)
 - Tests and trials also help strengthen our faith and develop Christian character in us.
 2. The Joy in Times of Adversity (James 1:2-4, Hebrews 12:1-3)
 - James use the word “count” or another way to put is to consider is a great joy when you experience various trials...
 - Notice James use of words “all joy” not “all happiness”. (vs. 2)
 - The Greek word for “joy” means joyful, cheerful, gladness, or to rejoice.
 3. Trusting God in Times of Adversity (Proverbs 3:5-7)
 - Trust is the single most important factor in any relationship. If you don’t have trust you don’t have much of a relationship.
 - Trusting in God is more than words we say, it’s about believing who God is and what God says in His Word.
 - What does it mean to “trust” God?
 1. The Hebrew meaning for the word “trust” means to lie down on or to put your entire weight on something.
 2. The word “trust” means to believe in the reliability, truth, ability and strength of someone or something.
 - It means to be confident in; to depend on, to hope in, be secure, to rely on or the truth of.
 - It means to believe confidently in the ability, character, integrity and trustworthiness of a person.

- Trusting God and His Word means believing in His Name, His reliability, His Word, His ability to keep His promises and His presence and power working on my behalf.

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- As I stated earlier in this series, that test and trials will come in our lives. And when they do come, they are usually unscheduled, uncomfortable, unbearable, devastating, unfortunate, painful and even frustrating.
- A. One vital element of tests and trials is our response to them. (James 1:2-4)
 1. God will test our heart and teach the heart during a season of growth in our life.
 2. God is behind our tests and trials in this journey called life.
 3. God will use every test and trial to prepare us for our next assignment. If we don't pass God's test, we will have to take it again.
 4. God will use every test and trial in order to refine us and define Himself to us, so that Christ can be reflected in us and through us. (1 Peter 1:6-9)
 - (James 1:3-4) – “knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect (mature) and complete, lacking in nothing.”
 5. The adversity that we all experience in this journey called life God will use to bring us into a state of maturity.
 - No matter how painful the trial, every test and trial has a purpose that God attaches to it.
 - The tests and trials should never be our primary focus. Our primary focus should always be on Jesus. (Hebrews 12:2)

**B. The greatest example of growth and endurance is Jesus Christ.
(Hebrews 12:2-3)**

- **Jesus Christ was able to look past the cross because He knew glory awaited Him.**
- **He knew He would return to His Father and He would bring salvation and deliverance to all who believe on His name.**
- **Jesus Christ endured the trial by fixing His eyes upon His resurrection and the redemption of mankind. (Matthew 26:39)**
- **(Matthew 26:39) – “O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.”**

C. The Bible is filled with Life lessons that God uses to teach His children about Himself.

- **Here are some examples of those who experienced God’s presence and power in times of adversity.**
- 1. Moses and the children of Israel – facing the Red Sea and Pharaoh and his mighty army behind them. (Exodus 14:8-31)**
 - 2. The Three Hebrew Boys – facing the fiery furnace. (Daniel 3:2-12, 15-30)**
 - 3. Joshua and the children of Israel – facing the walls of Jericho. (Joshua 6:1-21)**
 - 4. Daniel – thrown in the lion’s den. (Daniel 6:1-28)**
 - 5. David – facing the champion Goliath. (1 Samuel 17:15-26, 32-51)**
 - 6. The disciples – facing the stormy sea. (Matthew 8:24-27)**
- **You will never know that God can bring you through it or sustain you in it, unless you trust and believe Him in the midst of the situation.**
 - **You will never know God and experience His presence and power in our life without adversity.**