

Joy in Times of Adversity



James 1:2-4

A. 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. One of the greatest misconceptions about being a Christian is that we are exempt from any type of adversity.**
- 2. Life here on earth comes with its own unique set of problems, challenges, setbacks and disappointments. (John 16:33)**
- 3. Life also comes with moments of laughter, joy, peace and blessings for those who are in Christ Jesus.**

- What does the word “adversity” mean?
- A state of hardship, difficulty, affliction, misfortune, or tragedy that one deal with in life.

B. There are Four Things that Believers must know About Jesus during Adversity. (Mark 4:35-38)

- 1. Jesus will always stand by His Word. (vs. 35)**
- 2. Jesus will always be in there with us. (vs. 37)**
- 3. Jesus will always supply us with His rest. (vs. 38)**
- 4. Jesus has the power to calm every raging storm in our lives. (vs. 39-40)**

C. There are Nine Ways God Uses Adversity to create opportunities in a Believer’s life. (Romans 5:1-6)

- 1. To reveal Christ’s character in us. (Romans 12:1-2)**
- 2. To draw us closer to Him and His Word. (Hebrews 4:16, Hebrews 10:22, James 4:8)**
- 3. To strengthen our faith in Him. (Colossians 2:6-7)**
- 4. To bring discipline to our lives.**
- 5. To bring us to a state of spiritual growth and maturity. (2 Peter 3:18, Hebrews 5:12-14, Romans 5:3-6)**

6. To build our confidence in God's promises. (Hebrews 10:35-37)
7. To turn our focus and attention to God's promises and not the problem. (Hebrews 12:2, Psalm 46:1, Psalm 121:1-2)
8. To expose our motives and weakness. (2 Corinthians 12:6-11)
9. To reveal the love of God and expose the plans of the enemy. (Romans 8:35-39)

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James 1:2-4, Hebrews 12:1-3

- It is true that one of the best tests of a believer's maturity is trials and tribulations.
 - Tests and trials not only reveal if we truly believe and have faith in God.
 - Tests and trials also help strengthen our faith and develop Christian character in us.
 - (James 1:2-4) – "My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, ³knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. ⁴But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing."
- A. James' statement here in these verses, as it relates to various tests, trials and temptations, is one of certainty for believers.
1. James uses the word "count," or another way to put it is to consider it a great joy when you experience various trials...
 2. Notice James' use of words "all joy" not "all happiness". (vs. 2)
 - The Greek word for "joy" means joyful, cheerful, gladness, or to rejoice.
 - The joy of the Lord is everlasting (without end), when happiness is temporary. Happiness in the world is determined by what is happening.
 - The joy of knowing Jesus Christ, the Rock of our salvation! Only Jesus Christ can fill our lives with joy and certainty regardless of whatever is going right or wrong in our lives. (Psalm 18:2)

- The joy of knowing that God is demonstrating His love for us through those difficult situations. (Romans 5:8)
3. The word “various” means all sorts or of all kinds of trials and temptations.
 - James use the word “when” and not “if” as it relates to various trials and temptations that a believer shall go through in this Christian race called life.
 - These trials can come in different forms either spiritual, physical, emotional, relational, and financial.
 - The reality is every true believer will go through many tests, trials and temptations in this Christian race called life. (John 16:33)
 4. James tells us that the believer must know and do something. (vs. 3-4)
 - The believer must know that God is the source of true joy. When the believer experiences the testing of their faith in Jesus Christ it will produce patience (endurance, perseverance).
 - God will use every test and trial to conform our lives into the image of Christ Jesus.
 - God will use every test and trial to make us stronger in our faith in Jesus Christ.
 - God will use every test and trial to build and develop our spiritual muscles which is part of His maturity process.
 5. The believer must also do something when experiencing tests and trials. What the believer must do is let patience (perseverance) be completed within us.
 - The word “perseverance” means to be steadfast, be patient, and to endure.
 - It means to keep on persevering, to persevere, to never give in or never give up.
 - It means to persevere and to endure until God’s work is completed in us.
 - The word “perfect” or perfection of purpose. It has to do with an end, an aim, a goal, a purpose. It means fit, mature, fully grown and developed in order for purpose to be achieved.

- The end result for the believer is a life in Christ that is purposefully and completely equipped, fully fit, fully developed, and fully matured.
- 6. The believer will be able to remain steadfast in the faith of Jesus Christ.

B. Statements about the Joy of the Lord in Times of Adversity

1. The joy of the Lord flows in the hearts of those who are in Christ Jesus. (John 15:1-5)
2. The joy of the Lord is manifested in the heart of a believer by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. (Psalm 16:11)
3. The joy of the Lord will always bring true satisfaction. (John 15:11)
4. The joy of the Lord will be our strength in times of adversity. (Nehemiah 8:10)

C. There are six things needed to experience joy in times of adversity.

1. New life in Jesus Christ. (2 Corinthians 5:17, Ephesians 2:4-9, Romans 5:1-5, Philippians 4:11-13)
2. Be committed to God and Jesus Christ. (Proverbs 16:3, Matthew 10:37-38, Luke 9:23, John 12:25-26)
3. Strong belief in God's Word. (Romans 1:16-17, John 14:15, John 8:31, 1 John 2:3, 1 John 3:22-24)
4. The power of the Holy Spirit. (2 Corinthians 4:6-12, Acts 1:8)
5. Being intentional in our praise and worship of Jesus Christ and what He has done in our lives. (Psalms 105:1-5, 95:1-3, 66:1-4, 33:1-5, Psalm 34:1-3)
6. Always allow the love of Jesus Christ to flow to us and through us. (Romans 12:9-18)