



# Faith and Trials

## The Testing of Personal Faith

**Main point:** Perseverance in trials requires the right attitude.

### Expositional Outline

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If we desire to grow in *endurance* and *perseverance*, James teaches us that it starts with:

A. The proper attitude toward trials (vv.2-4)

1. The attitude commanded (v.2)

*Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials,*

2. The reason indicated (v.3)

*knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.*

3. The outcome anticipated (v.4)

*And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.*

### Observations:

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The KEY to turning trials into triumphs is to obey three imperatives (*commands*):

- Consider**—It is a financial term, and it means *to evaluate*. Paul uses this word several times in Philippians 3:7-8, 15. What he tells us that when he became a Christian, he evaluated his life through a different lens. What was once important to him, became like garbage when he *considered* it in light of God’s plan. In other words, consider trials as an opportunity to experience God’s grace. (v.2)
- Know**—The verb used (*ginosko*) suggests a knowledge grounded in personal experience. It introduces the knowledge that enables us to evaluate our trials as occasions for rejoicing. James tells us that the right knowledge concerning the value of trials makes it possible to have an attitude of joy. (v.3)
- Let**—The word “let” does not suggest giving permission. It is a command intent on putting us on guard against the danger of *interrupting* the chain of results from trials. (v.4)

## Interpretative discussion questions:

- How can you count trials as a joyful thing? Does this mean it will be without an admixture of sorrow?
- What does James imply by using the word “when” (whenever) in verse 2?
- Paint a picture of what the “perfect result” endurance and perseverance looks like in a person’s life.

## Applicational questions:

1. What can you do to move from a “bad attitude” toward trials to a “spiritual attitude?”
2. David said in Psalm 23:1, “The Lord is my shepherd I shall not want...” James says in chapter 1:4, “...let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.” What did David know about God that will equip us to face every trial we encounter?

## Memory verse for lesson 2:

- James 1:2-4— *Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, <sup>3</sup> knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. <sup>4</sup> And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.*



### Insights on Our Trials:

Keith Brazier

Volumes of books, online resources, workshops, and seminars are available to assist you with becoming more aware of yourself. Upon completion, you will understand your personality type, dominant color, communication style, leadership style, etcetera. By being more aware of who you are, you will interact with others more effectively and become more productive. Some of them provide tips or strategies in the form of graphs or flowcharts to prescribe a response to any number of potential situations or types of people that you will encounter. If only it were that easy—well, it would be easy. Being aware of self is not enough. You must know how to manage yourself while viewing yourself, others, and situations through the proper lenses—God’s perspective. Considering God’s sovereign will whenever we face adversity empowers us to persevere in the face of adversity.

Facing trials requires a great deal of strength. On our own, we are incapable of enduring and persevering (*Prov.3:5-6; 2 Cor.1:21; Eph.6:11*). The higher the value we place on a person or thing, the greater the challenge that is presented when there is discord in our intimate relationships or any deviation from a smooth-running plan. In addition, the stakes rise significantly when health or financial strains are introduced into the equation. We are 100% immersed in a war if we are living for Christ. Unlike the protagonist from a Hollywood action movie, we do not run from dilemmas to battles without tiring and being famished both physically and spiritually. We do not emerge from emotional or physical conflict without any wounds. Our faith requires that we look to Christ to be fed and rejuvenated. Just as saltwater and sweet water cannot flow from the same fountain, we cannot respond properly in the face of trials unless we keep God’s purposes in mind and trust in Him (*John 15:7; Heb.6:11*). The world would like to keep you distracted in a theoretical debate over whether the glass is half empty or half full. Your feelings and philosophy about a situation do not weigh in where

there is a question about the right attitude/path being sought after according to God's will (*Gal.6:9; 2 Thess.3:13*). God wants His children to continue growing and to be mature enough to avoid bickering or staring at how much space is in the cup; He wants to see what you do with the water.

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