

TRIALS OF MANY KINDS WEEK 1

WHEN FAITH MEETS TRIALS

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What is the book of James?

- A collection of challenges for how early Christians were to live radically different lives.
- Faith is supposed to be expressed through:
 - › concrete actions and good works
 - › setting yourself apart, not blending in
 - › living with extreme integrity
 - › searching out justice and caring for the marginalized.

Who was James?

- Jesus' younger brother
- Grew up in traditional Jewish home
 - Knew the Old Testament
 - Knew prophets
 - Waiting for the Messiah
 - › What would it have been like for James when his older brother claimed to be the Son of God?
 - › For not even his brothers believed him. **John 7:5**
- Leader of the early church in Jerusalem
 - Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. **Then he appeared to James**, then to all the apostles. **1 Corinthians 15:3-7**
 - › **The resurrection of Jesus changed James.**

- All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers. **Acts 1:14**
- After they finished speaking, James replied, “Brothers, listen to me.” **Acts 15:13**
- Scholars believe he was martyred for his faith
- Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. **James 1:2-4**

TRIALS SERMON SERIES FOCUS

April 26 & 27: Difficult Relationships
 May 3 & 4: Mental Health/Anxiety
 May 10 & 11: Break for Mother’s Day
 May 17 & 18: Physical Suffering
 May 24 & 25: Loneliness/Rejection
 May 31 & June 1: Failure
 June 7 & 8: Lack of Control
 June 14 & 15: Insignificance
 June 21 & 22: Marriage Brokenness
 June 28 & 29: Parent/Child Relationships

We all have difficult people in our lives.

- Being offended and angry with difficult people is inevitable.
Living offended and angered by difficult people is a choice.
- Not every difficult relationship is toxic or abusive.
- These people are hurting people.

If we don’t deal with difficult relationships they will:

1. Divide
2. Distract
3. Discredit

Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.

JAMES 1:2-3

Trial: (peirasmos) test or temptation.

- Tests from God
- Temptations from the Enemy
- Consequences of our choices
- Unexplainable—result of the broken world we live in

Realities of Trials:

1. Trials are normal

- But man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward. **Job 5:7**
- For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. **Matthew 5:45**

→ A trial could be testing to see if we really believe what we say we believe.

2. Trials can be joyful

- Spiritual maturity can be measured by reaction to trial
- Happiness is circumstantial. Joy is delight in God, that cannot be taken
- Count it joy = evaluate or consider and choose joy

3. Trials can be transformational

- Prove something (your faith is real, you're stronger than you think, you have great friends, prayer works, etc.)
- Produce something
 - Steadfastness: (hupomone: under + remain) signifies endurance, patience, and a steadfast waiting for something.
 - Under the weight of the trial, do you go through it or do you quit?

→ Love harder, even when it's hard

Questions to ask:

1. Why, God, have you put this person in my life?
2. What are you trying to teach me through this relationship?

TRIALS  MANY KINDS