

James 1:9-12 – Triumph Through Trouble- 5

The Means of Perseverance

Trials are an essential means that God uses to perfect our Christian character. We have learned that we are to rejoice in the midst of trial. We are not to rejoice because trials come, but because of their possible benefits. James gives us five keys for persevering through trials. We have learned that we are to:

- A. Having a Joyful Attitude
- B. Having an Understanding Mind
- C. A Submissive Will
- D. A Believing Heart

James 1:2-12

My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, ³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. ⁴ But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. ⁵ If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. ⁶ But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. ⁷ For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; ⁸ *he is* a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways. ⁹ Let the lowly brother glory in his exaltation, ¹⁰ but the rich in his humiliation, because as a flower of the field he will pass away. ¹¹ For no sooner has the sun risen with a burning heat than it withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beautiful appearance perishes. So the rich man also will fade away in his pursuits. ¹² Blessed *is* the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

A Humble Spirit

James 1:9

Let the lowly brother glory in his exaltation,

To persevere through trials one must have a humble spirit.

James addresses the “**lowly brother**”. This refers to those who are economically poor. This represented most of James’ readers. Many of these Jews had suffered persecution and had their homes and possessions confiscated. Many had to leave everything behind as they fled their persecutors.

Tradition states that the daughter of “Joseph of Arimathea”, the rich man who gave his tomb to Jesus, was forced to beg for bread in the streets because their possessions were confiscated by the Sanhedrin.

A Humble Spirit

James 1:9

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Despite present circumstances, these believers were to “**glory in their exaltation**”. The “lowly brother” can rejoice in his exalted position as a **child of God**. He can rejoice in the countless blessings that come from being in Christ.

The world may look down and reject a believer, but in the eyes of God, he is exalted. He may be hungry, but he has the bread of life. He may be thirsty, but he has the water of life. He may be poor, but he has eternal riches. Men may cast him aside, but he has been received into the presence and fellowship of God. He may have no home on earth, but he has an abiding place in heaven.

A Humble Spirit

James 1:9

Let the lowly brother glory in his exaltation,

We have seen that when a believer faces loss, God wants to use that situation for good. He wants to bring the believer to spiritual maturity and a deeper walk with Him. This is of greater value than anything a person has ever lost. The believer who is suffering can accept that it is temporary because he has a future inheritance that is both eternal and secure.

1 Peter 1:3-6

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, ⁵who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. ⁶In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials

A Humble Spirit

James 1:9-10

Let the lowly brother glory in his exaltation, ¹⁰ but the rich in his humiliation, because as a flower of the field he will pass away.

James now presents the other side of the principle. Just as the poor should rejoice in his spiritual riches, the **rich man** should rejoice in his **humiliation**. The idea is that a believer who is materially well off, healthy, and otherwise physically blessed should rejoice when trials come, for they teach him the **temporary nature** of those material things and their inability to give inner and lasting satisfaction or help. Both he and his possession are like flowering grass and will pass away.

A Humble Spirit

James 1:11

For no sooner has the sun risen with a burning heat than it withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beautiful appearance perishes. So the rich man also will fade away in his pursuits.

We have a natural tendency to trust in material things. This is the root of materialism and hoarding. James points to their temporariness and emphasizes the danger of trusting in wealth. A picture is painted of the flowers and grasses of Israel. They flourish in February and dry up by May. At this point both poor and rich are exactly alike. Neither material possessions nor lack of them is of any ultimate consequence. What is important is a trusting relationship with God.

A Humble Spirit

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For no sooner has the sun risen with a burning heat than it withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beautiful appearance perishes. So the rich man also will fade away in his pursuits.

When you lose a loved one, wealth is of no comfort. When you lose your health or are betrayed by a friend, money cannot buy you peace of mind or decrease the pain. Trials are the great equalizers, bringing all of God's children to dependence on Him.

Wealth does not bring God closer, nor does poverty keep Him away. We need to remember the encouragement of **Hebrews 4:16**, "Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

The Rewards for Endurance

James 1:12

Blessed *is* the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

"Blessed is the man that endures temptation". The word "**blessed**" is the same word used in Beatitudes. Blessed carries the idea of profound inner joy and inner satisfaction that God gives to those who faithfully and patiently endure trials.

1 Peter 1:5-7 states, "(You) who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. ⁶ In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷ that the genuineness of your faith, *being* much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

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The one who perseveres under trial is the man who never relinquishes his confident trust in God.

The word "**approved**" is an interesting word. It does mean approval, but it also carries the idea of being proven genuine. It was a word used with the refining of a precious metal. Once the worthless parts have been removed the pure metal remains and meets the approval of the smelter as he declares it genuine.

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The same is true for us. Trials refine us and burn away the worthless aspects and things of our lives. As one endures trials, it proves that our faith is genuine.

1 Peter 1:6-7

In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved [*distressed*] by various trials, ⁷ that the genuineness of your faith, *being* much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

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The principle is simple. Enduring trials proves the genuineness of our faith. Those which genuine faith receive the crown of life. The word crown here represents the wreath placed on the victor's head in athletic events.

Enduring trials shows God's approval, for it gives evidence of our faith in Him which results in eternal life. **Enduring trials does not result in salvation** and eternal life, but it is the evidence of salvation and eternal life.

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James also associates faithful endurance under trial with genuine love for God. Endurance is one of the evidences of those who love Him. Love and genuine faith are often associated together. 1 John 5:3 states, "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous".

So What ...

Not everyone who professes faith is a true Christian. It is not the profession, but the faith that brings about salvation. Many have attested to having a knowledge of Christ and His Word. Yet their lives declare that they really do not really believe. How a person handles trials and their love and obedience to God and His word, are outward declarations of their faith. Those who endured trials to God's glory have demonstrated that their faith is genuine and they are building their lives on the Rock which cannot be moved.

What are you building on?