

Triumph Through Trouble - 4
James 1:2-12

1

Introduction

We have looked at persevering in trials. James has given us five principles for successfully enduring tribulation and obtaining the rewards that lie at their end. These principles are fine and good, but do they work in real life? Can we trust God, even if we feel that He has abandoned us? In order to answer these questions, let's look at the lives of two men who experienced greater trials than most of us will ever face.

2

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.

3

Preserving Through Trial

Both Job and Christ faced extreme trials and tribulations in their lives. Both successfully completed the path that God ordained for them to walk, and by doing so brought honor and glory to the Father.

God allowed Satan to put Job's faith to the test. Was it genuine or did Job merely serve God because it was the profitable thing to do. In Job's testing, he lost his worldly possessions, and his children. In the midst of trial, his wife told him to curse God and die. Even Job's friends and counselors turned against him and accused him of sin and wrongdoing. Job's response was to place his trust in the Lord.

4

Preserving Through Trial

Jesus, as the Divine Son and second member of the Trinity, was unable to sin. Yet He faced much trial and tribulation as He walked this world. His nation rejected Him, His disciples would forsake Him, He would be falsely accused, tried, beaten, and nailed to the cross. The sins of the world would be placed upon Him, and the Father would pour out His wrath upon the Son. We can only imagine the trail and agony that Jesus endured for us, yet He too placed His trust in the Father.

5

A Joyful Attitude

In the face of financial ruin and loss of all his children, Job made the choice to praise God. He chose to rejoice in the nature and personage of God regardless of what he saw or felt. In Job 1:21 he states, "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return there. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; Blessed be the name of the Lord".

Jesus also chose to see the eternal joy that waited quietly on the other side of His adversity. Hebrews 12:2 states, "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God".

We also can endure the trials of this life by putting our trust in the promises of our future joy in heaven.

6

An Understanding Mind

Job had an understanding mind. This is not to say that he did not struggle with his affliction. He knew that it was a real possibility that he might die, but even in the face of death he chose to trust God. Job 19:23-28 speaks of Job's trust in his Savior. He knew that even if he died, he would see his redeemer face to face. Listen to what Job says in verses 25 and 26, "For I know that my Redeemer lives, and He shall stand at last on the earth; and after my skin is destroyed, this I know, that in my flesh I shall see God".

7

An Understanding Mind

Jesus, as well, knew that even though He would die upon the cross, that he would rise the third day. He openly taught and proclaimed that truth. Psalm 16:8-11 gives a promise to Messiah that He would not remain in the grave. "I have set the Lord always before me; Because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved. Therefore, my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will rest in hope. For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore." Jesus endured His trial because He understood and trusted the plan of the Father

8

A Submissive Will

In the face of tribulation, it is hard to be quiet and submissive. Yet Job surrendered himself, to the hand of God. In Job 2:9, Job's wife encourages him to rebel against God, by cursing Him and than to die. Job responds in verse 10 by saying, "You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity?" In all this Job did not sin with his lips."

9

A Submissive Will

Jesus also declared a submissive will to the Father. Philippians 2:5-11, teaches us that though Jesus was God, He was obedient to the will of the Father, even to the point of dying upon the cross. In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus prayed that the cup of the cross and all that it contained might pass from Him. He prayed this in Matthew 26:39, "He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.." Again, in verse 42 He prays, "O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done".

10

A Believing Heart

Job's councilors did not give him comforting or even true council. They were sure that Job had sinned. In chapter 12, Job states that only God has true wisdom and understanding (vs. 13) and only He knows why this calamity has fallen upon him. In chapter 13:13-19 Job declares that He will believe and trust in God despite his suffering. In verse 15 Job states, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him". In verse 16 Job goes on to say that God shall be his salvation. Job believed that God was good and chose to trust Him.

In John 17 as Jesus prays before going to the cross, He declares to the Father that He has been faithful in the work that He was sent to do. Verse 5 Jesus prays, "And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was". Jesus believed that the Father would do all that He promised.

11

A Humble Spirit

In Job chapters 38-41, God calls Job to humble himself. He challenges Job's understanding of Creation and his own inability to save Himself. In chapter 42:1-3 Job confesses his lack of understanding. Job's response to his confrontation with God is found in Job 42:5-6, "I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees You. Therefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

Jesus also humbled Himself as well. We have already looked at Philippians 2:5-11 where Jesus was submissive to the will of the Father, but it also teaches us His humble spirit. Verses 6-8 reads, "Who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross."

Might we have that same type of submissive attitude that we too, will pick up our cross in humble submission and follow Christ all the days of our lives.

12

Receiving a Reward

These two men also received great rewards from the Father for faithful service.

At the end of his trial, Job had everything restored to him two-fold (see Job 42:12-13). It is easy to replace sheep and camels, but what about Job's children?

Job was given 10 more children to replace the 10 he lost. Yet we know that as humans made in the image of God, that all of Job's children have eternal souls. I believe the reason that Job's children were not doubled, was because in the light of eternity, Job's children were not lost. Job started with 10 children and ended with 20. In this case we can see Job's temporary loss, brought forth great eternal gain.

For Jesus, He also received great gain. Today He sits at the right hand of the Father. In His presence will dwell all who have placed their faith and trust in Him. Revelation records it as an uncountable multitude. Jesus' temporary agony upon the cross, opened the door for the restoration of all mankind.

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So What ...

Trials are inevitable. We struggle with our own sin nature and live in a fallen world. God allows trials into our lives so that we can enter into a closer relationship with Him.

There is hope.

1 Corinthians 10:31

No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

God has given us His Word for direction, His Spirit for Power, His Son for Eternal Salvation. He has given us examples to follow and be encouraged by.

Let's commit ourselves to following Him!

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