

**Triumph Through Trouble - 2**  
**James 1:4-8**

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## **Introduction**

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 looked at the first two. We are to (1) have a joyful attitude and (2) we are to have an understanding mind.

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## James 1:2-8

My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, <sup>3</sup> knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. <sup>4</sup> But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. <sup>5</sup> 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. <sup>6</sup> 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. <sup>7</sup> For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; <sup>8</sup> *he is* a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

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## The Means of Perseverance

James 1:4

But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

It is a reality that the believer will face difficult circumstances in life. The question is not if one will face problems, but how will one respond. Our response will be an outward declaration to our inner faith and dependence upon God. James gives help and encouragement to the Christian facing trials in order that they will be able to stand fast and persevere to the glory of Christ.

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## A Submissive Will

James 1:4

But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

The only way out of a trial is to pass through it. The Lord promises no shortcuts. He only promises not to allow more than we can bear. God, however, can only do His perfect and entire work in us when we become patient or submissive.

When we learn to rejoice in our trials, we will come to understand that our Father uses them not to harm us, but to strengthen and perfect us. Therefore, we are encouraged to embrace them as beneficial.

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## A Submissive Will

James 1:4

But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

The word "perfect" does not mean moral or spiritual perfection, nor does it speak of sinlessness. Rather, it speaks of being fully developed. It means to be "mature". This is referring to spiritual maturity fulfilled in Christlikeness. This is the goal of enduring trial.

"Complete" speaks of being whole. To avoid misunderstanding, James adds, "wanting nothing". The end of a trial should result in maturity, completeness, and lacking nothing of spiritual importance. 1 Peter 5:10 reiterates this point, "But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you."

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## A Submissive Will

James 1:4

But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

The Father wants to do a work in your life. He wants to recreate you into the image of His Son. When trials come, one has to make a choice. The children of Israel grumbled and complained at their trial in the wilderness. God took their complaining as rebellion towards Himself. As a result, God was forced to discipline Israel again and again. God allows these trials into our lives. By complaining we declare that we really do not believe that God is good and in control of our situation. Though God desires to work good into our lives, He will not do His perfect and entire work as long as we rebel and refuse to turn to Him. We must first learn to submit ourselves under His authority and will for our lives. As we surrender, God is free to work His complete transformation in our lives.

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## A Believing Heart

James 1:5-8

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. <sup>6</sup> 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. <sup>7</sup> For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; <sup>8</sup> *he is* a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

As Christians, we cannot afford to make decisions on our own. God knows what is best for us His children, and we need to come humbly requesting wisdom for every issue of life. After all, God wants His best for us!

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## A Believing Heart

James 1:5

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.

When believers go through trials, they need a special measure of understanding to help them through. That need should drive us to “ask of God”. Trials have a unique way of bringing us to the end of our understanding. They teach us our limitations, our lack of wisdom, and our need for one greater than ourselves. Trials are often the result of our own foolishness and simplicity. That is to say that we are often in the midst of trial because we did not have or heed God’s wisdom. So now what does one do? We can continue to dig ourselves deeper into trouble by trusting our “natural” wisdom, or we can go to God and ask for His.

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## A Believing Heart

James 1:5

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.

Strong sound faith is not based upon feelings, but rather upon the knowledge and understanding of the promises of God’s truth. When one faces times of testing, whether physical, emotional, moral, or spiritual, one needs God’s wisdom. In these trials one needs to remember the words of Solomon in Proverbs 3:5-7, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; <sup>6</sup> In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths. <sup>7</sup> Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the Lord and depart from evil.”

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## A Believing Heart

James 1:5

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.

Trials also enhance our prayer life. These trials force us to the Lord for guidance, strength, patience, and wisdom. God is the source of wisdom, and we are assured that He will give to all liberally. When James uses the phrase "Let him ask" he is not giving personal advise but a divine command. We are commanded to call on the Lord for His wisdom. This is not an option but is mandatory. If a believer who is being tested is not driven to the Lord and does not develop a deeper prayer life, the Lord is likely to keep the test active and perhaps even intensify it until His child comes to the throne of grace.

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## A Believing Heart

James 1:5

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.

"Liberally" carries the idea of singleness of heart, of doing something unconditionally, without bargaining. The only condition God places is that we ask. When we come to God in our trials and ask for His help and wisdom, He immediately gives it to us generously. "Reproach" means to severely reprimand. God will never reprimand His child who comes seeking wisdom in time of trouble and testing. He will not remind us how undeserving and unworthy we are. He will not chide us for not asking sooner. Without reluctance or reservation, His divine wisdom will be given to us.

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## A Believing Heart

James 1:6

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.

In verse 6 James turns from the willing Father to the waiting child. He makes it clear that the Lord requires the right kind of asking if He is to bestow His wisdom. One must ask in faith without doubting. In other words, our asking must be a request backed by genuine trust in God's character, purpose, and promises.

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## A Believing Heart

James 1:6

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.

A request that does not take God at His word, that doubts either His ability or His trustworthiness, is presumptuous and worthless and is an affront to God. Hebrews 11:6 states, "But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him."

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## A Believing Heart

James 1:6

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.

Whoever doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. His request is not really a request at all because he foolishly does not believe God will honor it. This one is spiritually immature and leads to an even greater danger of being tossed and carried away by the storms which engulf him. Ephesians 4:14 states, “that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting”. When God is not trusted, the only course is to go from bad to worse and to worse still.

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## A Believing Heart

James 1:7-8

For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; <sup>8</sup> *he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.*

Verse 7 states that this person cannot expect to receive anything of the Lord. A man cannot serve two masters or go in two directions at the same time. We cannot play games with God. He wants us to make a decision to place our trust in Him regardless of what we see going around us. This is the core of what faith is all about – to trust in what we cannot see. The double minded man is like the Laodicean in Revelation 3:16. He is neither hot nor cold. He does not see or understand his real need and therefore does not utterly depend on God. As long as we are willing to put our trust in something other than Him, God will wait. He must teach us that He alone is the rock on which we are to build our lives. He will wait for us to come to the end of ourselves and all that we holding on to until we hold to Him alone. Then He will work, and He alone will receive the glory.

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## A Believing Heart

James 1:7-8

For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; <sup>8</sup> *he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.*

Simply put, he who doubts God is “a double-minded (two-faced) man and is unstable in all his ways”. He may claim to be a believer and that his trust is in God, but his actions reveal otherwise. This man may not renounce God, but he acts as if God does not exist, care, or is capable of delivering him from trouble. Because his trust is in the “shifting sands” of this world, he and all he does is unstable. This man is headed for disaster and in disaster he is destined for destruction.

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## So What ...

There is a cure for the double-minded man. He must become single minded. He must place his trust in Christ, regardless of how he feels or what he sees. He must come and meditate upon who God is, what He has done in the past, and that He is willing and able to work in our lives in the present. He must let the things of this world be stripped away and as Martin Luther, he must take his stand upon the Word of God, for he can do no other.

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