

James 1:1-4 When Faith Meets Fire

10/19/25 Calvary Chapel Titusville

Pastor Paul Andris

James, a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad: Greetings. (James 1:1 NKJV)

That's the gospel's logic: grace creates glad surrender.

Christ made a special appearance to James:

After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. (1 Corinthians 15:7 NKJV)

A skeptic brother becomes a surrendered servant when he met the living Lord.

Joyful obedience comes after we settle who Jesus is.

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, [which is] your reasonable service. (Romans 12:1 NKJV)

James writes as a pastor to scattered people.

"At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered... except the apostles" (Acts 8:1).

And to them James says, in essence, I see you. God sees you.

My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, (James 1:2 NKJV)

Trials are not an "if," but a "when."

You don't schedule trials; you fall into them.

"These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." (John 16:33 NKJV)

Peter adds:

Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; (1 Peter 4:12 NKJV)

If trials surprise us, we'll resent God; if we expect them, we can meet God in them.

James doesn't say feel joy about the trial; he says count it joy within the trial.

And not only [that], but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. (Romans 5:3-4 NKJV)

Joy in trials is not denial; it is defiant hope.

knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. (James 1:3 NKJV)

"Testing" reveals and refines.

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, (1 Peter 1:7 NKJV)

God tests not to shame you, but to shape you.

God's discipline is not payback; it's training.

"Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. (Hebrews 12:11 NKJV)

Fruit follows the furnace.

And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift [you] as wheat. "But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to [Me], strengthen your brethren." (Luke 22:31-32 NKJV)

God's sovereignty redeems, not excuses, evil.

"But as for you, you meant evil against me; [but] God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as [it is] this day, to save many people alive. (Genesis 50:20 NKJV)

That is why we can know—not guess:

And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to [His] purpose. (Romans 8:28 NKJV)

Invite wise believers to help you discern: resist, repent or endure.

But let patience have [its] perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. (James 1:4 NKJV)

The Christian life is surrendered cooperation. God supplies grace; we yield to its work.

Spiritual wholeness requires staying under what God is using to shape us.

Trials pry our fingers off counterfeit saviors so that Christ becomes our treasure.

And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong. (2 Corinthians 12:9-10 NKJV)

Weakness became the platform for strength.

Therefore let those who suffer according to the will of God commit their souls [to Him] in doing good, as to a faithful Creator. (1 Peter 4:19 NKJV)

If we assume trials are never from God, we'll try to rebuke what we should receive.

***When the Father keeps you in the furnace a little longer,
trust that He is purifying gold, not burning trash.***

***The cross is the guarantee that God is for you;
the empty tomb is the guarantee that God is able.***

When you can't trace His hand, you can trust His heart.

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. (Hebrews 12:2 NKJV)

James is not minimizing your pain. He's maximizing your hope.

God is not content to give you half portions. He intends to give you the whole portion—Christ Himself—until your heart can say with the psalmist...

Whom have I in heaven [but You]? And [there is] none upon earth [that] I desire besides You. My flesh and my heart fail; [But] God [is] the strength of my heart and my portion forever. (Psalm 73:25-26 NKJV)