

# Part 1 - Trial and Temptation

Kingdom Collective

Series: Book of James

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## James 1:1-18 ESV

**Central Truth:** We persevere in trial. We resist temptation. Yet in both, God provides a way of escape for He is always good!

### (BOOK CONTEXT AND AUTHORIAL INTENT)

- James is the half brother of Jesus and a leader in the Jerusalem church. He is different from the two disciples named James.
  - He likely carried skepticism as a family member. (No mighty works in his own hometown-Matt 13:58).
  - It is said that James was born again as a result of Jesus' resurrection.
  - James now refers to his brother as Lord (v1), demonstrating humility and submission
- He is writing in concern for the persecuted Christians who were once a part of the early church but had been scattered due to persecution.
  - Shortly after Stephen was stoned to death. This writing is in response to that.
  - He was writing to encourage their faith in difficult times. We need the same.
- The book of James has much to say about practical Christian living (a how-to book of sorts) and putting our faith into practice.
  - It is genuine faith that transforms lives. Not intellect. Not strategy. Not skill. FAITH.
  - **The Book of James is referred to as the Proverbs of the New Testament.**
- **James' message convicts those of us who are inclined to talk our way to heaven instead of walk our way there.** -Life Application Study Bible

### (BODY)

#### TRIAL

- None of us are immune to trials. There is no such thing as a life free from challenge.
- v2 The instruction here is to count them as joy.
  - Why, because trials produce steadfastness, strength, patience, growth, maturity.
  - i.e. a workout comes with resistance and results in growth
- **Think of trials as seeds that will ultimately bring a harvest of joy. So we want them to have their full effect.**
- v5 We are invited to ask for wisdom.

- We don't always know what to do in a trial but God will give wisdom.
- v6 Trials must be met with faith.

#### **Four Things Trials are Designed to Do:**

1. Train us (to use our faith)
2. Humble us (to stay dependent on God)
3. Develop us (towards godly character)
4. Produce a testimony (which gives glory to God)

#### **Trial/Test vs Temptation**

- Trial and test has a similar implication. It is helpful to separate those two words from temptation.
- God tests to prove (Gen 22).
- The world, the flesh, and the devil are all contributors to opposition and can help sum up why we face hard things in life.

#### **TEMPTATION**

- v13 marks a shift in James' instruction.
- Let no one say, "I am being tempted by God." He tempts no one.
- Satan is referred to as the tempter in Matthew 4 and 1 Thess 3:5. God is not the tempter.
  - i.e. Lord's Prayer says, "lead us not into temptation and deliver us from the evil one."
- v14 Each person is tempted
  - We can limit temptation, but we cannot avoid it.
- Temptation is not sin, but when embraced it leads to sin.
  - Process: temptation, desire, action, sin, death
  - Read verses 13-15 from the MSG Bible

#### **Three Things to Know About Temptation**

1. It is not from God.
2. It can be limited but not avoided.
3. Temptation is not sin. If acted on, it gives birth to sin.

The problem with sin is that it ends in death. And if we peel things back, the sin problem stems from a temptation problem, which comes from Satan, the tempter, not from God. And the way Jesus responded to temptation in the wilderness is a clinic on how we should too:

- Matthew 4 and Luke 4 - "It is written." Authority. Vocal. Not playing games.
  - For me, scripture, memorization, and declaration has been one of the keys to resisting temptation.

- **The reason we have pet sins is because we play with temptation.** If you play with fire you're gonna get burned. If you play with temptation, you'll find yourself ensnared in sin.
- i.e. "Jesus is here" (a reminder that my body is the temple of the living God and greater is He who is in me than He who is in the world.)

### 1 Corinthians 10:13 ESV

- *No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.*
- There is always a way of escape.

There is a tendency for trial and testing to weaken our faith, and James is reminding us that we face trial and testing FULL OF FAITH and WITH JOY!

(RESPONSE)

### James 1:16-18 NLT

- *So don't be misled, my dear brothers and sisters. 17 Whatever is good and perfect is a gift coming down to us from God our Father, who created all the lights in the heavens. He never changes or casts a shifting shadow. 18 He chose to give birth to us by giving us his true word. And we, out of all creation, became his prized possession.*
- In the face of trial and temptation, God is always good.

**Central Truth:** We persevere in trial. We resist temptation. Yet in both, God provides a way of escape for He is always good!

Prayer: For strength and joy!