

The 7th Sunday after Pentecost ~ Sunday, July 3, 2016

“Faith That Works: The Letter of James ~

Enduring the Trials of Life

James 1:1-11

James belongs to the _____ literature tradition in the Bible. Characterized by general instructions for successful or skilful _____, wisdom literature contemplates the perplexities of human existence by answering life’s most basic questions.

The Letter of James is written to individuals who are assumed to know the _____, and was intended is to drive home the importance of living out the _____ and obtaining authentic, spiritual _____.

James is an urgent demand for _____ in religion. It rebukes sham and _____, insisting that _____ must conform to creed, and _____ must be matched by performance.

“What good is it, dear brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but don’t show it by your actions? Can that kind of faith save anyone?” (James 2:14)

Real faith must work; it must _____ and bear fruit.

James integrates true faith and everyday _____ and argues that the proof of the reality of our faith is a _____ life.

The difference between Paul and James lies in the fact that Paul attacks the problem of _____ and James opposes those who feel all you have to do is believe and it doesn’t matter how you _____.

“James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes in the Dispersion: Greetings.” (James 1:1)

AUTHORSHIP: 5 POSSIBILITIES (check the correct one)

- James, the father of the disciple _____ (not Iscariot), mentioned in Luke 6:16.
- James, the _____ of Alphaeus, one of the 12, mentioned in Matt 10:3; Mk 3:1; Lk 6:15; Acts 1:13.
- James, called the _____, mentioned in Mark 27:56 and John 19:25.
- James, the brother of _____ and son of Zebedee, also one of the 12.
- James, the brother of _____ mentioned in Mark 6:3 and Matt 13:55.

Scripture also tells that James and the rest of his brothers didn’t believe that Jesus

was the _____ and one occasion, came to take Him away.

“When his family heard what was happening, they tried to take him away. ‘He’s out of his mind,’ they said.” (Mark 3:21)

Despite being Jesus’ brother and growing up with Him, James’ claim to authority for writing is that he was a _____.

Servant = **doulos** = which means _____ or _____, suggesting James’ _____ and submission to God and the Lordship of Christ.

James understands that he was bought with a price, and so he _____ acknowledges that he’s not his _____—that it is not about him or his position

RECIPIENTS OF THE LETTER

Twelve tribes was a synonym for _____.

Dispersion was a technical term used to describe Jews who were _____ throughout the Gentile world.

5 PRINCIPLES TO HELP US ENDURE THE TRIALS OF LIFE

Principle #1. _____ **come into everyone’s life.**

“My brothers and sisters, when you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy.” (James 1:2)

Trial = **peirasmos**, which carries with it not only _____ trials, like the loss of a job or the death of a family member, but also _____ trials. Problems may start out on the outside, but sooner or later end up on the inside—on the _____ of the mind.

James is telling us that trials are not _____, but inevitable.

In our comfortable North American culture, we’re afraid of _____ and complain at the slightest _____.

Different = **poikios** =

James goes on to say that if you are really a Christian, it will be revealed by how you _____ to these trials.

True faith _____ us when everything goes wrong, and the _____ of our faith is tested by how it stands up in times of trouble.

How have you viewed the trials that have come into your life?

Principle #2. _____ determines outcome.

Instead of succumbing to our feelings, James calls us to do the _____.
“My brothers and sisters, count it all joy when you fall into different kinds of trials.” (James 1:2)

Count = **hegeomai** =

James is pointing out the _____ we need to have if we're to _____ from our trials.

To count it all joy in the midst of our trials is to respond with a _____, intelligent _____ of our situation, based on our _____ in God.

James doesn't say that trials are a joy to go through, but that we should _____ them as joy.

He doesn't say that we should be joyous _____ our trials, but _____ our trials.

As believers we are not called to _____ endure times of testing, but to _____ and _____ from the experiences.

How would you describe your attitude in the face of trials and challenges?

Have you been able to count it all joy?

Principle #3. God has a _____.

“Because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance; and let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking in nothing.” (James 1:3-4)

Knowing that our trials have a purpose can make a big difference in how we _____ them.

3 POSITIVE CHARACTERISTICS IN THE PERSON BEING TESTED

- They become spiritually _____ and seasoned in their Christian experience.
- They become _____, meaning whole and fully developed in their Christian experience.
- They are lacking in nothing meaning that God will _____ everything they need to remain obedient in their lives of faith.

Trials=joy must _____ our minds and _____ our perception of everything we face or all we will see is our problem and not God's _____.

When you face the trials and challenges of life, how confident are you that God has a greater purpose?

Principle #4. We were not meant to go through trials _____.

“If any of you is lacking in wisdom, ask God, who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly, and it will be given you.” (James 1:5)

This is _____ wisdom, divinely provided through God's _____ and _____.

TWO CAVEATS

- We need to ask God in _____.

“But when you ask him, be sure that your faith is in God alone. Do not waver, for a person with divided loyalty is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is blown and tossed by the wind. Such people should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. Their loyalty is divided between God and the world, and they are unstable in everything they do.” (James 1:6-8)

- God doesn't promise that the wisdom He gives will cause the _____ of the trial to conform to our _____ or will, but rather will accomplish God's ultimate _____ in us.

In times of trial, do you seek wisdom from God?

Principle #5. God _____ those who endure.

Two specific examples of testing that we can experience in life: the test of _____ and the test of _____

No matter what our earthly circumstances—whether we're rich or poor—it's _____ and we need to live for what is _____.

“God blesses those who patiently endure testing and temptation. Afterward they will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.” (James 1:12)

In the face of trials we need to look at the _____ picture—God's ultimate _____ to bless us with the crown of life

Blessed = **makarios** =

This isn't happiness that is dependent on our _____. This isn't happiness due to freedom from trial—but happiness due to _____ over trial.

How blessed—how happy are you in times of trial?