

James 1

I have entitled today's message, "**Hard Times**"

James 1:1

Let us stand for the reading of God's Holy Word.

James 1:1-14

James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting.

2

My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;

3

Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.

4

But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

5

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

6

But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.

7

For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.

8

A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.

9

Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted:

10

But the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away.

11

For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways.

12

Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

13

Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:

14

But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

Let us pray

You may be seated.

“Hard Times”

Vs. 1

James (brother of Jesus and lead pastor of the first church in Jerusalem)

(Notice how he describes himself)

, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ (deity of Christ, coequal with God), to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad (diaspora, dispersed), greeting.

Pastor James is writing to people who were a part of his church in Jerusalem.

2:1

My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons.

Jewish Believers

Vs. 2

My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers (various, manifold) temptations, adversities or trying experiences,

so this word carries the idea of pressure, of being put to the test, of being tried; test of character

Luke 22:28

Jesus said, Ye (the Apostles) are they which have continued with me in my temptations.

Acts 20:19

Paul said, Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews:

What happens when we get under pressure? In the pressure cooker of life/
When we are Being tried?

The normal reactions and results

Well, people begin to cry and feel hopeless,

Others groan and moan,

Others bellyache and complain,

Others get angry and sometimes dig themselves a deeper hole.

How it interrupts our life?
 How it interferes with our routine?

It makes us want to shout and scream.

We writhe and wrestle with it.

If we would look a little further in this chapter.
 Look at what God says we ought to do.

1:19-20

Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear (be quiet, shut up and listen) (many times it takes adversity for someone to listen, to be still), slow to speak (clamp down on the tongue) (listen, when we are under duress, it is not a good time to speak, keep the mouth closed) slow to wrath (control the frustration):

20

For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

When we come unglued, when we get bent out of shape, this is not the proper response of a believer.

Adversity exercises spiritual muscles

Rage, temper, and words come from a pent-up, pressured, frustrated person.

And often times, it is poured out on others in their path.

1:26

If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.

We can be Praising God today, but when the adversity comes, what is coming from our lips now?

3:10

Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.

Words of faith are easy when life is easy, but when we have fallen into the crucible, then see what we say.

So what was their trial? vs. 1

They had been scattered abroad, their whole lives had been turned upside down.

They were running for their freedom and for their life.

Why were they scattered?

They were being hunted.

They were in afflictions, under persecutions and sufferings.

Acts 8:1

And Saul (Paul) was consenting unto his death (Stephen's). And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles.

Acts 8:3

As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison.

The believers were experiencing all kinds of trials, temptations and problems.

We all experience difficulties.

We know of some difficulties because people ask for prayer.

There are hardships in this room that we do not know about...Great hurting.

Many times, they were created by our own decisions. We made our own bed.....

But we are not the only ones that make our beds, sometimes others make our bed.

and we are laying in it. Eating the consequences of it and its not good.

Our flesh wants it to go away. We want it to end, please.

So man tries to make it go away, cover it up, forget it, drown it, run away from it.

But the Bible says to:

vs. 2 to Count it all, acknowledge it, embrace it

Sometimes our first response is to deny it.

We are not to respond as if nothing has happened.

We are not to try to go into some fake world in our minds.

It has happened, it will happen, and we have fallen into it even though we did not want to.

What does the Bible say we are to do? How does the Bible say we are to respond?

The Bible says, Look at it in a different way...

See it in a different light

Glass half empty or glass half full?

This pain, these troubles have the possibility of bringing about something good.

God can make that which is ugly into something beautiful.

Ask Joseph from the bottom of the pit when He cried out, when he begged for his life.

Ask Joseph from the caravan as he traveled to Egypt in chains and then to the slave auction.

Ask Joseph when he was falsely accused and thrown into prison.

Ask Joseph when it seemed he was forgotten about

You know what Joseph said, **Genesis 50:20**

But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.

God had a greater plan.

What was the outcome of the persecution and the scattering of God's people in Acts 8:1?

Acts 8:4

Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word.

God's will was done. God's Work was done. God's people did it and they were moved by persecution.

Difficulties birth something in us that we cannot see initially and do not possess yet.

We often only see our troubles, our difficulties and never see the possibilities

Count it all Joy

Joy in spite of these things.

Joy by reason of these things

We all know this is easier said, than done.

The anxiety, stress, pressure, tears, heaviness, broken hearted, weakness, worry, sadness, depression, and we lose sleep, loss of appetite, and there are more symptoms.

These are honest responses, realistic evaluations and true assessments.

We all experience these things.

We have a society that is facing its problems in the wrong ways.

People are paralyzed,
they have become walking zombies,
They cannot cope,
They find counsel and counselors that are inept,
encouraged into excessive use of medications and mind altering drugs,
cannot spend or buy their way out of it

Struggles, sorrows, pressures are a part of every persons life.

It is not, **if** we fall into, it is **when** we fall into them.

Every one of us.

We fall into, unexpected, not planned for

Do we remember Jesus saying, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho,
and fell among thieves,

I assume everyone is careful of their surroundings, so as not to be robbed. But people
are robbed!

No-one is expecting to fall down today.

It happens and it happens to all of us.

I Cor. 10:13

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man (this is a part of life):
but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will
with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

We do not want to bear it. We want it gone....

God did not say that He would remove it.

God is counseling us on how to deal with it. Count it all Joy.

God is not saying we are to laugh in the face of troubles.

We are to practice our faith, practice our Bible.

We are to have faith in God, that God will make a way and when it is all said and done, this suffering will have its positive outcomes, believe it or not.

A good friend of mine fell out of bed Monday and broke his hip. Do we understand what that means

Adversities vary and are diversified.

Some come from the outside...persecution.

And the believers fell into them -

Vs. 12-14 speaks of temptations that come from within...What is their source?

Our own lusts.

Out of control appetites, passions, desires that turn into lusts.

Inward and outward attacks.

Trails are not wanted, not liked, and very disruptive.

The goal is to not let them sour us, but to make us better.

Not to allow our joy to be stolen, but that the better comes shining thru in difficulty.

Rockets red glare, our flag was still there.

I Peter 1:6-7

Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:

7

That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

It is in the fire, that our life is purged and purified and the dross, the bad stuff is taken out of the gold.

Trying times teach us. This is a period of forced learning.

This is a time of real education.

vs. 3

Knowing this, that the trying (testing, trial) of your faith (convictions, constancy) worketh (accomplish) patience (endurance).

Knowing this, understanding this, grasping this

We must be reminded regularly of the purpose of testing.

We know this to count it all joy but we forget this.

The car breaks down, and what did we do?

Someone gets sick,

We feel their primary effect, but God can use them for a greater purpose.

We must look at all things thru the lenses of God and His Word, but many times, too many times we respond in the flesh.

When I was a young Christian, one old man said to me,

If we fail to count right, we get to count again.
 If we fail the test, we get the test again.

Get it right the first time.

So difficulties try our faith, our beliefs, our convictions about God and His Word to see if we will stay with God and His truths.

They reveal our strengths and our weaknesses, our maturity and our immaturity.

Now they are working us over and what will win, our feelings or our faith?

Faith can win today and lose tomorrow.
 Our faith can win the first hour and lose the second hour.

Will we allow God's Word to triumph over our feelings and frustrations?

Will we trust God in the pain and in the dark?

Will praise come from our lips or cursing?

So Let patience, endurance do its work in us.

Trails can deliver to us a growth, maturity, patience, vs. 4

All hardened by the fires of life.

Romans 5:3

And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

What is produced in me?

Patience -

What is it?

Acts 20:24

But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

Prov. 24:10

If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is small.

Adversity brings us to this point, Not my will be done, but thine will be done in my life.

Real patience is that which endures to the end.

This is what we need to get.

This is what helps us everyday.

It is active endurance.

Let us stand for closing invitation

Now what are our problems/trials/temptations?

What are we facing?

What is it doing to us?

Ask God for wisdom

Gospel