

Sunday, June 1, 2025

1 Timothy 4:13, "Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching."

Title: Divine Purpose of Trials

Series: James ... 1 Text: James 1:1 - 8

Purpose: I want to PERSUADE my congregation that the trials we encounter on our earthly sojourn are permitted by Almighty God with a Divine purpose.

Introduction:

Today we begin a devotional series on the book of James. We will be considering verses 1 – 8 of the first chapter; these verses lay a foundation for the balance of the letter.

It is generally accepted that the author is James, the half brother of the Lord Jesus Christ; he does not use that relationship to identify himself, rather he humbly calls himself "a servant." "*James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes in the Dispersion: Greetings..*" verse 1

~ vs. 1, "to the twelve tribes in the Dispersion;"

My understanding is that James is referencing the captivities of Israel under the Assyrians, (approximately 721 B.C.), and then Judah under the Babylonians, (approximately 597 B.C.).

~ One of the proofs for the inspiration of the Scriptures is the re-establishment of the nation of Israel on May 14, 1948, under the leadership of David Ben-Gurion.

~ For a moment consider Psalm 37

1. Count it all Joy:

~ vs. 2, "Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds,"

~ The Greek word translated 'count' or 'consider' is very interesting in its meaning. Primary use is: to lead; to go before; to be a leader; to rule, command; to have authority over. Secondary use is to consider, deem, account, think.

~ Please note that it is NOT 'if you meet trails,' it is "when you meet trails."

~ 1 Peter 4:12, "*Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you.*"

~ John 16:33, "*I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.*"

~ Key thought – count or consider = ATTITUDE. Our attitude leads us!

2. Know that the Testing:

~ vs. 3, "*for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.*"

~ The Greek word translated 'know' is ginosko. It means to know, come to know, get a knowledge of, perceive, feel, to become known

~ Hebrews 12:2, "*looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.*"

~ Romans 5:3 – 4, "*Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing (eido) that suffering produces endurance, (4) and endurance produces character, and character produces hope,*"

~ Romans 8:28, "*And we know (eido) that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.*"

~ John, KNOW that God is more interested in your character than your circumstances!

~ Key thought – to know = UNDERSTAND. There is no substitute for an understanding mind!

3. Let Steadfastness:

~ vs. 4, "*And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.*"

~ "let steadfastness" in the Greek is ONE word. The meaning is: steadfastness, constancy, endurance; in the New Testament the characteristic of a person who is not swerved from his deliberate purpose and his loyalty to faith and piety by even the greatest trials and sufferings. The idea is that of cooperation or consent.

~ Ephesians 6:6, "*not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart,*"

~ Key thought – let steadfastness = SURRENDER!

4. Ask in Faith:

~ vs. 6, "*But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind.*"

~ Do not be like Peter in Matthew 14:22 – 33

~ Be like Paul in 2 Corinthians 12:6 – 10

~ James gives more instruction in 4:1 - 3

Conclusion:

Verse 4 gives the main theme of this letter – God's goal for our life is MATURITY or CHARACTER!

Communion