



SMALL GROUPS |

CURRICULUM

SERMON TITLE	DATE
"When Life Is Hard I will Count It All Joy" James 1:1-8	November 01, 2015

James 1:1-8 "James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,

To the twelve tribes in the Dispersion:

Greetings. Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. 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. For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways."

The hope in this study is that you would be more confident that God's perspective on suffering is much bigger than yours and that you would view your suffering with joy!

What you need: Bible, Notebook, Pen or pencil or marker

Have someone in your group read James 1:2, "Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds,"

Definition: The word "Count" means to consider, weigh, or to get perspective

I. Would you say it is more natural to assume things or to consider things, when facing trials?

II. **In James 1:2** we are commanded to "count it all joy" and the reasons are not because, "the cup is half full", "tomorrow is a new day", or because "It could be worse"... What reason does James give in v3-4?

A. Why is it significant that James says, "For you know" and does not say "for you will feel"?

B. How must this change how you "consider" your trials?

C. Share a praise report from a trial and how "what you knew about the Lord" brought you joy through it?

III. **Pastor Kevin told us that when we respond in faith it produces steadfastness.**

He gave a list of 4 Faith Questions to consider:

1. Do I believe God is good?

2. Do I believe God is sovereign?

3. Do I believe God's promises are true?

4. Do I believe God will deliver me and glorify Himself?

Which of the following are you most convinced of? Which of the following do you most struggle with?

IV. **James 1:3** "for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness."

Definition: The word “steadfastness” means to remain under.

- **The same word is used in 2 Corinthians 1:6** “If we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; and if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which you experience when you *patiently endure* the same sufferings that we suffer.

- A. Comfort can come as a result of seasons free suffering but according to 2 Corinthians 1:6, where does comfort also come from?
- B. According to James 1:3 and 2 Corinthians 1:6 why must freedom from all suffering not be our aim as Christians?

V. According to James 1:4 we are told to “let steadfastness have it’s full effect”

Definition: The word “let” means to embrace; and the phrase “full effect” means complete workmanship

- A. What is the full effect or complete workmanship that the Lord desires to do in you through trials? Hint: Read the next verse (James 1:5) What is implied then, if you don’t remain under trials?
- B. How does an unbeliever embrace something like their cancer?
- C. According to v4-5 how does a believer in Christ embrace something like their cancer?

VI. Have someone read James 1:5 “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him”

- A. Why do you think we are told we will be given ‘wisdom’ rather than ‘answers’?
- B. **While going through trials, think through the following:** Your conversations with others, Your personal prayers, and Your direct counsel to those suffering. How does the pursuit of wisdom and not answers bring joy in each situation?

MEMORY VERSE :

James 1:2-4 “Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.”

ACCOUNTABILITY:

1. Men/Women:

- i) Currently what would you say is your greatest trial?
- ii) List 3 perspectives God has regarding this?
- iii) Who is one person you can share your trial and God’s perspective with this this week?

