

James: Trials as a Gift

James 1:2-8

The Gift of Hardships

- James insists that we should find joy in the trials of life
 - Joy: the divine perspective that God is at work in every situation for our good (Rom 8:28)
 - Trials: Situations in life that are difficult for us to handle
- This joyous perspective comes from the realization that God uses such trials to test our faith in Him
 - Testing: to ensure something's genuineness and strength
 - Like how steel is tested in fire
- God's desire is that we trust Him enough to endure every situation that life may throw at us
 - Perseverance: To endure hardship
- The fruit of perseverance is spiritual maturity
 - Growing up in our faith so we lack nothing that we need in our relationships with God and others
- The reward of perseverance is the crown of life (Jas 1:12)

The Gift of Wisdom (v. 5-8)

- If we realize that we lack the wisdom to live life as God desires, we need only ask Him and He will provide
- God gives wisdom in 3 ways:
 - Through His Word & Spirit
 - Through godly counsel from others based on His Word & Spirit
 - As the Spirit uses our own mistakes to teach us the truth of His Word
- However, we must ask for wisdom, and all things, with unwavering faith
- If we doubt that God will give us what we need, He may not
 - Not because He is unable, but because we will look to other sources to meet our needs
 - God wants us to know He alone fulfills us, so we learn to trust Him more deeply & readily
- Double-minded: Someone who is unstable in their thinking and behavior
 - Like a wind-tossed wave
 - We are called to love God with *all* our heart, soul, mind, and strength, not a portion of it (Mark 12:30)

So What?

- Do we have joy in struggles?
 - Knowing that God uses them to strengthen our faith
- Are we asking God for wisdom with undivided minds?
 - Trusting that He will give us what we need

Meditation Verse: *James 1:2-3*