

James: A Letter from Jesus' Brother **Trials — James 1:1-4**

Who is James and why should I listen to him? (v.1)

James is a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ (v.1)

James was Jesus' brother, who came to faith after the resurrection when Jesus personally appeared to him — he was an eyewitness of Jesus life, death, resurrection (John 7:5; 1Cor 5:17)

James was an apostle (Gal 1:19)

James died for Jesus

Who did James write this letter to? (v.1)

To the twelve tribes — probably referring to Jewish believers

In the Dispersion — probably referring to Jewish believers who fled the persecution in Jerusalem in AD 44 (Acts 11:19)

From this letter we see that they were suffering refugees, oppressed by the wealthy (5:4-6), taken to court (2:6), scorned for their faith in Jesus (2:7).

What does James say to suffering believers? (v.2)

He calls us to see every trial as a time for intense joy.

Why do trials call for intense joy? (v.3)

Because trials refine our faith and as a result bring us steadfastness.

Why is steadfastness so valuable? (v.4)

Because we need steadfastness to get to heaven.

Jesus gives us all the steadfastness we need through trials — as we let them refine our faith.

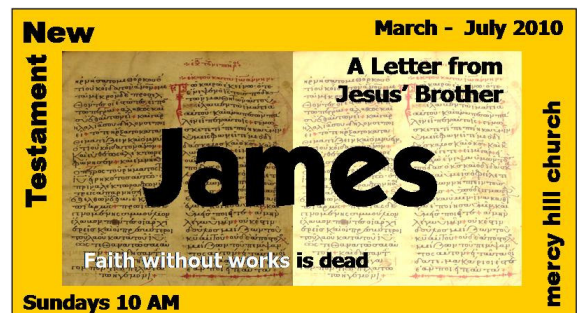
How should we respond to trials?

Pray for Jesus to help you.

See the trial as a joyful gift from Jesus.

Let the trial refine your faith.

Thank Jesus for the gift of steadfastness.



HOME GROUP DISCUSSION OF SUNDAY'S TEACHING

What was the Holy Spirit saying to you Sunday through this passage?

What questions, ideas, objections, encouragements did you come away with?

How often do you respond to trials with intense joy?

Does it make sense how someone can feel both deep sorrow and intense joy at the same time? Why or why not?

What is your usual response to trials? Do you intentionally take your trust out of other things and put it onto Jesus? Why or why not?

Do you agree that steadfastness is valuable because we need it to make it to heaven? Why or why not?

Does it comfort you that Jesus promises to give you all the steadfastness you need through trials? Why or why not?

What trials are you facing right now? How are you responding to them? How can we pray for you and encourage you?

What's your take-away from this message? What are you going to do differently? When? How?

Share prayer requests that come up in the discussion, jot them down below, and pray for each other.

New **March - July 2010**

Testament **A Letter from Jesus' Brother James** **mercy hill church**

Faith without works is dead

Sundays 10 AM