

HOW TO KEEP IT TOGETHER WHEN EVERYTHING IS FALLING APART

James 1:1-3 NKJV: James, a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad: Greetings. My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.

LIFE GROUP / PERSONAL STUDY:

The year 2020 will always be remembered as one of the most difficult and stressful years of our lifetime! Because of CoVid-19 and all the ramifications we've had to deal with, most people wonder all the time about, "How to keep it together when Everything is falling apart?" Especially as Christians, we need to stand out as people who are able to cope in difficult times because of our faith in Jesus Christ! The book of James gives us clear instructions and reasons that these instructions are good and will be effective as we continue in this ongoing struggle.

1A) Who did James write his letter to? Verse 1

1B) What important information can we glean about the early Christians from his description of the recipients of this letter? Verses 1-3

2A) What did James say to do when trials come and why? Verses 2-3

2B) PERSONAL: How hard has this been for you to do this year?

Have you even considered following his instructions?

What changes do you want to try to make?

3A) What are the two Fruits of the Spirit that James used in this passage?

3B) What does Zechariah 4:6 reveal about how we are able to respond and follow the instructions of James?

Read James 5:7-9:

4A) What further instructions did James give in verses 7-9?

4B) Write a list of the reasons James gave in verse 7, 8, and 9 for us to do this. What is the common thread in all of these verses?

5A) What example to follow did he give in verse 7?

5B) PERSONAL: What do you learn from this example and how would you relate this to what you have been experiencing this year?

Read James 5:10-11:

6A) What other example to follow did James give in verse 10?

6B) Name some specific examples and how they responded when “everything was falling apart” in their world.

7) What was the third example given by James in verse 11 and what do we learn about the Lord’s interaction with him?

8) PERSONAL: The first coming of Jesus brought great “joy” to the world. Spend time this week considering the 2nd Coming of Jesus and why this future event gives you joy and can help you to “be patient” no matter what is going on in our world today.

ACT: Jesus gave us basically the same instructions in John 16:33. He told us that in this world, we will have many trials and sorrows, but that we are to be of “good cheer” in other words “joyful” because Jesus has overcome the world. This is the foundation of our joy and our ability to be patient. It may look like Satan and the worldliness of sin is winning, but we must NOT be fooled by all of the deceptions of lies. God is the only One in Control! Jesus has OVERCOME the world and when we belong to Him, we can be filled with Joy and with Patience and even with another Fruit of the Spirit - Peace! We can wait on the Lord even when things beyond our control and our understanding take place. All of these trials and trouble are temporary! We have the Eternal Hope of living in the Presence of our Savior, who will make everything new, and we have the promise of a glorious reunion with our loved ones in our Eternal Home. Stand Firm and Be Joyful and Patient!

Daily Devotional: It always helps to look at the context of the passage. Then try to answer the following questions about the passage. Who is involved? What is going on? Where is the action taking place? When? How can this concept apply to my life? Why is it important? Also look for Commands, Warnings, and Examples to follow or not to follow.

- This week let's explore passages that describe what God does when we are suffering trials and trouble.

Monday:

Psalm 41:1-2 NLT

Oh, the joys of those who are kind to the poor! The Lord rescues them when they are in trouble. The Lord protects them and keeps them alive. He gives them prosperity in the land and rescues them from their enemies.

Tuesday:

Romans 8:18-19 NLT

Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will reveal to us later. For all creation is waiting eagerly for that future day when God will reveal who his children really are.

Wednesday:

2 Corinthians 1:3-7 NLT

All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is our merciful Father and the source of all comfort. He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us. For the more we suffer for Christ, the more God will shower us with his comfort through Christ. Even when we are weighed down with troubles, it is for your comfort and salvation! For when we ourselves are comforted, we will certainly comfort you. Then you can patiently endure the same things we suffer. We are confident that as you share in our sufferings, you will also share in the comfort God gives us.

Thursday:

Philippians 1:27-29 NIV

Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in the one Spirit, striving together as one for the faith of the gospel without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you. This is a sign to them that they will be destroyed, but that you will be saved—and that by God. For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him,

Friday:

2 Timothy 1:9-12 NLT

For God saved us and called us to live a holy life. He did this, not because we deserved it, but because that was his plan from before the beginning of time—to show us his grace through Christ Jesus. And now he has made all of this plain to us by the appearing of Christ Jesus, our Savior. He broke the power of death and illuminated the way to life and immortality through the Good News. And God chose me to be a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of this Good News. That is why I am suffering here in prison. But I am not ashamed of it, for I know the one in whom I trust, and I am sure that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him until the day of his return.

Saturday:

1 Peter 4:12-13 NLT

Dear friends, don't be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you. Instead, be very glad—for these trials make you partners with Christ in his suffering, so that you will have the wonderful joy of seeing his glory when it is revealed to all the world.

Sunday:

1 Peter 5:9 NLT

Stand firm against him, and be strong in your faith. Remember that your family of believers all over the world is going through the same kind of suffering you are.

