

The Letter of James

Faith that works!

Study 2 – Responding to trials

Introduction

One of the important and very precious things about the Bible is the honesty and reality with which it views daily life. False religion trades on untruth and on empty promises, Biblical Christianity speaks into the world as it actually is and enables God's people to live in the real world with integrity and in a way that honours God.

Nowhere is this contrast between Biblical Christianity and false religion more evident than in the matter of the daily trials of life. In false religion trials are either denied (as in Christian Science) or glorified (as in extremist religion), or, as in works based religion such as the prosperity gospel, trials are blamed on a lack of faith or obedience. All of this means that the followers of such religions end up trapped either in a form of spiritual make-believe or in guilt or, most often, in both. In Biblical Christianity, the reality of the trials that occur in daily life is openly acknowledged, but trials are also seen in relation to God's rule over the world and His good purposes at work in the lives of His people. This view of daily trials is very evident in James 1:1-12, our text for this study

Read James 1:1-12



Investigate

1. What trials is James referring to in this passage? (1:2)

2. According to this passage who can expect to face such trials? (1:2, 9-10)

3. What attitude should believers have toward daily trials? (1:2)

4. What knowledge makes this attitude possible? (1:3, 12)

5. What goal is God seeking to accomplish by allowing trials to occur in our lives?
(1:4)

6. What should we ask God for in the midst of our experience of trials? (1:5)

7. What is absolutely key as we seek to live for God in the midst of a fallen world?
(1:6-7)

8. According to this passage, what is the opposite of the 'mature' or 'complete'
believer? (1:8). How would you thus define maturity?

9. Who is the brother in 'humble circumstances'? (1:9)

10. What does James mean by 'high position' and 'low position'? (1:9,10)

11. What ultimate reality makes all people equal?



Think

1. What is the central concern of this passage?

2. How does James' teaching about trials, wisdom, faith and maturity apply to the everyday matter of possessions and wealth?

Apply



In what way has this passage challenged your thinking?



In what way has this passage spoken to your heart and challenged your deepest affections and desires?



What needs to change in your daily life as a result of this passage?