

James 1:1-4 "Real Faith Works!" Pastor Lee Talley

Author - "James, the Lord's brother"?

(Gal. 1:19; 2:9; Matt. 13:55-56; John 6:47 & 7:5)

[#1] Take note. At first, James **DOUBTED** Jesus claims to be Messiah, The Son of God...

(1 Cor. 15:1-8)

[#2] James' response to the visit of the resurrected Jesus was like 'doubting Thomas' response... "My LORD and my **GOD!**"

(John 20:27-29; John 16:32-33; John 14:6; John 11:25; John 10:27-28; John 10:9-10; Rom. 10:9, 13; John 16:33)

[#3] Notice it's not "**IF** you fall into various trials..." but "**WHEN** you fall into various trials."

[#4] There is no trial, no sorrow, no sickness, no struggle, no hurt that is so huge that Jesus is not **GREATER** than! Even the greatest trial of all ...

DEATH itself!

(1 Cor. 15:51-57)

[#5] We who belong to Jesus **NEVER** face these trials or sorrows alone!

(Heb. 13:5-6; 1Pet. 5:7; Rom. 8:32-39)

[#6] When Jesus' love and care and strength sees us through, our **FAITH** grows. We grow **CLOSER** to Him. Every time!

(Isaiah 40:11; Rom. 8:28)

"I have looked back to times of trial with a kind of longing, not to have them return, but to feel the strength of God as I have felt it then, to feel the power of faith, as I have felt it then, to hang upon God's powerful arm as I hung upon it then, and to see God at work as I saw him then." (Spurgeon quoted by Guzik)

[#7] James' theme ... Strong, Genuine, Real Faith in Jesus – **WORKS!**

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[#3] Notice it's not "_____ you fall into various trials..." but "_____ you fall into various trials."

[#4] There is no trial, no sorrow, no sickness, no struggle, no hurt that is so huge that Jesus is not _____ than! Even the greatest trial of all ...

_____ itself!

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[#7] James' theme...Strong, Genuine, Real Faith in Jesus – _____!

9) How do you balance the command to be joyful with your feelings of sorrow or anger during times of suffering?

10) What are some favorite verses you like to cling to when you are stressed, afraid, sad, or overwhelmed?

11) How can you best love and support those around you who are suffering?

12) Looking back to all that God has done for you - what do you most need to remember, so that you can trust Him today?

13) Looking back at this week's message and passage, what do you most need to remember or put into practice?

PRAYER REQUESTS

- ▶
- ▶
- ▶

Life Group Homework For the week of May 19, 2024

MY STORY

- 1) This week we learned how James' encounter with the resurrected Jesus helped him go from doubt to faith. Share an impactful experience in your own life that God used to help you follow Him or strengthen your faith.

QUICK REVIEW

- 2) Looking back at James 1:1-4 and your notes from this Sunday's message, what stood out to you or confused you?

DIGGING DEEPER

- 3) What do you think about the idea that "everything happens for a reason"? Do you think it is biblical? Why or why not?

Do you think there is a difference between God causing things to happen VS God allowing things to happen? Give some examples in Scripture of both.

4) What stands out to you or confuses you in the following passage?

Psalm 23:1-6 - "[1] A Psalm of David. The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. [2] He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. [3] He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake. [4] Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. [5] You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over. [6] Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the LORD Forever."

Looking at this psalm, what are some things God does for David?

What are some things David does (or tells himself to do)?

We're not sure of the time in David's life when he wrote this psalm, but as you think on David's life - what are some trials he faced that might have *discouraged* David in his faith?

What do you think were key moments or practices that helped David grow in his faith toward God instead of growing bitter towards God?

5) In the following quote, the author argues that no matter what the source of our suffering is, our response is always the same: obedience. He goes on to say, "The path of obedience always takes the high road. It tells the truth even if the truth brings pain. It refuses to return evil for evil, even when vengeance is within reach. It's thankful, even when there's not much to be thankful for. It walks with integrity, even when no one else does. It does the right thing, even when the right thing doesn't work out so well. Bottom line: God hasn't promised that everything will always "work out" in this life. But he has promised that, no matter what happens, he will never leave nor forsake us." - Larry Osborne

Do you agree or disagree? Why?

6) As you consider the topic of trials and suffering, what are some ways that God uses them for good? (We are not calling the trials "good", but looking for examples of good that God brings through them.)

7) How important do you think godly community is in helping us persevere and mature in our faith? Why?

GET PRACTICAL

8) What practices help you remain joyful even amidst the storms of life?