

Learn To Grow Through Adversity Series

May 03, 2020

Scripture: James 1:1-12

Summary: Reveals how we can grow through our adversities.

Learn To Grow Through Adversity

James 1:1-12

God never intended for or made provision for us to stop in our spiritual growth.

God's purpose for us is that we grow and become more like the Lord Jesus Christ in our daily lives.

To reflect more of Him and less of us. Sometimes we become complacent in our Christian growth.

We feel that we have reached a place and no longer have a need to grow or go any deeper in our walk with God.

When this happens, God will allow adversity to come into our lives to move us forward in our walk with Him and cause us to grow.

How we respond to our trials will either makes us or break us.

Why is that when we encounter troubles, trials or adversity many in the church want to quit and give up.

Over the years I have seen people quit church, quit serving God, quit reading their bible and quit praying because of troubles.

I have even seen those that became bitter and angry with God because of their troubles as though God has done them an injustice.

Many have expressed that God had been unfair to them.

Then there are those that feel that God owes them something.

Let me say that God doesn't owe any of us anything.

God, because of His mercy and grace chose to bestow on us His Blessing.

Not because He owed us or not because He had to, but because He Chose to.

If we will submit ourselves to God during times of adversity we will discover something about God and about ourselves.

Lesson Learned about God:

God has a purpose for every trial that comes into your life.

Nothing happens to you without God's approval or purpose.

God has the power to work things out to your good. Regardless of the circumstances you are facing God can make all things work to your good and your benefit.

God's perspective is not the same as yours.

God sees the purpose and outcome of your trial.

All you and I see is the pain and the problem.

God sees the future while all you and I can see is the present.

God's promise of His presence in the time of your trial. God will never leave you when you nor forsake you.

When faced with adversity we will also discover some things about ourselves.

We will discover what our view of God really is.

We will discover what our weaknesses and our strengths are.

We will discover how mature we are.

We will discover what our priorities really are. God's command or my comfort.

God is going to have a people that have been tried and proven.

God is going to have a people that have learned to grow through adversity.

God is going to have a people that have been made stronger and have become more determined than ever to serve Him.

God is going to have a people that is willing to change in order to become more like Jesus in their lives.

God test us to bring out the best in us.

Satan tempts us to bring out the worst in us.

This evening we are going to Learn To Grow Through Adversity..

This evening you can Profit From Your Problems.

You can turn Trials into Triumph.

If we are going to Grow Through Adversity.

If we are going to Profit From Our Problems.

If we are going to Turn Trials into Triumph.

Then there are some facts of Life that we MUST face and accept.

Fact # 1 The Reality of Trials.

James 1:2 My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;

1. Problems Are Inevitable.

James did not say, "If you encounter problems consider it joy" but when you encounter problems.

You can count on it, you're going to have problems.

If you don't have problems, check your pulse. It is a fact of life.

Jesus said "In the world you will have tribulation."

Peter said, "Don't be surprised when you have problems." Count on it.

Problems are not an elective in life. They are a required course.

You don't get out of them by saying you don't want to have any problems. Nobody's immune.

1 Peter 4:12

Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:

Don't be surprised by your trials they are coming.

2. Problems Are Unpredictable.

He says, "...when you fall into troubles ..." The word "fall" literally means "to fall into unexpectedly".

It is the same word used in the story of the Good Samaritan where the man fell among thieves -- it was unexpected.

Trials are not planned.

We seldom can anticipate the problems we're going to experience in life.

That's probably good because if we could anticipate them we'd run the other way and we wouldn't get the benefit from them.

We don't plan to have a flat tire. Or a crisis.

They are unplanned and unpredictable -- when we least expect them.

That's what makes a problem a problem. Often it's inconvenient when you fall into it suddenly.

3. Problems of Various Kinds

They come in all shapes and sizes. One thing about problems: you don't get bored with them: there are a wide variety of them.

Have you ever tried to match paint?

The word in the Greek for "many kinds" is literally "multi colored".

There are problems of many shades and varieties.

They vary in intensity, they vary in variety, and they vary in duration.

Some are minor inconveniences.

Some are major crises.

We have all kinds and shapes of problems.

They come in more than 31 flavors.

Some problems are custom made and you know it.

Fact # 2 The Reasons For Our Trials

James 1:3-4 3

Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.

4 But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

Our Trials have a Purpose.

Pain can be productive.

Pressure can produces.

Suffering can accomplish something.

It has value in our lives.

James says, " Knowing This ".

It's good to know that the adversity you are facing, the problems that you are encountering have a purpose.

You are not going through whatever you are going through for no reason.

When you go through troubles and trials, God is doing something in your life.

What value? Three purposes of problems in your life:

1. Problems Purify My Faith.

He uses the word "trying or testing", James uses a word to describe the process of purifying and testing gold.

You would heat the gold up very hot until the impurities -- the dross -- was burned off.

Job said "He has tested me through the refining fire and I have come out as pure gold."

The first things trials do is test our faith. They purify us.

Christians are a lot like tea bags.

You don't know what's inside of them until you drop them in hot water.

And then you know, faith develops when things don't go as planned.

Your faith develops when you don't feel like doing what's right.

It purifies your faith. Christians are like steel; when they're tested they come out stronger.

We've been in a test for a few months now

We've been in a course on character development.

God is much more interested in building disciples than He is in building buildings.

Problems purify our faith.

2. Problems Produce Perseverance In Our Lives.

"...the trying of your faith worketh patience."

Another way of saying this is, " The testing of your faith produces perseverance.

He's talking about staying power, endurance.

The ability to keep on, keeping on, the ability to hang in there.

The Greek here is literally "the ability to stay under pressure."

The idea is to stay put until the purpose is accomplished.

Hebrews 12:2

Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

We don't like pressure and we do everything we can to avoid it.

We run from it, hide from it, we do anything to get away from pressure.

But God uses problems in our lives to teach us how to handle pressure, how to never give up.

3. Problems Make Me Mature.

They make me like Jesus.

They help me mature.

They help me to grow.

"The testing of your faith produces perseverance that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."

That's God's long range goal.

His ultimate purpose is maturity. God wants you to grow up.

He wants you to mature.

God's number one purpose in your life is to make you like Jesus Christ.

God is much more interested in building my character than in making me comfortable.

If God is going to make me like Jesus, He's going to take me through the things Jesus went through.

There were times when Jesus was lonely, fatigued, tempted to be depressed and discouraged.

The Bible says there are two ways that God makes us like Jesus:

Through the word of God.

John 17:17

"Sanctify them through Thy truth. Thy word is truth."

James 1:22-25

"The word makes us like Jesus" it builds our character, matures us.

But even if you read the Bible two hours a day, how many hours of your life are you not reading God's word.

God demands even more on the second way.

Through the circumstances of life.

Here's where James hits right it on the head.

So many Christians I meet say, "Everything was going great when I first got saved.

Then all of these problems came.

Maybe God doesn't love me.

Maybe I'm not a Christian.

Maybe I'm not really saved.

Maybe I've missed the boat."

You are exactly where God wants you. You're in the process of growing.

He's making you like Jesus.

Romans 8:28 "We know that all things work together for good" [not all things are good but they work together for good] if we love God and are called according to His purpose."

The secret of Romans 8:28 is 8:29

"For whom he did foreknow He did predestine to become conformed to the image of the Son of God."

Why do all things work together for good? In order to make me like Christ.

Fact # 3 The Response To Trials

Our response to our trials determines the outcome of our trials.

Our trials will either make us or break us. It is a matter of how we respond.

1. Respond With Joy.

James 1:2

My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;

This is not the way we normally respond to adversity.

Often times our first response is to get mad and question Why me Lord.

James said Count. The word count is an accounting word that means to evaluate.

Accountants add up the numbers to make the balance sheets come out right.

Sometimes our trials don't add up from a stand point or our perspective.

They just don't add up. They don't make any sense.

We can count it all joy when we know that God is doing something wonderful in our lives. Something positive.

Something that will bring honor and glory to Him while at the same time make us more like The Lord Jesus.

2. Respond With Prayer

James 1:5-6 5

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. 6 But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.

A. Ask For Wisdom To Handle The Trial

How do we handle trials? Ask for God for help and understanding. You need to say God, I know that there is something good in this for me. Help me to see you plan and your hand this trial, in this adversity.

Show me how to respond so the I can get the best from this. As you are praying for God to give you wisdom remember what Paul said in:

1 Corinthians 10:13

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

You are not by yourself. There are other people in the body of Christ that have experienced what you are experiencing. They have seen God bring them through.

You may feel that God has allowed more to come on you than you can handle, but that is not true. God will always supply you with the grace that is needed to overcome all of your trials.

You must understand what wisdom is. Wisdom is the ability to properly apply and use the knowledge you have to correctly handle your trials and adversity.

A good teacher only tests students on the information that has already been taught. The teacher also wants the students to pass the test. So if you are going through a trial.

God has already supplied with the information needed to pass the test.

God's desire is that you pass the test of your trial so you can graduate to the next level of spiritual maturity.

B. Ask In Faith

We must believe that when we ask God for help and wisdom that He will give it to us. He will give generously and liberally.

Fact # 4 The Reward of The Trial

James 1:12 Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

God says there will be a reward.

I think the rewards will go to the people who quietly put up with difficult situations and develop the character of Jesus Christ in their life. He says,

There will be a crown of life.

When the trial is finished and the purpose is accomplished then there is God's reward. God not only wants you to receive the reward, He also wants you to love Him More.

God wants to Crown you with eternal, everlasting, never ending Life.

Conclusion:

Will you learn to grow through your adversity?

Will your adversity drive you closer to God? or Will your adversity drive you away from God?

We can Grow through adversity if we will face the facts of life.

Trials are a part of life. Trials have a purpose in life.

Trials will provoke a response. Trials will bring forth their reward.