

How to Live with Trials

Intro: ILL: Abraham sacrificing Isaac (Gen 22).

James 1:1-4, 12

I. v2 - What's a Trial?

A. Trial (πειρασμοις) = an experiment, a testing, a temptation.

1. It's a test directed towards an end - usually to help you end up stronger & purer in your faith.

2. ILL: A baby bird is said to test its wings.

3. This idea helps us to understand certain Bible passages better:

a. The Lord's Prayer in Matt 6:13 - And lead us not into temptation (a time of testing), but deliver us from the evil one.

b. I Cor 10:13 - No temptation (time of testing) has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted (tested) beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted (tested), he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

c. What a victorious promise!

B. So - test yourself..

1. II Cor 13:5 - Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you — unless, of course, you fail the test?

3. What's the test? The trials that come into your life!

C. Types of trials - tests.

1. Trials caused by you. The cause & effect test - you reap what you sow.

a. Gal 6:7-8 - Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.

b. ILL: Infidelity - you get caught, separation, divorce, heartache.

2. Trials caused by just living the Christian life. Your light shines so bright it exposes the sins of others.

a. I Pet 4:12 - Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you.

b. I Pet 4:16 - However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name.

3. The "why" trials.

a. There doesn't seem to be an explanation. Remember Job! He didn't know about the first 2 chapters!

b. ILL: Lorraine McKensie's threat to look up Eve when she got to heaven!

II. v2 - How Do You React When a Trial Comes?

A. With pure joy (χαρά) = delight.

B. There's a tremendous testimony that comes when you meet adversities with a calm faith.

1. ILL: My mom when Bob died.

2. ILL: Dana Haye's sweet spirit as she approached death.

III. v3-4, 12 - Why Should We React that Way?

- A. Because you are going to profit from it by developing perseverance.
1. **Perseverance** (ὑπομονή) = lit. remaining behind, patience, endurance, steadfastness, constancy.
 2. This is the ability to turn adversity into greatness.
 3. **ILL: The calmness of the martyrs stunned their persecutors.**
- B. Because your perseverance will produce . . .
1. **Maturity** (τέλειος) = having reached it's end, complete, perfect.
 - a. It's perfection towards an end - the perfect steak.
 - b. Trials give you the ability for conquering life!
 2. **Completeness** (όλόκληρος) = entire.
 - a. This is the lamb without spot & blemish qualified for sacrifice - the priest qualified for service in the temple.
 - b. Trials make you qualified for full service for the Lord!
 3. **Lacking** (λείπω) = failure to reach a goal.
 - a. This was the technical word for an army surrendering in battle.
 - b. So - in a godly reaction to trials you will not be surrendering, but be reaching the goal God intended for you.
 4. **v12** - The crown of life.

So, how are you going to respond when your next trial occurs? You are going to respond with pure joy because you know something Satan doesn't know. Each trial makes you a winner!