

Finding Joy in Life's Journey

The Book of James Intro (Week 1)

👉 *Did you grow up with a brother or sister?*

Can you imagine what life would have been like if your brother was...Jesus?

👉 *Read Today's Key Scriptures*

“¹James, a servant^a of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes in the Dispersion: Greetings.² Count it all joy, my brothers,^b when you meet trials of various kinds, ³ for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. ⁴ And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.” – **James 1:1-4**

➤ **Question:** Could James 1:2-4 be any more applicable to God's people after a year like 2020?

Three Truths to help us Find Joy in Life's Journey:

I. THERE ARE THINGS IN LIFE TOTALLY BEYOND OUR CONTROL

What is a trial?

The inevitable circumstances that make life hard

1. Trials are **unavoidable** — “when you encounter”
2. Trials are **unpredictable** — “various”
3. Trials are **uncomfortable** — “trials”

👉 *What strikes you about James statement in these Scriptures?*

Re-Read James 1:2-3

➤ “knowing...” — James says we can consider it all joy because we know something!

II. WE WORSHIP A GOD WHO IS ALWAYS IN CONTROL

➤ You and I may be surprised and caught off guard, but our God is never surprised! He never says “Uh-Oh”

➤ **Life Application:**

We cannot let our circumstances shape the way we view our God; we must let our God shape the way we view our circumstances

III. OUR GOD IS AT WORK IN EVERY TRIAL TO GROW US IN CHRIST AND GUIDE US INTO ABUNDANT LIVING

Re-Read James 1:3-4

- “Perfect” our growing in Christlikeness and “Complete” our experiencing the satisfaction of the abundant life He promised
- Here’s what that means: the trials in your life have not been allowed by God to take something from you; they’ve been allowed by God to give something to you—*“lacking in nothing”*

Discussion Questions:

👉 *Does following Jesus make our lives immune to challenges, obstacles, difficulties, heartaches and trials of life?*

👉 *How are we to respond to the trials of life?*

👉 *Have you always properly responded to the trials of life?*

👉 *Do your responses, behavior and attitude to life’s trials reflect the command James gives us to “Count it all Joy”?*

👉 *How will you manage expected and unexpected trials?*

➤ **Life Application:**

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