

Your Daily Appointments With God

MONDAY

Read Revelation 14:6-12. How is steadfast *endurance*, *perseverance* or *patience* related to the acceptance of the Three Angels' messages of Revelation? Will this *perseverance* or *patience* enable you to remain true to God through earth's last great crisis? Will it affect your faith in God?

TUESDAY

Read James 1:3; Romans 5:3; 1 Peter 1:7. What valuable characteristic is developed in the life of the believer who by faith triumphs over trials? What do trials accomplish for your faith in Jesus Christ?

WEDNESDAY

Read James 1:2-4; Matthew 5:10-12; 1 Peter 4:12-13. The Greek word *peirasmos*, translated "trials" or "temptations" in James 1:2, basically means a "test" applied with the purpose of determining the quality and thus the value of an object, or the character of a person. How is one who believes in Christ encouraged to meet the trials of life? Why?

THURSDAY

Read James 1:3-4; 1 Peter 1:7; What do trials accomplish for faith? What is the final stage in the development of your Christ-like character under the impact of trials? Does the testing of your faith develop you to handle trials and tribulations?

FRIDAY

Read James 1:5; Proverbs 3:5-6; Matthew 7:7-8. When trials come upon the believer, where will the Christian find the wisdom he or she needs in order to overcome? What must the believer do in order to obtain wisdom?

Presented by Jeff Rosenthal, Lead Pastor

Faith That Works in a Fractured World!

Part 1 – James 1:1-8

Introduction: James addresses many issues about how faith in Jesus needs to *affect our behavior*. Also, he addresses some misunderstandings about the relationship between salvation by faith in Jesus and the need for believers to live godly lives in a fractured world, such as today!

➤ *Let us look only to Jesus, the One who began our faith and who makes it perfect.*
Hebrews 12:2 (NCV)

I. Within Five Chapters, James Refers To Believing And Faith Nineteen Times In This Short Letter, More Than His References To Works And Justification Combined

- A. James is the most practical book in the New Testament. It's the "_____ " manual for the Christian life.
- *"Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, vs. 3, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. vs. 4, Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."*
James 1:2-4 (NIV)
- B. The word "trial" or "testing" in vs. 2 is an objective difficulty in life that can be a test of the _____ of your faith.
• It can also reveal the _____ of your faith.
- C. James tells us to turn our hardships into times of _____.!
• Because the "*testing of your faith produces _____*."
• Therefore, the Lord's desire is to make us " . . . _____ and complete, not lacking anything."
- D. James reveals in verses 2-4 that problems are _____.
The Bible doesn't say, "*If you face problems consider it joy*" but whenever you face trials . . ."
• Problems are _____. James says, "*whenever you face problems.*" The word "face" in Greek literally means "to fall into unexpectedly." It's the same word used in the story of the Good Samaritan where the man fell among thieves - it was unexpected.
• Problems are _____. Your faith develops when things don't go as planned, when you don't feel like doing what's right. This is when hopefully problems will sanctify your character!

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- E. The word “mature” in verse 4 in the NIV or “perfect” in NKJV has _____ to do with achievement or what you accomplish or sinless perfection.
- F. The LORD says maturity is _____. Your “attitude” is what makes the difference! Therefore, it’s all about our _____!
- G. The question is: How do you measure spiritual maturity?
- Not by comparing yourself to other people but by comparing yourself to what the _____ says and teaches.
- H. James uses the word “MATURE” five times in five chapters.
- Therefore, a mature person is _____ under challenges and the pressures of life.
- I. Jesus said, “... *I’ve come that you might have life.*” John 10:10
- The life we live comes with problems. So part of life means solving problems and facing them with the right humble _____.
- J. James tells us to ask something from God?
- Ask for “_____” from God!
 - He’s not talking about knowledge but about the ability to make wise decisions in difficult circumstances.
- “If you need **wisdom**, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking. vs. 6, *But when you ask him, be sure that your faith is in God alone. Do not waver, for a person with divided loyalty is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is blown and tossed by the wind.* vs. 7, *Such people should not expect to receive anything from the Lord.* vs. 8, *Their loyalty is divided between God and the world, and they are unstable in everything they do.*” James 1:5-8 (NLT)
- K. The wisdom that James says we need has Three Distinct Characteristics
- First, it is _____. It’s not a wisdom isolated from suffering and trials. This wisdom is the tool by which trials are overcome.
 - Secondly, it is _____. God’s wisdom goes beyond common sense. This wisdom begins with respect for God, and leads to living by God’s directions, and results in the ability to tell right from wrong.
 - Third, it is _____. Asking for wisdom is ultimately asking to be like Christ. God’s Word identifies Christ as the “wisdom of God” (1 Cor. 1:24; 2:1-7).
- “The proverbs of Solomon son of David, king of Israel: vs. 2, *for gaining wisdom and instruction; for understanding words of insight;* vs. 3, *for receiving instruction in prudent behavior, doing what is right and just and fair;*” Proverbs 1:1-3 (NIV)
- L. This wisdom, as far as the ancient sages were concerned, comes only from God: “For the Lord gives wisdom, and from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.” Proverbs 2:6, NKJV
- M. James says when a person asks for wisdom, he or she should remember two things: (1) How God gives; He gives _____ without finding fault (1:5), (2) That you ask without _____ (vs. 6).
- N. For James there is a PART TWO of the equation!
- That we must _____ and NOT DOUBT!
 - James 1:8 (NRSV), “for the doubter, being double-minded and unstable in every way, must not expect to receive anything from the Lord.”
- O. This double-mindedness is the _____ of the maturity and completeness mentioned in vs. 4.
- Being double-minded literally means “two-souled” or “double-spirited.”
- P. Jesus spoke about a person who is double-minded when he declared that “*no one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.*” (The Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 6:24)
- Q. Victor Frankl, who wrote, “Man’s Search for Meaning” and spent time in the Nazi concentration camp in Germany said, “They stripped me naked. They took everything - my wedding ring, watch. I stood there naked and all of a sudden realized at that moment that although they could take everything away from me - my wife, my family, my possessions – they could not take away my freedom to choose how I was going to respond.”
- R. “True religion means living the Word in your practical life. Your profession is not of any value without the practical doing of the Word.” (Ellen White, Manuscript 7, 1898)
- S. Proverbs 4:5 (NLT) says, “Get wisdom; develop good judgment . . .”
- This is an essential foundation for your “Faith that Works in a Fractured World!”