



## **Keeping Your Faith When Suffering**

*James 1:1-12*

James is a book about faith that must be evident in active works. So, James begins by addressing our most relevant felt need — we are vulnerable to losing or questioning our faith in suffering and pain.

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**Keep Your Faith—From God's perspective when you suffer.**  
**James 1:2**

*"Consider" = "When"  
"Encounter"  
"Various"  
"Trials"*

Psalm 30:5

**Grow Your Faith—From God's purpose for your suffering.**  
**James 1:3, 4**

Trials produce endurance.  
Endurance results in three qualities in your life:

**Understand Your Faith—From God's Power for your suffering.**  
**James 1:5-11**

Prayer to feed my soul results in wisdom in suffering.

Your faith must rest in the eternal wisdom of God, not the temporal values of this earth. Vs. 9-11

**Enjoy Your Faith—From God's promise after your suffering.**  
**James 1:12**

## Digging Deeper in James 1:1-12

Think of a time when you were vulnerable to either questioning or losing your faith because of some tragic situation in your life or a close friend or member of your family. If you did experience that, then you can begin to understand why James is introducing his book on faith dealing with the issue of trials.

Other books of the Bible also begin with the issue of suffering because our Lord knows we will struggle with it. See this in **II Corinthians 1** and **I Peter 1**. These passages are good companion scriptures to what James is writing about. I encourage you to read them first, work your way through **James 1:1-12** and note the parallel truths on suffering from these three passages. You will be better prepared to deal with your own pain and better to help someone else who is suffering. That is what it means to be a full disciple of Jesus.

James is writing to a community of Jewish believers who have been scattered beyond Israel to areas we know as Iraq and Iran today. It is so much harder to endure suffering when we lose our close community.

Read James 1:2: Based on what James writes, what are the odds that you will encounter some kind of trial? What key word leads you to that conclusion?

Reflect, write down and prayerfully consider this issue of suffering based on these following passages. Consider what this means for you, your family and believers around the world.

What did Jesus predict for these Jewish believers, and all His followers in **John 16:32, 33**?

What did Paul and Barnabas predict for the followers of Jesus in **Acts 14:21, 22**?

What did Peter predict for his readers in **I Peter 4:12-19**?

What conclusion should you draw about your life and all believers, when following Jesus? How then should you live and pray?

James wants us to consider it joy when we fall into many kinds of trials. Note the plural on "trials." What promise does **Psalms 30:5** offer you that is consistent with James 1:2?

From **James 1:3, 4**, we learn that God is in control of our suffering with a very intentional plan and process. What three key qualities is God seeking in your Christian life from your various trials from vs. 4?

Key to this is endurance. Read **Hebrews 12:1-3** and either underline or note how many times endurance or a form of that word is used.

Who is watching for our endurance in vs. 1? How does that help you when you feel alone in your trails?

Who is our perfect example of endurance in vs. 2? Where then should we focus our eyes so we can endure in suffering?

Why do we need to keep our eyes and mind focused on Jesus' endurance according to vs. 3?

Prayerfully lift your heart and mind to Jesus seeking His endurance to avoid growing weary and losing heart.

To help with your prayer, read this prayer in **I Thessalonians 5:23**.

From that verse, what can you pray for in your life? Write out your prayer to the Lord below.

Read **James 1:5-7**. Often the first question we ask in suffering begins with "Why?"

What does James tell you to pray for in suffering? Does that surprise you? What do you want to pray for when in pain?

We need wisdom in suffering. To help obtain God's wisdom, read below and respond to God's instruction so you can receive His wisdom for your life.

What promise does God make to you if you need wisdom in **Proverbs 2:1-6**?

What kind of person will acquire wisdom in **Proverbs 2:7-14**?

What wisdom should we not trust in from **I Corinthians 2:4-8**?

What power and resource do believers have for receiving wisdom from God from **I Corinthians 2:10-16**?

Who else does God provide for you to acquire His wisdom in the following verses?

**Proverbs 11:14**

**Proverbs 13:20**

**Proverbs 15:22**

How vast and deep is God's wisdom in **Romans 11:33-36**? How does this help when trials do not make sense to you?



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