



## EXPLORE THE BIBLE.

1, 2 Peter, Jude Sermon Series

Supports Session 1: Our Inheritance

Sermon Title: "Growth Through Trials" (James 1:1-6)

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### Connection to Session 1

Peter wrote to followers of Jesus who were exiled and dispersed. He commanded them to rejoice even while suffering grief through various trials (1 Pet. 1:6). James wrote to the twelve tribes that were dispersed due to persecution. He commanded them to consider it great joy as they encountered various trials (Jas. 1:2). We will experience trials on this side of glory.

### Introduction/Opening

We have been told that everything has a purpose. While we may argue the validity of this statement when it comes to diagramming sentences, we need not argue that the trials we face are without purpose. The world in which we reside is both sinful and sin-filled, and we are not immune to the consequences of this reality. But, as we will learn in today's sermon, the trials we face can and will grow our faith. This was true of the audience that James wrote to and it is true for us today also.

### Outline

#### 1. Trials are inevitable and multifaceted (v. 2)

- a. *When and not if.* We learn a significant and profound truth in verse 2: Christians will experience trials. James was the author, and he addressed his original audience as "brothers and sisters" (v. 2). These were not blood relatives, but rather those who were fellow followers of Jesus. As he began his teaching, he issued his first command to consider it great joy. This is the only command in this section of Scripture.
  - i. Peter continued to teach that trials are inevitable. We know this because he said, "whenever you experience various trials" (v. 2) The passage would be significantly different if it said, "if you experience various trials," but it does not say this. While some may want you to believe that Christians are immune from trials and suffering, the Bible does not support this. As we learned in our group study this morning, Peter encouraged fellow believers who were experiencing trials. We also know that Jesus told His followers that those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness are blessed (Matt. 5:10).
- b. *They come in various forms.* We also learn from this verse that trials take on various forms. A quick study of the Greek word for "various" teaches us that it means to be multifaceted, unique, and different. For example, the trial that you may be facing right now is different from my trial and different from the trial someone else in the church is facing. Each trial is unique to us, and each trial is, therefore, handled differently.

## 2. Trials have a purpose (vv. 3-4)

- a. *Trials test and prove our faith (v. 3).* Since trials are inevitable, let's consider why we face them. If we know the why, we may be better equipped to walk through them. The passage is clear—trials test our faith. If we once again look at the Greek, we can learn that the word “test” means to prove something to be authentic and real.
  - i. One way to determine if an orange is really an orange is to slice it and squeeze it. If orange juice comes out, then we know that we have a real orange. Likewise, one way to determine if a Christian is truly a follower of Jesus is to allow the trials of this life to squeeze them. If the love of Jesus comes out and the fruit of His Spirit is evident, then they are truly followers of Jesus. Trials have a way of testing and proving our faith.
- b. *Trials yield endurance and growth (v. 4).* Trials also invite us to endurance and growth. The word endurance means to stand up under the weight of something. As we stand under the weight of the trial, the result is a mature and complete faith. True maturity, however, is not found in the endurance of one trial. This is why we see the plural nature of trials in verse 2. When we endure and grow through one trial, we still have more to come as we continue to journey through this sinful and sin filled world.

## 3. Trials will lead us to pray (vv. 5-6)

- a. *We admit we lack wisdom (v. 5).* If we are wise, we will admit that we lack the needed wisdom to handle the trials we experience. When we admit this, we are much more apt to seek the wisdom needed. James told his brothers and sisters that those who lack wisdom, and that is all of us, should ask God for it. If we are being honest, our prayers tend to increase when we are going through trials. As we pray, we learn that God is bigger than our trials, and He has not abandoned us during our time of need.
- b. *God generously provides (vv. 5-6).* We can learn a great deal about the character and nature of God in this point. When we approach God asking for the wisdom needed to handle our trials, He gives to us generously and ungrudgingly. This truth is written as a statement of fact. Therefore, we can trust that God is helping us in our trials.

## Conclusion

Trials are no fun—this is why they are trials. But, for those of us who know and follow Jesus, we can rest assured that our trials have a purpose. If we know Jesus, we can ask Him to help us see our trials through His eyes and not our own. If, however, you do not know Jesus, ask yourself if He is allowing you to experience this trial to show Himself to you.

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