

Sermon Notes - James 1 - Genuine Faith Produces Stability

There are many times in our lives that we have to live by faith because what we see just isn't what we want. So how do we live by faith? How do you live a stable life when nothing around you is stable? How do you not give into fear or nerves or shortcuts or addictions?

Trials are “life difficulties.” -- Read James 1:1-4

Consider it pure joy whenever you face trials of many kinds...

1. Trials are inevitable. You will have trials. Life will be unfair.
2. Trials are various. Difficulties come in all shapes and sizes. You never know when or where or for how long.
3. Trials have a purpose.

...because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance.

When you face life difficulties, standing right in the situation, not running away from it, you build character in your life.

James says you will be a better person for standing through the storm.

4. Trials are your opportunity to become a better person.

Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. (verse 4)

Standing strong will make you a better person... a person people can count on... a person people can follow.

Better Ways to Face Difficulties in Life

1. You do not face your trials alone. – **Read James 1:5**

Facing life difficulties can make you feel alone. You don't want to be a burden. You don't want sympathy. But God has promised to never abandon you. He promises to walk with you through all adversity. You are never alone.

2. Let your leading thought be positive -- *Consider it all joy*

Don't go into difficult situations with dread. Keep as best as possible your leading thought to be “somehow the result of this tough time” is going to be positive for someone.

3. Pick the best path forward and leave regrets behind. – **Read James 1:6-8**

People question past decisions. Answer the questions.

If the answer is “Yes, I could have done a better job,” then admit the failure, learn from the mistake, and forgive yourself.

If the answer is “No, I did the best I could have at the time,” then quit haunting yourself with the question. You did your best.

4. Money doesn't make much difference either way when life gets really difficult. – **Read James 1:9-11**

James says it doesn't matter whether you are rich or poor. You have the same choices as anyone else.

Conclusion – The Crown of Life – Read James 1:12

And so James lived with the faith that he would face every difficulty in life as best he could. And he would do so without regret. And for it, he was rewarded with maturity. Maturity is the crown of a great life.

Questions to Ponder - James 1 Genuine Faith Produces Stability

Trials are “life difficulties.” -- Read James 1:1-4

1. What trials have you faced in your life? What trials are you facing now?

Better Ways to Face Difficulties in Life

2. **Read James 1:5** – Has God ever given you advice for a difficult time in your life? Does that sound strange to you that God would give you advice? What is stopping you from asking God for advice?
3. Do you generally have a positive outlook on life or a negative outlook? If it is negative, how could you begin to lead your thoughts with a positive twist?
4. **Read James 1:6-8** – Are there any past decisions that you continue to replay in your head? Which decisions do you just need to admit when were wrong and ask God to forgive you for those poor choices?
5. Which decisions did you simply do your best and need to rest in the fact that there was nothing else you could have done?
6. **Read James 1:9-11** – Are you using anything as an excuse for not having faith in difficult situations? Are you blaming your parents or your lack of education or your lack of money? What is your excuse? How does your excuse stand up before God?
7. **Read James 1:12** – What would maturity look like in your life? How would you be any different?

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