

Count It All Joy!

Introduction

Scripture Reading: James 1:2-8

1. **When we are faced with our own trials, tribulations and personal obstacles, we may wonder "how do I count this all joy?"**
2. **Individuals often ask this question because they have not learned to make the best of mishaps, disasters, death, sickness and trials.**
3. **Instead of being victims of these things we should learn to become victors over these things.**
 - A. **Whether we are dealing with trials on the outside or temptations on the inside, it is through faith in God that we CAN experience victory!**

Count It All Joy

1. **The fact that we will fall into various trials is a sure thing "when."**
 - A. **While strengthening the disciples returning from his first missionary journey, notice what the apostle Paul says:**

Acts 14:22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God."

- B. **From this passage we may better understand why it is stated that "Joy is the byproduct of obedience."**

2. But what do we do when this happens?

A. James says to "count it all joy!"

1) I must admit that my first thoughts are not normally thoughts of joy when I am faced with personal trials and tribulations.

B. But we see where this attitude is one that strong Christians learn to develop in their life, as did:

1) The apostles

Acts 5:41 So they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name.

2) Paul

Philippians 2:17 Yes, and if I am being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all.

3) The Christians

1 Peter 1:6 In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials,

3. But James does not ask us to be joyful without telling us why.

A. Understanding the "why" will enable us to be "joyful."

Testing Faith - Produces Patience

1. **In verse 3 James says:** "knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience."

A. **We cannot learn to have patience if our faith is never tested.**

Romans 5:3 And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance;

2. **It is through the testing of our faith that the very best is brought out in us!**

- **Our character is revealed!**

A. **The early Christians understood this principle and that is why they could be joyful.**

1 Peter 1:7-9

1 Peter 4:12-13

3. **The testing of our faith works for us, not against us.**

2 Corinthians 4:17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,

4. We gain patience through the tests that we endure.

A. Patience is just one building block that makes up the Christian's character:

Romans 5:3-4 And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope.

B. Understand that patience is NOT a passive acceptance of circumstances.

- 1) In the Bible this word denotes the ability to exhibit steadfastness and constancy in the face of the most formidable difficulty!**
- 2) It is "the continuing on" even when it is rough and despite the circumstances.**

C. The only way to have this kind of patience, this ability to continue on, is when we are faced with trials, outwardly or inwardly.

- 1) When our patience grows, we can be joyful.**
 - a. Charles Swindoll once said, "patience is waiting without worrying."**
- 2) BUT, to really benefit from our trials, we must obey what James says in verse 4.**

James 1:4 But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

The Results of Patience

1. **Trials produce patience, but then **patience must be allowed to do its work in our life.****

 - A. **We may feel that when some trial or difficulty comes our way that we want to get rid of it right now.**
 - B. **But we need to learn that some things that we must deal with may take time — and as a result we must learn to bear the trial patiently, working our way through it.**
 - 1) **Grumbling, getting mad, etc. is the norm, what most would do, yet how refreshing and uplifting it is to see:**
 - 2) **One enduring the trial, doing good, despite how bad it may be!**

Matthew 5:16 Let your light so shine before men, **that they may see your good works** and glorify your Father in heaven.

2. **When patience has an opportunity to work, it produces spiritual maturity in our life.**
 - A. **When Jesus said:** "Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect" **(Matthew 5:48) it means that we should strive to reach full maturity and understanding in spiritual matters.**
 - B. **We are to no longer be "babes" in Christ. We strive for perfection through an eagerness to know God.**

1 Peter 2:2 as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, **that you may grow thereby**

- 3. One that has learned patience is one that has matured, through use, of God's word. It does not come to one overnight, it takes effort.**

Hebrews 5:12-14

Conclusion

- 1. When we understand that God is the one that we live for, then we can be joyful when trials come our way.**
 - A. Understanding that the testing of our faith produces patience, and patience helps develop a Christ-like character.**

