

# Testing Your Faith [part 1] (James 1:1-11)

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## Scripture:

1. James, a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad: Greetings.
2. Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials,
3. knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.
4. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.
5. But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.
6. But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind.
7. For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord,
8. being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.
9. But the brother of humble circumstances is to glory in his high position;
10. and the rich man is to glory in his humiliation, because like flowering grass he will pass away.
11. For the sun rises with a scorching wind and withers the grass; and its flower falls off and the beauty of its appearance is destroyed; so too the rich man in the midst of his pursuits will fade away. (James 1:1-11 NASB)

## Outline:

- I. James, bond-servant of God and the Lord Jesus Christ (v.1)
- II. Joy in the Midst of your trials (v.2)
- III. Endurance in the midst of your testing (vv.3-4)
- IV. Wisdom as a result of your asking God in faith (vv.5-8)
- V. Glory in the midst of your humble circumstances (v.9)
- VI. The pursuits of the rich will fade away (vv.10-11)

## Outline:

- I. James, bond-servant of God and the Lord Jesus Christ (v.1)

- a. James, a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, (v.1a)
  - i. **Who** is spoken of in this verse?
    - 1. \_\_\_\_\_
    - 2. \_\_\_\_\_
    - 3. \_\_\_\_\_
  - ii. **Who** is James according to this verse? \_\_\_\_\_
  - iii. **Who** is James according to your knowledge of scripture? \_\_\_\_\_
  - iv. **What** is so significant about his relationship with Jesus and his apparent conversion? *[discussion]* \_\_\_\_\_
  - v. **When** did James become a convert, putting his faith in Jesus Christ as Lord? \_\_\_\_\_
  - vi. **What** event caused the conversion of James? What did it take in order to change his mind about Jesus his brother and the claims that He had made? *[discussion]* \_\_\_\_\_

- b. To the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad: Greetings. (v.1b)
  - i. **Who** was this book written to? \_\_\_\_\_
  - ii. **Why** where *some* of them “dispersed abroad”? \_\_\_\_\_
  - iii. **When** did this “diaspora” – “through a sowing” occur?
    - 1. Northern Kingdom \_\_\_\_\_
    - 2. Southern Kingdom \_\_\_\_\_
  - iv. **What** had caused the “scattering abroad” of most of James’ audience, who were fellow Jews referred to as “the twelve tribes” *[discussion]* \_\_\_\_\_
  - v. “Greetings” – One of six (6) words that are contained in the writing of James found in Acts 15 that are also found in the epistle of James that further substantiates the believe that he was the author of this book.

II. Joy in the Midst of your trials (v.2)

- a. Consider it all joy, my brethren, (v.2a)
  - i. **Who** was James encouraging to be joyful in the midst of trials? \_\_\_\_\_
  - ii. **What** is the *natural response* of a *natural man* when faced with “trials”? *[discussion]* \_\_\_\_\_

iii. This being the case, what does that require of a believer if he/she is to respond to “trials” with joy instead? *[discussion]* \_\_\_\_\_

iv. “Consider” – Greek: “count” or “evaluate” – What is required of the believer each time he/she is met with a “trial” in life that breaks the pattern of peace, joy, comfort or happiness in their life? *[discussion]* \_\_\_\_\_

b. when you encounter various trials, (v.2b)

i. Notice that James does not use the term “if”, but instead uses the term “when”. **What** can be said about “trials” in the life of a believer? *[discussion]* \_\_\_\_\_

ii. What areas in life can believers experience “trials”?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_

III. Endurance in the midst of your testing (vv.3-4)

a. knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. (v.3)

i. **What** is the key to being successful at passing the tests and enduring the trials of life for a believer, based on this verse? *[discussion]* \_\_\_\_\_

ii. **What** is the goal of testing that we receive from God in the form of trials? \_\_\_\_\_

iii. **What** benefit does this have for believers as the “trials” of life get progressively more difficult and challenging? \_\_\_\_\_

iv. **How** long must a believer endure these “tests” and “trials” in life and to **what** end? *[discussion]* \_\_\_\_\_

v. The word “testing” means “proof” or “proving”. **What** does this infer about how it is used in the life of a believer by God? *[discussion]* \_\_\_\_\_

b. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. (v.4)

i. **What** does the word “let” suggest about how a believer responds to “testing” and the result that follows, namely, “endurance”? *[discussion]*

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ii. **How** does the term “perfect result” relate to the life of a believer, practically speaking? **What** does it mean? **What** does it *not* mean?

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iii. Once a believer has “considered”, “rejoiced” and “endured” while going through various “trials”, **what** is the end result that is to be expected?

1. The believer will be spiritually \_\_\_\_\_ “perfect”.
2. The believer will be \_\_\_\_\_ “all the portions whole”.
3. The believer will be \_\_\_\_\_ in nothing “without deficiency”.

iv. **How** long does this process take? \_\_\_\_\_

IV. Wisdom as a result of your asking God in faith (vv.5-8)

a. But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. (v.5)

i. **How** does the wisdom of God related to what was just stated in verses 2-4 of this passage? [*discussion*] \_\_\_\_\_

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ii. **How** does the wisdom of God impact the life of a believer on a practical level as “tests” and “trials” come? [*discussion*] \_\_\_\_\_

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iii. As the wisdom of God is exercised in the life of a believer who endures various “tests” and “trials”, the evidence of this applied knowledge from God is evident because it shows up in the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ of the believer.

iv. As a believers applies the wisdom of God to difficult situations in his/her life, there is an awareness of their own personal \_\_\_\_\_ and their utter \_\_\_\_\_ on God.

v. People who lack wisdom, often do so because they don’t \_\_\_\_\_ “God, who gives to all generously and without reproach.”

b. But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. (v.6)

i. Is asking for wisdom enough, or does it require more and if so, **what**?

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ii. A person who asks God for wisdom, must not only believe that God is \_\_\_\_\_ to given them wisdom, but that He is also \_\_\_\_\_ to give them wisdom. This can be said of anything that a believer asks of God.

iii. **What** does this require of a person who asks God for wisdom? \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ (faith).

- c. For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, (v.7)
- i. **What** can the man who doubts when asking God for wisdom expect to receive from God? \_\_\_\_\_
  - ii. How should this guide the prayers of a believer when praying? \_\_\_\_\_
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- d. being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways. (v.8)
- i. **What** does “double-mindedness” and an absence of faith indicate about a person that asks God for wisdom? [discussion] \_\_\_\_\_
  - ii. This literal translation of the Greek expression denotes having one’s mind or soul divided between God and the world. This man is a hypocrite, who occasionally believes in God but fails to trust Him when trials come, and thus receives nothing. The use of this expression in 4:8 makes it clear that it refers to an unbeliever who is “unstable in all his ways.” (MacArthur, 2006)
    1. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. (James 4:8 NASB)
    2. I hate those who are double-minded, But I love Your law. (Psalms 119:113 NASB)
- V. Glory in the midst of your humble circumstances (v.9)
- a. But the brother of humble circumstances is to glory in his high position;
    - i. **What** should characterize a (financially) poor brother/sister who is (spiritually) rich in the Lord? [discussion] \_\_\_\_\_
    - ii. **What** is this “high position” spoken of in this verse? [discussion] \_\_\_\_\_
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- VI. The pursuits of the rich will fade away (vv.10-11)
- a. and the rich man is to glory in his humiliation, because like flowering grass he will pass away. (v.10)
    - i. Having money does not insulate the rich/wealthy believer from “trials” or “tests”, which have the ability to bring them low “\_\_\_\_\_” and it certainly does not grant \_\_\_\_\_, “because like the flowering grass he will pass away”.
  - b. For the sun rises with a scorching wind and withers the grass; and its flower falls off and the beauty of its appearance is destroyed; so too the rich man in the midst of his pursuits will fade away. (vv.11)
    - i. The pursuit of riches is \_\_\_\_\_ and comes to an end, but the pursuit of God is \_\_\_\_\_ and has no end.