

## **Sermon or Lesson: James 1:2-4** (NIV based)

[Lesson Questions included]

TITLE: God's Perspective For Our Facing Trials Of Many Kinds

INTRO: Life is full of trials, usually every day. When we go through various trials every day, there are many choices of how we can react. Usually, the first thing we contemplate and formulate is what our objectives are, and then we formulate the means or how we are going to achieve those objectives in the midst of the trial. We consider our available options and we strategize in order to promote our own agenda. And then we proceed to carry out our plan.

Have you ever considered that God may have an agenda for you as you go through trials? Furthermore, have you considered whether your objectives, means, strategy, and agenda align with God's and if yours please Him?

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READ: James 1:2-4

[Lesson Question: What are some objectives God wants to accomplish by us being tested? (v.2)]

SECTION POINT: As we "face trials of many kinds" (v.2), God has an agenda.

God wants to:

- - test our faith to determine its quality; (v.2)
  - - develop our perseverance (v.3), and other good character qualities (v.4);
  - - likewise develop maturity, completeness, wholeness, balance; (v.4)
  - - implement a means by which He can bless us and reward us; (vv.4,12)
  - - implement a means by which He can get us to live out our faith. (vv.3-4,22)
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[Lesson Question: Why and how is "facing trials of many kinds" (v.2) a "testing of our faith" (v.3)?]

SECTION POINT: As one of the main components of our facing trials, God tests our faith by usually placing us into a situation that requires:

- - patience and perseverance; (v.3)
- - faith and trust in God; (v.3)
- - maturity to handle the trial well; (v.4)
- - wisdom to resolve the trial; (v.5)
- - us to pray; (v.5)
- - decisiveness; (v.6)
- - God's help; (v.7)
- - the expenditure of resources, time, effort, or money; (vv.9-12)
- - being content with what we have; (vv.9-11)
- - us to properly use the resources God has already given us; (v.10)
- - standing through the duration of the testing; (v.12)
- - not surrendering to compromising our moral values; (vv.12, 27)
- - facing temptation; (v.13)

- - controlling our emotions and behaviors; (vv.19-21)
- - living out our faith; (vv.22-25)
- - controlling what we say. (v.26)

By implication, the nature of facing trial situations additionally require:

- - God to act;
  - - God to be working in our life (v.5);
  - - us being stretched outside of our comfort zone;
  - - us to become more rounded-out, balanced, and equipped to serve God and others (v.4);
  - - us to humble ourselves, admitting our need and dependence upon God;
  - - us to be motivated to be thankful for how God provides (vv.10-11) and gets us through the trials (v.6).
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[Lesson Question: How do we “consider it pure joy” (v.2) when the trials are harmful or worse?]

SECTION POINT: We can “consider it pure joy” (v.2) when we endure difficult and even harmful trials because:

- - By faith, we know that through the trials, God is building character qualities in us that are for our benefit in both the short-term and the long-term.
  - - Even though we may not feel or realize any benefits in the present, we can consider it or “deem” each adverse trial that we successfully endure to be producing in reality results that God finds of significant value. (Strong’s #2233)
  - - When we complete the trial successfully and we achieve God’s perspective on our facing trials of many kinds and what He is working to accomplish in and through them, we can respond with genuine and all-encompassing (Strong’s #3956) “pure joy” (v.2), “knowing” (v.3) that He is blessing us in a substantial and long-term or perhaps even eternal way (v.12).
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BIG IDEA: God intends and is working to make the trials of many kinds we face a long-term blessing for us, even though to us they look and feel like a harmful disaster.

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APPLICATIONS:

- - In the trials you face, have you been passing the testing of your faith and building these virtues, or have you been failing?
- - Certainly other people watch how you go through a trial. What do they see you doing? And what impact could you be having on them?
- - When you encounter a trial, if possible take a moment to consider God’s agenda, and then respond in His way. Train yourself to always proceed in this manner. Then rejoice and rest in the confidence that because you are behaving in the way that pleases God,

no matter what the ultimate outcome of the trial becomes, God is and will find ways to bless you.

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[Additional Lesson Question to ponder (optional, if time allows):

- - When is it God-approved to avoid or escape from a trial and when is it not?]

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Works Cited:

Bible. "The Holy Bible: New International Version." *The Bible Library CD-ROM*. Oklahoma City, OK: Ellis Enterprises, 1988.

"Strong's Greek Dictionary". *The Bible Library CD-ROM*. Oklahoma City, OK: Ellis Enterprises, 1988.

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