

## **Trials: Making You Bitter or Better?** **James 1:2-8**

The Book of James is all about spiritual maturity. Part of maturity is knowing how to handle difficult times.

James knew believers would face hard times and wanted to provide guidance in dealing with them.

### **I. Respond Positively (v2)**

#### **A. Some respond with anger.**

- v. 20 “The wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.”

#### **B. Some respond with resignation.**

#### **C. Some respond with avoidance.**

#### **D. Believers should respond with REJOICING!**

- We don't rejoice for the trouble itself, but for what God will do through it.
- God is sovereign over our trials, so we can respond positively.

### **II. Respond productively (v3-4)**

“A gem is not polished w/o rubbing, nor a man-made perfect without trials.”

#### **A. Let trouble help you develop patience.**

#### **B. Let trouble help you develop perseverance/endurance.**

#### **C. Let trouble help you develop maturity – complete, lack nothing.**

#### **D. Let Christ-likeness be your goal.**

- If our goal is to know Christ & to be conformed into His likeness, then we can have joy in trials, because trials move us towards that goal!

### **III. Respond Prayerfully (v5-8)**

#### **A. Some pray for deliverance, but God wants to refine & purify us through our trials.**

#### **B. Believers should pray for wisdom.**

- God gives generously; He doesn't hold out or give sparingly – so ask.
- God gives without finding fault – so ask.

### **Conclusion:**

- We will face trials of all shapes & sizes.
- They are a gift. It is a grace gift to suffer for the sake of Christ.

**James 1:12**, “Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.”

- The crown of life is the eternal reward received at the conclusion of your race of faith.

**2 Cor. 4:17**, “For our momentary light affliction is producing for us an absolutely incomparable eternal weight of glory. So, we do not focus on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.”