

Count It All Joy in Your Trials, v. 1-2

- I. The book of James is wisdom literature, often echoing the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5-7).
 - A. To “count” it all joy may also be thought of as to “consider” or to “account” it as joy, meaning it may all be painful right now, but in the end, looking back, it will be all worth it (Matt. 5.12).
 - 1. He is not calling them to one exclusive emotion of joy but considering it as “pure” joy! *Not* nothing but joy.
 - 2. Joy is not superficial sentimentality that can be analyzed by outward appearances.
 - a) Joy is the unexplainable inner reality of the believer happily and contently resting upon the Lord.
 - b) Grounded in God and the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5.22-23).
 - (1) There is a paradox in Christian living (1 Thess. 1.6; 2 Cor. 7.4) as we are united to the Lord.
 - B. Various trials may include temptations and daily battles in a fallen world such as sickness, disease, problems in relationships, etc.
 - 1. Heb. 12.1
 - a) Count it all joy because it will bear fruit in due season.

The Fruit of the Trials, v. 3

- I. What is the fruit of these trials and testing of our faith?
 - A. It is a spiritual testing, *not* a physical or worldly testing.
 - 1. It is a testing of your faith in Christ, which has been given to you by God (Eph. 2.8).
 - a) In matters of conscience, you may not be successful in this world because of the testing of your faith.
 - B. The fruit of this testing is steadfastness; endurance; perseverance; patiently waiting for an end result.
 - 1. The testing always has an end in sight.
 - a) What if I fall during the test? Get back up and seek the face of the Lord and his mercy (Prov. 24.16).

The Fruit of Steadfastness, v. 4

- I. What is the fruit of steadfastness?
 - A. That you be made whole in holiness and righteousness. The end is your sanctification and spiritual maturity.
 - B. That you would “lack in nothing,” doesn’t mean that you would not lack in physical goods, but in spiritual goods that come from above (1.17).
 - 1. It is a spiritual cleansing; putting on the new man (Col. 3.10); being transformed into the image of Christ from one degree of glory to another (2 Cor. 3.18).

- II. Application.
 - A. Consider a similar call in Rom. 5.3-6 and the foundation is Christ and his sacrificial death on our behalf.
 - B. Remember Jesus (Matt. 4.1-11) and how his temptation produced steadfastness leading up to the cross and the declaration of being the Son of God in the resurrection (Rom. 1.4).
 - 1. In order that we can go to him in the midst of our trials (Heb. 2.17-18).
 - a) He is the fountain of Christian spiritual maturity, so let us run to him in our time of need (Heb. 4.16).
 - C. 1 Pet. 4.12-13; Rom. 8.28
 - 1. What type of trial are you going through today? We are not called to enjoy these trials, but we can give of ourselves to one another in these trials (Rom. 12.15). Allow the fellowship of the saints to minister to you as Christ is present in our midst and there is joy there.
 - D. 2 Cor. 4.7-10; The Christian life is a paradox because we display Christ in the midst of various trials as we press toward the goal (Phil. 3.14).

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