

James 1:12Introduction

1. **You can't label someone a failure until you see how they respond to adversity. (Show)**
 - a. When Ellen's middle brother was struck w/kidney disease, he became an invalid.
 - b. He had very little quality of life for 8yrs. Some of his best friends couldn't handle his trial.
 - c. They literally abandoned him because he was no longer the outgoing, active David.
 - d. But the qualities that came out of him in the 8yrs 'til he died showed us how to suffer.
 - e. There was more to David than many of us realized, said his uncle after the funeral.
 - f. It is not until adversity comes that we often see the true measure of a person
2. **You can't label someone a success until you see how they respond to adversity. (Show)**
 - a. Many of us were born w/silver spoon in mouths. Most of lives things've gone our way.
 - b. We've know nothing but success and everyone thinks of us as a success.
 - c. But it is not until we have suffered & been deprived that people really know us.
 - d. Calamity is the perfect glass wherein we truly see and know ourselves.¹
3. One of the greatest tragedies in the Christian life is to fail to learn from our trials.
 - a. But one of the great blessings of life is to turn our problems into steps to maturity.
 - b. What is the incentive to do that? My brother-in-law accepted his trials w/o complaint.
 - c. How can we do that? If ever one verse gives answer to question it is James 1:12.
 - d. Summary verse in James. It rounds up the teaching on trials in summary fashion.
 - e. It is like a nutshell that summarizes the godly person's response to adversity.
4. (Remind us of James' development w/graphic Life in the Midst of Trials.) (Show)²

I. THE REWARD OF TRIALS IS BEING TESTED IN LIFE.**A. Verse 12 = A Beatitude**

1. Beatitudes are expressions of praise or congratulations.³
 - a. Blessed = to regard someone as fortunate or in favorable circumstances.⁴
 - b. It can almost be translated Congratulations!
2. But in the Greek world the fortune was always positive, never negative.
 - a. Blessedness equaled material goods, marriage, children, riches, fame, wisdom.⁵
 - b. But here in surprising twist the congratulations have to do w/trials, i.e., negative.
3. Know this is the way beatitudes often are? Take world's values & turn upside down.
 - a. Everything you think you know is wrong. Values of God's kingdom different.
 - b. God operates in a way that is different from what world thinks is fortunate.
 - c. God says believers who have lost, suffered, gone thru trials are fortunate ones.
 - d. People who are blessed may outwardly be much to be pitied, but from the higher and therefore truer standpoint they are to be envied, congratulated, and imitated.⁶

B. 1st Reason We Are Blessed Is Being Tested

¹ Sir William Davenant (1606–1668) was an English poet and playwright.

² <http://www.slideshare.net/GreatOaks/the-oneanother-approach-to-sin>. Slide 4. Accessed 6/30/16.

³ Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary (1992). Doubleday.

⁴ Louw, Johannes P. and Nida, Eugene A., *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament based on Semantic Domains*, 1988, 1989.

⁵ Kittel, Gerhard, & Friedrich, Gerhard, eds. (1985), *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Abridged in One Vol.*

⁶ *Weymouth's New Testament* note cited in "Blessed," *The New Bible Dictionary* (1962).

1. **Trial = to try learn character of someone by submitting to thorough/extensive testing.**⁷
 - a. Word means to find out what is in a person's heart based on tests go thru.
 - b. Know there is no other way to prove the reality of our faith other than testing?
 - c. We see that here in two words: **trial = pressure; stood the test = to be approved.**
 - d. **Stood the test = to be approved as genuine on the basis of testing.**⁸
2. **Two of My Favorite Statements Share Two Sides of This**
 - a. **Christians are like teabags, you don't really know what they're like until put them in hot water.**⁹
 - b. **A faith that hasn't been tested can't be trusted.**¹⁰
 - c. Are you real Christian? Really love Lord? Mean more to you than worldly success?
 - d. What happens when you are tested & put in hot water? That's the true test

II. THE REWARD OF TRIALS IS BECOMING TOUGH THRU LIFE.

A. **Key Phrase = Remains Steadfast**

1. Means to stay or remain + under – same Greek word fr. which we get word "abide"
 - a. Abide means to stay put or remain permanently. James Ropes says **staying power.**¹¹
 - b. **It's not a passive attitude of quiet submission or resignation, but rather, a brave manliness which confronts the difficulties and contends against them.**¹²
 - c. **The characteristic of a believer who is unswerved from his deliberate purpose and his loyalty to the faith and piety by even the greatest trials and sufferings.**¹³
2. Three times God told Joshua this was what he needed. **Be strong/courageous. 1:6.7.9.**

B. **Romans 5:3-4**

1. The same words used here are translated *endurance* & *character* in Romans 5:3-4.
 - a. **Character = metal cleansed of all alloy thru the pressure of heat in a furnace.**
 - b. **Weaknesses of character are eradicated: and believer emerges strong & pure.**¹⁴
2. Trials strengthen & purify us. And these 2 virtues, strength/purity, make us who are.
3. Kay Arthur was bitterly disappointed when she contracted a heart infection that forced her removal from the mission field. She and her family, serving in Mexico, were forced to return home. "I felt like a failure," she wrote. "Depression set in until I cried, 'Father, whatever you want.'" "It would be several years before I'd see how He'd use those formative years of study in Mexico to prepare me to write inductive Bible studies that would eventually reach fifty-two countries." "My disappointments aren't over," Kay admits. "Pain and trials are almost constant companions, but never enemies. They drive me into His sovereign arms. There He takes my disappointments and works everything together for good."¹⁵

III. THE REWARD OF TRIALS IS ENDING TRIUMPHANT AFTER LIFE.

A. **Crown of Life**

1. What James describes here is available to every Christian. Every Christian can win.

⁷Louw, Johannes P. and Nida, Eugene A., op. cit.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Chip Ingram, <http://i.quoteaddicts.com/media/q3/973053.png>. Accessed 7/9/16.

¹⁰ <http://izquotes.com/quotes-pictures/quote-a-faith-that-hasn-t-been-tested-can-t-be-trusted-adrian-rogers-350082.jpg>.

Adrian Rogers quote. Accessed 7/9/16.

¹¹ D. Edmond Hiebert. *James*. Moody Press.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Joseph Thayer *Greek Lexicon*, Ibid.

¹⁴ William Barclay. *The Daily Study Bible. James* (James 1:12).

¹⁵Kay Arthur, "In Person: My Disappointments, His Appointments," *Moody Magazine*, January 1992, 30.

2. What is **crown of life? = crown which consists of life.** Full endowment in heaven.¹⁶

B. Crowns Picture Four Great Experiences In Heaven.

1. **The crown was a sign of joy, 1 Thessalonians 2:19.**

- a. Crown of flowers worn weddings/feasts – times of joy.
- b. How do Olympic athletes look when gold medal placed on neck? All smiles.

2. **The crown was a sign of royalty, Revelation 14:14.**

- a. Crown of gold worn by kings & those in authority.
- b. In the kingdom God's children are going to rule and reign w/CHRIST.

3. **The crown was a sign of victory, Revelation 6:2**

- a. The crown of laurel leaves was awarded the victor in the Greek games.
- b. In the conquering power of Jesus Christ we can win life's battles.

4. **The crown was sign honor, Hebrews 2:9**

- a. 1 Cor.4:5 - **Then shall every man have praise fr. God.** Every believer some praise.
- b. Someday eyes of heaven on Jesus Christ. Receive all praise/honor.
- c. Turn place crown on our heads – honor in eyes of all heaven. Worth living for.

IV. THE REWARD OF TRIALS IS BEING TRUE TO THE LORD OF LIFE.

A. Those Who Love Him

- 1. James says **the Lord has promised [the crown] to those who love Him.**
- 2. All Christians love the Lord: Rom. 8:28; 1 John 4:19; 4:16. Love = Two-sided impact.
 - a. Our accepting trials and enduring them reveals our love for the Lord.
 - b. Our love for the Lord motivates us to accept and endure trials.
- 3. So this is not bearing down & gritting our teeth. But it is love.
- 4. Just like sugar sweetens the tea, so love for Jesus sweetens the trial. **It's for you Lord.**

B. Diagram of the Reward for Trials, James 1:12



- 1. Isn't this the life that we want?
- 2. Isn't this what life is really all about?
- 3. Isn't this what we want to offer to Jesus?
- 4. Let trials have their *perfect work that we may be perfect & complete, lacking nothing.*

¹⁶ R. Kent Hughes (1997). *James: Faith that Works.*