

# WHEN TROUBLE COMES

AUTHENTIC FAITH: GROWING WITH JAMES THE APOSTLE · JAMES 1:1-18 · JANUARY 5, 2025 · PASTOR MATT ERICKSON

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*“Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.” (James 1:2-4)*

## Introducing James (James 1:1)

Who is James?

When and why is James writing?

## Joyful Consideration Amidst Challenges (James 1:2-4)

Considering it joy – not the experience but God’s work in it

Testing leads to perseverance leads to maturity and wholeness

## Wisdom Needed Amidst Challenges (James 1:5-8)

Needing wisdom

Praying for wisdom

Trusting God’s wisdom

## Perspective and Perseverance Amidst Challenges (James 1:9-12)

Reframing perspective on our circumstances

Reframing perseverance through our circumstances

## Knowing God Amidst Challenges (James 1:13-18)

Remembering God’s role and our role amidst challenges

Remembering who God is amidst challenges

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. When have you experienced challenges bringing about something good in your life?
2. This week we begin a new preaching series, “Authentic Faith: Growing with James the Apostle,” by exploring James 1:1-18. Whether on your own or with others, begin your study in prayer, asking God to speak to you through this study and then read that text aloud.
3. *Background: The first verse of this letter introduces the writer as James, likely the brother of*

*Jesus and an early church leader, who is writing to dispersed Christians in various places, making the letter a more generally applicable teaching for us.*

4. With verses 2-4 James offers a very penetrating approach to facing trials or challenges. What does James say Christians should do? Why does James offer this sort of perspective?
5. What do you think about James’ perspective on trials? What do you find hard to handle about it? What do you find helpful about James’ perspective?
6. What does James say about wisdom from God amidst our difficult circumstances in James 1:5-8?
7. How does James reframe being in high or low positions, with much or with little, in verses 9-11?
8. Read verse 12 aloud again. What stands out to you about this verse?
9. When you consider verses 13-15 in relation to verses 2-4, what do these verses communicate to us about our role and God’s role in challenges?
10. What do verses 16-18 tell us about who God is? How does this shed light on all we have studied in chapter 1 so far?
11. What is one thing God speaking to you personally through this study? If you are with a small group, discuss that with one another and then pray about what you shared. If you are on your own, write it down, pray about it, and share this with someone this week.

## DIG DEEPER

This week dig deeper in one or more of the following ways:

- Memorize James 1:2-4 or 1:12 or 1:17
- Are you in a challenging time? Find a friend who will pray for you or submit the prayer request to the church: [eastbrook.org/prayer](http://eastbrook.org/prayer).
- Consider exploring these resources related to James:
  - “Old Camel Knees: a brief reflection on the remarkable prayer life of James the Just”: [mwerickson.com/2019/08/29/old-camel-knees-a-brief-reflection-on-the-remarkable-prayer-life-of-james-the-just/](http://mwerickson.com/2019/08/29/old-camel-knees-a-brief-reflection-on-the-remarkable-prayer-life-of-james-the-just/)
  - Augustine of Hippo, reflections on temptation in “Exposition of Psalm 61”: [newadvent.org/fathers/1801061.htm](http://newadvent.org/fathers/1801061.htm)
  - Bible Project James overview video: [bibleproject.com/explore/video/james/](http://bibleproject.com/explore/video/james/)
  - Bible Project “The Test” video: [bibleproject.com/explore/video/the-test/](http://bibleproject.com/explore/video/the-test/)