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People often take Scripture out of context and they give a verse a life of its own. James 2:24: **You see then how a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.** Rom. 3:28.

- I. Responding to Trials 1:1–18
- II. Thematic Statement
- III. Development
 - A. Be slow to
 - B. Be slow to anger
- IV. Epilogue

James 1:1 **James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes in the Dispersion, greeting:**

James 1:2 **My brothers, count it all joy when you fall into different kinds of trials,**

Aorist middle imperative of *hegeomai*. Immature believer has trouble with this passage. Gal. 5:16b: **Walk in the Spirit and you shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.** Gal. 5:22: **But the fruit of the Spirit is: love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith,**

James writes this to *My brothers*, which means that he is writing to fellow believers. A *test* or *trial* is the word here. Some who have come into wealth don't feel as though they need God any more. Adversity is a fairly common test. *Hokilos* = a variety. There are a variety of trials a tribulations.

Adversity is inevitable but stress is optional. 1) Deserved suffering; we suffer because we are sinners and make bad decisions. 2) Undeserved suffering, simply by associating with others. 3) We live in a fallen world, which is going to have some suffering in it. 4) Suffering for blessing. 5) Suffering for discipline.

True happiness and joy comes from the proper function of the spiritual life. If you believe that people, circumstances, events or things are the key to your happiness, then you are slave to those details. If you have to have certain things in your life in order to be happy, then you are slaves to those details.

There is often a protagonist in most epistles; there is often a specific person who was a problem in the church. Their philosophy was often the same as today: Live for pleasure and avoid suffering. Gal. 2:20: **I have been crucified with Christ, and I live; yet no longer I, but Christ lives in me. And that life I now live in the flesh, I live by faith toward the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself on my behalf.**

James 1:3 **knowing that the trying of your faith works patience.**

Ginôskô (γινώσκω) present active participle; knowledge is a matter of value. You have to pass your high school tests in order to advance. You don't just go through the test; you have to pass the test. It is not just the result but the methodology. We have to follow strict protocol. This is the best possible way for us to grow in the devil's world because this is God's method. For a man, *is it normal and automatic to love your wife?* It is not natural. A supernatural command requires a supernatural power, and we have the Holy Spirit. We have everything that we need; we just need to use it. Pistis (πίστις) = *faith*. Hupomonê (υπομονή). John 10:10 there is a quality of life that we can enjoy on this side of heaven. We have the methodology to work this out. Those in difficult adversity often just want peace in this. There are millions of human viewpoint solutions and the correct solution is found in Scripture.

James 1:4 **But let patience have its perfect work, so that you may be perfect and entire, lacking nothing.**

Endurance is hupomenê. Present active subjunctive here. Teleios (*complete, reached an end*) and halêklêros (*whole or entire*). "Oh God, why is this happening to me?" 1Peter 4:12–16: **Beloved, do not be astonished at the fiery trial which is to try you, as though a strange thing happened to you, but rejoice according as you are partakers of Christ's suffering, so that when His glory shall be revealed, you may be glad also with exceeding joy. If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of God and of glory rests on you. Truly according to them, He is blasphemed, but according to you He is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or an evildoer, or a meddler in the affairs of others. But if one suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God because of this.** Each epistle tells us not to do this or that, because believers are capable of sinning. Sin reveals who the unbeliever is, but it also conceals who we are as believers (it shields us as believers; our light is under a basket and can't be seen).

James 1:5 **But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and with no reproach, and it shall be given to him.**

James 1:6 **But let him ask in faith, doubting nothing. For he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, driven by the wind and tossed.**

James 1:7 **For do not let that man think that he shall receive anything from the Lord;**

James 1:8 **he is a double-minded man, not dependable in all his ways.**

James 1:9 **But let the humble brother rejoice in his exaltation;**

James 1:10 **and the rich one rejoice in his humiliation, because he shall pass away as the flower of the grass.**

James 1:11 For the sun rose with the hot wind and dried up the grass, and its flower fell out, and the beauty of its appearance perished; so also the rich one will fade away in his ways.

James 1:12 Blessed is the man who endures temptation, because having been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

Makarios (μακαριος) which means *happiness*. Pêrosmos (πηροσμος) *perseveres, endures, remains until the end*. Reward is the crown; that is not salvation. This is for those who love Him. John 14:21–3: He who has My commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves Me. And he who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will reveal Myself to him. Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, Lord, how is it that You will reveal Yourself to us and not to the world? Jesus answered and said to him, If a man loves Me, he will keep My Word. And My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him. Do you follow His commands? That is the test of true love.

This is not simply James' theology.

1Pe 1:6–7: ...in which you greatly rejoice, yet a little while, if need be, grieving in manifold temptations; so that the trial of your faith (being much more precious than that of gold that perishes, but being proven through fire) might be found to praise and honor and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,...

Rom. 5:3–4: And not only this, but we glory in afflictions also, knowing that afflictions work out patience, and patience works out experience, and experience works out hope. Many of the same words and pretty much the same doctrine.

I Thess. 1:6: And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, welcoming the Word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit,...

4 conclusions:

1. Various trials, adversity and suffering which tests our faith produces endurance.
2. Believers are to thoughtfully consider the trials of life, for they build spiritual maturity and character in our life.
3. Trials, tribulation and suffering are dealt with in the Spirit. We are sanctified in the truth.
4. Spiritual perseverance under testing produces glorification of God.

Christian world view vs. an atheist world view on suffering. We assume that if God exists, then His purpose is to make us happy. We constantly must keep in mind that God's purpose in life is much broader than our own happiness. God shows us in the cross that He is not some distant, unemotional God. He enters into our world of suffering and bears our suffering. Only Jesus should complain of complete unjust suffering. It is not how God can justify Himself to us, but how we, filled with wickedness and sin, can be justified before Him.

He's been a Christian for 14 years. 3 groups of believers: Group 1: once you believe Christ, you have true salvation, but you can lose it. Lordship group: you must make Jesus Lord in order to be saved; works are a part of salvation. If you fall away, then you were never saved in the first place. Group 3: You are saved completely once you believe in Christ alone.

James 2:24: **You see then how a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.** But then Paul says you are saved through faith apart from any works. James says faith with no works cannot save you. But then Eph. 2:8–9.

James begins with James 1:1 and not 2:14

1:1–18 Responding to trials properly

1:21–4:6 Body of the text

5:7–10 Epilogue

James 1:1 **From James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. To God's faithful people who have been scattered. Greetings.**

We need to know the Word; and we need to be able to go through and explain these passages which we have problems with.

When we hear the word *saved*, we think of deliverance from hell. However, *soteria* (σωτηρια) means *deliverance*. Only a third of the passages with this word and *sôzô* deal with being saved from hell. 3 phases: salvation from the penalty of sin; this is the book of Romans (1:18–3:20 tells us just how much we fall short). We were born with an old sin nature. God imputed to our account at believing in Christ perfect righteousness. Gal. 5:16ff deals with the struggle of the osn. The struggle with the flesh. Rom. 8 gives us the solution, which is God the Holy Spirit. 1 Thess. 4:16–17 when we are delivered from the presence of sin. Positional sanctification. Penalty of sin, power of sin, and presence of sin. These are the 3 things that we are saved from.

Paul tells us to work out our salvation, which refers to the power of sin (this is to the Philippians).

James 1:2 **My brothers and sisters, be very happy when you are tested in different ways.**

James 1:3 **You know that such testing of your faith produces endurance.**

James 1:4 **Endure until your testing is over. Then you will be mature and complete, and you won't need anything.**

James 1:5 If any of you needs wisdom to know what you should do, you should ask God, and he will give it to you. God is generous to everyone and doesn't find fault with them.

James 1:6 When you ask for something, don't have any doubts. A person who has doubts is like a wave that is blown by the wind and tossed by the sea.

James 1:7 A person who has doubts shouldn't expect to receive anything from the Lord.

James 1:8 A person who has doubts is thinking about two different things at the same time and can't make up his mind about anything.

James 1:9 Humble believers should be proud because being humble makes them important.

James 1:10 Rich believers should be proud because being rich should make them humble. Rich people will wither like flowers.

James 1:11 The sun rises with its scorching heat and dries up plants. The flowers drop off, and the beauty is gone. The same thing will happen to rich people. While they are busy, they will die.

James 1:12 Blessed are those who endure when they are tested. When they pass the test, they will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.

James 1:13 When someone is tempted, he shouldn't say that God is tempting him. God can't be tempted by evil, and God doesn't tempt anyone.

James 1:14 Everyone is tempted by his own desires as they lure him away and trap him. The blame is squarely placed on us. Dunn's biggest problem is not other people; it is him.

James 1:15 Then desire becomes pregnant and gives birth to sin. When sin grows up, it gives birth to death. The 2nd generation is sin; when sin grows up, it gives birth to death, which is the 3rd generation. This is carnality, when you are under the control of the osn. This death would be the sin unto death, like I John 5:16. I Cor. 11 believers arrived for the elements out of fellowship. Sin can have deadly consequences. James 5:19–20: My

brothers and sisters, if one of you wanders from the truth, someone can bring that person back. Realize that whoever brings a sinner back from the error of his ways will save him from death, and many sins will be forgiven. Turning an erring brother away does not save him from hell; Christ did that. This turns him away from the sin unto death.

You can wander from Houston, if you live in Houston. Not everyone can wander from the truth, because not all have received the truth.

James 1:16 **My dear brothers and sisters, don't be fooled.**

James 1:17 **Every good present and every perfect gift comes from above, from the Father who made the sun, moon, and stars. The Father doesn't change like the shifting shadows produced by the sun and the moon.**

James 1:18 **God decided to give us life through the word of truth to make us his most important creatures.**

Αποκυεω (αποκυεω) which means *to bring forth, to bring into being, to create*. God has regenerated James and his readers. They are all brothers because they share a common Father. James 4:5: **Do you think this passage means nothing? It says, "The Spirit that lives in us wants us to be his own."** Only believers have the Holy Spirit.

Salvation is related to the power of the Word. Dekomai (δεκομαι) which means *to receive, to accept, to welcome, to take hold of*. Receiving the Word is the same as living it out. **Receive the implanted Word which is able to save your souls.** He did not say, "Receive the implanted word, you unbelievers." The text has nothing to do with salvation from hell. The deliverance is from the power of sin, not the penalty of sin.

James 1:19 **Remember this, my dear brothers and sisters: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak, and should not get angry easily.**

James 1:20 **An angry person doesn't do what God approves of.**

James 1:21 **So get rid of all immoral behavior and all the wicked things you do. Humbly accept the word that God has placed in you. This word can save you.**

A deliverance in life from the power of sin. This is the first time we find the word *saved*. First verse in the section of being *quick to hear*. This is not a parallel verse to Acts 6:31.

James 1:22 **Do what God's word says. Don't merely listen to it, or you will fool yourselves.**

James 1:23 If someone listens to God's word but doesn't do what it says, he is like a person who looks at his face in a mirror,

James 1:24 studies his features, goes away, and immediately forgets what he looks like.

James 1:25 However, the person who continues to study God's perfect teachings that make people free and who remains committed to them will be blessed. People like that don't merely listen and forget; they actually do what God's teachings say.

James 1:26 If a person thinks that he is religious but can't control his tongue, he is fooling himself. That person's religion is worthless.

James 1:27 Pure, unstained religion, according to God our Father, is to take care of orphans and widows when they suffer and to remain uncorrupted by this world.

James is not evangelizing lost people; he is teaching Christians. James calls these readers *brothers*. James 1:2, 16, 19 2: 4:11 5:19 (and many I missed). You don't spend much time on dispensations with an atheist. James is teaching believers; he doesn't need to go back and teach salvation.

James 2:1 My brothers and sisters, practice your faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ by not favoring one person over another.

James 2:2 For example, two men come to your worship service. One man is wearing gold rings and fine clothes; the other man, who is poor, is wearing shabby clothes.

James 2:3 Suppose you give special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say to him, "Please have a seat." But you say to the poor man, "Stand over there," or "Sit on the floor at my feet."

James 2:4 Aren't you discriminating against people and using a corrupt standard to make judgments?

James 2:5 Listen, my dear brothers and sisters! Didn't God choose poor people in the world to become rich in faith and to receive the kingdom that he promised to those who love him?

James 2:6 Yet, you show no respect to poor people. Don't rich people oppress you and drag you into court?

James 2:7 Don't they curse the good name of Jesus, the name that was used to bless you?

James 2:8 You are doing right if you obey this law from the highest authority: "Love your neighbor as you love yourself."

James 2:9 If you favor one person over another, you're sinning, and this law convicts you of being disobedient.

James 2:10 If someone obeys all of God's laws except one, that person is guilty of breaking all of them.

James 2:11 After all, the one who said, "Never commit adultery," is the same one who said, "Never murder." If you do not commit adultery but you murder, you become a person who disobeys God's laws.

James 2:12 Talk and act as people who are going to be judged by laws that bring freedom.

James 2:13 No mercy will be shown to those who show no mercy to others. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

James 2:14 My brothers and sisters, what good does it do if someone claims to have faith but doesn't do any good things? Can this kind of faith save him?

This is not salvation from hell. This is not salvation from the penalty of sin. This is deliverance from the power of sin in this context. James 2 comes from chapter 1; see James 1:22, which is being a hearer only of the Word. Simply believing God's Word is not enough; if you believe God's Word but disobey it, then you got a problem.

What is good is it if someone claims to believe God's Word, but does not act on it; can this faith deliver him from the power of sin? Obviously not. There is no mention of hell in James except in chapter 3, which is a separate issue.

James 2:15 Suppose a believer, whether a man or a woman, needs clothes or food

James 2:16 and one of you tells that person, "God be with you! Stay warm, and make sure you eat enough." If you don't provide for that person's physical needs, what good does it do?

James 2:17 In the same way, faith by itself is dead if it doesn't cause you to do any good things.

James 2:18 Another person might say, "You have faith, but I do good things." Show me your faith apart from the good things you do. I will show you my faith by the good things I do.

James 2:19 You believe that there is one God. That's fine! The demons also believe that, and they tremble with fear.

James 2:20 You fool! Do you have to be shown that faith which does nothing is useless?

James 2:21 Didn't our ancestor Abraham receive God's approval as a result of what he did when he offered his son Isaac as a sacrifice on the altar?

James 2:22 You see that Abraham's faith and what he did worked together. His faith was shown to be genuine by what he did.

James 2:23 The Scripture passage came true. It says, "Abraham believed God, and that faith was regarded by God to be his approval of Abraham." So Abraham was called God's friend.

James 2:24 You see that a person receives God's approval because of what he does, not only because of what he believes.

This is a problem passage. Ορᾶτε τοίνυν οτι εξ εργαων εδικαιώτη, υποδεξαμένη τούς αγγελους και ετερα οδω εκβαλοῦσα. Paul's forensic legal justification. A justification by works, which is deliverance from the deadly consequences of sin. Paul says that someone is justified apart from works (Rom. 4:6). Jesus told his followers that you need to be even more righteous than the pharisees. James certainly understood imputed righteousness. It is faith in Christ which justifies one before God; but James uses Rahab as an example of justification through works. Paul teaches that God declared us judicially righteous before Him. We will also be justified before men if we apply doctrine and obey it. A life of lived

out truth. Abraham and Rahab are given as examples of two who have been justified before men. Isa. 41:8. Islam, Judaism and Christianity all recognize Abraham as being a *friend of God*. Abraham and Rahab were vindicated by their actions before God. When we go through testing and adversity, we need to pass those tests as well.

Let's say you are an ambulance driver and completely decked out with all the ambulance equipment; but you let people die, because you don't help them.

When James says something is dead, that means it was supposed to function, but it does not. You don't call those in a wax museum dead. But if your power tool quits, you call it dead. *Useless* is the word found in the context of being dead.

James 2:25 **The same is true of the prostitute Rahab who welcomed the spies and sent them away on another road. She received God's approval because of what she did.**

James 2:26 **A body that doesn't breathe is dead. In the same way faith that does nothing is dead.**

James 4:17: **Therefore to him who knows to do good, and does not do it, to him it is sin.** There is more to this than simply not sinning.

1. No contradiction between the justification of James and the justification of Paul Paul uses and accounting term. Logizomai. James deals with the justification before men.
2. God is not interested in believers only learning the Word and not applying it. We must know doctrine in order to apply it.
3. A faith actively living out in response to God's Word. Calls them carnal and babies in Christ is what Paul calls the Corinthians.
4. This is who you were; this is who you are; now be who you are (Eph. 4–5)
5. God clearly sees that we are justified in the legal sense. We can't see that in others. However, our works make it possible for others to see that we are saved and we are justified in this way before men. **"Let your light shine before men, so that they may see your good works and that you may glorify your Father in heaven."** (Matt. 5:16).