

# Tests aren't all bad

## **JAMES 1:2-4**

"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."

### **REFLECTION**

Look and trust.

Look. When we face a trial in this life, it is important to take time to reflect after we have come through the trial. We can take the opportunity to look back on what we have come through to see how God worked in the midst of the pain and confusion. See how He provided the right person at the right time with the right word of encouragement. Or how God protected us from long-term pain by allowing us to feel the sting of the loss of a relationship. Perhaps we were headed down a dangerous path, yet God, in His grace intervened and saved us from destruction. Whatever it might be, taking time to look and see how God has moved in our lives helps prepare us for the future trials that undoubtedly come.

Look and Trust. Remember we serve a God who has been through it all and can empathize with us always. Jesus has endured the worst trial imaginable so that we could gain access to the Father. He opened the door for us to cry out to God in hard times, and trust Him in uncertain times. Jesus' trials were not wasted but used to bring us into the family of God. Look to Jesus and trust Him in your trials.

*God is not allowing you to experience pain and trials "just because." They serve a purpose, and they can help us grow in our Christlikeness.*

I have yet to meet a person who really enjoys going through hard times, pain and suffering, or even change, for that matter. It is guaranteed that we will experience many forms of trials in life. Some will be simple and straightforward; others will cause real pain and confusion in our lives.

If you have lost your keys, had to study for a test or learn a new skill, you have experienced trials of a smaller kind.

When we lose a loved one to cancer; when our house burns down; when we deal with Covid and all its ramifications: these have significantly more impact on our lives.