



# Connect Church

Connect to a GREATER GOD, to a GREATER COMMUNITY, and to a GREATER LIFE

## Faith that Works Introduction

Theme: James – Faith that Works

*(Less about your talk – more about your walk)*

Tez Andrews, Lead Pastor

PO Box 372462 Decatur, GA 30037 10:30 am Sundays, S. DeKalb Mall

678-705-8121



**Scripture:** Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. 4 And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. (James 1:2-4)

### I. Introduction

- A. (Image) I'm Stronger! I'm Wiser! I'm Better! Trials lead to Triumph
- B. We Need to Trust God when We Can't Trace God
- C. Background of James: John 7:2-9; 19:27; Galatians 1:19; 1 Corinthians 15:7; Acts 15:13-21
- D. Text: James 1:1-4

I'm sure all of us remember this song, Never would have made it. A few months ago

TV One did a documentary on Marvin Sapp. Great story of this man of God.

Marvin Sapp had planted a church and he had signed a 3 album deal with his record label. He said my family is young. The church is growing. I need to get out of the record business. Focus on my family and focus on my church.

In 2007 his Father died. He looked up to his father. While his father was on his death bed. His father said, I want you to do my Eulogy at my funeral. For years he looked up to his dad leading choirs. Worshipping God. He wanted to tell Him no. But on his death bed he said OK.

I don't know how I'm going to do it. From this place of pain God birthed this song.

The first song to top the secular charts and the Gospel charts. It ministered the purpose of pain.

It was the first time Marvin Sapp had garnered a top hit. God apparently had a work for him to do. He later produced another top song, my testimony. This song also came from a place of pain. It came after his wife had died. Leaving him to raise 3 young children.

In this unsung he said, if I have to go through this sort of pain in order to produce a top song I don't want anymore top songs.

But the song Never would have made it said it best. God uses trial to produce character in you. God uses pain to make you better and stronger.

Life has ups and downs. It has pain but in the end, I'm stronger, I'm wiser, I'm better, much better. When I look back over what you brought me through. I can see you were the one I held on too.

Trials will lead you to triumph. We need to trust God when you can't trace God!

That's a faith that works! Today we are starting a new study. It's a study of the book of James. A theme in the book of James is trusting God in Trials. Trials have purpose. That's the first message in James. Trust God in Trials because Trials have purpose.

James gives a word about faith that works. It works when you go through trials. It works to grow you up. This faith is not a dead faith it has good deeds. This faith will save you and keep you. James tells a story that your Faith is less about your talk is more about your walk.

James! There are 3 James in the New Testament.

James son of Zebedee was considered one of the twelve. However, in Acts 12:2 this James was killed/beheaded by Herod Agrippa. So he did not pen this letter. It was likely written after his death.

James son of Alphaeus was an unknown figure in the early church.

James the Lord's brother. He was the natural son of Joseph and Mary. So he would have been the half brother of Jesus. This James originally opposed Jesus. John 7:2-9 2 Now the feast of the Jews, the Feast of Booths, was near. 3 Therefore His brothers said to Him, "Leave here and go into Judea, so that Your disciples also may see Your works which You are doing. 4 For no one does anything in secret [a]when he himself seeks to be known publicly. If You do these things, show Yourself to the world." 5 For not even His brothers were believing in Him.

James would have grown up with Jesus. He would have seen Jesus in a way very few would have seen Him. Yet James did not believe in Him. We know this to be true because even at Jesus' death, the people around the cross were Mary his mother and John one of his disciples. Before Jesus dies one of His final words were John behold thy mother or John please take care of my mom in John 19:27. Jesus did not leave this to the responsibility of his brothers because during his ministry they were against them.

But James converted to faith. He grew to actually be the lead elder of one of the first churches in Jerusalem. In Galatians 1:19 it says when Paul was converted he

spent 2 weeks with Peter but then the only other Apostle he spent time with was James the brother of Jesus. Interesting.

In fact you learn that James was the leader of the 1<sup>st</sup> Christian church at Jerusalem. Paul and Barnabas were leading gentiles non Jews to faith in Christ.

There was a contingent of Jewish believers that were saying the gentiles need to be circumcised and they need to obey the 360 laws of the Old Testament like us.

Paul says why should we put a yoke of bondage on them that we could not even keep. Then Acts 15:13 After they had stopped speaking, [a]James answered, saying, "Brethren, listen to me. 19 Therefore it is my judgment that we do not trouble those who are turning to God from among the Gentiles,

James was the one that really set up a major doctrine of the church. The spiritual life of a Christian not bound to the 611 laws of Old Testament but they should represent their faith in Jesus.

James the brother of Jesus. James the lead elder at the church of Jerusalem. James one of the Apostles that ministered to Paul. James the brother of Jesus that establish a primary doctrine of the church.

That's why when you read the book of James in the New Testament he doesn't hold back. I'm James and its not about your talk its about your walk. Be a doer of the word not a hearer only. Put in the practice what God has taught. Watch your mouth. Pursue wisdom. He challenges us to have a faith that works. Not a dormant faith. Let's look at James the brother of Jesus in James 1. Faith that works!

## II. James Servant of Jesus Christ... How About you? (James 1:1)

1 Corinthians 4:1

---

James 1:1 James, a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes who are [b]dispersed abroad: Greetings.

James had a litany of titles he could have used. We just read that James was an Apostle of Jesus as testified by Paul in Galatians 1:19. WE just read that James was the leader of the first Christian church in Jerusalem. Could have easily labeled himself bishop or elder. James was the one who came up with the doctrine of the Christian Life that Paul likely built the doctrine of Spiritual growth and practice based of James instructions and ruling in Acts 15:13-21. He could have said Him Im' James the theologian.

But yet we don't see any of that, James bondservant of God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I was at a church for a funeral a week ago. Connect Church spoil you. I just wasn't use to the mentality of don't call me by name call me reverend. Don't call me reverend, I'm elder, don't call me elder, I'm bishop, don't call me bishop call me Apostle. Don't call me Apostle call me prophet. I can't let you see the pastor can't let you tough him. He is busy drinking out of his goblets. You may effect the anointing God has on Him. Ok.

James legitimately an Apostle, Prophet, preacher, theologian but introduces himself as Servant of Jesus Christ.

Why? Faith that works is a faith that has a heart of a servant.

I'm teaching my boys look when you get on a job have a servants heart. If your manager asks you to do something. Don't tell them that's not in my job description.

You serve. You work as if you are working for the Lord on that job.

That's a faith that works. James has all of these accolades that he could have said to demand respect and reverence yet he says I'm a servant of God and Jesus.

I'm writing to the other servants of Jesus spread across Asian minor and Syria.

That's all he gives in his introduction. You are going to see that James gets right down to business. Enough of the talking its time to walk.

---

### **III. When "not" If you Face Trials (James 1:2)**

---

2 Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various [c]trials,

Unlike Paul who eases into letters with grace and peace be unto you. Let me send a shout out to Mark, Barnabas, and some of the other believers that I know in the area. James is like look you guys have got develop a faith that works.

Consider it all joy my brethren when you encounter various trials.

His first message which is a theme in his book is trials. Everybody say trials.

Trials are hard times. Difficulties. Temptations is a translation for this word.

Things that pull you away from God. Trouble.

Notice it says Consider it all joy my fellow Christians when you face trials not if.

What does that mean? Trials are a part of the believers experience.

There are times in your life when stuff will not work out the way you want it to work out. Times when financial difficulty. People difficulty. Issues with your children. Job difficulty. Church difficulty.

In this life you can expect there to be difficulty at times.

I wish I could tell you that when you come to Jesus life is going to be fully of bright days. No more suffering. You will never get sick. You will never experience the loss of a loved one. You will never go through the pains of this life.

The reality is that when your life gets impacted by Jesus, transformed, saved, on God's side the challenges get worst. The fire gets turned up even more.

John 15:20 If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you;

John 16:33 In this world you will have tribulation but take courage I have overcome the world.

Sometimes you will experience sickness. Sometimes the doctor will call and say, we found an abnormality rush to the hospital. Sometimes friends will let you down.

Sometimes divorce does happen. Sometimes friends die. Sometimes loved ones will get sick. Drunk drivers. People born with deformities. Adulterous relationships.

This life is filled with pressures.

Before Saul could be transformed into Paul he had to be blinded and humbled on the Damascus. Before he could write most of the new testament doctrines, he had to be beaten with rods, shipwrecked, stoned, rejected, threatened. Ohhhh you say you want to be impacted by Jesus expect difficulty. Expect Challenges.

Before Peter could lead thousands and be the leader of the disciples he had to be thrown in prison, beaten, arrested. Are you a follower of Jesus expect challenges.

Difficulty.

Challenges are necessary for the Christian life. Don't believe me?

2 Timothy 3:12 Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

Do you want God to use your life in that way? Expect challenges!

In order for diamonds to be produced they must go through pressure.

In order for Iron to be produced it must go through the fire.

In order for Strength to be gained your muscles must go through stress.

When you encounter various trials. As a follower of Jesus expect a variety of trials.

---

#### **IV. Consider and Know God (James 1:2-3)**

A. Rejoice in Affliction (Matthew 5:4, 10-12; Luke 6:20-25; Romans 5:3-5; 1 Peter 1:6-7)

B. Know that God has divine Provision and Purpose

---

Since trials are a part of life of a believer what am I to do.

Consider and know God.

2 Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials,

3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.

James says, make a conscience decision to consider trials pure joy. What is he

saying just put a smile on your face and act like its all good when its all bad. Wear a

fake smile when you are really crying on the inside.

Consider it all joy is not wearing a fake smile. Consider it all joy is a state of being not an emotion. Joy is a settled contentment to know God's got me. Joy is a thankful trust in God.

Now I'm going to tell you when I first read this passage count it all joy when facing various trials, I said God why did you have to put that in the bible. I don't want to be happy when I'm struggling. I figured out something you can't will yourself to be jovial you have to choose how you think.

To consider trials as an occasion for joy is an act of faith.

Instead of looking at the trial to consider it joy you have to look through the trial. By faith Abraham looked at Sarah being past child bearing years but didn't look at the trial looked through the trial and said God you promised that my wife would produced a child of promise (Heb 11:11).

By faith Moses parents looked through the trial when Pharoah said all first born children of Israel must be killed. By faith Moses parents said, we got to save this child even thoggh it would have cost them their life if they were caught Heb 11:26.

They didn't look at the trial they looked through the trial.

James has confidence that God does work things out for higher purpose and good.

Rejoice in affliction is to have faith that God is working. I got one of my best friends in this whole world here. Would have never thought in late 90's God was working God was working. Who would have ever known he was going to birth doctors, preachers, computer engineers, lawyers, business owners, people to make

an impact in this world. Use even the ugliest of experiences to birth something great. Trust the process.

This message of rejoicing in trial is a common message throughout New Testament.

Its to take God at His word.

Matthew 10: 10 "Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 "Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Luke 6: 20 And turning His gaze toward His disciples, He began to say, "Blessed are [a]you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. 21 Blessed are [b]you who hunger now, for you shall be satisfied. Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh. 22 Blessed are you when men hate you, and ostracize you, and insult you, and scorn your name as evil, for the sake of the Son of Man. 23 Be glad in that day and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven.

Consider and Know. Verse 3 know that the testing of your faith produces endurance.

The response to trials is Have faith in God's promises and know that it's a testing of your faith.

You know what I love about God is he is working on you. He's testing you refining you. You purify medal by putting it in the fire. Diamonds are produced w/ pressure.

Medal can't be sharpened unless it is banged against other medal.

Consider God's plan. Know that it's a test.

---

**V. In the End Trials Produce Endurance, Maturity, and Perfection (James 1:3-4)**

A. Endurance is Earthly Strength (Romans 5:2-5)

B. Maturity is Purification (1 Peter 1:6-7)

C. Perfection is Eternal Reward (Matthew 5:11-12)

---

2 Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various [c]trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces [d]endurance. 4 And let [e]endurance have its perfect [f]result, so that you may be [g]perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

Consider it all joy have faith in what God is doing.

Know this that trials are producing endurance. What's this? Earthly Strength!

Romans 5: 3 And not only this, but [a]we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; 4 and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; 5 and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

God loves you so much that he will not leave you where you are. He wants to produce character in you. Perseverance and strength. He wants to mature you.

Years ago Gala and I went on a cruise Has anyone ever seen a sculpter before. They will work for hours but it starts out as a big block of nothing. I remember Gala and

I was on a cruise years ago and they had an Ice sculptuerer. He was working for hours. It looked like a big block of nothing but all of a sudden after hours worth of work, it was something beautiful.

You know what trials it works on you. Right now you are a big block of nothing. But God allows trouble in your life to produce character. To produce perseverance. To work on you until one day God steps back and says now you beginning to look like Jesus.

3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces [d]endurance. 4 And let [e]endurance have its perfect [f]result, so that you may be [g]perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

Trials mature you. 1 Peter 1:6-7 6 In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various [a]trials, 7 so that the [b]proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which [c]is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

Trials mature you! Purify you! Holiness is birthed when you go through trial.

Two types of perfection are talked about here. First is maturity.

James is going to challenge our behavior to put away the futile things of this world.

Be a doer of the word not hearer only. Trials produce maturity. Your life practice changes.

Perfection also talks about eternity. 2 Corinthians 4:17 says momentary light affliction produces an eternal weight of glory far beyond comparison.

You will not be completely perfect until you see Jesus. Trials get you closer to where God wants you to be.

See this is why Marvin Sapp could sing Never would have made it. But in the End I'm stronger, I'm wiser, I'm better, Much better, When I look back over all he brought me through I realize I made it cause I had you to hold on to.

I love the story of Joseph in Genesis. This man Joseph went through so much.

Brothers threw him a pit. Sold into slavery. Sold to be a male servant. Falsely accused. Thrown in imprisonment. Forgotten about left to rot. But God elevated him to a place where he saved at least 2 entire nations from a famine. When his brothers came to beg him for food, he revealed who he was. IN Genesis 50:20, he said what you meant for evil God meant for good.

I can count it as joy because God was working in the pit. God was working in the slavery. God working when I was falsely accused. God was working when I was thrown in prison. God was working when I was forgotten about. What you meant for evil. God worked for Good.

I consider as joy knowing the testing of my faith was producing character and perseverance.

That's a faith that works!

---

## Less About Your Talk and More about Your Walk

---

James got a word for you! Time to stop talking and start walking. Are you trying to get closer to Jesus? Are you trying to hear His voice? Since God's presence?

Trying to let go of some sin that has entangled you? James got a word for you.

Do you have problems with different difficulties in your life? James got a word for you! Consider and know that God is God.

Does anybody need wisdom? You got a decision you need to make you need guidance from the Lord? James has a word for you. 1:5 any man needs wisdom ask God He will give it freely and abundant.

Does anybody have a problem with money. Maybe too greedy or not enough money. James got a word for you.

Do we have a problem with racism, classism, or sexism? James got a word for you in chapter you are evil if you judge people with evil motives.

Do you have a problem with your mouth? Speak too much. Talk out of turn when you should be quiet. James got a word for you. Be careful because your tongue is lit by hell itself.

Problem with lust? James got a word for you

Problem with selfishness? James got a word for you

Problem hypocrisy? James got a word for you; double-minded unstable in all his ways

Problem with humility? James got a word for you

Problem with planning or procrastination? James got a word for you

Need to enhance your prayer life? James got a word for you; Call on the elders of the church the prayer offered in faith will be healed for the effective fervent prayer of the righteous man availeth much.

James is a book that is special to me. Because it's how I came to Christ. I grew up in church was there week after week. But lived a carnal life apart from God. One day God spoke through a pastor that said true religion is to be a doer of the word not a hearer only. A walk with Jesus is not about your talk it's about your walk.

Where is your walk with God? Spirit worked in such a way I said, God I want maturity. I want growth. Not a mundane lax life for your you.

Let James challenge you!