# James 1vs1-12

Rejoice in the face of trials for the generous God is producing genuine faith that will keep you till the end

## Introduction

Hi everyone and welcome to our new devotional podcast where we seek to encourage you with God's word even as you find yourself separated from other believers due to social distancing and government restrictions. I could think of no better book for us to go through this time than the book of James. And today we will be looking at the first 12 verses of the book.

## Context

The book of James was written to Christians who found themselves scattered across the nations due to persecution.

They were people who were facing many difficulties. They were confronted by persecutions, the ungodly rich were oppressing them, the religion of some was superficial (not genuine) lacking love and action, and many were bitter and spoke badly about others. James writes to these believers in absentia and the first thing he does is give a bit of perspective (umbono).

## Rejoice for trials are not meaningless

Vs. 2…

*2 Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters,[a] whenever you face trials of many kinds, 3 because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. 4 Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything*

James is saying, I know that you may be going through trials and at the face of it is a painful but let me give you perspective in terms of what God is doing in you. Those trials that test (ahlola) your faith are producing (akhiqiza) in you, endurance (ukuqinisela) that will make you mature (sikhule sivuthwe) in the end. You see like an athlete who endures and rejoices in the momentary pain as they train because they know that they will be fitter to finish the race when the day comes or a mother who rejoices at the pain of child birth for she knows that this pain brings her closer to seeing her loved one. So, we rejoice for different trails, whether it be persecution, or moral tests, for they proof our faith genuine and produce endurance that brings us to maturity.

## God generously provides

But he goes further, and he says if there are some among you who lack wisdom to have this perspective God is generous and he will give you wisdom if you would ask Him. And of course, this perspective is hard, Wisdom (which is ability to have insight that produces results) can be hard especially when the reality of now feels so tangible and overwhelming. James says ask God and he will give you this wisdom but be confident or trust God. You see the problem is not God's ability to give you wisdom but our double mindedness in going to him for help. We want to have it both ways, we want to hedge our bets (trust in God but also trust in ourselves). But when we live like this, we shouldn't expect to receive anything for we don't believe he would give us what we need.

## Embrace your status in the Lord

Rather let us embrace our newfound status in Christ. The newfound status that flips the world's values on its head. Those who are from humble circumstances (the poor) should boast in their exultation for they are now crowned Children of God while the rich should embrace their humbling and not trust in their riches because the riches of this world will pass like a flower in the wind. You see this all about perspective. Living in the short term being blinded by your current circumstances will make the poor Christian not see how rich they are and the blind the rich into trusting their wealth and not see how much danger they are in.

But with the right perspective, with the wisdom of God that rejoices in our momentary trials you will endure till the end and receive the crown of life that God has promised us.

So even as news of the corona virus gets worse and fear and uncertainty surrounds us, rejoice in this trials, not because what you are going through is fun but because you know what God is achieving in you and be confident that he is able to give you your crown of glory for he is a God who is generous (a God who keeps his promises).