

## **Digging Deeper: James 1:1–4, 12**

Written by Rob Reynolds (Elder at MACC)

### **Day 1**

Read through and pray over James 1:1-4, 12.

James 1:1 (Who?): James begins by identifying himself. There are numerous ways he could have chosen to do so. He could have said James, son of Mary. Or perhaps James, brother of Jesus. James chose to identify himself in his most prestigious role, a servant of God and the Lord Jesus Christ. Who are you and how do you identify yourself? Perhaps by your job title or your family. Take time today to pray and prioritize your role as Servant of God.

### **Day 2**

James 1:2 (What?): This verse talks about facing trials and tribulations. Merriam-Webster defines trials and tribulations as “difficult experiences, problems.” James tells us what we should do when we face difficult experiences and problems in our life. Consider it pure joy, count it all joy, esteem it all joy. These are some of the Bible translations of James 1:2. So when we face trials and tribulations, God wants us to consider it, count it, esteem it, as all joy! God’s math says when we calculate these negatives it equals a positive. How do you handle trials and tribulations? Read John 16:33. Pray today that you would see life’s problems through God’s eyes and that you would have joy and peace that surpasses all understanding.

### **Day 3**

James 1:3(Why?): Now James begins to explain why you should consider it all joy. The NLT says “For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow.” The NIV reads “...the testing of your faith produces perseverance.” Okay, so having faith and remaining in our faith in difficult times produces perseverance and grows endurance. But why do we need endurance? Read Hebrew 12:1-3. God has set out a race for all believers to run, and it requires endurance and perseverance. Are you running quick sprints on Sundays and sitting down on your faith the rest of the week? Pray today that you would take every opportunity to persevere in faith through life’s obstacles and that God would prepare you to run with endurance.

### **Day 4**

James 1:4(How?): How does this process of perseverance in faith work? Choosing joy and having faith in the midst of hard times develops and strengthens our dependence on God. It is a maturation process of our faith in God. Read Romans 5:3–4, and 1 Peter 1:6–7. This is how we become fully developed, spiritually complete and needing nothing. In most translations of James 1, we see the words such as “allow,” “let” and “choose.” Ask yourself today, are you choosing joy and are you allowing faith in hard times to mature and complete you?

### **Day 5**

James 1:12: God wants us to be patient, have faith and endure through tests and trials, for he will bless us. Blessings come in many ways. Some blessings are physical and tangible while others are spiritual. Perseverance is a blessing. Faith that endures is a blessing. Receiving the Crown of Life reward when Jesus returns is certainly a blessing. Tony Evans writes “Trials open the door to God’s blessings. So receive them with joy, pray for wisdom, and grow in Christlikeness.” Thank God today for his physical and spiritual blessing in your life, and pray that you would run with endurance to receive the Crown of Life.