

## James 1:2-4

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**Verse 2:** “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations.” Is this a natural response? Not at all! To what kind of temptations is James referring? Both Thayer and Strong in their definitions of the Greek word *peirasmos*, from which this is translated, list the ideas of adversity, discipline, trials, and proving. In short, this has more to do with DIFFICULTY rather than DESIRE to sin, although sometimes the specific difficulty that serves to “prove” us at that moment happens to be a desire to sin that must be overcome.

Why is it that we should count these trials as joy? The answer lies in the next verse.

**Verse 3:** “Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.” “This is not a faked happiness, but a sincere joy because the results of overcoming trials are known. Overcoming trials will result in receiving the promise (Hebrews 10:32-39)” (Hampton 4). How many Christians have attended and served and lived faithfully many years, only to give up when hard times come?

It may be fairly easy to live as a Christian in times of comfort and fortune, but when hard times come, we find out who has the spiritual stamina to continue onward. Times such as these are certainly not easy, but they WILL come at one time or another (see 2 Tim. 3:12, for example). When the hard times do come, we must be steadfast, and immovable, ALWAYS abounding in the Lord’s work (1 Cor. 15:58). The patience that trials produce serves to make us much stronger Christians, who in turn ought to be able to help other Christians who face similar difficult circumstances.

**Verse 4:** “But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.” In order for a Christian to be perfect (not in a sinless sense, but in a sense of COMPLETION, which the Greek word *telios* indicates here), his PATIENCE must be complete. And how does his patience become complete? By successfully surviving each of Satan’s attempts to subvert him through the various trials that are thrown his way!

Patience (longsuffering, KJV), is one of the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23). This flavorful fruit can only be perfected in the presence of the pains of temptation! When such takes place, the Christian becomes more and more complete — as an aside, consider that both the Scriptures (2 Tim. 3:16-17) AND trials, as seen here, are necessary for Christians to be complete! — as he gains more and more experience in dealing with such trials. Thus, he matures as a Christian that is wanting (lacking) nothing, and is more than capable of surviving his spiritual struggle.

Think back, for a moment, to the time you first became a Christian. Now think about all of the trials you have faced since that time. Could you have survived those trials if they had all been piled on right after you became a Christian?! Probably not! But as you have progressed and grown as a Christian (ASSUMING YOU TRULY HAVE), your faith has increased so much that you are able to withstand so much more today than you could have back then. As the psalmist described in Psalm 1:3, you are “like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his FRUIT (emphasis mine, TCG) in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.”

**Works Cited:**

Hampton, Gary C. *Practical Christianity as Seen Through the Eyes of the Lord's Brother, James*. Valdosta, GA: Colson Printing Company, 1994. Print.