

Louder Than Words #1
Embracing Life's Trials

Word

Scripture Reference

James 1:1-11

Discussion Questions

1. How would you respond if someone says to you that something good can come from the suffering that you may be experiencing right now?
2. Actions that evidence your faith speak so much louder than your words. How do you live out a life evidencing your genuine faith? Read James 1:1-11. The Jewish Christians in Jerusalem were going through trials and persecution and were having second thoughts about living a life for Jesus Christ. They wanted to compromise their faith, and so James, the half-brother of Jesus who was a key leader of the church in Jerusalem and who had passionate faith in the Lord, wrote this letter to encourage them not to compromise their faith and not to go back to their worldly ways. He wanted to encourage these believers to give evidence to their real faith in Jesus Christ even in the midst of trials and difficulties. Discuss why it is a lot easier to show forth your faith when everything is going well? Why would living out your faith in the midst of trials speak louder to the people around you about your love for God?
3. James is encouraging his readers to show forth their faith to the world by embracing life's trials. First, he has written what should be a believer's attitude in times of trials (v. 2). What attitude did James tell you to demonstrate when you are facing trials? Discuss what kinds of trials every Christian could possibly face in his or her life. What does it mean to count it joy when you face trials? Did James mean that you should not feel bad when bad things happen? Share and discuss.
4. The product of trials is the perfecting of the person (v. 3-4). A Christian who went through a lot comes out as a complete and mature believer who knows what is important in life. His/her action of fortitude impresses and encourages others. What is produced when your faith is tried? Share how a trial has helped you to be more patient and helped

you develop endurance. Share about someone you know whose strong faith amidst trials and suffering has shown you what it means to trust God.

5. Our enablement through trial comes through praying for wisdom to understand the will of God and strength to endure those trials (v. 5-8). You can pray for God to change the situation, but what do you think would happen if your prayer were centered on the outcome instead of on your ability to endure it? Share how you can pray to help you to accept the things you cannot change.
6. Lastly, your actions speak louder than your words when you have the right perspective regarding trials. Both the rich and the poor have their own problems. Regardless of one's status, everyone goes through trials, and at the end of the day would have the same ending (v. 9-11). How can a person who chases wealth and riches be let down? Can rich people have a better life in heaven based on their status on earth? What would be the basis of heavenly treasure for everyone?

Walk

How you respond to trials is a big factor on how your life's testimony of faith becomes louder than words. In embracing life's many trials, a believer's attitude should be joyful; the product is his/her perfecting; he/she is enabled through prayer, and he/she views it from right perspective. How do you react to trials? How is your relationship with God transformed as you go through those hardships?

Worship & Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for Your Word that reminds me of Your love amidst the trials I experience. Thank You for being the Refiner who puts me through the fire to purify and make me into the best version of myself. Thank You because even through the many hardships You let me go through, You have never left me alone, but instead carried me through. So take my life, Lord; do with it according to Your will, and give me the strength to endure 'til the end. May my life shout loudly to the world that You are the good, good Father. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.