

*Series: Just Do It; Sermon: The Testing of Your Faith*  
*delivered by Josh Moody, senior pastor, on August 30, 2020*

***Bible text explored: James 1:1–18***

<sup>1</sup>James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,  
To the twelve tribes in the Dispersion:  
Greetings.

<sup>2</sup>Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, <sup>3</sup>for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. <sup>4</sup>And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

<sup>5</sup>If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. <sup>6</sup>But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. <sup>7</sup>For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; <sup>8</sup>he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

<sup>9</sup>Let the lowly brother boast in his exaltation, <sup>10</sup>and the rich in his humiliation, because like a flower of the grass he will pass away. <sup>11</sup>For the sun rises with its scorching heat and withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beauty perishes. So also will the rich man fade away in the midst of his pursuits.

<sup>12</sup>Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him. <sup>13</sup>Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God,” for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. <sup>14</sup>But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. <sup>15</sup>Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

<sup>16</sup>Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers. <sup>17</sup>Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. <sup>18</sup>Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

[ESV]

***Review and application:***

*James, Jesus’ brother, writes as the leader of the Jerusalem church to Jewish Christians scattered by persecutions that began with the stoning of Stephen.*

1. On what basis (*verses 2-4*) could James urge his fellow believers to welcome the full spectrum of troubles they faced as a positive opportunity?  
What end result (spelled out in *verse 12*) would enduring this testing of their faith produce?  
Can you glimpse how God could be using current trials to refine and strengthen your priorities?
2. If responding with joy to trials as a source of growth seems like a tall order (*verses 5-8*), where should you turn for straightforward help?  
What is the danger of wavering: half trusting God and half heeding other perspectives?
3. How, for instance (*verses 9-11*), does true wisdom provide clarity about issues of status and wealth as to . . .  
. . . their source?  
. . . their extent?

4. External forms of testing are easy to identify, but there is also internal testing (*verses 12-15*): What is the ultimate result of succumbing to one's own worldly desires?  
What are desires I need to face down to avoid evil actions and stand the test?
5. Who (*verses 16-18*) is the unchanging source of every truly beneficial and lasting gift?  
How did he give you your spiritual birth?  
How were James's readers the firstfruit offerings (*Leviticus 23:9-14*) of the worldwide church?
6. "The crown follows the contest," John Calvin insisted. Is frustration causing me to resist today's multiple trials, or am I welcoming them as occasions for joy?