

Transition:

“Count it all joy.” That’s easy to say—much harder to live. How do we find joy in sickness, in trials, in moments of sadness, grief, desperation, or even despair? Every one of us has faced trials, yet in just a few verses, God invites us to see our hardships from a completely different perspective. Here in Chapter 1, James calls us something radical: to “count it all joy”.

Tell the story:

Tell the story (with passion!) the best as you can, don’t stop and teach, try not to make points, just tell the story. Perhaps leave some parts out or make a mistake, just to see if your group catches it!

Rebuild the story:

Chronologically rebuild the story by asking questions. Have the group look for what was added or left out by looking in their Bibles and going back over the story. Then have someone else tell the story the best they can – just like you modeled the first time.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why does James urge us to *count it all joy* when we go through trials?
2. What habits or actions can help us live as *doers of the Word* instead of merely hearing it?

Fundamental:

James calls believers to find joy in trials, knowing they build perseverance and maturity. He urges us to seek wisdom from God in faith and warns against the instability of doubt. Earthly riches fade, but those who endure receive the crown of life. Temptation comes from within, not from God, and every good gift comes from Him. We’re called to be quick to listen, slow to speak and anger, to reject sin, and receive God’s Word with humility. True faith is shown by living out the Word and caring for the vulnerable while staying pure in a corrupt world.

1. When we face trials, how does ‘counting them joy’ shape our faith and spiritual growth?
2. When facing temptations, can you recognize that it often starts with our own desires—and what practical steps can we take to overcome them?
3. In what ways can we care for those in need and remain unpolluted by the world?

Homework/Challenge:

1. Identify a trial you’re currently facing or have recently walked through. Write down three ways God might be using it—or may have used it—to grow you.
2. This week, practice being quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to anger—then reflect on where you succeeded and where you struggled.

Discipleship Tip:

It can be challenging, even feel nearly impossible, for someone to see beyond their pain and count a struggle as joy. Reach out to someone in your group this week—send a word of encouragement or pray with them, as your support could help lift and shift their perspective. Building the ability to see trials as opportunities to grow in faith is an indispensable tool for navigating life with spiritual maturity.

Prayer:

Father, help us see trials the way You do—not as obstacles, but opportunities. Give us joy in the pain, faith in the unknown, and wisdom in the waiting. Amen.