



water from rock

Selah: Stop, Look, Listen – October 24, 2023

The Lord be with you.

Have you noticed how some people come through trials better while other people come through trials bitter? Better or bitter. Which one will be for you? Which will it be for me?

This is something I wanna think about today and to see how you and I might emerge better from the trials we're facing...

I'm in the little New Testament Book of James chapter 1, verse 24, that I read, "my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of any kind. Consider it nothing but joy. Because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its full effect. So that you may be mature and complete. Lacking in nothing." So here is a way of facing trials that can make us better, that can make us, the text says, mature and complete. Lacking in nothing. Now, notice that James says, whenever you face trials, he doesn't say, If you face trials, he says, whenever you face trials, because it's just to be assumed that you and I, this side of heaven, that we are going to face trials. But James says, whenever you face trials, whenever I face trials that we are to consider it nothing but joy. Trials are not to be considered as a punishment from God, I hear that from some people today, they think they're being punished, trials are not to be considered a calamity, but we are to consider trials as nothing but joy.

The Greek word translated consider, it speaks of a mental process, it speaks of a way of thinking of not reacting with our emotions but rather giving the trials do thought, giving the trials do consideration. As you consider the trials as all joy, because we know that the trials when faced with joy are, well, they're producing something in us, so I see rejoicing in trials is not being a masicus, rather it's... That we consider, James says. And you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And trials do test our faith, don't they? I mean, trials can stretch your faith with the limit, but James says, and when we counted away from the facing trials, not because trials are good in themselves, but because we know that trials face with joy produce something better. James says, because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance. The Greek word translated endurance is the word hupomona, hupo meaning under mona, meaning to stay... To remain under so hupomona endurance, it has an idea of staying under the pressure, bearing up under, it means that we don't cut and run when the going gets tough, but we hang in there, and the testing of our faith produces hopomona endurance. And then James says, let



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endurance have its full effect, let it play itself out as we become mature and complete, lacking in nothing.

So as we meet our trials with this joyful attitude, knowing what trials produce, that they produce endurance in us, and as we let endurance have its full effect and we become mature and complete, lacking in nothing, that there will be nothing lacking in our Christ likeness, that is the power of trials met with joy, knowing how God is going to use them to make us better.

Now, I don't know if what trials you are facing today, the trials are not a punishment from God, they're not a calamity, but the trials are God's tools for refining you, polishing you, making you more and more like Jesus, so that through your trials, you will become better and not bitter. And you will become a blessing to many people, so I pray that for you today, as I pray it for me, whenever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy, because you know... You know that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its full effect so that you may be mature and complete. Lacking in nothing. And that's what we really want. Isn't it? To be mature. Complete. Lacking in nothing.

I am Tim Smith, a fellow traveler. Thanks for listening until next time.