

ECCLESIA  
CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST  
Pastor Luther H. Holmes, Jr.  
August – October 2022  
Bible Enrichment Series

---

**NINE TESTS EVERY BELIEVER MUST FACE**  
**LESSON 8 – THE FRUSTRATION TEST**

**KEY CHAPTER: James 1:1-12 (Message Bible)**

**1** I, James, am a slave of God and the Master Jesus, writing to the twelve tribes scattered to Kingdom Come: Hello!

**Faith Under Pressure**

**<sup>2-4</sup> Consider it a sheer gift, friends, when tests and challenges come at you from all sides. You know that under pressure, your faith-life is forced into the open and shows its true colors. So, don't try to get out of anything prematurely. Let it do its work, so you become mature and well-developed, not deficient in any way.**

<sup>5-8</sup> If you don't know what you're doing, pray to the Father. He loves to help. You'll get his help and won't be condescended to when you ask for it. Ask boldly, believingly, without a second thought. People who "worry their prayers" are like wind-whipped waves. Don't think you're going to get anything from the Master that way, adrift at sea, keeping all your options open.

<sup>9-11</sup> When down-and-outers get a break, cheer! And when the arrogant rich are brought down to size, cheer! Prosperity is as short-lived as a wildflower, so don't ever count on it. You know that as soon as the sun rises, pouring down its scorching heat, the flower withers. Its petals wilt and, before you know it, that beautiful face is a barren stem. Well, that's a picture of the "prosperous life." At the very moment everyone is looking on in admiration, it fades away to nothing. <sup>12</sup> **Anyone who meets a testing challenge head-on and manages to stick it out is mighty fortunate. For such persons loyally in love with God, the reward is life and more life.**

## Introduction

We are living in a time that most of us never would have expected or predicted. Now more than ever we recognize that we do not know what tomorrow holds.

In times like these the question must be asked, how should we, as followers of Jesus, respond during these unusual and uncertain times?

Tonight, we turn to the book of James where we have this reminder: that while trials are certain and come in all shapes and sizes, joy is possible as we recognize God's purpose and provision in the midst of our trials.

## Context

James was the half-brother of Jesus, and he was a pastor in the church in Jerusalem in the years following Jesus's return to Heaven. ***James is writing to real people, in a real situation.*** These are people who are facing real trials. As individuals and as a church we must strive to have a view toward joy in the midst of unexpected situations. We don't know what tomorrow holds, but we can trust that God will use our trials to accomplish His purposes. As we navigate uncertain times, we must trust His plan, submit to His work in us and go to Him in faith asking for wisdom.

The first phrase of verse 2 provides a call that frames the entire section that follows. James is calling on believers who are facing trials to consider their trials with joy. On its own this may seem like a call to unsubstantiated happiness, but the verses that follow reveal the reason saints can truly, *count it all joy*.

We can experience joy in our trials by knowing that our trials have a purpose (1:2-4) As we face trials, we can have this hope: That God is using our trials to make us perfect and complete. The call for joy or rejoicing in the knowledge that God uses trials to bring us to maturity is a theme throughout the New Testament (≡; Romans 5:1-5)

How can we endure with joy?) Jesus endured the cross with joy as his motivation (Hebrews 12:2) While Jesus endured the cross with joy, He still experienced pain, grief and sorrow (Matthew 26:37-39). Enduring with joy does not mean we don't experience pain, but it does mean that we have hope

and purpose in the process. We can experience joy in our trials by knowing that God provides wisdom for the journey. In times of difficulty, we become acutely aware of our need for wisdom. It is easy to feel lost or unprepared. God does not leave us alone to find our way through our trials, He generously and graciously gives wisdom to those who ask in faith.

God is ready and willing to give wisdom, but there is a qualifier, we must ask believing that He will give it. We must trust that He will hear and answer our request. The person who doubts is described as double-minded and will not receive wisdom from God.

In this series, we will examine “Nine Tests Every Believer Must Face” knowing that they’re all working together for our good. The nine tests for our learning are:

- (1) The Wilderness Test (alone in storms)
- (2) The Test of Time (just waiting and waiting)
- (3) The Motivation Test (Doing the right things for the wrong reasons?)
- (4) The Failure Test (We all fail if we try to do something)
- (5) The Self Will Test (Are you stubborn in your ways?)
- (6) The Discouragement Test
- (7) The Misunderstanding Test
- (8) The Frustration Test
- (9) The Servant Test

## Tonight, we begin with Lesson Eight

### THE FRUSTRATION TEST

**2 Cor. 11:16** (Msg)

*Let me come back to where I started—and don't hold it against me if I continue to sound a little foolish. Or if you'd rather, just accept that I am a fool and let me rant on a little.*

**2 Cor. 11:17-18** (Msg)

*I didn't learn this kind of talk from Christ. [18] Oh, no, it's a bad habit I picked up from the three-ring preachers that are so popular these days.*

**2 Cor. 11:19** (Msg)

*Since you sit there in the judgment seat observing all these shenanigans, you can afford to humor an occasional fool who happens along.*

**2 Cor. 11:20** (Msg)

*You have such admirable tolerance for impostors who rob your freedom, rip you off, steal you blind, put you down—even slap your face!*

**2Cor.11:21**(Msg)

*I shouldn't admit it to you, but our stomachs aren't strong enough to tolerate that kind of stuff. Since you admire the egomaniacs of the pulpit so much (remember, this is your old friend, the fool, talking), let me try my hand at it.*

**2Cor12:1**(Msg)

*You've forced me to talk this way, and I do it against my better judgment. But now that we're at it, I may as well bring up the matter of visions and revelations that God gave me.*

### FRUSTRATION IS A REACTION AS OLD AS CREATION!

*“For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it.” Romans 8:20 (NIV).*

When sin entered His creation, God cursed the physical world. We see the frustration manifested in thorns and thistles, sin, and death. Sickness, decay, and suffering are not what the world was supposed to look like. Because of sin, we live in a fallen and frustrating world, and **everyone who tries to accomplish something will face FRUSTRATIONS.** The more effort one gives in trying to accomplish will measure the degree of frustration.

- Frustration is defined as to bring to nothing, to break, to nullify, to make void, to disappoint. The feeling of being upset, angry discouraged or annoyed as a result of being unable to do, change, complete or achieve something.
- Frustration is an EMOTION that occurs in situations where one is blocked from reaching a personal GOAL. The more important the goal, the greater the frustration. It is an emotional response to stress, which leaves one feeling hopeless, inactive, helpless, and impotent.
- Frustration is simply caused whenever the results you are experiencing do not seem to fit the effort and action you exerted. Frustration will occur whenever your actions are producing less and fewer results than you think they should.
- Life is full of frustrations. From the minor irritations of losing your car keys to the major anxieties of continued failure towards a goal, frustration is not a pleasant emotion in any magnitude.
- Frustration is not the final answer...but only a step toward accomplishing your goals.

### **SOURCES OF FRUSTRATION MAY BE INTERNAL OR EXTERNAL**

- Internal sources of frustration involve personal deficiencies such as a lack of confidence or fear of social situations that prevent one from reaching a goal.
- External causes of frustration involve conditions outside the person such as obstacles or a lack of money or other resources.

### **DANGERS OF FRUSTRATION**

- Frustration is an emotion that can spiral downward
- Frustrating problems are incredibly energy consuming
- Frustration may lead to downfall and deviation because it wastes resources.
- Frustration can lead to obsession.

### **EFFECTS OF FRUSTRATION**

- Frustration leads to bad decisions which makes the problem worse

- Frustration negates the progress achieved
- Frustration discourages any real advancement
- Frustration limits perceptions

### **WHY THE FRUSTRATION TEST?**

- Frustration can indicate problems in character.
- Frustration reveals the need for patience.
- Frustration reveals if we are submitted unto God.
- Frustration reveals the need of TRUST.
- Frustration reveals the need of HUMILITY
- Frustration reveals the need of God's direction

**Let's wrap-up this lesson with a few points of application:**

### **HOW TO HANDLE FRUSTRATION?**

#### **1) Realize that difficulties are inevitable in life.**

- Job 14:1 As for man, the son of woman, his days are short and full of trouble.
  - It is called LIFE—deal with it.
  - It is called LIFE—get over it.
    - Don't whine and complain, it only makes matters worse.
    - Those that feel sorry for themselves usually draw others of the same mind-set
    - Frustration often leads to depression and a pity-party
    - God rarely attends a pity-party

#### **2) Determine cause of frustration**

- Is the problem external or internal?
- Why are things not working out?
- Can anything be done to change the outcome?
- Will more time make a difference?

#### **3) Seek the counsel of God and listen**

- Folly of Balaam
- Folly of King Saul

#### **4) Pray against the Spirit of Frustration**

5) **Do what you can and leave the rest to God.**

6) **Don't make matters worse**

7) **Remember that this frustration too shall pass.**

- How we handle frustrations determines who we are, and where we are going.
- How we handle frustrations reveals our maturity
- How we handle frustrations reveals the level to which we can lead.
- Your ability to lead is equal with your ability to stand frustration
- If you have a church of a hundred, you will have 1 person who feels that their calling is to keep you humble.
- If you have a church of a thousand, you will have 10 people who feel that their calling is to keep you humble.

Your promises, your successes, and your leadership depends upon you passing the **Frustration Test**.