

Facebook should have a limit on how many times you can change your relationship status. After 3 it should default to "Unstable".



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James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes in the Dispersion: Greetings. ²Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, ³for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. ⁴And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.
—James 1:1-4 ESV

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A Humble Introduction

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James:

Oldest half-brother of Jesus	Mark 6:3
Rejected the Messiah	John 7:5
Witnessed the resurrection	1 Cor. 15:7
Leader in church at Jerusalem	Acts 12:17
Led at the Jerusalem Council	Acts 15
Wrote a letter about "genuine" faith	
Martyred for faith in Jesus Christ	

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"There is no such thing as a changeless faith. There is an unchanging God who is using everything in my life to create change in me."

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A Hard Instruction
Count it all joy... —James 1:2

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⁷But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us.
⁸We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair;
⁹persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed;
¹⁰always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies.

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¹¹For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.

—2 Corinthians 4:7-11 ESV

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In a world where we like everything to be instantaneous, our faith causes us to learn and to lean on the One who does the glorious in our lives through the worst life has to give.

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James 1:2-4

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Will you choose to be bitter or to be better? (James 1:2)

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Joy = Perspective

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It is the recognition within that regardless of what is happening without, God is at work.

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Have you embraced God's purpose or merely indulged your pain?

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Testing = Prove

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"Trials are not electives in God's school; they are required courses."
—John Phillips

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²⁸And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose. ²⁹For those whom He foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, in order that He might be the firstborn among many brothers. —Romans 8:28-29 ESV

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⁶In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. —I Peter 1:6-7 ESV

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“When all kinds of trials and temptations crowd into your lives my brothers, don’t resent them as intruders, but welcome them as friends! Realize that they come to test your faith and to produce in you the quality of endurance. But let the process go on until that endurance is fully developed, and you will find you have become men of mature character with the right sort of independence.”

—J. B. Phillips

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Are you willing to endure
with hope or are you only seeking
escape the hurt?

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Steadfastness = Endurance

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And I am sure of this, that He
who began a good work in
you will bring it to completion
at the day of Jesus Christ.

—Philippians 1:6 ESV

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“Hoping does not mean doing nothing. It is not fatalistic resignation. It means going about our assigned tasks, confident that God will provide the meaning and the conclusions. It is not compelled to work away at keeping up appearances with a bogus spirituality. It is the opposite of desperate and panicky manipulations, of scurrying and worrying.”

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“And hoping is not dreaming. It is not spinning an illusion or fantasy to protect us from our boredom or our pain. It means a confident, alert expectation that God will do what He said He will do. It is imagination put in the harness of faith. It is a willingness to let God do it His way and in His time.” —Engene Peterson

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