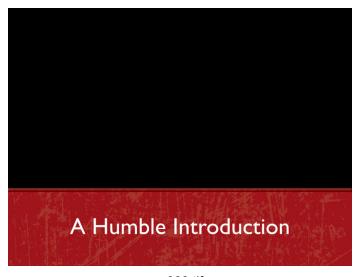


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IJames, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes in the Dispersion: Greetings. <sup>2</sup>Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, <sup>3</sup>for you know that the testing of your faith produces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

—James 1:1-4 ESV

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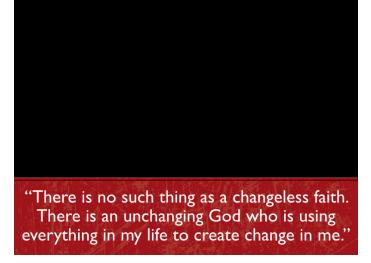


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## James:

Oldest half-brother of Jesus
Rejected the Messiah
Witnessed the resurrection
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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A Hard Instruction

Count it all joy...—James 1:2

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

IIFor 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

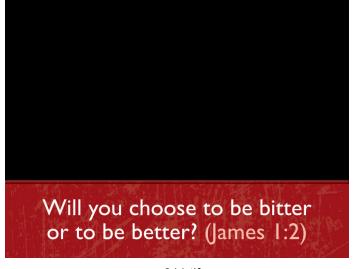
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In a world where we like
everything to be
instantaneous, our faith
causes us to learn and to lean
on the One who does the
glorious in our lives through
the worst life has to give.

James I:2-4

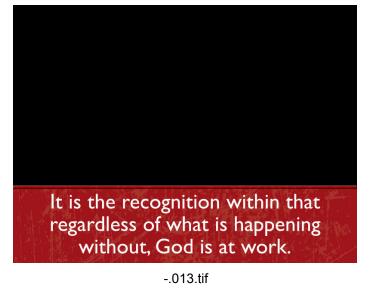
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2



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

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

—John Phillips

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<sup>28</sup>And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose. <sup>29</sup>For 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

<sup>6</sup>In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, <sup>7</sup>so 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 I:6-7 ESV

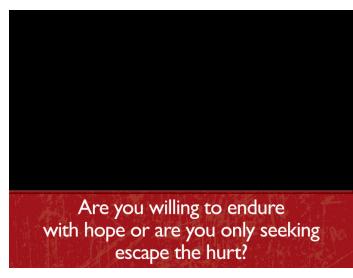
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3

"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

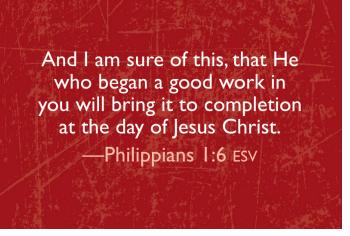
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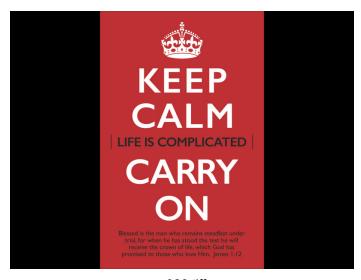
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"Hoping does not mean doing nothing. It is not fatalistic resignation. It means going about our assigned tasks, confident that God will provide the meaning and the conclusions. It is not compelled to work away at keeping up appearances with a bogus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

"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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