

Count It All Joy, James 1:1-2

Anyone here have TROUBLES? Abnormal, life interrupting, turn your whole world upside down types of trials or problems? Do you know what God says to any who “falls into various kinds of trials?” God says, “**Count it all JOY!**” Is that amazing, even humanly incomprehensible? How can God say that? How could anyone “**count it all JOY**” when they are suffering, experiencing loss, feeling threatened or as James puts it, “fall(s) into” abnormal, life interrupting, or turn your whole world upside down types of trials or problems”? Consider...

¹**James**, Probably Jesus’ half-brother, Converted after Christ’s Resurrection unto Supernatural Faith, 1 Cor. 15:7; contra. Matt. 13:54-58; John 7:5.

a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, Strategic identity (contra. “natural affection”)! “**Bond slave**” as bought with a price, 1 Cor. 6:19-20, set FREE from the bondage to sin, and now *willingly* forfeits his freedom/ volition to do God’s Will; e.g. “...**not my will, but Thine be done.**”

To the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad: You think you’ve got troubles? Jewish people know what it means to be hated (anti-Semitism) by Gentiles. Jewish believers know what it means to be hated by both Jews and Gentiles. This letter is written to Jewish believers with all kinds of problems who have been Sovereignly uprooted by God in the “dispersion” so that they might witnesses of their new found Faith, Acts 17:26-27. How bad was their “dispersion?” Consider Ezek. 37:1-14.

Greetings, a common greeting meaning “Be glad” or “Rejoice!”

²**Consider it all joy, my brethren**, This is how these Jewish believers should express their new found Faith. They are to rationally evaluate their situation and determine it to be “all Joy” based on where their “**treasure**” is, Matt. 6:21. “Empty buckets” find “**Joy**” in the Satisfaction derived from their “**Treasure**,” i.e. the Presence of our Resurrected Lord Jesus Christ *with us in any trial*, Phil. 3:7-11. APPL: What/ Who gives me Joy? Who/ what could cause me to lose my Joy?

Consider it, “count it” refers to *CHOOSING TO USE* Spiritual Discernment (D/V) rather than sense perception: “**regard**,” II Thess 3:15; I Tim 6:1; I Thess 5:13; “**thought**,” Phil 2:6; “**esteeming**,” Heb 11:26; cf. “**reckon it**,” Rom. 6:11; 8:18. But *HOW* do you “**count it**” such? When overwhelmed by (feeling threatened, inadequate to face) various trials, we often hear someone exhort us to “Look to Jesus,” but we must be more specific. Look to Jesus as your Transfigured, Matt. 17:1-9, Resurrected (contra. Roman Catholic crucifix), Rev. 1:10, 12-18, and Ascended Savior and Lord, Psm. 18:1-19; Prov. 18:10; contra. the Sadducees who did not believe in the Resurrection, Matt. 22:23-33. If you have a problem with your Faith, it lies in your perception of the Object of our Faith. In Whom do you “**count it ALL JOY?**”

ALL JOY, the most, the greatest Joy, I Tim. 1:15; in Green Leaves and Drought, missionaries Arthur and Wilda Mathews learned to DELIGHT in God’s Will *rather than just accept it* while suffering severe persecution in China when the Communists came into power in the 1950’s, Jer. 17:8.

when you encounter (“fall into” KJV, Matt. 10:28-31) **various trials**, Our trials and problems, from our perspective, seem like sudden, grievous troubles that have caught us off guard or unprepared, but we must choose to see them from God’s Perspective as leading to our Sanctification. God is working in believers, exposing our sins and OSN, in order to *force us* to “put off (sin), renew our minds and put on (Christ),” Eph. 4:22-24, so that we become more and more set-apart (“Be Holy”) for Christ until we become like Him. Especially, “**count it all Joy**” as you consider how imminent is the Rapture and Return of our Lord Jesus Christ, Rom. 8:18, 28. Asked recently what is our church’s position regarding the Rapture, I answered that we believe in the Pre-Tribulation, Pre-Millennial position; that’s why it’s called

“our Blessed Hope!” Cf. [1 Pet. 1:6, 3-9](#). Time is short! Troubles make Sanctification urgent.

Note, therefore ...

1. Afflictions and misery can be viewed as being either bitter or sweet depending on your point of view (D/V or H/V). Under such unexpected trials, it's important that we not rely on H/V; cf. [Rom. 8:18](#); [Heb. 11:24-26](#); e.g. principle of [Rom. 6:11](#), because “the Things of God knows no man, but by the Spirit of God,” [1 Cor. 2:11](#) and “eye has not seen, ear has not heard,” etc, [1 Cor. 2:9](#). Our natural “sense” doesn't perceive the Worth of Spiritual Privileges, both for lack of capacity, but also, because of a *natural* distaste for the Things of God. Over time and by various trials the Holy Spirit “weans” us from the illusion and nothingness of this world, and helps us to learn to appreciate the Glory of God and all that He has Promised to those who Love Him. God's Discipline sometimes is sharp indeed, but we hardly know how strong our corruptions are that God would have us mortify. Hence, we are called to great trials that will eventually work for our good and for God's Glory.

2. Remember that from D/V (Eternity's perspective) a Christians' *worst* is better than the world's *best*, [1 Cor. 1:25](#). God intends His children to be able to sing in the cold, gray winter as well as in the spring; to be able to endure the fire like Moses' bush and not be consumed, and even be thrown in the fiery furnace and come out Victoriously with not so much as the smell of smoke. Rejoicing in trials has been the *NORMAL* Triumphant experience of Christians throughout history, [II Cor. 2:14](#); [7:4](#) (lit. “I super-abound, or overflow, with Joy”); [Rom. 5:3](#); contra. The spiritual condition of believers today. Resentfulness, self-pity and bitterness toward the trial reveal a weak faith. It is expected that the world would ask us of the Hope that is in us, and would count us strange, for boasting with great Joy at the same time we are enduring great tribulations, [II Cor. 6:10](#); cf. Piper, “Don't waste your cancer.”

3. This is not to say that we do not weep in our sufferings. Jesus' soul was “heavy unto death,” [Matt. 26:38](#); cf. [John 12:27-28](#); [Heb. 12:2](#). Sufferings hurt, sometimes terribly, yet, all the more it is perceived as a great honor done for us when we are called to suffer for Christ's sake, [Acts 5:41](#); [Phil. 1:29](#); [1 Pet. 4:16](#); [Matt. 5:12](#); [Luke 6:23](#). What a great honor to be recognized as a Champion for Christ.

4. Allow a (hopefully brief) period of time for the more or less mature believer *TO CHOOSE* to “count,” to conclude, that the trial is, from God's Perspective, “all JOY.” Sometimes this takes a while.

This is where SOUL-CARE becomes practical. We must know each other well enough to be a comforter and an encourager for each other. The last thing we want to do is to communicate condemnation or disappointment just because another believer is going through “various trials.” Remember, whom God Loves, He chastens, [Heb. 12:4-14](#). It's not weird if a Christian “falls into” troubles; it's deadly serious, if they don't have chastening in their lives. Comfort one another, therefore!

Is Christ in you, even or especially, in “various trials,” ALL JOY? Is your Faith real, or is it mere words (counterfeit)? We'll study next week how God “tests” our Faith both for our and other's benefit as a witness to God's Supernatural Sufficiency in our lives. Do you personally and practically know the Resurrected Christ? Is it evidenced by how you respond to “falling into” various trials, problems and troubles? Let's pray intensely for each other, be completely committed to each other and evidence that we willing suffer with one another until they come forth purified and victorious, [1 Cor. 12:26](#).

Do you know Jesus Christ as your Resurrected Savior and Lord? God so Loved you that He Gave His Only Begotten Son, Jesus, to Save you. Jesus Died on the Cross to Pay the Penalty for the sins of the whole world; He was Buried and He Rose from the grave to Forgive you and to Give you Abundant and Victorious Eternal Life. Have you ever Trusted in Jesus as your Savior and your Lord? Trust in Christ today. Don't delay. Trust Him. You can Trust Him.