

Problem:

Jn 16:32-33 -> Jesus told them that what was about to happen was in the will of God- so they could endure- made it general - trials are not an accident or because you didn't follow certain instructions -

Text:

Joy Through Knowledge

James 1:2 ¶ Count it **all joy**, my brothers, **when** you meet trials of various kinds, **(outward/inward)**

James 1:3 for you **know(ing)** that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.

James 1:4 And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

Joy in trials - Rom 5:1-5; 1 Pet 1:3-7; 4:12-13

—->this is a call for a deliberate attitude of Joy at the very moment when we shouldn't have it.

->here we see that joy is the result of biblical knowledge regarding the real heavenly perspective about trials. The idea is very powerful - WHEN you encounter not after you get through trials. This is because of what you know.

Wisdom Through Prayer

James 1:5 ¶ **If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously** to all without reproach, and it will be given him.

James 1:6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting **(that He gives generously - do not doubt His goodness)**, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind.

James 1:7 For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord;

James 1:8 he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

wisdom - Job 28 - a precious gift

->applying what we know when trials start is the hardest part. Wisdom is the applied knowledge of God to our circumstances. It is something we can pray to God and ask for. We must do so not doubting the goodness of God and His willingness to give us this wisdom which is joy. So then joy is the result of biblical knowledge prayerfully applied...

In all outward trials

James 1:9 ¶ Let **the lowly brother boast** in his exaltation,

James 1:10 and **the rich** in his humiliation, because like a flower of the grass he will pass away.

James 1:11 For the sun rises with its scorching heat and withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beauty perishes. So also will the rich man fade away in the midst of his pursuits.

James 1:12 ¶ Blessed is **the man** who remains **steadfast under trial**, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him.

lowly brother - 2 Cor 8:1-4 boast- rejoice in the privilege) - this is not your value

rich - 1 jn 2:15-17 - this is not your value ; 1 tim 6:6-10

blessed - Matt 5:1-12 - role reversal/heavenly values = happiness -

-> Here the focus is on two broad outward trials we all can relate to. Whether we have much or little the idea is that we see our status from God's perspective not our circumstances. So then Joy is the result of biblical knowledge prayerfully applied whether we have nothing or whether we have almost everything.

In all inward trials

James 1:13 Let no one say when he is **tempted**, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one.

James 1:14 But each person is tempted when he is lured and **enticed by his own desire**.

James 1:15 Then **desire** when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

temptation is from desires at war - James 4:1-2

Desires of the flesh lead to the fruit of the flesh - Gal 5:16-24

how can we be blessed in trial?

because...Rom 6:23- the wages of sin might be death but the gift of God is eternal life

->we often think of trials only in the outward sense, forgetting that our thoughts are often negative and challenging. We must remember that God is not putting us 'good' people into unfair temptations but we are sinners in a fallen world and we are tempted because of it. the wages of sin is death but the free gift of God is eternal life in christ Jesus. So then joy is the result of biblical knowledge prayerfully applied to even our inward struggles of the heart.

God is Good

James 1:16 ¶ Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers.

James 1:17 Every good gift and every *perfect* gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.

James 1:18 **Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.**

2 Sam 16:9-14 - David refreshed himself

psalm 136 - God is good and His steadfast love endures forever

->we are troubled because we are bad and we must remember that God does not give us temptations but good things. His character is good. He is sovereign and in control. His steadfast love endures forever. joy is the result of biblical knowledge, like this, prayerfully applied to even the worst situations.

Implication:

The Bible presents us with a polarizing conclusion - either joy can be had in every circumstance or joy cannot be had in any circumstance.

God is the difference between having - no joy in any circumstance - Ecc 2:1-17

or pure joy in every circumstance - Phil 3:1; 4:4-7, 10-13; 1 thess 5:16-18

Main Idea:

Joy is the result of biblical knowledge prayerfully applied to even the worst situations

Application:

- joy comes through knowledge - we need to know stuff
- wisdom comes through prayer - we need to pray for God to help us apply this knowledge to our suffering
- this means our primary prayer in any kind of suffering needs to be a prayer for wisdom in letting God define our moments for us from His perspective

read the following articles and discuss:

<http://www.dts.edu/download/publications/veritas/veritas-2004-october.pdf>

<http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2009/december/8.53.html>

<http://lifeyourway.net/on-choosing-joy-even-when-its-not-easy/>

and here is one to read on your own if you are wanting to go further

<http://www.gracegems.org/Mac/tg09.htm>

I like to recommend the book desiring God by John Piper here too to further explore this concept