

## Steadfast

[Jas 1:1-4 ESV] 1 James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes in the Dispersion: Greetings.

2 Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, 3 for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. 4 And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

### I. Intro

- A. Recap last sermon:
  - 1. Bondslave
  - 2. Rejoice
- B. This week: **STAY STRONG**
- C. Count it joy, and grow in the spot you are planted!
- D. Steadfast is not the most exciting of the charges (divine imperatives) from God, yet its truly powerful:
  - 1. Worship...active participation
  - 2. Fight the Good Fight...we are geared up for battle, lets get to it
  - 3. Be steadfast...ok...but what do I do???
- E. Steadfastness is not inactivity, but continued activity from previous instruction

### II. Text

- A. Rejoice
- B. James is written in a fashion that introduces truth, and then digs deeper in a spiral form that keeps hitting a little deeper as we move through the letter
  - 1. Trials, Wisdom, Wealth, Works
- C. Count it Joy when you have trials
  - 1. When you are going through trials, there is joy to be found
  - 2. God has not left you abandoned
- D. Testing of your faith produces steadfastness
  - 1. Steadfast: hypomonē: from word for UNDER and word for ABIDE
  - 2. Hypo is an interesting prefix:
    - a) Refers to position, but seems to bring more impact
    - b) Seems also to refer to a willful choice of position, so steadfast is not just abide, but choose to remain in an abiding relationship
  - 3. The things that Test our faith cause us to remain in the abide
  - 4. Webster: steadfast \STED-fast\ adjective. 1 a : firmly fixed in place : immovable. b : not subject to change. 2 : firm in belief, determination, or adherence : loyal.
- E. Steadfast in full effect:
  - 1. The Full outcome of steadfastness is Christ's presence
  - 2. Perfect and complete
    - a) You are perfect and complete because of Christ
    - b) The result of that is a life that chooses to abide in relationship.
    - c) The choice is such that you would not make the choice without relationship with Christ.
  - 3. Lacking nothing
    - a) You are equipped
    - b) You lack nothing because He is the one that holds it all together.

### III. Point

- A. Steadfast in Trials
  - 1. **There are challenges all around, some are long lasting...trials**
  - 2. **Things that are not super exciting or glamorous:**
    - a) **Steadfastness**
    - b) **Trials and Testings**

**3. We need to celebrate STEADFASTNESS!**

4. Trials: testing do to circumstances that could hinder
5. [Gal 4:12-16 ESV] 12 Brothers, I entreat you, become as I am, for I also have become as you are. You did me no wrong. 13 You know it was because of a bodily ailment that I preached the gospel to you at first, 14 and though my condition was a trial to you, you did not scorn or despise me, but received me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus. 15 What then has become of your blessedness? For I testify to you that, if possible, you would have gouged out your eyes and given them to me. 16 Have I then become your enemy by telling you the truth?
6. [2Co 12:7-10 ESV] 7 So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. 8 Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. 9 But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.
7. Paul dealt with trials:
  - a) He asked for the testing to go away
  - b) But found contentment in his opportunity to rely on Christ
  - c) He dealt with it in the same way we should...ask God to make it go away, but find joy in the midst of hardship.
8. **Count your blessings, be positive, find Joy, proclaim Joy, and realize you are being given an opportunity to GROW.**

**B. Steadfast in Testimony**

1. **How you respond to the trial and testing will give a testimony to everyone.**
2. **Through a TEST, you develop a TESTIMONY**
3. **ILL: Some of the best stories come from hard situations**
  - a) Camping...storm comes...tent leaks...stories for years
  - b) 4X4 mudding...buddies say send it...you send it...get stuck...spend hours digging out...stories for years
  - c) Trials...endure the challenge...learn to wait on God...watch Him deliver at the right time...stories for eternity.
4. We are going to have trials, and we will also have testimony that will impact others
5. We live in a fallen world, and that world needs to know how God can work in the midst of challenge.

**C. Steadfast in Triumph**

1. Victory can come in the midst of Darkness
2. **A hard fought victory is one that ends in joy, but is full of challenges along the way.**
3. During the contest:
  - a) There will be ups and downs
  - b) There will be mistakes and amazing performances
  - c) There will be uncertainty and confidence
  - d) But in the end, after the victory is won, there will be celebration
  - e) All the missed calls, missed shots, missed opportunities will not be as important, the victory has been won.
4. **Let God WIN the TRIUMPH**
  - a) **God will fight for you**
  - b) **God will be your defense**
  - c) **God will be your strength**

**d) God will be your encourager**

**e) God will be the one that challenges you as well**

IV. Close

A. Count it all Joy

B. Because God is at work in the challenge!