

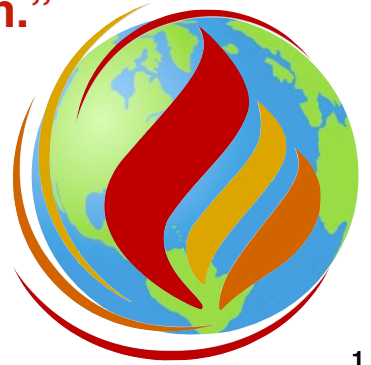
# THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

**James 1:1-4**  
**Lesson #1**  
**Preparing for Trouble**  
**02/28/2021**

“The biggest challenges in life come from the way we see this world **in the context of God’s kingdom.**”

The ministry of the Spirit as **Paraclete** is to address this issue.



1

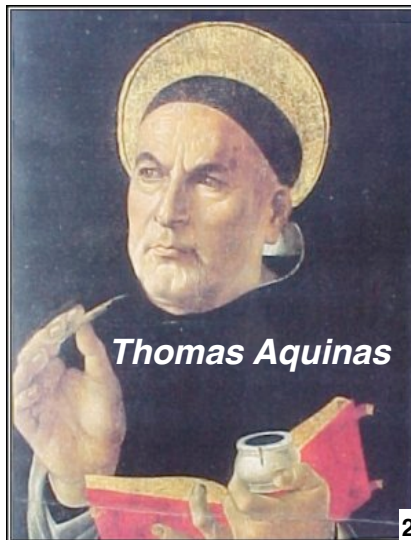
“As we look at the world there are two great challenges to the Christian faith.”

The challenge of **science**

Does it make sense to our physical senses?

The challenge of **suffering**

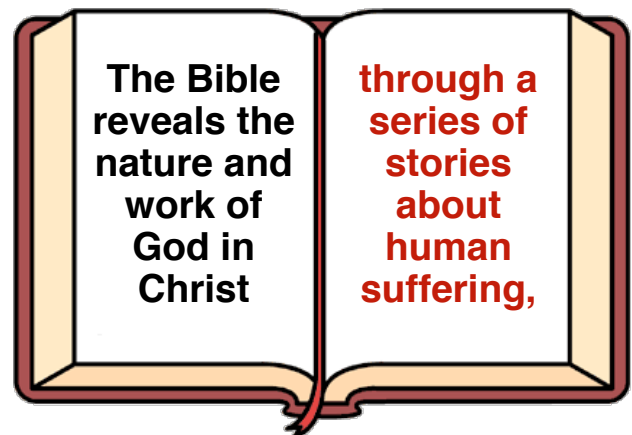
Does it resolve the problem of suffering?



Thomas Aquinas

2

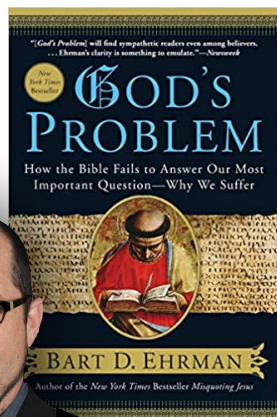
*The Biblical record is sensitive to the challenge of suffering.*



3

How the Bible Fails to Answer Our Most Important Question – Why We Suffer.

*Could it be that the Biblical answer is clear but we choose to reject it?*



BART D. EHRLMAN

Author of the New York Times Bestseller *Misquoting Jesus*

4

**The great symbols of the faith ARE**



The Cross



The bread and cup



Water Baptism

**reminding us of our sharing in Jesus’ death and resurrection.**

5

• **Christianity is the only religious system that celebrates the death of its founder.**

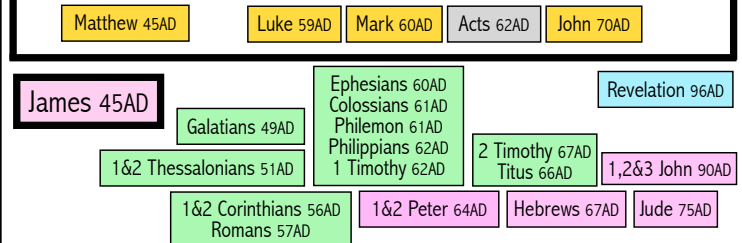
• **It also calls for the living sacrifice of its participants.**

**Death (dying, and suffering) is at the heart of Christianity and it is why we cannot ignore it and must address it.**



6

## Pentecost 33 AD Chronology of the New Testament Books



- James was probably the oldest epistle in the N.T.
- James reflected the early period of the church (pre-Gentile).
- James was not widely accepted until the 3rd cent.

7

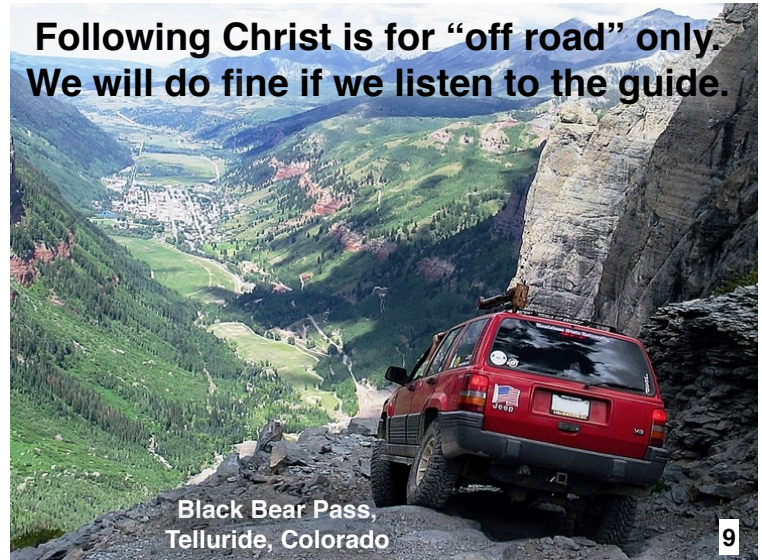
## The historical context of James

*John 16:33*

“32 Behold, an hour is coming, and has already come, **for you to be scattered, each to his own home**, and to leave Me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. 33 These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. **In the world you have tribulation**, but take courage; I have overcome the world.”

8

**Following Christ is for “off road” only. We will do fine if we listen to the guide.**



Black Bear Pass,  
Telluride, Colorado

9

## Common mistakes we can make in facing hardships

**Demanding an explanation for all suffering**



“it’s the Devil”



“it’s all my fault”



“it’s all your fault”



“it’s God’s will”



“it’s God trying to teach me something”

10

## Note what James will NOT say.

- He will not tell us how to **AVOID** trials.
- He will not tell us how to **OVERCOME** trials.
- He will not tell us how to **ENDURE** trials.
- He will not tell us the **MEANING** of our trials.
- He will not tell us the **SOURCE** of our trials.
- He will not tell us that our trials are **DECREED** by God to teach us something.



**So if we are expecting answers to any of these we might be in the wrong class and reading the wrong book.**

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# James

## Developing a Bold Witness in a Broken World

An  
overview  
of Trials

Trouble  
1:1-18

Facing life's troubles starts  
with four basic insights.

### 1. Trials can be a **BLESSING**

12

## Trials can be a **BLESSING**

*James 1*

"<sup>1</sup> James, a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad: Greetings.

<sup>2</sup> Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, <sup>3</sup> knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. <sup>4</sup> And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing."

**Pressure in tribulation  
+ perseverance in faith  
= power in witness.**

13

*James 1*

"<sup>1</sup> James, a **bond-servant** of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes who are **dispersed** abroad: Greetings."

Know who we are

**Aliens, Sojourners**

This world is **not our home** and it is **hostile** to God's kingdom.

Implications

- James was the **half brother of Jesus**, (Mk.6:3) "James the just", leader of the church in Jerusalem, martyred for his faith. James lived in this world but was a citizen of another kingdom as a **voluntary slave** to God and His Son.
- James addresses a lot of **social ethics issues** in a way that is consistent with Jesus, Paul, and Peter (but not politically correct with the world).

14

*James 1*

"<sup>2</sup> **Consider** it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials,"

Know what to expect

**"consider not an emotional impulse"**

Our response is based on a **commitment** or "faith claim" linked to a hope found in Scriptural revelation.

How can we do this?

- Sharpen our **perception** - renew your mind (the way we see).
- Broaden our **perspective** - of this world & God's kingdom.
- Refresh our **priorities** - develop & demonstrate faith / hope.

*Romans 12:2*

"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the **renewing of your mind**, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."

15

*James 1*

"<sup>2</sup> Consider it all **joy**, my brethren, when you encounter various trials,"

Know what to expect

**"joy not endurance"**

We are not just to "get through" hard times, we are to **"feed our faith"** off of them.

How can we do this?

- Consider the **company** - fellowship with Jesus & saints.
- Imagine your **benefits** - confidence, courage & freedom.
- Fix your **hope** - beyond this life.

*Hebrews 12:2*

"fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who **for the joy set before him endured** the cross, despising the shame,"

16

*James 1*

"<sup>2</sup> Consider it all joy, my brethren, **when** you encounter **various** trials,"

Know what to expect

**"when not if"**

Don't be surprised by bad circumstances.

How can we do this?

- Plan our **response** - mental dress rehearsal for events.
- Remember we live in a **broken world** - we can't avoid it.

**"various not only persecution"**

Trials come in many forms and are not necessarily anointed.

How can we do this?

- Remember **God anoints us** - not our circumstances.
- Don't **try to understand every trial** - It's our response that is the issue.

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Love is a gracious response to life's challenges.

**Love is** a response to

patient	trials
kind	insults
not jealous	success of others
does not brag	success of self
is not arrogant	power & authority
is not unbecoming	freedom
not self seeking	competition
is not provoked	confrontation
holds no grudges	injustice
does not rejoice	failure of others
rejoices in the truth	gossip & slander
bears all things	losses
believes & hopes all things	discouragement
endures all things	delayed hopes

1 Cor. 13:4-7

19

**1 Corinthians 15:19**

"If we have hoped in Christ **in this life only**, we are of all men most to be pitied."

**Romans 8:18**

"For I consider that the **sufferings of this present time** are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us."

**1 Peter 2:21**

"For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also **suffered** for you, leaving you an **example** for you to **follow** in His steps."

20

**James 1**

"3 **knowing** that the testing of your faith produces **endurance**. 4 And let endurance have *its* perfect result, so that you may be **perfect** and complete, lacking in nothing."

**Knowing**

**"this is an opportunity for faith"**

Don't mishandle the opportunity.

**How can we do this?**

- We must **see ahead** - Hard times are not an attack on our faith but an opportunity to develop and display faith.
- Don't just listen to our old nature - **Talk to ourselves through our new nature in Christ.**

21

**We are to put off the old self and put on the new self**

Our old sin nature in Adam

Our new nature in Christ

22

**James 1**

"3 **knowing** that the testing of your faith produces **endurance**. 4 And let endurance have *its* perfect result, so that you may be **perfect** and complete, lacking in nothing."

**Knowing**

**"this is an opportunity for faith"**

Don't mishandle the opportunity.

**"this is an opportunity for growth"**

Don't let your circumstances be fruitless.

**How can we do this?**

- Remember Peter not Judas - **From shame to life or death.**
- Remember Job's experience - **Trusting God through it all.**
- Remember Paul's experience - **From thorn to power**


Cor.12:7-11.

23




The difference between a **trial (test)** and a **temptation (response)**

**Trial**  
circumstances in a fallen world  
from without




This will naturally  
happen apart from  
God's direction.



**Great  
world**

**Temptation**  
response  
from an old sin nature  
from within




This is a choice  
involving God's  
anointing and  
our response.

**Great  
witness**

The "perfect result" is not a **change**  
**in circumstance** but a **mature faith**.

24

**Turning  
mourning  
into dancing**



1. Pain and suffering can be consistent with the power and love of God.
2. Our character is shaped and showcased in our response to life's highs and lows.


25

**"We shine when the fire  
inside us burns brighter  
than  
the fire  
around  
us."**



26

The only difference between



**Stumbling Blocks &  
Stepping Stones**

**is how we see  
and use them.**

27

*James*

**Developing a Bold Witness  
in a Broken World**

An  
overview  
of Trials

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Trouble  
1:1-18

1. Trials can be a **BLESSING**
2. Trials call for **WISDOM**  
(next week)

**Facing life's troubles starts  
with four basic insights.**

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