

**Sermon or Lesson: James 1:12** (NIV based)  
[Lesson Questions included]

TITLE: Persevering Under Trial

INTRO: Are you battered and bruised and downtrodden from the adversities of life? Does a never-ending parade of troubles come your way every day? Do you get so overwhelmed at times that you want to just give up completely - check out of life altogether?

Take heart and hang in there. There is light at the end of the tunnel, but you will need long-range binoculars to see that good things will come in the end. In this message, we are going to look through God's long-range binoculars (so to speak).

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READ: James 1:12

[Lesson Question: What "trial"?)

SECTION POINT: "Trials", that God uses to test us in life, can be anywhere within a wide range or spectrum.

"trial" = Strong's #3986 "a putting to proof (by experiment [of good], experience [of evil], solicitation, discipline or provocation); by implication, adversity; temptation"

From the Greek definition, "trial" carries a meaning:

- - that includes but goes beyond the meaning of going through a difficult situation;
- - of being tested, of being tempted to do evil, of being solicited to do evil, of being provoked, of exerting self-discipline, or of going through adversity.

"Trials" can be any situation along a spectrum, ranging from:

- - the mild or mundane annoyances to time-consuming troubles to the ongoing struggles to the highly destructive to the disaster;
- - the expected to the unanticipated to the out-of-the-clear-blue-sky to the one-in-a-million;
- - the bothersome to the painful to the excruciating;
- - the immediate to the short-term to the decades-long.

SECTION POINT: "Trials" have an intrinsic component of being a "test".

- - An element in all of the multitude of kinds of trials is the "testing of our faith". (vv.12,3)
  - - Clearly, God has intentionally designed life so that we would experience these trials, which are all tests.
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[Lesson Question: What does it mean to "persevere under trial"?)

SECTION POINT: To “persevere under trial” carries the meaning to stay under or endure the difficult or harmful situation successfully.

“persevere” = Strong’s #5278 “endures; to stay under (behind), i.e. remain; figuratively, to undergo, i.e. bear (trials), have fortitude, persevere”

Successfully persevering under trial involves:

- - to stay under or endure even if or especially when the situation is very difficult or harmful;
- - to respond to the trial in the ways that please God (i.e. successfully), which of course are delineated in Scriptures;
- - to both love God supremely and obey His commands supremely, through no matter what kind of adverse situation; (cf. Mark 12:30-31)
- - to likewise love one’s neighbor, which also needs to be predominant. (cf. Mark 12:30-31)

On the flip side, unsuccessfully enduring or persevering under trials can involve:

- - getting angry and flying into a rage; hate;
  - - cussing the perpetrator out; verbal and/or physical assault;
  - - self-medicating with alcohol or drugs to ease the pain or suffering;
  - - avoidance, in which responsibilities go uncompleted;
  - - gossiping, bad-mouthing, slander, malice, trying to get even or revenge;
  - - excessive anxiety, fear, depression;
  - - implementing foolish counter-responses to the adversity.
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[Lesson Question: What does God promise in this verse to those who successfully pass the tests?]

SECTION POINT: “Blessings” await those who successfully pass the tests:

- - “blessing” of spiritual growth; (vv.3-4)
  - - “blessing” of having gained the ability to succeed in weathering future storms of life; (v.12)
  - - “blessing” of gaining benefits that accompany living in righteousness; (v.4)
  - - “blessing” of enjoying a healthy relationship with God; (v.3)
  - - “blessing” of “receiving” “the promised” “crown of life” (v.12), “which is some kind of attached tangible, physical, visibly conspicuous, highly-regarded reward that will hold its value and prestige eternally.
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BIG IDEA: God promises to bless us both now and in the future when we successfully endure trials in the ways that please Him.

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APPLICATIONS:

- - What trial are you going through currently?

- - How is it going?
  - - Has minimal relief been out of your grasp?
  - - Has all hope of the trial ever ending been evaporated?
  - - What have you been clinging to in order to make it through?
  - - Have you been asking, "Where is God?" in the midst of your trial?
- - We are to walk by faith through life (v.3) - not by sight (2 Corinthians 5:7), trusting God to keep the promises He makes (v.12), and waiting upon God to make all things right in the end (v.12).
- - Refocus from the near future onto the distant future, and take heart - God has blessings planned for you, if you "persevere under trial" (v.12).
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Works Cited:

Bible. "The Holy Bible: New International Version." *The Bible Library CD-ROM*. Oklahoma City, OK: Ellis Enterprises, 1988.

"Strong's Greek Dictionary". *The Bible Library CD-ROM*. Oklahoma City, OK: Ellis Enterprises, 1988.

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