

Message

**Count It
All Joy**



Neal Parker

Count It All Joy

■ James 1:2-4

“Greet it as pure joy, my brothers, when you come across any sort of trial, sure that the sterling temper of your faith produces endurance; only, let your endurance be a finished product, so that you may be finished and complete, with never a defect.”

- As with any trial, it can have a multitude of angles, causes, purposes and effects.**

What Is Joy?

■ Webster's Dictionary

- a condition or feeling of high pleasure or delight; happiness or gladness.

■ Joy vs. Emotion

- In our world of unprecedented prosperity and luxury human reasoning tells us that there should be great joy throughout the world.
- On the contrary, depression, hopelessness, despair and suicide are commonplace. Materialism and obsession with the accumulation of physical things has never led to anything, but increased sorrow.

What Is Joy?

■ Old and New Testament

- Words translated "joy" mean much the same as the English word: gladness, cheerfulness, calm delight.
- In the New Testament, Greek word "*chara*" is the noun form of "joy," and is used 51 times.
 - **Luke 6:23** - "Rejoice in that day and leap for joy! For indeed your reward is great in heaven. . . ."
 - Beginning in Acts 13, however, a subtle change occurs in the usage of "*chara*". Scriptures, tie joy with trials, suffering, persecution and the like. Why?

What Are Trials?

■ Acts 14:8-22

- “...Then they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples and encouraging them to continue in the faith. “We must endure many hardships to enter the kingdom of God,” they said.”

– Berean Standard Bible

What Are Trials?

■ Hebrews 12:6-7

- For the Lord disciplines and corrects those whom He loves,
- And He punishes every son whom He receives and welcomes [to His heart].”
- You must submit to [correction for the purpose of] discipline; God is dealing with you as with sons; for [a]what son is there whom his father does not discipline?.”

– Amplified Bible Translation

What Are Trials?

■ I Peter 4:12-19

- “Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial that has come upon you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice that you share in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed at the revelation of His glory...”

– Berean Standard Translation

Gauging Growth With Tests

■ James 1:2-4

- Count your trials as joy, James 1:2-3 says, "knowing that the testing of your faith [through trials] produces patience."
- "Testing" is *dokimion*, meaning "to prove." Dokimion describes the process of proving sterling coinage, that it was genuine and unalloyed.
- We can conclude, then, that God's testing process has the goal or aim of purging us of all impurity, to make us "perfect and complete, lacking nothing" (verse 4).

Gauging Growth With Tests

■ Trials Should Produce Growth

- Just as we prune a shrub or tree to force it to grow into a more perfect form, so God does with us.
- “. . . these tests or trials are not meant to make us fall, they are meant to make us soar. They are not meant to defeat us; they are meant to be defeated. They are not meant to make us weaker; they are meant to make us stronger. Therefore we should not bemoan them; we should rejoice in them.”

- William Barclay

Gauging Growth With Tests

■ The Fruit We Produce Depends On Our Outlook

- With any trial, you wonder why. You evaluate your actions, your mistakes, your sins. You repent, fast and pray. You cry out to God with more emotion than you knew you possessed. If you are normal, you have moments of anger, perhaps even doubt.
- **II Corinthians 4:14-17** "...The outward man does indeed suffer wear and tear, but every day the inward man receives fresh strength..."

Gauging Growth With Tests

■ Joy Comes After, Not Before, The Trial

- No sane person sits around, wishing he had a trial. That is absurd. No one is ecstatic to find himself encompassed in pain.
- "Realise that they come to test your faith and to produce endurance" (James 1:3).
- Hebrews 12:11, "Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it."

Gauging Growth With Tests

■ Vital Lesson Regarding Humility

– Deuteronomy 8:2-3

Remember that these forty years the LORD your God led you all the way in the wilderness, so that He might humble you and test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep His commandments. He humbled you, and in your hunger He gave you manna to eat, which neither you nor your fathers had known, so that you might understand that man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.

Blessing For Endurance

■ Standing the Test = Crown of Life

– James 1:12

Blessed is he who endures under trial; for when he has stood the test, he will gain the crown of life which is promised to all who love Him.

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