

REFLECTION

BLD NEWARK COVENANT COMMUNITY

PERFECT FAITH

Usually when someone says “**GOD is good!**” it gets an almost automatic response, “**All the time!**” One thing for sure, when things in life go in our favor, this phrase is freely expressed without reservation. OK, how about when someone experiences the “trials” during his/her spiritual journey? Will we be as swift to express/respond with this answer?

“Consider it all joy, my brothers, when you encounter various trials, for you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. And let perseverance be perfect, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.” (James 1:2-4)

I personally like the scriptural verses from the book of James, which I find to be the most enlightening and encouraging words in the Bible, especially for those who are experiencing trials in their lives. This passage teaches us that trials should not be viewed as foes but instead welcome them with a joyous attitude. God chooses what we go through; we choose how we go through it. Trials work for our good and God’s glory. As we journey through life we can expect these tests of our faith but they are only passing experiences and do not come to stay. Trials are very purifying experiences if we properly respond to God’s purposes for them.

There is a reason, as well as a need for them. Enduring trials makes us what we are. At times we hear people say that they hope their children don’t have to experience the hardships they went through. In our human nature, I guess it is completely understandable but again those hardships made you what you are. Every trial that finds its way into our lives comes with an intentional purpose. But that part of the emphasis that James is concerned with is how we as saints can persevere and make the most of them - how we can gain the most as well as demonstrate the genuineness of our faith.

We are privileged to have our faith tested. We are also privileged to suffer because it draws us closer to the Lord. They produce proven faith and strengthen us. We are to submit our whole being to God as there is no other way but to cling to Him and He will show the way out. We will see the glorious future because we’re drawn into sweet communion with the Father and are enriched in the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ. God allows trials to create a greater endurance, for a greater usefulness and for greater trials.

True believers are held by the Lord, but the true believers also hold on to the Lord. They persevere through trials. In the midst of trials, they demonstrate the validity of their faith by the validity of their love - by whether or not they hold fast to that faith. If they bail out in the middle and walk away from God, or deny or ignore God, then they show themselves to have “dead” faith. On the other hand, if no trials or tribulations can destroy their trust in God then they show themselves in that trial to have living, saving faith, spiritually mature - equaling PERFECT FAITH! ...**GOD is good! All the time!**