

James 1:1-4 | Ted Tash

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[0 : 00] For those of us that have young kids, raise your hand if in the last two weeks your kids have been sick. Lots and lots of hands. Hope and Jordan aren't here, their kids are sick.

Our kids have also been sick. And actually for the first time, two kids are up here to hear me speak. So, kind of fun. Not really fun at all.

Man, it's one of those ones that just kind of hangs on. Like they had fevers like Tuesday-ish. And then fevers were gone by Wednesday and they'll have like four hours of being fine and then like 20 hours of crashing out.

Our kids are at the age where they don't nap at all anymore. Like zero naps. They do take like a rest time, which is more like a rest time for us than them.

But, and if they do nap, you know, if they fall asleep in the car or something kind of one-off like that, they will not sleep at night. They slept for three hours yesterday afternoon from like two to five. We had to wake them and then they fell right asleep at bedtime.

[1 : 01] So, they're just wiped. We've got depleted kids, which again, thank goodness February is behind us. I wish Kevin were here as well. My wife's birthday is in February. And so I'm thankful that she was born.

Outside of that, February is the worst month. We are starting a new book today. We're going to introduce the book of James.

So if you want to go ahead and turn there. This will be a little bit disjointed and I apologize for that. But, but we're going to talk first kind of an introduction to James.

And then we're actually going to look at the first four verses as well. Before we do that, I, I also wanted to piggyback a little bit on what Jeffrey just shared, which was we had the leadership retreat, if you will, this weekend.

And, man, that was really good. It was, it was pretty intense. We were there. I think we got there at six. We went to bed at like 1130 ish. Jeff and I got up about 545 ish. And then we left around three ish. And basically that entire time was like meetings that we were in.

[2 : 16] There was not a lot of like, you know, we weren't in the gym playing volleyball or we weren't paddling down the river. It was all, all meetings and just good stuff. Like he said, looking back, you know, to 1992 when this church was started and then looking ahead to, you know, in a couple of years, Bethel will turn 40.

What, what do we want to do? And so that was just, it was interesting and it was fun and it was good. And I would echo exactly what he said. We, as the leadership here at Bethel are, we're not clergymen.

We don't wear big robes and funny hats and, you know, do the incense thing. And that, that's not us. Like we have two truck drivers and two finance bros. Sorry to call you finance bros. He is wearing a Patagonia vest as I say it though.

So whatever, Jeff. And lay people, we are lay people is what I'm trying to say. Bethel is a low church. That is not a derogatory term. That's a definition of a church. We are a low church.

It's like a step above a house church. That is what we are. And so are we the world's best, most qualified leadership? No, but we care a lot about this church and about you people and about us as part of the body.

[3 : 27] And so if I can convey that in any other way, I don't know how to say that, but we care and we are trying and we want to see this thing do well for the Lord and his glory. So just let me clearly communicate that to you this morning. And with that in mind, in the 34 year of Bethel history, we have never gone through the book of James.

Dave for a very long time, one of his roles was to set the schedule and he handed that off about three years ago to Brad and myself. And with that came a list of all the books we'd ever gone through and how many messages we did on each.

And let me clearly say my goal is not to make sure we check every box. Like we probably don't need a verse by verse study through Leviticus or numbers or some of those books.

But when you look at the New Testament books that we haven't covered, Matthew was on the list. Acts is on the list. James was on the list. And so anyway, we did a two and a half year study verse by verse through Matthew.

I thought that was a great study. We just kind of did a highlight tour of Acts. And we didn't really want to commit to another couple of year study. So James was was one of the shorter books that we hadn't gone through yet.

[4 : 43] And that's that's what we chose to do next. But by means of introduction to James, you know, if you would have asked me a month ago before I knew that I had this message, what did I know about James?

I would have said it's written to Jews. I didn't know that. I think it was the brother of Jesus. Like that would be what I would have told you.

It has some really good stuff in there. What some of my favorite verses are in like chapter four, eight, nine, says resist the devil and he will flee from you. That's a great verse. If you're dealing with temptation or even just like anxiety, that's a great verse.

Resist the devil. He will flee from you. That's a that's a great if then verse. And then the flip side comes in verse nine. Draw near to God and he will draw near to you. That's a great verse. So I knew that those were in there.

I probably would have told you there's some some tricky stuff with Abraham and he was justified by works and show me your faith and I'll show you works. And that's kind of a tricky passage. But that's probably all I would have known about James.

[5 : 47] That's that's the month ago. What did I know about James? And so now I haven't prepared for this a little bit more. I do have a little bit more, not much more to offer. It was Jesus's brother. Some call him James the less, which would be a terrible nickname.

And he's called that because of the disciples and of the apostles, if you remember, there were James and John. They were two brothers, the sons of Zebedee or sons of Thunder. Much better name than James the less, the son of Thunder.

And that James Zebedee, brother of John, he was referred to as James the great. And so here's James the less. Didn't know that it is the brother of Christ.

Galatians chapter one. Paul clearly identifies James as James, the brother of our Lord. Some some religions will tell you that Mary didn't have any other kids.

And so this would have been a cousin of the Lord. But that's clearly not what the Bible says in both the Gospels and there in Galatians. So this was the brother of the Lord. Interesting. Interestingly, he doesn't lead with that.

[6 : 56] He leads with James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. That would probably be the first thing I would say about myself if I was brother or half brother to Jesus. But maybe that's why he's James the less. He has the less mentality that he can't break out of.

I don't know. The topics here in James are a wide variety. There's there's talk about how to deal with wealth, which which we're going to look at later on.

There's a whole chapter on taming the tongue, which is in there. The takeaway from from that is you can't do it. Can't be tamed.

The you have in there about the poor dealing with them dealing with the sick. This is where we get anointing the sick with oil comes from James.

That's something that I did not grow up with, but we do occasionally here at Bethel. And I got to tell you, the first time I saw it, I was like, this is not for me. And then, man, you look at it scripturally and we're instructed to do it.

[8 : 00] And, you know, we've seen good come from that here. And then just two other things. One, it is written to Jews. The Jews were dispersed.

There's, you know, a well-known historical thing of the diaspora or the dispersion of the Jews kind of came at the hands of Rome, kind of came at the hands of like the early Jews who were persecuting the early church.

But there's this dispersion. And James is writing to them. We'll circle back to that in just a sec. And then the last kind of tidbit, if you will, is that this is one of the first, maybe the first epistle that was written.

So you think of all of Paul's letters, they were written. Those all came later. The epistles from John came way late. They were probably like the latest ones. But James was the first, somewhere around like A.D. 44 to 48 is what the guess is.

So 15 years or so after, you know, Jesus was here on Earth, died, was resurrected and ascended to heaven. The book of James was written. So pretty early on.

[9 : 09] And then just the last thing, like I said, it was written to Jews. There are some, if you take a dispensational view of the Bible to its extreme end, that would say this book is not written to us.

I would tend to agree with that. It's maybe not written to us, but it is certainly for us. All scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching. And so it is worthwhile to look at this book of James. Again, if you feel conversely to that, it's only going to take us like six months. So just get over it. It will be fine. K.J., if you will, I did ask A.I. just what James might have looked like.

And it was very boring. And so I said, well, what would he look like if he went by Jimmy instead? And so there is the apostle Jimmy. Jimmy. There was another version of this picture where it was Jimmy Fallon, but he had black hands.

I don't know what that was about. I don't know if it got like a Jimmy Butler mixed in there too, who's a basketball player. But anyway, there's the apostle Jimmy. There you go. Okay.

[10 : 17] It's a stretch. Let me go ahead and pray. And then there is one other kind of general James thing I want to show you and then we'll get into it.

But let me pray real quick and then we can dive in a little bit more. Father God, just thank you for loving us and thank you that you've given us your word. And thankful that it is living and active and it's still relevant. Even today, Lord, 2,000 years after it's written, it's hard to believe, but it really is. And we're thankful for that and thankful that we can look at a new book and start on a new journey here and just pray that this study would be profitable and pray that today's lesson would be profitable as we look at suffering.

And we just pray all these things in Jesus name. All right. KJ, if you don't mind pulling up the other thing. I built a little site. Are you guys familiar with like a word cloud, the concept of a word cloud?

So like, let's say, oh, that's really small up there, but that's fine.

Let's say you take a book, like any book or just a group of words or you brain dump a bunch of thoughts, anything. You throw into like a word cloud generator and it will like, let's say you use the word the a lot or the, it will make that really big because you use it a lot.

[11 : 33] The amount of occurrences of the word are bigger. The lesser amount of occurrences are smaller. And it's a not a super useful tool. I, I don't know. I'm, I'm definitely a visual learner.

I am not a reader for comprehension learner. I really struggle with that actually. I'm very much a visual learner. And so it maybe appeals to that visual learner piece a little bit for me.

Um, and if, if you're just trying to get a high level sense of what does this group of texts, like what are the biggest themes word clouds can be useful. So anyway, I built this. It's basically the Bible and a word cloud.

Uh, you know, if you want to maybe click Matthew there, KJ for me. So we just went through Matthew. These are all the words. So Jesus would be used the most. And then maybe down in like the bottom, right money would be used a little bit less.

I ran into two problems with this as I was building this one. It's always Jesus, God, Lord, man. Like those are kind of the top four that you always see, which is kind of the Sunday school answers, right?

[12 : 35] Like what, what is the, what did Noah do in the ark? Cause Jesus died for our sins. Uh, so if you exclude the, I added the exclude God button, uh, which excludes God, Jesus, Lord Christ.

Uh, don't click that button in real life, but for this tool, it's useful. Uh, and so, yeah, you see that that's kind of what Matthew was about. It was about like disciples, about man, a lot about kingdom, a lot about heaven.

Uh, and then if you want to click just the top five there, uh, and that's with the God filter also, which is fine. Uh, those are kind of the five main things from, from the book of Matthew.

I don't know where away comes from, but anyway, uh, maybe just real quick do acts for me. Uh, so there you go.

Jews, Peter, Paul, again, God, Lord. Uh, those are all good. Maybe just do the top five. God, Paul. Yeah. And then take, take that one.

[13:35] God, Paul, man, Jews. That, I mean, that's a fair, you know, we were just looking for the last dozen weeks at, uh, acts and we came up with this. So yeah, go ahead and hit James for me.

And in James, we're going to see it's, it's man. It's, uh, it's, you see evil in there. Yeah. Faith brothers works. Uh, go ahead and bring, bring God back in.

I'm pretty sure he's in there. Yeah. So, uh, dealing with, with evil, dealing with faith, dealing with man and dealing with God. I think that's a good, uh, a good word cloud illustration, uh, of what James has to offer.

Take from that what you will. Um, but anyway, that's, uh, live and on the internet. If you want to go check that out. Built by cloud code for those of you in the, uh, AI space.

Okay. Let's look at the first four verses here. Let's just go ahead and read them. James one, one through four. If you wanted a title for the message portion today, it would be joy in suffering, joy in suffering.

[14:42] It says this, James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ to the twelve of the tribes in the dispersion. Greetings.

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

One heck of a way to open a letter, you know, greetings. Count it all joy. When you meet trials of various kinds. I mean, he just, he hits the ground running.

Uh, and so, yeah, let's, let's take a verse that or a look at verse two. It says, count it all joy. My brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, the, the first thing that jumps off the page is it does not say, be happy in trials.

Does it? It says, count it all joy. There's, there's an important distinction there. You know, happiness is more of that, uh, that feeling, if you will. It's more of a temporary emotional state, happiness.

[15:57] Uh, Casey in January gave an awesome message on act 16. If you weren't here for that, look that up on YouTube. It was a great message. And he talked about Paul and Silas and how they were singing hymns and they were singing songs while they were imprisoned.

Uh, you know, in, in probably not a very friendly prison environment. Uh, but yet they were able to have joy in that. They had probably weren't super happy, uh, but, but they were having joy, uh, in that trial.

And so kind of two thoughts on that one, uh, again, that the thought of happiness is more of an emotion. It's more of a feeling. Joy is not, and joy is a fruit of the Holy spirit.

And so if you're in a trial or, or even if you're in a good situation, whether, whether your situation is good or bad, it's, it's not deterministic on the situation.

If you're walking in the spirit and you're relying on the Holy spirit and you're being renewed day by day. The Holy spirit is just the natural fruit that will occur from the Holy spirit. It's second list, right?

[17:05] Love joy, peace, patience. And so joy is, is not dependent on ourselves or on our circumstances. It is just a natural fruit of the Holy spirit. So that's kind of the first thing.

And then second, second thing we can count it joy. When we have trials because of the result of the trials. And that's what verses three and four are about. We're going to see that trials bring about the English standard says steadfastness.

Other versions might say endurance. Others might say perseverance, but trials bring out this steadfastness. And the result of that is the growing of our faith.

And because of that result, we can have joy in the trials. Like the trials don't just come and leave us unaffected. We are actually made better through the testing through the trial.

And so because of that, you can have joy in trial. So I don't know if that hits or not, but that, to me, that's how I read it. We can have joy independent of emotion and as a result of the trials.

[18:09] So that says this, count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds. Does the name Joe Reese ring out to anybody? Does anybody recognize that name, Joe Reese?

Is he a super old assembly guy? I think he did the believers conference many, many moons ago. I looked him up. He's actually still alive. He's like 130 years old.

He's got to be at least 130 years old. He was super old when I was a kid. And that was a long time ago when I was a kid. So, but he's still alive, lives up in Canada. That's where he's from. Looks like

a mouse.

He looked like Chuck E. Cheese. If Chuck E. Cheese was like preaching, that would be Joe Reese. Excellent teacher. I'm not knocking the guy at all. I'm just saying he's old and looks like a mouse. Those are two of the three things I remember about Joe Reese. The third thing is probably more useful. And it probably has had the greatest effect on my teaching style of anyone.

[19:08] He said, and I remember this clear today, he said that we read our Bibles too fast. He said we read our Bibles too fast. And I remember, I mean this is ages ago, and I remember the passage he was speaking on.

It's when Jesus goes out to the desert to be tempted. Right? He does his 40 day fast. Satan comes to him and says, hey, turn these stones into bread. That temptation of Jesus.

And he said that Jesus was led out into the wilderness to be tempted. And that's not what it says. It says he was led by the Spirit out into the wilderness to be tempted. And that changes the whole dynamic, right?

Because is the Spirit leading to the temptation? Like there's some big connotations if that's the case. And that's all beside this one. The point is that we read our Bibles too fast.

And so reading this verse, it's not saying if you meet trials of various kinds. It's saying when. Like you are going to meet trials of various kinds.

[20:07] Like it's going to happen. In the book of Job, you don't need to turn there. Job chapter five, verse seven. It says this. It says, man is born to trouble as sparks fly upward.

That's a bit of a thinker there. Man is born to trouble as sparks fly upward. If you have a bonfire going, you think about the hay ride or whatever, and you take a big log and you throw it on a burning fire, there's kind of that cloud of sparks that comes up.

Right? When you do that, they don't like go out. They don't kind of go out in an arc and then crash down. They go up. And it's all just convection and whatever thermodynamic physics that I don't understand.

But it is just common knowledge that when you throw something big on a fire, sparks travel upward. It would be unnatural if they went any other direction. You'd be like, whoa, is gravity broken?

What's going on here? In the same way that sparks fly upward and man is born to trouble, it would be unnatural if we didn't have trouble. You know, you think about God. He created the world.

[21:14] He said it was good. He said it was very good. And then a chapter later, sin enters into the world. In one generation after God created Adam and Eve, there's murder. Right?

Cain kills Abel. It is just immediately there is trouble. If you are alive, you will face trouble. Five chapters, six chapters in, the world gets so bad that God says we've got to destroy this place.

And he floods the earth with Noah. Right? And so man is born for trouble. And so it is inevitable that we will face trials in this life. Now the last thing I want to pull out of verse 2, it says that we will meet trials of various kinds.

There's a wide variety of troubles that we'll face. That's great news, right? You know, you just think about the people in this room. Man, you've got, we've had many folks here that have had really hard medical diagnosis.

Really hard relational stuff either as kids or as adults. You think of, you know, infidelity that has happened to several in the room when they were kids. You know, their parents had issues.

[22:21] You think of, you know, people's parents dying when they were kids. You know, that's, that is hard trials. And those are just the kinds you can see. Think about all the relational trouble that you can't see.

Think about things like infertility, miscarriage. You know, I don't need to go on and on here. We know there are various kinds of trials that you go through. And so what I pull out of that is, man, we as humans, but also especially as believers, we need to have some empathy for one another.

Right? That does not come naturally to me. I am not a naturally empathetic person. I am very much of the mindset, well, you made your choice. Here's your consequence. Made your bed, now lay in it. But man, sometimes that is out of your control, you know? And so it has taken a lot for me to hear somebody sharing bad news and to just come alongside and say, man, I'm sorry you're going through that.

Like, what, what can I do to help? That goes a long way. That's all you got to do. If it doesn't come naturally to you, man, just, just tell them you're sorry to hear it and really genuinely get in there with them and see how you can come alongside.

[23 : 27] I opened with, you know, have your kids been sick? Mine have been sick and it has been a bummer. It has been a long week. But man, Mike, we talk about Craig and Amy.

Luke's still in the hospital. He's going to have weeks of rehab and his baseline is permanent disability. Just, just to call a spade a spade. And so it's like, man, am I, am I helping Craig as much as I could?

Could we have Noah and, and, is it Ethan, the other one? Could we have them out to take a burden off of Amy for a day? Probably. Maybe we should offer that. So, yeah, we, we as believers, we, we need to be empathetic.

This is a, a fallen world. The, the book I really like, Wild at Heart. It describes life as kind of like D-Day. You know, D-Day when the U.S. invaded France to, to win back from the German occupation.

He says, you know, the, the boats open up. It's like the opening scene from Saving Private Ryan. People are getting blown up everywhere. He's like, that's what life is like. You, you can't get through this thing without getting shot. He said, you would never come up to a guy who's, who's got his leg blown off and be like, Hey Chuck, how you doing?

[24 : 33] How, how's the job going? You know, the, all the small talk stuff. You're going to watch the hockey game later? Well, take care. Like, that's not how you'd be. Be like, dude, how can I help? What, what can I do?

And like, we, we have to keep that in mind a little bit more as we go through life. Like people are hurting everywhere. Um, how, how can we skip the small talk and get in deep with them?

So anyway, that's, that's verse two. Okay. Verse three, count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds. Verse three, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.

So two words I want to look at here. First one is testing of your faith produces steadfastness. That word testing. It's not like a pass fail test. It's not like a, um, it's not, you know, like a tensile strength. Like let's see where the stick breaks. It's not that kind of testing. Uh, it is more along the lines of proving. Um, you know, the, the example I would go back to is like a flight.

[25 : 38] The Wright brothers invented a little lightweight engine and they tested it in North Carolina and it flew. Uh, the, the plane was able to fly.

And so it was a proof of concept. Like the, they proved, they demonstrated that the engine had enough thrust, a light enough weight to make the plane fly. It was a test, but it's not like a pass fail. It's more of like a proving. Does that make sense? So, so we're not like testing your faith. Like, are you saved or not? It is testing your faith. Like it is the proof of your faith. It is the, the trial, if you will, of your faith that produces steadfastness.

That word steadfastness. Like I said, some of your, uh, Bibles might say endurance, might say perseverance. Uh, what the word means is a cheerful or hopeful endurance.

Uh, so it means you're, you're getting through your enduring, but you're enduring positively. There's a, an aspect of cheer or hope behind it.

[26 : 42] It's not, man, I'm just gonna bear down and get through this and find that next gear and, and just plow through. It's not that. It is that, but you're happy.

Uh, it is that with, with a cheerful, hopeful attitude. Uh, and so the testing of your faith produces this cheerful endurance, this cheerful steadfastness.

And then verse four says, let that steadfastness, that cheerful endurance have its full effect that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

Again, it's worth looking at that word perfect. That's not talking about righteous, right? We're not talking about salvation here. It is talking about, um, almost, he goes on to say complete.

That's kind of what that perfect means. Like lacking in nothing. There's no, uh, no flaws. Like flawless. That's kind of what that word perfect means. And it's kind of interesting.

[27 : 43] I, I, I was thinking about how to take this back to the cross. And kind of two thoughts.

One, there is no greater trial, no, no greater, um, yeah, trial or, or trouble that man can go through than dying without dealing with their sin.

Dying in a lost state and living in a lost state without salvation. There, there's no greater trouble or trial than that. That, that is the greatest one that there can be.

It says in the book of Romans that for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. That is how we're born. We're born of the sin nature, born separated from God due to our sin. And it says that

the wages of that sin is death.

And there, there's no greater trouble or trial that you could have than to be in that separated state from God. That was dealt with on the cross. At the right time while we were yet sinners, Christ died for the ungodly.

There's no condemnation towards those who are in Christ. So by, by, you know, by grace through faith, we are saved. If that greatest trial is dealt with, what else do we have to worry about?

[28 : 58] Right? I mean, does that, does that resonate? Like if, if, if the greatest thing you could possibly imagine has been dealt with on the cross, we have nothing else to worry about. Job's friends, they said, Job, you're really going through it, man.

Why don't you just curse God and die? That was what they said. They said, just curse God, die, get it over with. Your, your family's all dead anyway. Your, your wife is no good. And she, Tim Hawkins has a bit that, that Job's wife did not die.

Anyway, they say curse God and die. And, man, the, the complete opposite could not, is true.

It is, bless God and live, right? Praise God and live your life and know that the trials that, that we're going to meet, there's nothing worse that hasn't already been dealt with. And when we encounter these trials, we're getting this endurance by, by faith that just makes us better.

It makes us more, more complete, more perfect to face more trials throughout life. And it all comes back to the cross, to me. Second thing on, on having this, this full effect of the cheerful endurance.

[30 : 15] I was trying to think of a good biblical example of someone who went through trials. And since man is born to trouble, there's about a million examples to choose from. I thought about Paul and Silas that Casey did.

I thought about the Lord on the cross. That's a pretty big trial. I thought about Job and ultimately settled on Abraham. You know, Abraham, Abraham had a lot of trouble.

He was a sojourner, you know, he was called out to go on a journey. He had some trouble with Pharaoh. They had trouble having children. He, you know, took matters into his own hands with Hagar and Ishmael.

That didn't go well. Finally has Isaac. And then God says, I want you to sacrifice Isaac. And that's, that's probably Abraham's greatest trial. I want you to sacrifice Isaac, your only son.

And he doesn't hesitate. He trusts God and he trusts that God has it. And he goes up onto the mount and he's getting ready to kill Isaac. And, you know, we, we read that story and we teach in Sunday school.

[31 : 24] And it's all about that substitutionary ram, which is a great gospel lesson. It points us to the substitutionary lamb that, you know, died for us. And I think we read that story that like Abraham had the knife.

Maybe he was like, oh, do I hear my mom calling me? Like he had the knife and, oh, is there a ram anywhere? Like, I don't think there's any hesitation. He was committed to doing, to doing that, to killing his son.

And then God provided the ram. And we read in Hebrews that, that he, I'm just going to read it. It's one page over. You don't have to turn there. That he considered that God was able even to raise him from the dead.

You know, to my knowledge, I don't think there had been a resurrection at that point. But I think Abraham believed God so much that when God told him to kill his only son, whom the promise was made through, Isaac.

He believed God so much. And he had, he had such faith in the Lord that, well, if he wants me to kill him, I'll kill him. And God must be able to raise him from the dead. I think that's what Abraham believed.

[32 : 26] And so, man, having that kind of faith in a trial like that, how could you endure something so terrible?

But yet Abraham, his faith in believing God was capable of raising his son, gave him the hopeful attitude, the hopeful endurance to go through with it. And then God intervened and stepped in and it was accredited to him as righteousness.

So that's just an interesting story. If the musicians want to come up, I just want to read from 2 Corinthians. Go ahead and turn there. 2 Corinthians chapter 4.

And I want you to pay attention to the adjectives that are used in this passage. There's a comparison here between our current lives here on earth and eternity.

And I just want you to pay attention to the adjectives, the describing words here. When it talks about the earth, the things we're going through now, it says, So we do not lose heart, verse 16.

[33 : 42] Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison.

As we look not to the things that are seen, but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

You know, in life we are all but guaranteed to go through a variety of trials. But look at that. They're light. They're momentary, temporary. They're transient.

The things that are unseen are eternal. There's an eternal weight of glory that's beyond all comparison is what it says. Lydia, would you toss me my phone?

I meant to bring my phone up here. I like speaking on empty pockets. But I have... You just toss it. I'm a good catch.

[34 : 42] I don't like the message translation, obviously, for doctrine or really much of anything. But the message translation for these types of verses, sometimes you can read it and you get something different out of it than you would, you know, like an English standard or something.

They're just encouraging to read sometimes. So I want to read it from the message with that as a disclaimer. It says, I want to share that with you as an introduction to James and hopefully as an encouragement.

And if you're going through something, let's pray. Father God, just thank you for loving us. Thank you for your word. Thank you that we can have joy that is not dependent on how we feel, but it's just dependent on you.

And ultimately, Lord, comes back to your finished work on the cross. And so we're thankful for that.

And Lord, we do have the hope one day in our resurrection. And we look forward to a time where there are no more trials and no more tears, Lord, that you'll wipe all that away.

We know that the goodness and just the glory that will be then is not even comparable at all to what we go through now. And so we look forward to that, Lord, and we thank you for it.

[36 : 41] And I always pray all this in Jesus' name.