

Interpreting Life from God's Perspective

(James 1:2) Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds,

James is the pastor of the Jerusalem church and is writing to Jewish Christians who are under extreme adversity. (Heb 10:32-34) Great conflict of suffering; public beatings, seizure of property and children, arrest, prison, torture and execution.

(Heb 6:4-6) Many of these believers were failing the test, giving in to the social pressure and returning to the temple. James says all believers have the ability to interpret adversity from God's viewpoint

Vs 2 Consider – A.M.Impv **hegeomai** [to lead; guide your mind & imagination; to interpret; to use your visual – verbal faculties to imagine adversity as a reason to rejoice].

The word **hegeomai** is made up of: **Ago** [to lead, guide]; **oomai** [imagination; visual-verbal faculties]

Definition: To control your mental faculties so that you visualize and verbalize life events as part of God's will, that He is using to produce **agathos** good in your life that glorifies Him.

Aorist: In the moment; at the moment of the adversity and time following

Impv: A command, exhortation or impassioned plea

- The word **hegeomai** indicates that we have the ability to choose how we will interpret our life events. We get to assign our own meanings to the events of our lives.
- The meaning / purpose of all events are determined by why God allows them.
- God assigns meaning/purpose to all the events of angelic & human history

Vs 2 pure joy – **pas** – all, complete, total, pure; **chara** – joy the result of God's grace

- God's purpose in the life of a believer is to produce good – (Rom 8:28)
- Every event is used to produce divine good that grows us & glorifies God – all events
- Every event contributes to the ultimate accomplishment of His plan which when He has finished will result in total joy for all those who are aligned with His purposes.

Vs 2 my brothers – gen **adelphos ego** my fellow believers in Christ

- James shows that only bel's have the promise of (Rom 8:28) where all things work together for good and are a reason for joy.
- Even as the half-brother of Jesus and the leader of the lead church in the world, he identifies himself and puts himself on the same level as every other believer.

Vs 2 whenever – **hotan** – adversity could hit any day at any time – be ready

Vs 2 you fall into – **peripipto** – surrounded; to be suddenly encompassed about

Vs 2 various – **poikilos** – different kinds, diversity, multi faceted

Example: (Lk 10:30) a man traveling was suddenly surrounded by robbers – Good Samaritan

- Adversities can come into our lives at any moment, unannounced
- They often come in groups and suddenly surround us giving us multiple challenges
- All adversities come by the will of God just like every other event of our lives.
- Adversities come in different categories attacking different aspects of our lives.

Vs 2 trials – DMPL peirasmos [temptations, trials; adverse circumstances that tempt us to abandon God’s will by choosing to sin in reaction to the events].

- The word looks at the events of life from the view of the circumstances (trial) or from the view of the believer involved in the event (temptation).
(1Cor 10:13) No temptation beyond our ability to bear; Heb 3:8 – tempted to resist will of God - hardened hearts;
(Jam 1:12) Blessed the one who endures trials – Crown of Life
(1Pt 1:6) Rejoice in salvation in spite of suffering from various kinds of trials;
(1Pt 4:12) Don’t be surprised by the fiery trial that is given to test you
- The temptation is to interpret adversities as a hindrance to our personal plan
- The command is to interpret adversities as a necessary part of God’s unfolding plan which when it has accomplished His will, results in great joy for all believers.

1. **God designed our human faculties with ability to assign meaning to life events.**

- We are able and always do interpret life events however we choose – see it how we want
- **hegeomai** – guide imagination responding to life events - envision either good or bad
- Our view of past life events are interpretations of what happened and what it meant
- Envision loss & frustration of our own plan to get ahead, make profit & gain pleasure
- Envision God’s perspective and purpose for allowing every event of life – produce good

2. **Faculties use visual & verbal methods to create & store the meanings we assign**

Visual Capacity to see images, scenarios of God using adversity to produce good

Verbal Quoting scripture, rehearsing applications, practice responses to common events

- We use our faculties to interpret life events, assign a meaning to them and store them in memory where we call them up to interpret future similar situations.

3. **The images we choose to see and the phrases we choose to say within our self control the way we think, feel and act in response to life events & relationships.**

- a. All events in life are part of God’s will and intended to work good (Rom 8:28).
- b. Even the events that caused us extreme pain were allowed by God to produce good.
- c. Past negative interpretations of life events can cause painful memories stored as neg. images & phrases - hinder our present efforts to understand and apply God’s word.
- d. Past adversity **à** negative interpretation (reject God’s will) **à** feel emotional pain **à** store painful memory **à** **athumos** (Col 3:21) to minimize pain **à** impacts present perspective **à** unable to trust & apply truth to this area.
Ex: Failed love relationship **à** interpret as blame on the other **à** never trust any male **à** marriage **à** stored pain resurfaces in marriage **à** blame husband can’t see truth/self
- e. Once images / phrases are stored in memory they function habitually & unconsciously
- f. Past negative images & verbal logic + faith render us incapable of trusting God to fulfill the roles and responsibilities of CWL.

4. **God empowered & commanded us to renew our old interpretations as His will.**

Old Man – false human system to deal with life based on misinterpretations of life events

Pursue pleasure – misunderstand the role pleasure plays in our life – pursuit happiness

Prevent pain – misunderstand the role adversity plays in life – self-protection

- Misinterpretations causing dysfunction can be rejected (Eph 4:22) **take off** Old Man
- True interpretations enabling Christ-like function embraced (Eph 4:24) **Put on** New Man