

## **Faith in Trials** **- Ron Stullenbarger -**

Trials and tribulations have the power to either keep us from abundant life or produce in us character that sustains abundant life. The choice is up to us. Will our faith remain steadfast in the face of trouble or will we abandon the lifestyle of faith for one of the world?

James 1:2-4 says, *"My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing."* Allow the phrase, "count it all joy" to settle in for a second. What trials have you faced in the past? What trials stand before you today? Is joy the emotion that stirs up within you when you think about your problems?

Our first instinct in the face of trial is usually to run. We want to abandon the problems before us, to act as if they don't exist. But Scripture commands us to count our trials as joy and run at them head-on for the sake of being transformed into a faith-filled, steadfast child of God. God sees trials as a chance to produce character within us, not as a circumstance intended to harm us or derail His plans for our life.

The greatest gift we've been given in the face of trials is faith. When problems are staring at us head-on it's hard to see around them to the beneficial outcome God intends. In order to face trials the way God intends, we must have faith. We have to believe (trust) that God has an outcome as beneficial as the trial is hard. We have to have faith that God will see us through every problem that stands in our way and produce in us a steadfastness on which we can experience abundant life.

Hebrews 10:35-39 says, *"Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: 'FOR YET A LITTLE WHILE, AND HE WHO IS COMING WILL COME AND WILL NOT TARRY. NOW THE JUST SHALL LIVE BY FAITH; BUT IF ANYONE DRAWS BACK, MY SOUL HAS NO PLEASURE IN HIM.' But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul."*

May we not shrink back, but stand on the firm ground of God's promises. May we be believers filled with faith rooted in the faithfulness of God.

Spend time in prayer allowing God's word to fill you with fresh perspective about your trials and tribulations.