



LESSON 38: GROWING FAITH

Biblical Passages: James 1:2-4, 12-17

The human body is an incredible creation, capable of amazing feats. Did you know that if the Earth was flat, the human eye could see a candle's flame burning from thirty miles away? Or that the human brain is capable of reading up to 1,000 words per minute and the human nose can detect up to one trillion different odors! And among all of God's creation, humans are the best long-distance runners. In fact, long ago, humans used to chase their prey by foot until the animal died of exhaustion. Amazing, right?

As incredible as the human body is, the spirit is even more astounding. Read James 1:2-4, 12-17. By the grace of God, we are able to turn difficulties, hardships, and personal agonies into perseverance and spiritual maturity. Even trials and painful life experiences can be used to strengthen our faith and make us more like Christ. Every one of us will be tempted and will face trials of various kinds. The amazing promise and extraordinary hope of today's passage is that spiritual maturity and resilient faith are developed as we overcome and persevere during trials. Death, however, is the result of yielding to the temptations of our evil desires. The overarching message of today's passage is this: God delivers good and perfect gifts, even amidst life's most devastating trials, but sin can only deliver death.

According to today's passage, the faith of the Christ-follower not only endures during hardships and trials, but it also flourishes. Knowing this to be true, why might we remain resistant to God's process of maturing our faith during such times?

CONNECTION QUESTIONS

1. What's the benefit of allowing perseverance to finish its work in your life? What are some reasons that we often stop short of allowing trials to strengthen and mature our faith?
2. Why does Scripture celebrate those who persevere in faith amidst trials? What is their reward?
3. Why is it incorrect to suggest that God tempts His people with sin? Why might people be enticed to believe this lie?
4. Every good thing comes from God. How might this truth impact the way we respond to the good and the bad in life?