



[James 1:2-3](#)

(2) Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you are beset by various trials, (3) Knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.

A Faithful Version

We are counseled here by James, who was Jesus' brother. Hardly anyone knew [Jesus](#) as James did—he grew up with Him. He was able to watch Him over the course of His entire life, and so he knew the mind of Christ exceedingly well. James says that we are to consider trials as a reason for great [joy](#) because trials are capable of producing good results. However, we must understand that trials do not *automatically* produce good results. They can easily make one *bitter* rather than *better*. Whether one comes out better for the experience depends upon how [faith](#), [hope](#), and love are used. *How* the trial is used is the issue, and whether faith, hope, and love produce a higher level of spiritual maturity. What determines whether they make us better rather than bitter is how we use them.

James describes a person surrounded by trials of many kinds. We live in that period when iniquity abounds, and we are admonished by Jesus that we will need *endurance* during this time ([Matthew 24: 12-13](#)). We are assaulted by many kinds of trials, and they will increase. James is concerned about whether they will produce perseverance in us.

The King James Version renders this word as "[patience](#)." That *may* be an acceptable translation, but it is not really correct. "Perseverance" or "endurance" is better, as most modern translations translate it. This is because the Greek word that equates to our "patience" is passive, meaning that one is merely waiting something out. But the Greek word used here, *hupomone*, indicates *activity* rather than passivity. The person is not just waiting for something to happen, though he is patient in what he is going through.

Commentator William Barclay defines *hupomone* as "having the quality to stand, facing the storm, struggling against difficulty and opposition." It is a quality that makes progress against a trial, rather than merely waiting a difficulty out. James is focused on the testing of our belief and trust or faith. There is also *hope* that comes from faith, which acts as a motivator to sustain the struggle against the difficulties of life.

Hope is not directly mentioned here, but James does mention endurance. There is no active endurance unless one actually desires to accomplish something, and he has the hope of good to come from what he is enduring.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

To learn more, see:

[Perseverance and Hope](#)



Related Topics:

[Endurance](#)

[Enduring Hardship](#)

[Hope as Motivation](#)

[Hupomone](#)

[Perseverance](#)

[Trials](#)

[Trials, Shaping Power Of](#)

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