

Making the Most of Tough Times

Spiritual Lessons Only Learned During Difficult Seasons

LESSON #1

NO PAIN, NO GAIN

James 1:2 Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, ³ because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. ⁴ Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. ⁵ If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.

- A. True joy that is not based on pleasant circumstances v.2
- B. Faith strengthened through testing v.3
- C. Delayed gratification v.3
- D. Longer-view perspective v.3
- E. A persevering, enduring spirit v.4
- F. Full maturity v.4
- G. Well-rounded character v.4
- H. Deep dependence upon God v.5
- I. Appreciation for God's generous goodness v.5
- J. Experience of God's sweet compassion v.5

LESSON #2

JESUS WANTS TO LOVE OTHERS THROUGH US

1 John 3:16 This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. ¹⁷ If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? ¹⁸ Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but

with actions and in truth. ¹⁹ This is how we know that we belong to the truth and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence.

1 John 4:19 We love, because He first loved us.

LESSON #3

GOD IS OUR SOURCE

James 4:13 Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money." ¹⁴ Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. ¹⁵ Instead, you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that."

LESSON #4

JESUS IS OUR FOCUS

Hebrews 12:1 ...Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, ² fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³ Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.