

Growing In Maturity

Sunday Morning
Pastor Jim Lowe III
Sunday Morning, 9:30am Stream
11/14/21 (2nd Sunday Message)

{All scriptures are NIV84 unless stated}

Last week I was out sick.

When was the last time you were sick?

There are all types of things that can make people sick in this day and age.

Common Colds can make you sick

Flu can make you sick

COVID can make you sick.

Your job can make you sick.

Dealing with other people can make you sick.

Sicknesses can last different times.

The common cold can last between 3 and 7 days but CAN hang on as long as 2 weeks.

This can happen with any sickness.

Sometimes they can come and go quickly.

Sometimes they last for what feels like forever.

But “who wants that?”

No one wants to get sick.

But we know occasionally we do.

And WHEN we do get sick...

We only want to be sick for about 15 minutes.

We don't like being sick.

We don't like what it does to us.

Sickness...trials...stress...

Life would be so much easier without all those things.

What does the bible say about that stuff?

James 1:2

2 Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds,

The first line.

“Consider it pure joy when you face trials.”

Consider it joy when you face trials...

Simply put:

Be Happy When Life Gets Hard!?

Who wants to do that???

How can we find happiness in difficult times?

When you're sick...how can you find joy in that?

Who's happy when they go through things in their life?

That must be written wrong!

This had to be an error in scripture!

Be happy when life is easy is what it should say!

This is clearly on another level!

There is more for us to reach for.

So WHY should we find joy in trials?

James 1:3

3 because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance.

James 1:3 (NKJV)

3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.

James 1:3 (AMP)

3 Be assured and understand that the trial and proving of your faith bring out endurance and steadfastness and patience.

This tells us something about the trials we go through.

- 1. We Should Be Happy When We Face Trials**
- 2. When We Face Trials, Our Faith Is Tested**
- 3. When Our Faith Is Tested, It Makes Us Stronger**

Gross...

So those things we go through.

Pain...

Sickness...

Heartbreak and hard times.

They are there for a reason.

Major Point:

Trials Are Necessary For Our Growth

Trials help our perseverance.

Trials help us to grow stronger...

Here are some questions to talk about today?

How Strong Is Your Faith?

What Kind Of Endurance Does Your Faith Have?

We all say we have faith.

We all say we have faith that God will do certain things.

Does that faith have endurance?

We all can say we believe.

We all can have faith until it's truly tested.

But how strong is it really?

How strong is your faith during a trial?

What if it goes days...weeks...months?

Does your faith stay as strong??

Do you still pray with the same “fire” for God to deliver you?

What does the original scripture say?

James 1:2-4

2 Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, 3 because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. 4 Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

Perseverance must finish its work so you may be mature and complete...not lacking anything.

James 1:2-4 (MSG)

Consider it a sheer gift, friends, when tests and challenges come at you from all sides. You know that under pressure, your faith-life is forced into the open and shows its true colors. So don't try to get out of anything prematurely. Let it do its work so you become mature and well-developed, not deficient in any way.

God wants to move us from being “babes” in Christ.

God Wants Us To Be Spiritually Mature!

Philippians 1:6

6 being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

He who began a good work...

Will carry it till completion.

It's not complete when it began.

It needs to finish.

It needs to be completed!

God Wants To Complete What He Started In You!

Hebrews 12:2

2 Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

God is the author.

He is the author of faith...

He placed that faith in us...

Now he wants it as perfect as it can be.

God Doesn't Just Want Us, He Wants Us Better Than We Are!

God wants to perfect us!

God wants us spiritually mature!

{Someone say:}

“God Wants To Make Me Better!”

“God Wants To Mature Me!”

God is still working to build your faith!

{Question:}

How Does God Build Us Up?

When you were in school...

In math class.

You could learn all day.

How did you find out what you truly knew?

when the test came.

The good teachers will “test” us to make sure we’re learning.

They will give us opportunities to “show what we’ve learned.”

Psalms 66:10

**For you, O God, tested us;
you refined us like silver.**

God tests us to refine us.

To make us BETTER than we were!

We've talked before about trials.

John 16:33

33 "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

We learned before that things must happen in life...

But we can find peace in God during those times.

We ALSO see in James...

That God uses these times to make us mature also.

{Someone say:}

"God Wants To Make Me Better!"

"God Wants To Mature Me!"

God tests us in smaller things to prepare us for the bigger things.

Before we can do advanced math.

We have to be able to multiply and divide.

Before that we have to be able to add and subtract.

Before that we have to count.

God trains us the same way.

1 Samuel 17:4-11

4 A champion named Goliath, who was from Gath, came out of the Philistine camp. He was over nine feet tall. 5 He had a bronze helmet on his head and wore a coat of scale armor of bronze weighing five thousand shekels; 6 on his legs he wore bronze greaves, and a bronze javelin was slung on his back. 7 His spear shaft was like a weaver's rod, and its iron point weighed six hundred shekels. His shield bearer went ahead of him. 8 Goliath stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, "Why do you come out and line up for battle? Am I not a Philistine, and are you not the servants of Saul? Choose a man and have him come down to me. 9 If he is able to fight and kill me, we will become your subjects; but if I overcome him and kill him, you will become our subjects and serve us." 10 Then the Philistine said, "This day I defy the ranks of Israel! Give me a man and let us fight each other." 11 On hearing the Philistine's words, Saul and all the Israelites were dismayed and terrified.

What do we see about Goliath?

Goliath:

-He Was A Champion

- He was one of the best fighters.

-He Was Over 9 Feet Tall

- He was a big man.
- He was almost twice the size of the Israelites.
- Wingspan
 - His wingspan was twice the height of the Israelites
 - His arms alone were probably larger than the average Israelite.
- He was fully armored out.

The Rules:

-Settled By One Fight

- Both sides lined up for war.

-Whichever Side Won Would Rule The Other

- Clearly an unfair fight.
 - Goliath was about the size of 2 of them.

Saul and the Israelites were dismayed and terrified.

Why?

Because they had no one who could fight him.

This is considered a trial for Israel.

This ONE fight would determine who becomes slaves towards the other.

We know the story...

Twice a day for 40 days he does this.

David eventually hears it.

1 Samuel 17:32-33

32 David said to Saul, "Let no one lose heart on account of this Philistine; your servant will go and fight him." 33 Saul replied, "You are not able to go out against this Philistine and fight him; you are only a boy, and he has been a fighting man from his youth."

David says he will take care of the problem.

David answered a question NO ONE ASKED HIM.

No one imagined David could do this.

He was a boy!

He was smaller than the male fighters out there!

1 Samuel 17:34-37

34 But David said to Saul, "Your servant has been keeping his father's sheep. When a lion or a bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock, 35 I went after it, struck it and rescued the sheep from its mouth. When it turned on me, I seized it by its hair, struck it and killed it. 36 Your servant has killed both the lion and the bear; this uncircumcised Philistine will be like one of them, because he has defied the armies of the living God. 37 The Lord who delivered me from the paw of the lion and the paw of the bear will deliver me from the hand of this Philistine."

Saul said to David, "Go, and the Lord be with you."

This is what I call:

The Lion And Bear Principle

David tells Saul why he can fight Goliath.

When a lion or bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock...

David went after it and killed it.

Since God kept him with the lion and bear...

God would keep him with Goliath

David Used A Natural Trial To Determine A Spiritual Conclusion

David realized that if God would save him from one trial.

- God could save him from another.
- And if God could save him from THAT trial.
- God could save him from another.

This was David showing Spiritual Maturity!

What we can learn from David:

Our Trials May Change, But Our God Does Not!

In your life...it might be a lion one day.

It might be a bear another...

It might be a cold today.

It might be a sore throat another.

It might be a work of the Lord one day.

It might be an impossible situation another...

But as long as God showed himself strong before...

It doesn't matter what the problem looks like.

If God Is A Deliverer, He Is A Deliverer!

We have to start using the things we've been through as a way to develop our Spiritual Maturity.

What is the Spiritual Mature way to look at it?

If God Did It Before, He Can Do It Again!

If we want to start extending the reach of our faith,

We have to realize first that God Can.

Whatever It Is, God Is Able!

{Conclusion}

We may not always agree with the things we go through in life.

God told us they have to happen and we can find peace in him during.

But they are ALSO necessary.

God wants us to be mature.

He wants us to build our faith up.

Some us need our faith built up.

Why?

How To Increase Our Spiritual Maturity:

1. Remember We Are A Work In Progress

We do not have it all together.

We have a lot more maturing to do.

God wants us to be mature.

James 1:4

Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

Many of us are still lacking a lot.

God loves us and wants to fix all of that.

How To Increase Our Spiritual Maturity:

2. Use Your Personal Testimony To Help Build Your Faith

Remember the Lion and Bear Principle.

What May Had Been Meant To Take You Out Is Going To Push You Forward

God is with you.

You can have peace through your trials..

And if God is a deliverer, he is a deliverer!

If God Did It Before, He Can Do It Again

How To Increase Our Spiritual Maturity:

3. Remember That Every Trial Is A Chance To Grow Your Faith