

1. Introduction

- a. Piano makes beautiful music because the strings are pulled under pressure
- b. God's grace shines through human adversity
- c. James wrote his letter to Christians scattered all over the world
  - i. James was the half-brother of Jesus and pastor of the Jerusalem Church
  - ii. James had experienced the martyrdom of Stephen (Acts 6:8 - 7:60) and James the apostle (Acts 12:1, 2) as well as Peter's arrest (Acts 12:3 - 5)
  - iii. The Jerusalem Church experienced much persecution

2. Heavenly Purpose in Difficulty

- a. To develop your faith
  - i. Not every trail is a temptation, but every temptation should be a test  
*Romans 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*
  - ii. Difficulty tests my faith  
*1 Corinthians 10:13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer [allow] you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.*
- b. To display your faith
  - i. Tested faith produces patience  
*Romans 5:3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;*  
*1 Peter 1:7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:*
  - ii. Untested faith cannot be trusted  
*James 2:14, 17 What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? ... 1Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.*

### 3. Biblical Process Through Difficulty

#### a. Process of surrender

- i. As God works with you through the difficulty, Christian yields to God  
*James 4:10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.*
- ii. Keep a humble spirit of surrender from your past, in your present, & for your future  
*1 Peter 5:6-7 Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time. Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.*

#### b. Process of maturity

- i. Tested faith produces patience (part of maturing process)  
*1 Peter 5:10 But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish [firmly rooted], strengthen, settle you.*
- ii. Pressure from life's problems brings me closer to God  
*2 Corinthians 12:9 And he [God] said unto me [Paul], My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities [sicknesses or handicapped], that the power of Christ may rest upon me.*
- iii. Better in tough times to be with God rather than have good times without God.

### 4. Revealed Product Through Difficulty

#### a. Wisdom for the asking

- i. Ask God for wisdom  
*Matthew 7:7 Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:*
- ii. But ask God in faith  
*Romans 4:20 He [Abraham] staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;*

#### b. Wisdom to be given

- i. God will give you wisdom
- ii. *James 1:5 If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally [generously], and upbraideth not [won't scold you for asking]; and it shall be given him.*

iii. God gives wisdom liberally

*Psalm 111:10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth forever.*

iv. God will be gracious when you ask for wisdom