

Trials and Joy: How God is Pursuing Me
(and maybe you!)
James 1:2-4

“Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.”
James 1:2-4

God, is it really joy to meet a trial? How come I honestly do not feel much joy right now?

Point One: God is relentlessly pursuing me.

“I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak...”
Ezekiel 34:16

Father, why do I regularly feel there is still more of me that needs to change? Have I really wandered that far?

Point Two: God will use trials to pursue and refine me.

Father, I know I do not get to choose the trials You use to refine me. But what are you trying to teach me through these current trials and pains?

“Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you.”

1 Peter 4:12

Themes in both James 1:2-4 and 1 Peter 4:12

- Joy (see also 1 Peter 4:13)
- Trials will come
- There will be various and difficult trials
- It is not strange to go through trials- it is God’s way of perfecting and completing me

Point Three: Through trials and pain, I am still called to be thankful.

“And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.”

Colossians 3:15

Gracious Father, I know You are in control. It is hard. But thank You that You will walk with me through the trial, thank You that You will never leave me or forsake me.

“God is God. Because He is worthy of my trust and obedience, I will find rest nowhere but in His holy will, a will that is unspeakably beyond my largest notions of what He is up to.”

-Elizabeth Elliot

Sermon by Pastor Dave Williams on Sunday, November 16th, 2014
Next week: End of worship series- New Covenant Worship John 4:23