

How does a habit of putting Jesus words into practice help us to stand our ground in the tough times?

Why do you think so many Christians behave like the foolish builder, hearing Jesus' words yet failing to put them into practice?

Can you think of a time when leaning on Jesus' words helped you through a tough time?

3. Read Matthew 5:11-12, 2 Corinthians 4:16-18, Hebrews 12:10-11 and 1 Peter 1:6-8. How do these passages give us encouragement for facing the trouble and trials in our lives?

Which of them do you find the most personally encouraging?

Do you see any differences in the reasons these passages give to persevering in the tough times?

Would you consider sharing any of these verses with someone you know who was going through a tough time in their life? Why or why not?

### TAKING IT HOME

☞ Looking back over this week's sermon and homework, what's the most important thing for you to remember?

☞ Is there a trouble or trial you're facing that the group can lift to God this week?

### PRAYER REQUESTS



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Pastor Andrew Kraye-White  
andrew@eaglerockbaptist.com

**BENEFITTING FROM THE TOUGH TIMES**

“James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,  
To the twelve tribes scattered among the nations:

Greetings.

<sup>2</sup> Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, <sup>3</sup> because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. <sup>4</sup> Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. <sup>5</sup> 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. <sup>6</sup> But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. <sup>7</sup> That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. <sup>8</sup> Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do.”

James 1:1-8

### MEMORY VERSE

“Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him.”

James 1:12

### Three Truths about Trials

1. Trials will \_\_\_\_\_. Not \_\_\_\_\_  
but \_\_\_\_\_.

“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.”

John 16:33



2. God doesn't \_\_\_\_\_ every \_\_\_\_\_  
but God can \_\_\_\_\_ every \_\_\_\_\_

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.”  
Romans 8:28

3. We can't \_\_\_\_\_ our trials, but we can  
\_\_\_\_\_ our \_\_\_\_\_

**QUICK REVIEW**

Thinking back to the sermon this weekend “Being Thankful During The Tough Times,” in a sentence or two summarize the main point.

Looking back at your notes, was there anything you heard for the first time or that caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?

**GETTING STARTED**

- Share something that you've done that was difficult, maybe even painful when you were going through it, but were glad you did so afterward.

- Share an example of a tough time in your life that God has used to shape who you are today.

**DIGGING DEEPER**

1. Based on his later life experience the Apostle Paul was an authority in dealing with tough times. Read what he has to say in Romans 5:1-5. What do you think makes the difference between those who persevere in the face of suffering, and those who give up?

Can you think of someone whose character has been shaped positively by suffering?

How does suffering produce hope in us?

Is there anything you're facing today that God can use to form your character and give you hope?

2. In Matthew 7:24-27, Jesus concludes the sermon on the mount with a parable about putting his teaching into action. What stands out to you in this parable?

**MY NEXT STEP IS TO . . .**

- Commit my life to Jesus Christ for the first time.
- Memorize James 1:12
- Give thanks in the tough times that God is in control
- Give a Christmas Invite card to someone and encourage them to come with me to one of our holiday events
- Attend the rest of the Thank You teaching series as much as possible and choose to be thankful every day
- Get the most out of today's message by attending my Life group



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