

Discussion Questions for “Opportunities for Joy”
James 1:1-11, Pastor Trey Sonnenberg, Weekend of March 1, 2026

Outline:

Q. Why should we endure trials?

A. Because they provide opportunities to draw close to the Lord and grow in our faith.

1. Trials give opportunity to grow more like Jesus (vv.2-4)
Encouragement: Jesus walks with us in our trials.
2. Uncertainties give opportunities to trust Jesus more (vv.5-8)
Encouragement: Jesus remains true in every uncertainty.
3. Poverty gives opportunity to rely on Jesus more (vv.9-11)
Encouragement: Jesus is our wealth and our inheritance.

Questions:

1. What stands out to you most in James 1:1-11? (A phrase, a command, a promise, or something that felt difficult to accept?)
2. What do you think is the difference between feeling joyful and “counting” something as joy? What does that word choice suggest about the role of our mind in this perspective?
3. How is “steadfastness” different from simply surviving something difficult? What might spiritual maturity actually look like in everyday life?
4. Why do you think wisdom—not relief, escape, or answers—is what James tells believers to ask for? What does this reveal about what God may be doing in our trials?
5. What might “double-mindedness” look like practically in someone’s life today? In what subtle ways can someone seek God’s help while still relying on their own power?
6. Why would poverty make it easier to see one’s “high-position” (or “exultation”) in Christ? Conversely, what spiritual dangers might wealth create according to this passage?
7. What current or recent trial in your life might God be using to deepen your endurance and grow you in your relationship with Jesus? What does it look like this week to intentionally “count it as joy?”