

## An Opportunity for Joy

“My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.” – James 1:2-3

A wise father who was sending his son to college promised to give him a monthly allowance. But he told his son, “I’m not sending you a monthly check. If you want it, you’ll have to come home to get it.”

In the same way, our Father in Heaven might say, “I’ll give this to you, but you have to come to Me to receive it.” God wants to have fellowship with us. God likes to hear from us. God likes to talk to us through His Word. God likes to bless us.

Therefore, God will allow certain circumstances in our lives that keep us dependent on Him. If life were all blue skies and green lights, would we still turn to God in prayer? If there wasn’t any illness in our lives, would we still pray as much? If we never had a need for God’s provision or we never had prodigal children, would we still pray?

We wouldn’t. These things bring us to God. Right now you might be going through a difficulty. Maybe you’re facing a trial of some kind. You’re having family conflict, problems at work, or problems with your health. Maybe something isn’t going well for you, and you’re saying, “This is a bad thing.”

Yes, in a way it may be, but it also can turn out to be a good thing if it brings you to God in complete dependence and improves your prayer life.

The Bible says, “When troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy” (James 1:2). Another version puts it this way: “Don’t resent them as intruders, but welcome them as friends!” Could you consider trials and temptations your friends? You could if they bring you to see your need for dependence on God.

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