

Overcoming Fear In The Face Of Trial



By Cindy Steinbeck Newkirk

Opening: Lord, You declare, “Ask anything.” Please open our eyes and ears to Your Word. Give us boldness to ask in confidence. May we delight in receiving the assurance of Your presence as we face the trials life brings. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

Facing the Why’s: Facing trials and responding with prayer go hand in hand. What are our prayers during trials?

“Lord, take it away!” or “Lord, I’ve learned my lesson, please ease my pain.” or “Why, Lord?”

List trials you have faced, are facing, or expect to face. Share one from your list with your small group.

According to **James 1:3**, what do trials produce in us? What are some ways we react negatively to our trials? What are some positive side effects of our facing trials?

Why are fears and anger powerful motivating factors as we face trials? How can we move from fear and anger to joy through a trial?

Getting Unstuck: Heavy rains left some of our vineyard roads unexpectedly slippery and soggy. A friend, who thought she knew the best way to our home, drove toward our home down a road she recognized from a previous, “drier” visit. Within moments she was stuck in the mud. The harder she tried to become unstuck, the more stuck she got. Our embarrassed friend called us to say, “I am really stuck and I need help.” She needed help getting unstuck. Why do we all need help getting unstuck?

What do **James 1:5** and **James 1:12** call us to do as we face trials and the fear associated with them? Why does James place emphasis on praying for wisdom? (Read **James 3:17–18**.)

Strength Under Control: James also places emphasis on receiving with meekness. A working definition of “meek” in the Scriptures could be “strength under control.” The words meekness, humility, and gentleness are used by translators of the Scriptures to convey the idea in the Greek word *prautes*. However, *prautes* is not readily expressed

in English since the term “meekness” in English suggests weakness. *Prautes* is a condition of mind and heart that demonstrates gentleness — not in weakness but power. It is a virtue born in strength of character, according to *Lexical Aids to New Testament*.

What does **James 1:21** call every person to receive with meekness? What, or rather Who, is the implanted Word?

James is a book written to Christians, people like us who live in relationship with the living Lord. Read **James 1:19–20** and review the list of “what to do” to be both hearers and doers of the Word of God, that is, people who live in a healthy relationship with God, self, and others.

When we face trials with fear, our ears close and our mouths speak quickly, either as a result of anger at circumstances or at ourselves. Discuss the importance of praying for wisdom as we face trials and meekness as we receive the implanted Word.

The Truth Is: If time permits, discuss these statements and how they can help us overcome fears in the face of trials:

- We work hard and expend so much energy trying to produce a “trial-less,” perfect life. God calls us to think differently, to count or consider it all joy as we face trials.
- Truth is — Jesus Christ. Jesus declared: “I am the way,

the truth and the life” (**John 14:6a**). And wisdom is — Jesus Christ. Paul declared: “It is because of Him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God” (**1 Corinthians 1:30a**).

- The Implanted Word dwells IN us, and His life-giving blood covers our sin, cleansing us and giving us new life. We were baptized into The Word of God, into The Truth, into Wisdom. We dwell IN Him, now and for eternity.

God calls us to be in relationship with Him and with one another, not to live in isolation, as we encounter fears and anger when facing trials. Our Lord can use us to help one another overcome fears in the face of trials, and He can use us to encourage one another to count our trials as joy.

Closing Prayer: Heavenly Father, grant us courage to ask for wisdom and boldness to cry out for meekness in receiving the implanted Word. Lord Jesus, grant us courage to cling to Your truth. Holy Spirit, provide friends to surround and guide us into a deeper relationship with You. Help us to be friends of wisdom and meekness to those around us. In Jesus’ precious name. Amen.

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