



APPNOTES

Date: May 18-22 , 2020

Series: James: Faith That Works

Psalm 119:49-52 What is it about a relationship with God that brings us comfort? He's not a Father we can see and hug. What can we cling to as we walk through this world, waiting for the day we can see Him face to face? We cling to His word. The Bible is the living, breathing word of God. It changes people's lives because it's a Father's love letter to His children. It tells us of God's promises. It reminds us of what He has already done and what He will do. When the world is throwing lies at us at every turn, God's word is truth. Not wishy-washy truth; truth you can stand on and build a life on. If you are feeling tired, weary, anxious, or pressed down, cling to the living word of God and know that He loves you!

John 16:33 Several years ago I was diagnosed with a severe autoimmune disease. One of my early treatments included infusions; I'd sit in the doctor's office for three hours with a drip in my arm, and a nurse checked my vitals every fifteen minutes or so. The first week, I started reading the pamphlet from the drug company, which of course lists every possible side effect. I started asking questions; I'm the curious sort! My nurse finally said, "If you keep that up, I'm going to take that away from you." She knew that sometimes we don't need to know every detail. But so often it helps to know what to expect. Jesus tells us here that there will be trouble. Don't be surprised! Expect it. But know this: peace is possible. Disease, financial hardship, sin, whatever you face: Jesus has overcome the world.

Isaiah 61:1-3 What do you need right now? Financial security? Emotional strength and peace? Friendship? Forgiveness? There is no one person on this earth who can meet all your needs. But Christ can. This passage in Isaiah is a prediction of Jesus and what Jesus would accomplish, what we know all these years later that He did accomplish. He proclaimed the good news: God loves you so much and gave His Son as a sacrifice in your place. He brings hope, light, and freedom. He takes our tears of sadness and redeems them for tears of joy. That doesn't mean all the hardships cease. As Christians

we will still face hardship and struggle, but walking with Jesus, we'll get through it together. The end of verse 3 says we'll be for God's splendor. We'd call it helping others find the way back to God. That can make all the struggle worth it!

I Peter 5:8-11 One of my biggest struggles – always, but especially during this current crisis – is distraction, allowing my focus to be side tracked. During World War II, Britain was facing the Blitz; London and all of southern England were within range of Germany's bombers. Posters were printed with the phrase "keep calm and carry on." There would be temporary hardship, food shortages, and separation, but there was an enemy that needed to be defeated, and they mustn't take their eyes off that. Neither should we. Satan is our enemy and is seeking those whom he can devour. If we believe in Jesus Christ, Satan cannot steal us from God's family, but he can try his best to make us miserable, and when we allow him to distract us, we're not sharing the message of God with the people around us. And, friends, they need to hear it! Stand firm in your faith and carry on.

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 A teacher assigns homework and gives tests to make sure the students have successfully learned the material. But it's ultimately not about the test; true success will be when the students apply the lesson to life. The motto of my classroom was "we learn not for school but for life." Our Christian life is no different. The trials we face are the equivalent of taking a lesson on proportions and applying it to a recipe or understanding our history so we can take part in our government. The end goal of school is a career, success, a better life. The end goal of this Christian life is not knowledge of God but a deeper relationship with God. When we struggle and experience the comfort of God, we can apply that to life, and it's for this reason you have been comforted. Now, help others find their way back to God.

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