

# Bible Way Church

OF ATLANTA ROAD

February 20, 2007

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## **“EMPOWERED BY OUR STRUGGLES”**

James 1: 2-4 (NKJV)

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- As we continue to look at ways that we as believers are empowered to do the extraordinary, let us examine one unusual way that we are empowered: by the struggles and adversities we often go through.
- The Bible tells us in Job 14:1 “Man who is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble”.
- In Psalm 34:19 David writes, “Many are the afflictions of the righteous...”
- Paul tells us in II Corinthians 4:8 that we are troubled on every side.
- The question that we must consider is, “Not whether trouble will come our way, but will we be destroyed or empowered by our troubles?”
- Will life’s unpredictable journey make us bitter or better?
- Can we actually be blessed by the struggles we go through?
- James seems to think so when he writes in our scriptural text:

*“My brethren count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations, know this that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that you may be complete, wanting nothing.” James 1: 2-4*

- Paul shares James’ view that we can be empowered by our struggles. In II Corinthians 4:17, he writes, “For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”
- In Genesis chapters 37-50, the life of Joseph, the son of Jacob, offers a wonderful example of how one’s struggles and adversities empowered them to reach extraordinary heights.
- Joseph’s testimony shows how he was blessed as a result of the struggles he endured.
- He counted it all joy!
- Joseph’s troubles began as the result of his brothers’ jealousy.
- The Bible tells us that jealousy is worse than the grave.
- We first hear of Joseph’s brothers’ jealousy against him in Genesis 37:4: “*And when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all the brethren they hated him, and could not speak well of him.*”

- According to Genesis 37:24, Joseph's brothers took him and cast him into a pit.
- Later they sold him into slavery to a group of Midianite merchantmen for twenty pieces of silver (Genesis 37:28).
- Joseph ended up as a slave in Egypt in the house of Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's army.
- As a result of Joseph's resistance to the sexual advances of Potiphar's wife, he found himself in prison (Genesis 39:20).
- While in prison, Joseph, through the power of God, interpreted the dreams of Pharaoh's chief butler.
- After the butler was released and Pharaoh needed his dreams interpreted, the butler told Pharaoh of Joseph.
- Joseph was released from prison and brought into the inner court of Pharaoh's house to interpret his dreams.
- After Joseph was able to interpret the dreams of Pharaoh, he was placed over the entire house of Pharaoh (Genesis 41:39-40).
- Later, he was promoted over the entire nation of Egypt, second only to Pharaoh.
- Finally, in Genesis 50:15-22 Joseph's life came full circle when he faced his brothers who sold him into slavery many years earlier.
- Joseph put it all into perspective in Genesis 50:20: "But as for you, you thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good."
- Joseph's struggles empowered him toward his destiny.
- Your struggles can also empower you toward your destiny.
- That is why Paul says in our text "...count it all joy..."