

## James 1:2-4

My brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy, because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance; and let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking in nothing.



Embrace the Inevitability ("When you face trials")

+

Fight for Joy ("Consider it nothing but joy")

+

Accumulate Endurance ("Testing produces Endurance")

=

Unflinching Resiliency ("mature & complete, lacking nothing")



## 1. Embrace the Inevitability

"My brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials  
of any kind..."



**COVID-19 has exposed:**

- American racial pride as quite alive.
- America's salvation scheme as fraudulent.



## The American Salvation Scheme

"The Good Life is having the freedom to do whatever I feel makes me happy."



## Christianity says:

- Avoiding hard times is not possible.
- + You can have joy, purpose, and meaning during hard times.



## 2. Fight for Joy

"My brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of any kind, **consider it nothing but joy...**"



## Christianity says:

- It's okay to mourn, grieve, weep, hurt, yell, doubt before God when life gets hard.
- + God is an expert at turning evil and suffering against itself.



## Romans 8:28

And we know that God causes everything to work together  
for the good of those who love God and are called  
according to His purpose for them.



## We've unleashed a compassion frenzy!

- 100,000+ items collected
- Served 24 zip codes
- Served 25 schools
- Served 23 NGOs
- Served 3 surrounding counties
- Nearly all 24,000+ snack packs distributed
- 94 food orders for nonprofits and food banks
- 15 food orders for individuals
- 50 orders for families in partner schools
- Approx. 1,000 pizzas to healthcare heroes
- 350 boxes of girl scout cookies donated



“I never expected it to be so easy to talk about church in the hospital but when half of the people working at the hospitals are already talking about NECC, it’s not super hard. Keep it up.”



Does spiritual awakening like this happen  
without a pandemic?



Does spiritual awakening like this happen  
without a pandemic?

We would never pray for this,  
but our church was made for this!



### 3. Accumulate endurance.

"My brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy, because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance..."



"God whispers to us in our pleasures, but shouts in our pains. It is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world."  
- C.S. Lewis



## Daniel 3:29-35

Then Nebuchadnezzar was so filled with rage against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego that his face was distorted. He ordered the furnace heated up seven times more than was customary, and ordered some of the strongest guards in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to throw them into the furnace of blazing fire.

So the men were bound, still wearing their tunics, their trousers, their hats, and their other garments, and they were thrown into the furnace of blazing fire.



## Daniel 3:29-35

Because the king's command was urgent and the furnace was so overheated, the raging flames killed the men who lifted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego....Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished and rose up quickly. He said to his counselors, "Was it not three men that we threw bound into the fire?" They answered the king, "True, O king." He replied, "But I see four men unbound, walking in the middle of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the fourth has the appearance of a god."