



It's in the Attitude

Anne Cetas



Consider it pure joy . . . whenever you face trials of many kinds. [James 1:2](#)

Read: [James 1:1–12](#)

Bible in a Year: [Exodus 4–6](#); [Matthew 14:22–36](#)

Regina drove home from work discouraged and tired. The day had started with tragic news in a text message from a friend, then spiraled downward in meetings with co-workers who refused to work with any of her ideas. As Regina was talking to the Lord, she thought it best to put the stress of the day aside and made a surprise visit with flowers to an elderly friend at a care center. Her spirits lifted as Maria shared how good the Lord was to her. She said, “I have my own bed and a chair, three meals a day, and help from the nurses here. And occasionally God sends a cardinal to my window just because He knows I love them and He loves me.”

Attitude. Perspective. As the saying goes, “Life is 10 percent what happens to us and 90 percent how we react to it.” The people James wrote to were scattered because of persecution, and he asked them to consider their perspective about difficulties. He challenged them with these words: “Consider it pure joy . . . whenever you face trials of many kinds” (James 1:2).

We are each on our own journey of learning to trust God with hard circumstances. The kind of joy-filled perspective James talked about comes as we learn to see that God can use struggles to produce maturity in our faith.

Lord, please change my attitude about hard times. Bring about joy, perseverance, and maturity in me.

God can bring times of growth out of our times of heartache.



A “Yes” of Love

Dave Branon

Let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth. [1 John 3:18](#)

Read: [1 John 3:16–24](#)

Bible in a Year: [Exodus 7–8](#); [Matthew 15:1–20](#)

On August 21, 2016, Carissa posted photos on social media of a devastating flood in Louisiana. The next morning she included a note from someone in the flooded area pleading for help. Five hours after that, she and her husband, Bobby, sent out a call for others to join them on their 1,000-mile trip to provide help. Less than twenty-four hours later, thirteen people were on their way to serve those whose homes had been severely damaged.

What motivates people to drop everything and drive seventeen hours to move appliances, do demolition work, and provide hope in a place they’ve never been before? It’s love.

Think about this verse, which she posted along with her call for help: “Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him and he will do this” (Psalm 37:5). This is especially true when we follow God’s call to help. The apostle John said, “If anyone . . . sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person?” (1 John 3:17). It may be a daunting task—but we have God’s promise of help when we “do what pleases him” (v. 22).

When a need arises, we can honor God by being willing to offer a “yes” of love to what we sense He is asking us to do for others.

Lord, please open our eyes to the needs of others, open our hearts to those people, and open our hands so we can provide help in the time of need.

We show God’s love when we are willing to help others; we show His strength when we take on the task He gives us to do.

God of Life

Jeff Olson



Lord my God, you are very great; you are clothed with splendor and majesty.

Psalm 104:1

Read: **Psalm 104:1–12, 24–30**

Bible in a Year: **Exodus 9–11; Matthew 15:21–39**

A few winters ago, my hometown experienced an unusually long blast of bone-chilling temperatures that finally gave way to the warmer weather of spring. For two weeks straight, the outside thermometer dipped well below the sub-zero degree mark (-20 C; -5 F).

On one particularly bitter cold morning, the sound of chirping birds broke the silence of night. Dozens, if not hundreds, sang their hearts out. If I didn't know any better, I could have sworn the little creatures were crying out to their Creator to please warm things up!

Bird experts tell us that the multitude of birdsongs we hear during late winter mornings are mostly male birds, attempting to attract mates and claim their territories. Their chirping reminded me that God fine-tuned His creation to sustain and flourish life—because He is a God of life.

In a psalm that marvels at God's flourishing earth, the author begins, "Let all that I am praise the Lord" (Psalm 104:1 nlt). He went on to write, "The birds of the sky nest by the waters; they sing among the branches" (v. 12).

From singing and nesting birds to a vast ocean "teeming with creatures beyond number" (v. 25), we see reasons to praise the Creator for the lengths He's gone to ensure that all of life thrives.

Thank God for the world He has made. List the parts of His creation that you especially enjoy. Thank Him for them one by one.

He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. Colossians

1:17



True Hope

James Banks



*The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. **Romans 8:16***

Read: Romans 5:1–11

Bible in a Year: Exodus 12–13; Matthew 16

Not long ago I visited the Empire State Building with a friend. The line looked short—just down the block and around the corner. Yet as we entered the building, we discovered the line of people stretching through the lobby, up the stairs, and into another room. Every new turn revealed more distance to go.

Attractions and theme parks carefully route their crowds to make the lines seem shorter. Yet disappointment can lurk “just around the bend.”

Sometimes life's disappointments are much more severe. The job we hoped for doesn't materialize; friends we counted on let us down; the romantic relationship we longed for fails to work out. But into these heartbreaks, God's Word speaks a refreshing truth about our hope in Him. The apostle Paul wrote, “Suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame [or disappoint us], because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us” (Romans 5:3–5).

As we place our trust in Him, through His Spirit, God whispers the truth that we are unconditionally loved and will one day be with Him—regardless of the obstacles we face. In a world that may often disappoint us, how good it is to know that God gives genuine hope.

Abba, Father, thank You that I can always trust in Your perfect, never-ending love.

In Christ, the hopeless find hope.



Holy, Holy, Holy

Julie Ackerman Link



*Day and night they never stop saying: “‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty,’ who was, and is, and is to come.” **Revelation 4:8***

Read: [Revelation 4](#)

Bible in a Year: [Exodus 14–15](#); [Matthew 17](#)

“Time flies when you’re having fun.” This cliché has no basis in fact, but experience makes it seem true.

When life is pleasant, time passes all too quickly. Give me a task that I enjoy, or a person whose company I love, and time seems irrelevant.

My experience of this “reality” has given me a new understanding of the scene described in Revelation 4. In the past, when I considered the four living creatures seated around God’s throne who keep repeating the same few words, I thought, *What a boring existence!*

I don’t think that anymore. I think about the scenes they have witnessed with their many eyes (v. 8). I consider the view they have from their position around God’s throne (v. 6). I think of how amazed they are at God’s wise and loving involvement with wayward earthlings. Then I think, *What better response could there be? What else is there to say but, “Holy, holy, holy”?*

Is it boring to say the same words over and over? Not when you’re in the presence of the one you love. Not when you’re doing exactly what you were designed to do.

Like the four creatures, we were designed to glorify God. Our lives will never be boring if we’re focusing our attention on Him and fulfilling that purpose.

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty! Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee; holy, holy, holy! Merciful and mighty! God in three Persons, blessed Trinity! Reginald Heber

The author of this article, Julie, is now worshiping her Lord in heaven.

A heart in tune with God can’t help but sing His praise.
