

27. We will delve into the Greek of this verse later, but what we want to note at this time is the word “blessed.” It is the predicate adjective of **μακάριος** (*makários*). Here’s what the word means:

Μακάριος. Pertains to being fortunate or happy because of circumstances. Pertains to being especially favored, blessed fortunate, happy, privileged. Privileged recipient of divine favor. “Be blessed in what he does,” James 1:25.⁵

28. True happiness becomes a tremendous defense against the disillusionment that often occurs in life. Scripture identifies three areas where happiness trumps these challenges:

- (1) Overcoming disillusionments in life is noted in:

Philippians 4:11 Not that I am speaking with regard to poverty [every adverse experience increased Paul’s learning curve toward spiritual maturity], for I have learned [from consistent instruction under discipline] in whatever circumstance I am [the objectivity of positive volition & grace orientation] to keep on being content [**αὐτάρκης** (*autárkēs*): self-sufficient].

v. 12 In fact I have come to know from experience how to be disciplined in reversionism also I have come to know what it is to live in prosperity of the sophisticated spiritual life. In every place and in all circumstances I have been initiated in both how to be well-fed [**spiritual status quo**] and to hunger [**insatiable for more advanced instruction**], both of having abundance or suffering need. (EXT)

- (2) Overcoming disillusionments in the details of life:

Hebrews 13:5 Let your way of life be free from the love of money [**example of overemphasis on the details of life**]. Constantly be content with what you possess. For He Himself has said, “I will not ever abandon you, neither will I ever desert you.” (EXT)

- (3) Disillusionment with other believers indicates failure to orient to the justice of God. All believers have a sin nature and many make decisions based on an incomplete inventory of doctrine. Jesus is the prototype in dealing with human sin.

⁵ Ibid., “μακάριος,” 610, 611.

Hebrews 12:2 Be concentrating on Jesus, the price-ruler and perfecter of our doctrine, Who instead of the present unalloyed happiness in His soul, He endured the three-hour judgment on the cross, having disregarded the disgrace, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.⁶ (EXT)

29. Inner happiness—**ἑσωτερικὴ ἁρμονία** (*esōterikē harmonía*)— is a mental attitude that helps the believer to maintain a copacetic spiritual life. We cannot build our happiness on people. Unalloyed happiness must be built on the Word of God present in our souls.
30. Principle: Get your eyes off people and get them on doctrine.

James 1:2 My Jewish brethren, after weighing all the facts, consider it nothing but unalloyed happiness whenever you encounter various categories of pressure, (EXT)

James 1:3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. (NASB)

1. Verse 3 is a continuation of verse 2. Together they communicate to the Jewish Diaspora the mechanics of how Messianic Jews often had to endure cultural pressures in Gentile nations.
2. The types of pressures were not necessarily persecutions but rather those considered typical of life in general especially outside the milieu of Palestine.
3. The Messianic Jews were believers in Jesus as Messiah and therefore were tasked with resolving “various categories of pressure” without the luxury of the written canon which the Tanakh provided under the ritual plan of God.
4. James is instructing them in the mechanics of how to deal with external and internal pressures while in the process of growing in grace.
5. The thought developed in verse 2 continues in verse 3 with the present active participle of the verb **γινώσκω** (*ginōskō*): knowledge acquired through a process.
6. When introduced to a new experience, whether mental or physical, it is accompanied by a body of knowledge that must be systematically acquired.

⁶ An allusion to Psalm 110:1 cf. Acts 2:34.

7. Such knowledge is first acquired academically followed by mental and/or physical application. No one is an expert in anything the first day out.
8. The participle indicates linear action that takes place in the function of spiritual growth. If James grasped what Paul knew when he wrote 1 Corinthians 2:6–14, then he would have developed the principles of the grace apparatus for perception.
9. Spiritual growth is accelerated when the believer after learning some doctrine encounters a situation requiring him to apply it under pressure.
10. In any profession, the discipline to perform must begin with vocabulary and principles. Later these terms and principles are correlated with policy and procedure.
11. What is learned mentally is facilitated by application. In starting any endeavor, academic instruction precedes function; function facilitates application; continued application broadens understanding.
12. James begins his book by focusing his readers on the importance of learning the Word of God and then placing their faith in its power to resolve categories of pressure through its application.
13. So, if a Jew is to effectively deal with pressures in life what is the first order of business? Knowing! How does a believer acquire the kind of knowledge that produces unalloyed happiness when under pressure? By being put to the test.
14. James is going to present numerous mandates for application but behind these imperative moods are principles from the Word of God that require stability under pressure.
15. I have concluded that most people think “categories of pressure” are limited to serious illnesses, personal crisis, or current events. But the overwhelming sources of pressure are the cluster provided by thought, system, people, and disaster testing.
16. James is counseling the Jews that they would be able to deal with these if they acquired a doctrinal inventory of ideas to cope with them effectively and efficiently.

(End JAS1-04. See JAS1-05 for continuation of study at p. 41.)