



## August 7, 2022

# Raquette Lake Chapel Sunday Blast

### “Consider it Pure Joy”

*Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. (James 1:2-3, NIV)*

### Challenges from All Sides?

I'm not sure any of us “Consider it pure joy ... whenever we face trials of many kinds!” We are all facing challenges. How do we understand those challenges, trials, testings, temptations?



### Trials and Testing

Some Biblical scholars say Christians should interpret these verses from James in the sense of the Greek word for “testing”, testing to see the real essence of something, the part that is real, like gold put through extreme heat to remove impurities. Or tests on a painting to see if it's an original or if it's a forgery.

### What does God want for us with all this testing?

I don't know about you, but I react negatively when I hear someone is going to test me! “I'm here to see if you have memorized all the facts you should have. And I'm going to grade you. Give you a good or bad mark. Pass or fail!” To the contrary, James tells us that God wants to get down to the precious sense of our being! Apply the heat, burn off what isn't necessary and what's holding us back. God is not there to grade us: else why did Jesus come to us, to patiently teach us, to guide us, to take on our shortcoming, failings, and sin. What God wants to do is not just to make us happy. He wants to make us holy. He wants us to become pure. He wants us to be genuine. He wants us to be mature, complete, not lacking in anything.

### And if we Struggle...?

*If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. (James 1:5, NIV)*

But we know there will still be those times when we don't feel the “pure joy whenever we face trials and tests of many kinds.” Have you ever thought about the goal of your life?” Is our goal to be happy? To more realistic – our goal is to live wisely, demonstrate our faith, and a James puts it “be doers, not just hearers.” May it be so. Amen.

This Week's Reading from James: Chapter 1:2-12

Let us keep in our prayers: continued for those suffering from extreme weather, especially those in the mid- and south-west suffering from record-breaking heat, and those impacted by recent floods in the south, especially Kentucky; all who are suffering from disease and hunger. Lord, hear our prayer!