

NEW COVENANT CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES

SERMON NOTES

July 5, 2026

Pastor Kenneth Bryant

Stay on the Operating Table **James 1:1-4**

Seasons of testing and trials come in all different shapes and sizes. We all have them, and they come for our development and not our destruction. God is not testing us for amusement, but it is the process by which He forms Christ in us. We can be willing participants, or we can be involuntary participants which extends our seasons of testing when we don't cooperate with the process. But God will not allow us to miss what He is trying to build; He will retest before He lets us suffer the consequences of becoming less than what He intended.

James' perspective on trials, tests, and tribulations is that we should count it all joy not because the trial feels good, but because of what the trial is doing. God is actively at work in that process. Our trials are not random, our tests are not punishment, and our tribulations are not abandonment. Like in school, God is testing us because graduation is required to move us to the next level.

"The process is not designed to terminate us; it is designed to graduate us." - Pastor Kenneth Bryant

James is saying that we should count it all joy when we "fall" into various trials because we can still get up. A trial can be a test that proves character and holiness, a temptation is an internal enticement towards sin arising from desires within, and a tribulation is the pressing weight of circumstances, the condition of things, or a mental state in which we are strained and often the source that is unidentifiable (the heaviness of life in a broken world). No matter the situation, God can direct our development so we should count it all joy. While we don't know who's giving the test, we know who runs the school. We should not get caught up in where our trials come but celebrate the fact that we're in a process and God is in control.

James says that if we count it all joy, it will produce endurance with hope knowing that the Lord is going to help us. God has a history of providing for us, healing us, and delivering us. He didn't just start being good; He has been good to us.

If we participate in the process, it produces:

Patience With Ourselves

Trials have a way of exposing the hidden things in our hearts that God sees but we can't see. He allows these things to happen so we can ask Him to search us and take them out. When patience is produced, we realize that we have to be patient with ourselves and recognize where we still fall short trusting that one day through this process it will make all the difference.

Patience With Others

Often, we are not patient with others because we are not patient with ourselves. When we recognize that we are still a work in progress, it helps us understand and be patient with others. God is often doing a similar work in others that He is doing with us. We give up on people too soon because they're in a certain condition, but the Bible teaches that once we have been through our own process, it teaches us patience with others.

Patience With God

We must trust God to finish what He started and not jump off the operating table too soon, getting anxious because the process is taking longer than expected. Sometimes we must get back on the operating table because God is not finished. He knows what's ahead, and the operation is not just to get us past this test, but to prepare us for what's coming next. We must sit still after the operation and recover. If we have patience, we'll let the process work. But if we jump off the operating table, we short-circuit the entire operation and must start the operation over.

"Don't jump off the table just because you survived the trial or tribulation." - Pastor Kenneth Bryant

James says once we let patience have its perfect work, we will be suitable for the call God has on our lives. The process is not designed to kill us; it is there to put patience in us and allow it to work. As we lay on the operating table/altar, God is working this process, so we can have hope to come out of this trial. Patience is not the final product, it's the key to getting to the final product, which is maturity in God.

STAY ON THE OPERATING TABLE

James 1:2-4

Kenneth Bryant II · Main Campus · July 6, 2025

"This process is not designed to terminate you. It is designed to graduate you."

THE ALTAR & THE OPERATING TABLE

THE ALTAR



The offering is laid on the altar in surrender — brought to stillness before the process begins.

There is no fight from the sacrifice — it is bound and brought to stillness before the work begins.

Everything on the altar is fully given — nothing withheld from the process.

The ceremony is not complete until the fire finishes what it was sent to do.

THE OPERATING TABLE



You lay down on the operating table — surrendered, face up, still. The position is the same.

You are placed under anesthesia — the surgeon needs you still and unable to interfere with the work.

Everything on the table is surrendered to the surgeon — you cannot manage or control the outcome.

The process is not complete until the surgeon finishes the operation.



IF ABRAHAM IS GOD THE FATHER AND ISAAC IS JESUS — THEN WHO IS THE RAM?

*The ram was the substitute. The ram was slain.
The New Testament never identifies Isaac as a type of Christ.*

**Isaac is not a picture of Christ.
Isaac is a picture of YOU.**



RESTRICTED

ISAAC ON THE ALTAR

Genesis 22 — The Believer's Surrender

ISAAC WAS A YOUNG ADULT — NOT A CHILD. (Genesis 22:6)

Abraham could not have forced him. His surrender was chosen.

HE CARRIED THE WOOD UP THE MOUNTAIN. (Genesis 22:6)

Not dragged — walking willingly alongside his father.

HE ASKED THE HARD QUESTION. (Genesis 22:7-8)

Heard an incomplete answer. Kept walking anyway.

HE ALLOWED HIMSELF TO BE BOUND. (Genesis 22:9)

Every step required his cooperation. Every step was trust.

HE GOT BACK UP ALIVE. (Genesis 22:12-13)



ROMANS 12:1

*"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a **living sacrifice**, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service."*

NOT DEAD. LIVING.

Isaac is the only thing in all of Scripture to lay on an altar and get back up alive.

Which makes Isaac not a picture of Christ — but a picture of the believer.

**Isaac is you!
On the altar. Surrendered. And still breathing.**