

**THE POINT:** God uses trials to mature your faith.

**OVERVIEW:** Life can be hard. No one goes looking for difficulties and trials; they have a way of finding us! While no one enjoys going through the hard days, we can experience joy despite the difficulties. The joy does not come from the trial itself but from the realization that God is at work. Trials can play an important role in deepening our faith and our walk with Christ.

**DIRECTIONS:** As you begin your event, consider using the following engage options before starting the message.

## Atmosphere

Decorate the room like a gym or weight room. Say, **“We’re often weak in our faith, but God uses the trials in our lives to make us stronger in our faith.”**

## TEACH (Make your notes below)

➤ **THE POINT:** God uses trials to mature your faith.

### ➤ 1. ALL THINGS FOR GOOD

Romans 8:28a

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### ➤ 2. THOSE WHO LOVE GOD

Romans 8:28b

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### ➤ 3. CALLED TO HIS PURPOSES

Romans 8:28c

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## Media

Search the internet for “How to Trust God in Tough Times - Tony Evans.” Play the video as you begin the session. Say, **“When we work together with other believers and persist in our faith through trials, God strengthens and matures our faith.”**

## PREPARE (Sermon outline)

All that we experience in this life—the blessings and the struggles—are ultimately used by God to accomplish His good purposes, both in the big picture as well as in the individual lives of His people.

- **A.** In our lives, we will experience both good times and difficult times.
- B.** We are called to live faithfully in whatever circumstances we face.
- C.** God uses even the hard times for good.

- **A.** We are called to love God with all we are.
- B.** This promise applies to those who are devoted to God.
- C.** For those who don’t follow Jesus, not all things work for their good.

- **A.** God has given a call for all people to follow Him and holds us responsible for our response.
- B.** The “called” here refers to those who choose to follow Him.
- C.** God uses those who follow Him to accomplish His purposes.

# JAMES

Faith on Display in Hard Times // Romans 8:28

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**DIRECTIONS:** Use the following outline as a guide for a message based on the passages from this session of Bible Studies for Life: Students. Additionally, use the suggested illustrations and activities to customize your midweek event.

## INTRO

- ▶ What kinds of trials do people encounter?
- ▶ What is the most difficult trial you have faced?
- ▶ How did you respond?

## ROMANS 8:28a

- ▶ How have you experienced both good times and difficult times in your life?
- ▶ What can we do to live faithfully during any circumstance?
- ▶ How can God use difficult times for good?

## ROMANS 8:28b

- ▶ How would you explain what it means to love God with all that you are?
- ▶ Why does God's promise here only apply to those who are devoted to Him?
- ▶ What can we do to help others understand the importance of this promise?

## ROMANS 8:28c

- ▶ How are we held responsible for our response to God?
- ▶ Why would someone choose to follow Jesus?
- ▶ What are some examples of God using His followers to accomplish His purposes?

## LIVE IT OUT

- ▶ **Discuss:** Ask students to briefly discuss ideas that may have challenged them during the session.
- ▶ **Ask:** How can you live out your devotion to Jesus in every aspect of your life?
- ▶ **Pray:** Ask God to give students the faith to endure whatever life throws at them and that they would live devoted to Jesus in every circumstance.