

When Life Gets Hard - James 1:1-18 Cory Daniels

Sermon Questions

INSTRUCTIONS: Leaders, check out some fun Connection Activity ideas for your group time, which are posted on our Chapel website Small Groups page under “virtual group resources.” We encourage you to come up with your own “introduction” question to begin your group discussion, and to end your group time in prayer.

Read James 1:1-18. Ask God to fill you with His Spirit as you read through the passage. Use your journal to record what stands out to you, and how you relate this passage to your life today.

James 1:1-18

James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,

To the twelve tribes scattered among the nations:

Greetings.

² Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, ³ because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. ⁴ Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. ⁵ 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. ⁶ But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. ⁷ That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. ⁸ Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do.

⁹ Believers in humble circumstances ought to take pride in their high position. ¹⁰ But the rich should take pride in their humiliation—since they will pass away like a wild flower. ¹¹ For the sun rises with scorching heat and withers the plant; its blossom falls and its beauty is destroyed. In the same way, the rich will fade away even while they go about their business.

¹² Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him.

¹³ When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; ¹⁴ but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. ¹⁵ Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

¹⁶ Don’t be deceived, my dear brothers and sisters. ¹⁷ Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. ¹⁸ He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of first-fruits of all he created.

1. What does verse 3 say trials are? Think about evidence of your perseverance and faith in either this pandemic or in a current or past trial. What crisis or trial do you need to release to God and ask Him to help you trust Him in?
2. During what past crisis have you asked God for the spiritual blessings listed in verses 4&5 and what specific spiritual fruit increased as a result of looking to God for His direction?
3. Have you harbored accusations against God because of a trial? In light of God’s pure,

good, perfect gifts, how do you personally pause to refocus on the situation in light of God's unchanging character? Joy is a choice.

4. In which trial, if any, did you begin to understand we must hold loosely to our present circumstances? How has your focus on Christ and a kingdom of God perspective impacted your thoughts and behaviors in everyday normal life and in successive trials?
5. If the kingdom of God is our home, we are living as aliens in this fallen world, which is impacted by sin. What would you give up here and now in order for someone else to learn about Christ? If our eternal home is with Christ, what are you holding onto which is keeping you from joy in living each moment with Christ beside you?