

James 1:1-4

Life Group Study Guide

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Life Group Life:

- Make sure everyone in your group knows everyone else. If you have new members take a few minutes getting to know them and learning how they came to be connected to your group.
- This would be a good time for your group to discuss your group agreement form. Healthy groups share group responsibilities and ownership. Discuss expectations, atmosphere, childcare, meeting times, discussion leaders etc. putting everything in writing.
- In the past week what has been a high or a low or both in your life?
*(Encourage each person in the group to share something from their week that has been a high and one thing that has been a low. There is not right or wrong answer to this question. **This is an exercise that offers the opportunity to celebrate or mourn with each other. For example, if a group member shares a “low” that is really significant stop what your group is doing and pray over/with that person right then and there.)***

Memory Verse:

- Share this verse together encouraging each other to commit it to memory:
“Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance.”
James 1:2-3 (NIV)

Grow:

- Read 1:2.
- James chapter 1 begins with a complete contradiction in verse 2- consider it pure joy (NIV) when we face trials?! What would pure joy in the midst of a trial or trouble look like? How would we know that we had ‘pure joy’ and not something that was less than pure joy?
- Read 1:3.
- In verse 3 James connects trials (NIV)/ trouble (NLT) with testing your faith. Why might James connect trials with testing your faith? Do trials test your faith? Why or why not?
- Verse 3 goes on to say that testing your faith develops perseverance (NIV)/endurance (NLT). How would you know if someone had developed the kind of perseverance or endurance James is describing here?
- Read 1:12
- Why is it important to persevere when we are facing difficulties?
- Have you ever had a trial so severe in your life that you were tempted to give up on God? How were you able to persevere/endure?

- Read 1:4.
- The NIV of verse 4 tells us that “perseverance must finish it’s work...” What does this verse tell us is produced in our lives when we allow perseverance to finish its work?

Serve:

- Read 2 Corinthians 1:3-7
- According to these verses how can the difficulties of life prepare you and provide opportunities to serve others?
- 2 Corinthians 1:3-7 clearly tells us how our own suffering can be used to help others in times of trouble. What are some specific ways God has comforted you in suffering that you might use to comfort others in their times of need?

Share:

- Problems often provide us with opportunities to purify our faith, fortify our patience, and sanctify our character. As we see God’s work in our lives, we naturally desire to share with others what God has done for us. In what ways can a life that has “profited from problems” open doors to sharing Christ with those around us?
- All of us have opportunities to share Christ with the people around us, especially when we have the opportunity to connect with someone in a similar situation and share how God has worked in our lives. Have you ever had the opportunity to share Christ with someone around you? If so, with whom? What happened? What event or circumstance gave you the opportunity to share Christ?
- Now let’s think about the people that are around each of us. Who has God placed around you who need to know about Jesus Christ? What events or circumstances currently exist that would help you connect with them so that you can share Jesus love with them? (*Write these names down and encourage the members of your group to lift them up in prayer.*)

Worship:

- End your group time by coming before the throne of God and acknowledging your trust in God. Ask each person to think of one thing in their life that causes them or is currently causing them significant trouble.
- Now ask each person to envision God giving them His comfort. What does God giving His comfort to each person look like? Does anyone struggle really believing God can bring us comfort with whatever struggle we are dealing with?
- Pray asking God to help us to believe he really can bring us comfort.
- Now ask the group to share any prayer requests they might have closing your group time with prayer for these and anything else your group time has surfaced.