

Session 3

James 1:5-8

Prayer

As a group, spend time praying through the verse below. Consider each word and meditate on the promises and commands of the scriptures. Make note of any insights, questions, moments of clarity, convictions, gratitude, or promises as needed in your reflection.

“⁸ This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.”

-Joshua 1:8

Suggested Prayer Prompts
Prayers of gratitude for the gift of scripture.
Prayers for understanding what God is communicating through this study.
Prayers for spiritual growth and maturity as you study.
Prayers for conviction as you strive to be more like Christ.
Prayers that the Lord will bring your group together in unity and accountability as you study His word.

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Launch

One thing to keep in mind as we study scripture, is that we are reading the words of God himself. James may have put pen to paper, but he is writing under the direct influence of the Holy Spirit. This means that each word is important and written on purpose. However, our tendency is likely to skip over words that seem insignificant in our minds.

What are some possible reasons we may do this?

You can see that there are plenty of reasons we may be tempted to skip to what seems more interesting or important to us. This can be dangerous because we are certainly not at the center of the story and have no business deciding what may or may not be needed.

What are some negative results that may come from picking and choosing what ideas are most important?

My challenge as we work through verses 5-8 is to pay attention to the words that our brain may naturally want to skip over. We will refer to them as **hinge** words, which likely brings to mind an image of a door.

In that case, what do hinges control?

Imagine coming to a door and trying to push when you should pull. You have to back up and change directions. As we study the following verses, we're going to see hinge words change the direction of our understanding as well.



Get a pencil ready as we'll be marking up the verses to help clarify our understanding. Use the blank copy of James 1:5-8 on page 4.

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James 1:5-8 for Annotation

⁵ If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. ⁶ But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. ⁷ For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; ⁸ he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

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Explore

Annotation Instructions

VERSE 5

This section of scripture actually starts with a hinge word. Circle the word.

IF

IF indicates a condition, which leads to action. For example,

IF you are hungry...eat.

IF you are tired...sleep.

IF you want to make the team...practice.

Our job in study is to find the condition or situation relevant to the rest of the verse. Draw a rectangle around this word.

LACKS

A quick search gives the following definition: Lack is the state of being without or not having enough of something.

So we have to ask ourselves, lack what?

Draw a triangle above the "what" a person may lack.

WISDOM

Now get ready for some mental gymnastics because we need to understand what wisdom refers to. Wisdom in what? While James doesn't state it directly in this verse, context will help us out. Refer back to James 1:2 and write the context of wisdom in the blank below.

James has carried over the umbrella of **TRIALS** to this next section but what is he communicating in doing so? Why might we need wisdom in trials?

God has first commanded us to find joy in our trials. He also explains the "why" which is to become perfect and complete in Christ.

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But what do we do if we can't see how we are being perfected through trials?

We've now established the condition, next we need to search for instructions. We need to answer the question, "if a believer lacks wisdom in trials, what should they do?"

Draw a smiley face above the *one* word that gives directions.

ASK

Next, we think to ourselves, "ask who?"

Draw an arrow connecting the instructions to **ASK** and **WHO** we should ask.

GOD

Ok. Now we get to the truly beautiful part. Read the rest of verse 5 and answer the following question.

What do we know about the way God gives?

(Reproach: the expression of disapproval or disappointment. Without shame.)

GENEROUSLY AND WITHOUT REPROACH

VERSE 6

Read verse 6 and circle the next conditional word.

BUT

In the boxes below, write the condition that expresses God's faithfulness to answer prayers for wisdom in seeing purpose in trials.

God will give abundant wisdom without shame to those who ask in....

without

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Next, we see the “why.” Write a question mark above the clue word that tells us James is going to explain the reason for asking in faith. This is another “because” moment.

FOR

James uses an illustration to clarify the idea of asking in faith, not doubt.

Read the rest of verse 6 aloud and take a look at the graphic below.

“for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind.”



Keep that image in your mind as we finish this section.

VERSES 7-8

Write another question mark above the clue word that tells us James is going to explain why we are to ask in faith, not doubt.

FOR

Read verse 7, and in your own words, explain what the result of asking for wisdom in doubt, not faith, would be.

James goes on to describe the doubter as double-minded and unstable, bringing us back to the image of the wave.

While doubt will lead to confusion and instability, faith brings peace and calm in the storm of trials.

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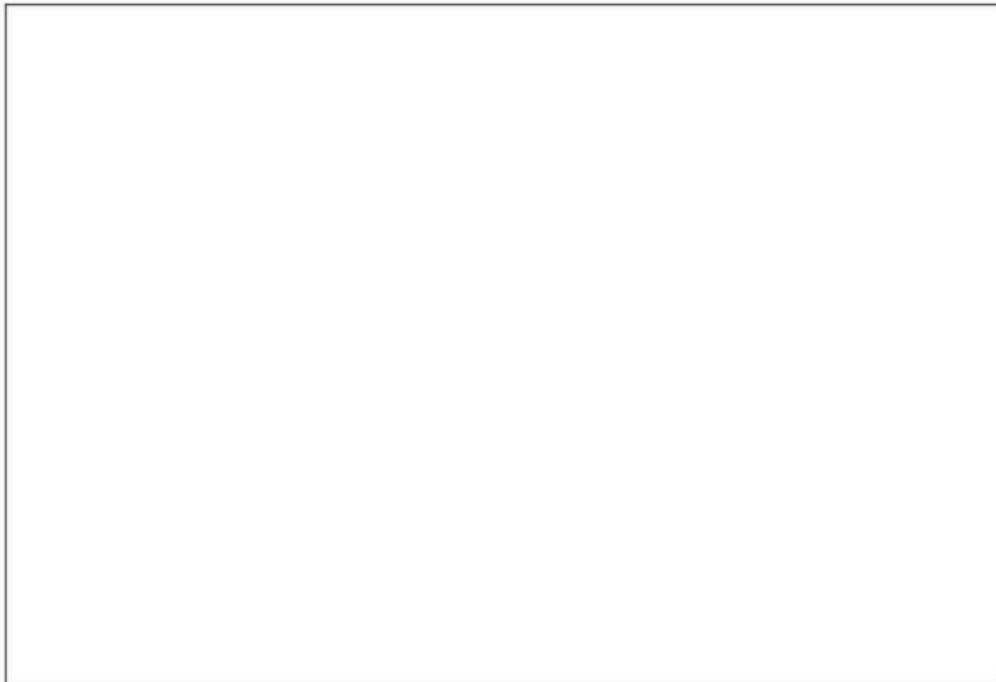
Apply

In the final portion of Jesus' famous "Sermon on the Mount", we see a bold contrast. While a double-minded man will be driven and tossed by the wind, followers of Jesus who live a life that honors Him will be like a house built firmly on the rock.

Read Matthew 7:24-27 below.

²⁴ "Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵ And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. ²⁶ And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. ²⁷ And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it."

Next draw, or discuss with your group, an image that shows the difference between the trials of life tossing us with the wind, and a house built on the rock of Jesus in faith, believing that regardless of the storm, God is growing us into a closer reflection of Himself.



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Memory Work

James 1:1-4

For this week's memory work, you will use a memory grid to practice each verse. Each block below represents one verse. The first letter of each word is included.

Recite each verse 3 times each day, using only the first letters as clues.

At the end of the week, recite each verse to a partner without using any clues. If you can do that, congratulations! You memorized four verses! If not, keep practicing! Give your partner the copy of the text from Session 1. Ask them to mark any word you're struggling with so you know what to practice! You may also find a Bible memory app or an audio Bible helpful.

If you struggle, don't get discouraged. Any time spent in scripture is time well spent!

James 1:1	J,	a	s	o	G	a	o	t	L	J	C,
	T	t	t	t	i	t	D	G.			
James 1:2	C	i	a	j,	m	b,	w	y	m	t	o
	v	k,									

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James 1:3	f	y	k	t	t	t	o	y	f	p	s.
James 1:4	A	l	s	h	i	f	e,	t	y	m	b
	p	a	c,	l	i	n.					

Use the chart below to track your study habits by checking off each day you study!

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7

Check in with other group members who are attempting the challenge and encourage each other to practice every day!

*"¹¹ I have stored up your word in my heart,
that I might not sin against you." -Psalm 119:11*



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