

# JAMES

Live your truth

**OPENING UP**

Who is the wisest person you know? Or, who comes to mind when you think of the word wisdom?

**TEXT**

**Testing of Your Faith** | James 1:1-4; 12- 18

<sup>1</sup>James, a servant<sup>[a]</sup> of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes in the Dispersion: Greetings.

<sup>2</sup>Count it all joy, my brothers,<sup>[b]</sup> when you meet trials of various kinds, <sup>3</sup>for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. <sup>4</sup>And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

<sup>12</sup>Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him. <sup>13</sup>Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. <sup>14</sup>But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. <sup>15</sup>Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

<sup>16</sup>Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers. <sup>17</sup>Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.<sup>[c]</sup> <sup>18</sup>Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures

**MESSAGE OUTLINE**

Big Idea: Mature faith survives seasons of suffering.

1. Surviving suffering requires a right understanding of God's goal (vv. 2-4 & 12)
2. Surviving suffering requires a right understanding of our sinfulness (vv. 13-15)
3. Surviving suffering requires a right understanding of God's character (vv. 16-18)

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



1. This week we launched a new series on the book of James. James is considered wisdom literature and has been called the Proverbs of the New Testament. What is wisdom? How does wisdom differ from knowledge? What does it look like to be knowledgeable, but lack wisdom or vice versa?
2. The first piece of wisdom we learn from James is how mature faith helps us survive seasons of suffering. In verses 2-4 we learn that there's a greater good being produced through the trials that God has allowed us to encounter – Steadfast Faith. How have past trials strengthened your faith? How would you encourage someone who is currently enduring trials with this truth?
3. When we experience trials, we can choose to trust God and strengthen our faith or blame God for our troubles. In James 1:13-15, James reminds us of God's goodness and the struggle we have against our own sinful nature. Are you ever tempted to blame God for evil? How can you resist sin during hard times and support one another as a community?
4. James reminds us in verses 16-18 who God is: Giver of good gifts, Father of lights, Creator, Savior. How does remembering God's character help you through trials? What aspects of God's character give you confidence as you face suffering?
5. The Big Idea from this week's sermon was: *Mature faith survives seasons of suffering*. What trials are you currently facing in your own life? How can you survive this season with mature faith?

## LIFE CHALLENGE



We all go through seasons of trial and suffering. God allows us to endure hard times, so that our faith may increase. What would it look like for you to count your trials as joy this week, whether they're little inconveniences, or life-altering tribulations?

Is there someone in your life who is walking through a difficult season? Think about how you can come alongside them and encourage them in the same way that James encouraged his fellow believers as they endured trials.

## CLOSING PRAYER



In your prayer this week, thank God for your trials, acknowledge that His plan for you is better than your plan for yourself, confess your sinfulness, and spend time naming the attributes of God that give you confidence to trust in Him.