



LIFELINE Discussion Guide

Week of April 8, 2024

1. Get your Bibles ready and read verse-by-verse through James 1:1-18. Each person should read one verse until the whole passage is read. How would you summarize this section in your own words? What is the “big picture” James is talking about?
2. James the writer was the brother of Jesus, but he wasn’t one of the original disciples or apostles. When did everything change for James? (read John 7:5 and 1 Corinthians 15:3-7 for the answer)
3. Trials are never fun and we don’t request them because they challenge us with adversity. But what is the correct Christian response to trials (verse 2)? What positive results are brought about in our lives through trials of various kinds? (verse 3-4 and Romans 5:3-4).
4. If you are struggling to understand a tough situation or know how to proceed through it— what is the best strategy according to verse 5-7? Why does James insist that we pray “believing”, rather than “doubting”? How does that make a difference?
5. *“Trials are the great equalizer.”* How does this statement apply to the different kinds of Christians inside your church? In what way do trials put the multi-millionaires and the minimum wage workers on the same ground? Explain your answer.
6. What is the difference between “trials” and “temptations”? Which one is outward and which one is inward? Give a few examples of each from everyday life. If you are facing a tough situation and are feeling tempted to sin, is that God’s fault? (see verses 13-15).
7. Even with the hard things that come into our lives, the Bible insists that God always remains “good”— which means every gift is also “good”. Within your group, brainstorm a list of ten (10) things from outer space that are always fluctuating, moving, and changing. What encouraging truth does James share about God in verses 17-18? Why is this good news for you in the here and now?
8. Are you facing any serious trials, hardships, or life challenges at the moment? Galatians 6:2 tells us that we can “share” our burdens with fellow believers and find strength, support, and solidarity to keep going. Briefly share the adversity that you are facing, and have your group pray about these requests.

If you embrace them, trials can produce tested character, tenacious prayers, and tough faith.