

HOW TO STAY ANCHORED IN A STORM
James – A Faith That Works – Part 3
LIFE GROUP DISCUSSION

GETTING STARTED: Open with prayer. Take a minute to catch up on everyone's week.

1. *"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash." Matt. 7:24-27 (NIV)*

Jesus is emphasizing the importance of building the house of your life upon a solid foundation of His Word and suggests that there are three forces which will bring the house down: rain pounding the roof, winds blowing against the windows and walls, and flood waters rising on the ground.

- Can you describe any of those forces currently attacking your life as a Christian?
- How has this past month influenced your ability to be a strong Christian living in the midst of a storm?

2. *"Every good and every perfect gift comes from above. These good gifts come down from the Father of lights, who does NOT CHANGE like their shifting shadows. God chose to give us LIFE through the Word of TRUTH so we might be the most important of all the things He made." James 1:17-18 (EXB)*

Romans 15:4 says, *"Everything written in the past was written to teach us. The Scriptures give us endurance and encouragement so that we can have hope."*

- According to these passages, how does God's Word anchor us?
- Why would you consider the Scriptures to be one of God's "good gifts" according to James 1:17-18 above?
- How is God's Word not just good moral teaching but also "life-giving" as Vs.18 says?

3. *"So get rid of all the filth and evil in your lives, and humbly accept the message God has planted in your hearts, for it is strong enough to save your souls." James 1:21 (NLT)*

- This verse asks us to "humbly accept" God's truth. Has God's Word ever challenged any of your preconceived views? If so, share a time when you had to humble yourself and accept God's truth.
- At times, the truth of God's Word can be blocked by sin in our lives. Has there been a time in your life where you had to repent of something before you could hear God's Word?

4. *"Do not merely listen to the Word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says! Anyone who listens to the Word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But if you keep looking intently*

into the perfect law that gives freedom, and you continue to do this, NOT forgetting what you have learned, but doing it - then you will be BLESSED in whatever you do." James 1:22-25 (NIV)

5 CONDITIONS FOR GOD'S BLESSING

1. **LISTEN TO THE WORD** "*Listen*"
2. **STUDY THE WORD** "*Keep looking intently*"
3. **MAKE IT A HABIT** "*Continue to do this*"
4. **MEMORIZE THE WORD** "*Not forgetting*"
5. **DO WHAT IT SAYS!** "*Do what it says*"

James is very clear about how we can receive God's blessing on our lives.

- Share your experience and process in fulfilling the 5 Conditions for God's Blessing listed above.
- Discuss which of the 5 actions you find easy to do and the one you may struggle with. Talk about the blessings you have experienced in your own life and witnessed in the lives of others.

5. Read James 1:26-27. These 2 verses are an application of doing what the Word says. What three things does James say ought to characterize authentic faith in Jesus? Take a minute to talk about each one.

Three Essential Questions

The following questions are intended to be open-ended and encourage members to consider how they felt and what they, or the group, can do as a result of hearing the message!

1. **What did you hear?** *What point in this message was most impactful for you?*
2. **What do you think?** *How did this message challenge, change, or affirm your thinking?*
3. **What will you do?** *How will you put into practice what you've learned today?*

ACTION STEPS:

His Word First Word, His Word Last Word

Pastor Mark challenged us to make reading the Bible a habit, to put an open Bible by your bedside to practice *His Word First Word, His Word Last Word*. Before you get out of bed, read one chapter from James, and before you go to sleep read another portion of scripture.

Memorize God's Word

Pastor Mark challenged us to *memorize a verse* each week. This week's memory verse: "*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.*" James 1:12 (NIV)

