



Community Bible Experience: New Testament
A Straight Talker: James (James 1:21-25)
By Pastor David Hillis, 26 February 2017

BIG IDEA: Greatness comes not only from being focused on the big stuff, but being faithful in the small stuff.

If we don't stay faithful and obedient in the small stuff, we can be laser-focused on the big stuff but never really get anywhere. James says you can have all the faith in the world, but if you don't reflect it in living a life that strives to please God in everything, then it's just a hollow, empty faith.

- 1. Watching Our Words** (James 1:19-26, 3:3-12, 4:11-17, 5:12)
James calls the tongue a fire, that part of the body that can burn and destroy people. In chapter 1, he reminds us, "be careful what you say in anger; be quick to listen and slow to speak."
- 2. Subduing Selfish Ambition** (James 3:13-4:10)
James reminds us that while we pursue our self-centered desires and ambitions to give us pleasure, they can damage us, our relationships with God and with others and that those ambitions hurt the work of God in our lives and must be subdued, taken out.

May we discover for ourselves that the measure of greatness isn't found in this life in wealth, popularity, or power of accomplishments alone, but rather in how our Creator see greatness, and may we be faithful in the small stuff!

NEXT STEP:

Is there an area of my life where I have minimized the impact of my words or selfish ambitions? What is God asking of me, to help ensure that I don't go there again so easily?

FOR MY PERSONAL TIME WITH GOD THIS WEEK:

1. Review some of the practical advice in the book of James, looking at it as if he had written it with you in mind. Which of his words are most convicting? Why?
2. Mother Teresa once said, "be faithful in small things, because it is in them that your strength lies." What do you think she meant by that? How might you see that in the life of Samson (Judges 13-16)? How could it become a source of strength in your life?
3. Read your sixth week's readings as part of the Community Bible Experience. As you read, find yourself in the story—how your life and experiences match what you are reading.
4. As you do your readings, consider these 5 questions (which will be the 5 questions everyone shares in their book clubs next week).
 1. What's something you noticed for the first time?
 2. What questions did you have?
 3. Was there anything that bothered you?
 4. What did you learn about loving God?
 5. What did you learn about loving others?