

North Valley Community Church
Bible Study: James
Series: Let's Do this!

Week 4 – Inductive Bible Study

Read James 1:12-15

Introduction

Trials in life are inevitable. Whether you're a casualty of downsizing and have recently lost your job, whether you're struggling with singleness and wanting desperately to have children, or you're feeling like you'll lose it if you have to referee another argument between the kids, we all struggle in life, and it prompts difficult questions. You wonder where God is, why things are always so hard, or if God is even there.

In the Christian life, we often can forget that the Lord Jesus himself had the same kinds of struggles and temptations that we do. James saw his own brother, Jesus, struggle perfectly through trials that were unbearable. In these verses of his book, James is trying to encourage the Jewish Christians (and us today) to endure trials. That means we can't escape them, walk past them, or ignore them. He wants us to endure them so we become pure and steadfast in our faith in Christ. He starts the section by telling us we will be blessed if we persevere under trial and concludes it with revealing how our sinful desires lead to death!

All the way back to the Garden in Genesis, we have tried to blame God, Satan or others for "making" us give in to our own desires. Instead we need to agree with James' that God is not the author of temptation or evil. If we truly believe that God is a good God that loves us and gives good gifts, it will be the foundation when we face trial and ask for wisdom to respond purely.\

Observation

The blessing of the crown of life is promised to those who love God and persevere under trial. On the other hand, if we continually give in to evil temptation, our sin gives birth to death.

- Is the blessing given to unbelievers and believers?
- What does it mean to stand the test?
- Who does it say has the evil desire?
- Is it a sin to be tempted or only when we give in to the temptation?
- What are the 3 stages of temptation?

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Interpretation

“Blessed” is not referring to money or fame in this passage, rather to the internal (relationship with God) and external (life forever with God) when we persevere in trial. The crown metaphor might have been related to the laurel wreath an athlete would earn with a victory in a race. Life can feel like a long marathon and we need to keep an eye on the end goal of being with Jesus or else we quickly fall into temptation based on our own selfish desires.

- Does God tempt us? Why or why not?
- Does God test our faith? Why or why not?
- Can God give us strength to resist temptation?

Application

Now that we are aware of our own responsibility to being “dragged away and enticed” by temptation, we can’t blame God or Satan for our sin. In future verses we will see how Satan plays a role in tempting, but we are still responsible for giving into the temptation instead of resisting it by God’s grace. We also shouldn’t judge others temptations because we all have different things that challenge us, opening us up to sin in various ways. Encourage one another, as James does, to resist and look toward the crown of life.

- What are your hardest temptations to resist currently?
- Do you pray for strength to resist when you are faced with temptation?
- Do you easily choose to ignore temptation as a sin issue because you WANT to give in?

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- Are you willing to trust a friend to hold you accountable and to do the same for them?
- What are some ways to safeguard against the stages of temptation?

For Further Study

Read and study Matthew 4 when Jesus was tempted (but resisted over and over) by Satan himself. Knowing the Word and God the Father were essential for Jesus. List practical ways you can grow in knowing the Word and the Father.

Read and study the example of Abraham when he was tested (not tempted) by God in Genesis 22. List things that you don't trust God with. List things that you do trust God with and He has provided a way out. Pray and submit the ways you don't trust to Him and watch Him work.

Read and study Genesis 3:6-22 about Eve and the Fall. Note how each person blame shifted out of selfishness and to not "get in trouble with God". List ways that you have done the same to others and God.