

Dangers to Receiving the Crown of Life

Pastor Jeff Bucknam | James 1:12-18

ICE BREAKER:

What's the longest you've ever stuck with something hard—like a job, a sport, a project, or even a TV series? Describe the experience.

UNDERSTANDING THE TEXT IN CONTEXT:

James 1:12-18 speaks about the danger of being deceived in the midst of temptation. For more from the immediate context about trials, reread James 1:2-4. What key ideas and encouragements from those earlier verses shape the context for what James will describe in v. 12-18?

CONNECTING TO JESUS AND HIS GOSPEL:

If the Gospel promises eternal life to those who endure, how are you letting current trials refine your faith rather than destroy it? How does remembering that our salvation is entirely God's idea (v.18) reshape your view of current pain or setbacks?

LIVING OUT THE TRUTH:

Scripture is clear that God tests us to strengthen our faith in Him, but He never tempts us to sin against Him. How does knowing God's character help us to remain steadfast, to persevere in the Faith? In your discussion, note specific descriptions James provides in v. 13 and v. 17-18.

In this text, James locates the start of our sin in our own sinful desires (v. 14). Is that idea easy to accept? Why or why not? When we rightly wrestle with this truth, how does James encourage us in v. 16-18 to be well-equipped to endure on the path of righteousness?

In prayer, thank God for His character and His gifts. Ask the Holy Spirit to strengthen your walk with Jesus, loving the 'word of truth' and living life faithfully as 'a kind of first fruits of his creatures' (v. 18)

PARENTING MOMENT AND FAMILY FOCUS:

God's desire for his children is to rely on Him to overcome our temptations to sin. Some of your temptations are from your bad desires that can be lured into sin (James 2:14). Read 1 Corinthians 10:13 as a family. Thank God that he always provides a way out from the sin that tempts us. Take some time to pray the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13) together as a family, highlighting in particular the last verse, "and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil."

FURTHER STUDY:

Read (or hear) R. C. Sproul's children's book: 'The King Without a Shadow.' Kids and adults will both be encouraged! For more on our inner temptations, read 'Your Sin Begins with a Felt Need' at DesiringGod.org. For more on our inner sin and how that intersects some of the cultural issues of the day, search for the many books, articles, and interviews from Rosaria Butterfield or Denny Burk. For a deep dive, read Matthew Roberts' book: 'Pride: Identity and the Worship of Self.'

True Religion

THE BOOK OF JAMES

This page gets us into the text for the next sermon. The more familiarity we have with God's Word, the better we can see God and all that He has for us.

In the days leading up to next week, set aside a few minutes to read the text and reflect on these questions. A prayer to start: 'Open my eyes that I may behold wonderful things out of your law' - Psalm 119:18

- 1. Moving from God's character and gifts (James 1:16-18) to this next section (James 1:19-26), how does James now address his audience? Has he used that description before? What does this say about James' relationship with his audience?**
- 2. Trace the theme of words / speaking throughout this text. What different aspects does James highlight in his descriptions? What other issues does James connect to words/speaking?**
- 3. What fails to produce the 'righteousness of God' (v. 20)? Why so, from the context of v. 19 and v. 21?**
- 4. How does James emphasize being 'doers of the word' (v. 22)? What imagery does he use? How is the 'law of liberty' included in the imagery?**
- 5. How does James connect the tongue and the heart in v. 28?**
- 6. What in this text confuses you?**
- 7. What in this text compels you?**
- 8. Spend some time in prayer to God. Ask God to make you a humble hearer of the Word and an active doer of the Word.**