

# James – Lesson 1

## You've Got Issues

### Verses to Remember

"Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance." (James 1:2-3 NIV)

### Workbook Activity

#### Trials & Temptations (Part 1)

Write down two or three trials that you are facing today.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

#### Finding Joy in the midst of Trials

How may God be using a trial to stretch and mature you?

Don't be deceived to doubt God, or let your faith in God be shaken.

How can you bring honor and glory to God in the way you handle trials.

### James 1:1-18

The Big Four:	Trials (v. 2)	Lack of Wisdom (v. 5)
	Humble Circumstances (v. 9)	Temptation (v. 13)

1. According to James, how should we respond to trials?

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2. Why is that an appropriate response?

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3. How should we respond to a lack of wisdom?

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4. Why should we respond in this way?

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5. In humble circumstances, how should we respond?

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6. Why take pride in humble circumstances?

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7. How should we react to temptation?

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8. Why shouldn't we blame God when we are tempted?

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## Workbook Activity

### **Trials & Temptations (Part 2)**

Write down two or three temptations you are struggling with.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

### **The Source of Temptation**

Temptation does not come from God, but rather your own evil desires.  
Do not dwell on the evil desire while ignoring the danger that it poses.  
You become your own worse enemy when you start to justify your sin.  
When you are disobedient and act on the evil desire it becomes sin.

### **Combating Temptation**

Once you determine that your temptation comes from your own evil desires it will be easier to overcome those temptations.

Pray and be ready – Matthew 26:41

Guard our heart – Proverbs 4:23, Phil 4:8-9

Hide God's word in your heart – Psalm 119:9-11, Romans 1:2, James 4:7

If all else fails, run! – 2 Tim 2:22

You will not run if you haven't done the first three points above.

Remember God is faithful and will provide a way out. – 1 Cor 10:13

God doesn't want us to fail.

### **Homework:**

- Memorize James 1:2-3 and Proverbs 4:23
- Look for the positive that may come from the trials you are experiencing today, how may these trials stretch and mature you.
- Combat temptation and realize that God will provide a way out, if we don't shut the door.

# James – Lesson 2

## My Favorite

### Verses to Remember

"My brothers, as believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ, don't show favoritism." James 2:1 NIV

### James 2:1-13

1. What does verse 1 say about favoritism? Why do you think it says that?

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2. According to this text, is showing favoritism a sin? (verse 9)

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3. Why do you think it is called a sin? Talk about that at your tables or small groups.

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This text is not saying that you can't have a close group of friends, everyone does. It's not even talking about cliques, that is a separate issue. Friendships are built with time, trust and commonality. What this text is talking about is how you treat "outsiders," people you don't know well and who don't know you.

4. What example does James give to drive this point home? (verse 2-7)

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5. Would you treat a well-dressed, approachable, attractive person who was a lot like you differently than you would a shabby-dressed, stand-offish, unattractive person?

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**Making it Real – Discussion Questions**

1. How do you think our group handles outsiders?

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2. What could our ministry do differently that would keep us from showing favoritism to people coming in for the first time?

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3. What could our ministry do differently that would keep us from showing favoritism to people who have been around for a while?

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4. In your own life, do you play favorites? Why do you think you do it?

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**Homework:**

- Memorize James 2:1
- Take an honest look at the way you treat others during the next week, do you show favoritism?
- Make a concentrated effort to stop showing favoritism.

# James – Lesson 3

## Watch Your Mouth

### Verses to Remember

"Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be." James 3:10 NIV

### Getting Started - Discussion Questions

1. What's the most embarrassing thing you've ever said?

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2. What's the most hurtful thing you've ever said?

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3. What's the nicest thing someone has said to you?

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### James 3:1-12

1. What are the three images that James uses to illustrate the tongue?

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2. What do those three things have in common?

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The tongue, James says, is the same way. It is relatively small, but it controls us.

3. Do you see that playing out in real life, that the tongue influences us so greatly?

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## **MAKING IT REAL**

There is no doubt that the tongue is a powerful thing. Wars have been started and ended with words. Friends are made and lost with words.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. Why do you think words carry so much power?

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2. Why do you think it is so easy to use our tongues for good or evil?

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3. How should a Christian control their tongue according to James?

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### **Colossians 3:17**

We often think that the things we do demonstrate our faith. But Colossians associates the two together, and says that both should glorify God. We all need to watch our mouths, because what comes out of them affects people and either honors or dishonors God.

### **Homework:**

- Memorize James 3:10
- You have the responsibility of controlling your tongue. Refrain from using it in ways which will dishonor God.
- Words have a lasting impact. Starting this week use your words to build others up & refrain from speaking harshly.

# James – Lesson 4

## The Time of Your Life

### Verses to Remember

"Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes." James 4:14 NIV

### Getting Started - Discussion Questions

1. What are some of the goals of your life?

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2. What do you want to be when you grow up?

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### James 4:13-17

1. What does James tell us about tomorrow?

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2. What does James teach us about life?

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3. How would you sum up what James is saying in these verses?

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**Luke 12:22-31**

1. What does this passage tell us about our life?

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2. What should we do/not do?

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**Matthew 25:41-46**

1. What does this passage tell us about our life?

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2. What should we do/not do?

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**Luke 12:42-48**

1. What does this passage tell us about our life?

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2. What should we do/not do?

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We really are here to do good! And keep in mind what James says, our lives are short. To do good in a short time is a high calling. It begs two questions that all of us need to ask ourselves and really think about:

1. How much good for others do I do?

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2. What do I spend my time doing?

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**Homework:**

- Memorize James 4:14
- This week, take note of how much time you spend on yourself verses how much time you spent on others.
- Start a community service project, visit the elderly in a nursing home or volunteer to help out at church.

# James – Lesson 5

## Must Be The Money

### Verses to Remember

"Now listen, you rich people, weep and wail because of the misery that is coming upon you." James 5:1 NIV

### James 5:1-11

#### Discussion Question

1. In this letter that we've been studying for five weeks now, who is James talking to?

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2. Who does he single out in this passage?

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3. What is his tone toward them?

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It's easy to read this passage and, along with James, point the finger at the rich. But what if he's talking to us? What if we are the rich?

4. Do you consider yourself rich? *Why or why not?*

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Here are some quick facts about teenagers in America:

- In 2006, teenagers spent an estimated \$159 billion
- The average teen spent an estimated \$104 per week
- The purchasing power of Americans is almost 2X's that of any other country

You may not think you are rich, but you are. Consider this:

- Half the world, 3 billion people, live on \$2 a day or less
- An estimated 30,000 children die every day because they are poor
- The richest 20% of people in the world (that includes us) consume 86% of the world's goods

You may not think you are rich, but you are. Let me say this plainly, James is talking to YOU.

The good news is, the Bible doesn't leave us hanging. It tells us what we should do with our riches.

### Matthew 6:24 - Put Money In Perspective

#### Discussion Questions

1. What do you think the fascination is with money?

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2. Why does it matter so much to us?

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3. What does this verse say about our allegiance to wealth?

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**Luke 3:11-14 - Don't Abuse Money**

**Discussion Questions**

1. What abuse of money is John the Baptist talking about?

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2. In what ways could someone like you abuse the money the same way?

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**Luke 9:1-3 - Don't Depend on Money**

**Discussion Questions**

1. Why do you think Jesus sent out his followers with no money?

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2. Why is it easy to grow accustomed to depending on money?

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**Acts 4:32-37 - Share**

**Discussion Questions**

1. Do you find it hard to share? How often do you do it?

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2. How can sharing possessions and money be a good thing for a group of people?

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**True Riches**

The second half of this Scripture talks directly to poor people. Look over James 5:7-11 again. Sum it up in your own words.

It's kind of funny to hear it in between a tongue-lashing like he gives the rich and an encouragement to poor people to persevere, but James says in v. 7 that "the Lord is coming."

**Discussion Questions**

1. Why would that have been important for both of these groups of people to hear?

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2. How serious do you take that remark? How often do you think, "Wow, the Lord is coming."

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If we really believed that He was, I believe we would live differently. I believe the rich would be more likely to share and the poor would become more likely to persevere under trials. I believe we'd have totally different priorities, because money would stop mattering so much.

**Homework:**

- Memorize James 5:1
- This week, take time to meditate on the Lord's return. Would you joyfully greet Him or would you be ashamed?