

Session **10**

Consider It **ALL JOY**

CENTRAL TRUTH | Though believers will face difficult times and temptations, God is faithful to grow our faith.

Have you ever had a moment on Christmas morning when your parents or guardians made you wait to open one particular present? Even that brief period of waiting was tough, wasn't it? But once you opened that gift, the joy of discovering it was exactly what you asked for was almost indescribable! Receiving a great gift is an amazing experience. And, in this week's passage, we learn that every good and perfect gift is from God and that believers are to humbly look to His unchanging goodness. Though we will all face difficult times and temptations, God is faithful to grow our faith. He is worthy of our trust.

REFLECT

What questions do I have about God?

What questions do I have about myself?

What questions do I have about the world and those around me?

JAMES 1:2-8

² Consider it a great joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you experience various trials, ³ because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance. ⁴ And let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking nothing. ⁵ Now if any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God — who gives to all generously and

ungrudgingly — and it will be given to him. ⁶ But let him ask in faith without doubting. For the doubter is like the surging sea, driven and tossed by the wind. ⁷ That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord, ⁸ being double-minded and unstable in all his ways.

JAMES 1:9-12

⁹ Let the brother of humble circumstances boast in his exaltation, ¹⁰ but let the rich boast in his humiliation because he will pass away like a flower of the field. ¹¹ For the sun rises and, together with the scorching wind, dries up the grass; its flower falls off, and its beautiful

appearance perishes. In the same way, the rich person will wither away while pursuing his activities. ¹² Blessed is the one who endures trials, because when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.

JAMES 1:13-18

¹³ No one undergoing a trial should say, “I am being tempted by God,” since God is not tempted by evil, and he himself doesn’t tempt anyone. ¹⁴ But each person is tempted when he is drawn away and enticed by his own evil desire. ¹⁵ Then after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and when sin is fully grown,

it gives birth to death. ¹⁶ Don’t be deceived, my dear brothers and sisters. ¹⁷ Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. ¹⁸ By his own choice, he gave us birth by the word of truth so that we would be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

Day01

JAMES 1:2-8



Refer to page 5 for a description of the 7 Arrows of Bible Reading.

📍 READ & RESPOND

Writing to believers facing severe struggles across the Roman empire, James (the half-brother of Jesus) teaches that trials should be met with joy. This is because every challenge acts as resistance training for our faith: The testing process strengthens our commitment and develops perseverance, or the ability to endure. God intentionally uses these difficult moments to accomplish His greater purposes, so James says we should embrace them because of the significant spiritual growth they promise. When facing a trial, we must seek divine wisdom. The believer who doubts exposes instability in his or her relationship with God. So, when trials come in your life, be on the lookout for the greater things God has planned!



What is the first reaction James tells us to have when we run into hard times or challenges? What is the result God is trying to create in us through those hard times?



James was writing to Christians facing real persecution and suffering. Why would telling them to find joy in their trials have been a challenging message to hear?



Write a short, single-sentence prayer asking God for the wisdom you need to handle a specific challenge you're facing this week.

📍 MEMORIZE

On a piece of paper, write down **James 1:12** five times. Doing this makes all the different parts of your brain turn on at the same time, which forces you to think about the information in a much deeper way.

📍 PRAY

Father, grant me Your perspective to see the good You are working through the trials I face.

Day02

JAMES 1:9-12

📍 READ & RESPOND

James continues his letter by talking about who is truly rich and who is truly poor in God's eyes. If you lack wealth but have faith, God values and honors you. If you are rich in money, but lack faith, you are truly poor. Wealth is temporary; it will fade away quickly, like a flower that wilts in the sun. Your riches don't make you important to God. The real blessing comes to the person who keeps trusting God even when life is hard. If you endure the test, God promises you the crown of life. This crown is worth more than all the money in the world because it is eternal! True value is found in your relationship with God, not your bank account.

← In the first-century church, many believers were poor. Why would it be encouraging for them to hear that their true wealth was found in their relationship with God?

↑ What does this passage teach us about what God values? Does He care more about how much money you have or where your hope is placed?

→ How do you see wealth? Do you place your pride and trust in your relationship with the Lord or in temporary things of this world? What needs to change?

📍 MEMORIZE

Using your phone, tablet, or computer, write out **James 1:12** in a notes app using emojis. Be creative! Send the emojis to a few friends or family members and see if they can decipher the verse.

📍 PRAY

Lord, my value is in You alone. When I'm tempted to place my trust in temporary things of this world, pull me back. Remind me that my faith is far more valuable to You than anything in this world.

Day**03****JAMES 1:13-18** **READ & RESPOND**

When we face temptations or go through tough times, it's easy to get confused about where that pressure is coming from. If we mess up, we might even feel frustrated and blame God for “sending” the temptation our way. But James makes it perfectly clear: God has absolutely nothing to do with temptation or sin. Temptation actually starts with our own selfish desires and sinful hearts. When we give in, that sin starts a path that leads away from life. The amazing news is that while sin produces death, God produces life! Just as God spoke creation into existence by His word, He gives us eternal life through His Word—Jesus Christ. He gifts us with His Son to fix our brokenness and bring us back into a relationship with Him.

← **Why would it be important for James's first-century readers to know that God is not the source of evil or temptation?**

↑ **How is God's unchanging nature a guarantee that His gifts and promises will never change or disappear?**

→ **How does verse 14 put the full responsibility for sin on you and not on someone else?**

 MEMORIZE

Let's map out this week's verse. Write out **James 1:12**. Underline the important nouns in the verse. Circle the important verbs. Put an appropriate symbol next to any word that might be important.

 PRAY

Father, thank You for the gift of Your Son. When I'm tempted to blame You or others for my sin, remind me that I am responsible for my own sin. Help me turn away from temptations.

Day 04

MATTHEW 5:11-12

📍 READ & RESPOND

Jesus directly addresses His followers, telling them: “You will be persecuted because of me.” While their task on earth would be difficult, He offers them powerful encouragement not to be surprised by the persecution they face, noting that even the Old Testament prophets He sent were mistreated. We should also be encouraged by Jesus’s words. As His followers, we can expect to face persecution, but we look forward to the great reward waiting for us in heaven. This life is only a brief moment compared to eternity, so while we may suffer for a little while, we have the sure hope of a future with Him.

🔄 What does Jesus tell His followers to do instead of getting sad or angry when they are persecuted? How do you react when you’re mistreated because of your faith?

↑ What does the promise of a great heavenly reward tell you about how God views or values the struggles His followers go through?

→ How does focusing on your reward in heaven change your attitude toward the mistreatment you face at school, work, practice, and so on?

📍 MEMORIZE

Go for a walk! Recite **James 1:12** aloud while walking. Assign one phrase to a set number of steps (for instance, walk five steps while saying the first phrase).

📍 PRAY

Lord, thank You for the hope of Your reward in heaven. Help me when I’m mistreated for my faith, and give me the courage to stand faithfully for You, speaking Your truth to others in love.

Day**05**

1 CORINTHIANS 10:13

📍 READ & RESPOND

One of the great lies Satan tells us is that what we're going through is unique—that our trial or temptation is the hardest anyone has ever faced. But that simply isn't true. Paul reminds us in today's passage that everyone is tempted by sin; it is a common human problem. But in His faithfulness to us, God never abandons us to sin. He always provides an escape route out of temptation. While taking that way out may seem too difficult in the moment, it often means we're just unwilling to choose it. When you recognize temptation, look immediately for the path God has provided to walk away from it. Trust His faithfulness to always keep His promise!

🔄 What two things does God promise to do when you are facing a temptation?

↑ What does the promise of a “way out” show about God's power and His mercy when we are struggling?

↔ How can you use God's promise in this verse to encourage someone who feels like they are too weak or too far gone to overcome a temptation?

📍 MEMORIZE

Once you know **James 1:12**, teach it to someone else—a younger sibling, a parent, or a friend. Explain what it means and why it's important.

📍 PRAY

God, You are faithful! Help me look to You when I face temptation, knowing that You'll provide a way out.