



## WEEK 1 - SUNDAY 22 JUNE

### Welcome to the study of the Book of James

It is suggested by scholars that this letter (Epistle) was written by James who is thought to be the brother of Jesus. According to John 7:3-5 James was not a believer. He only became a true follower after the Resurrection. According to the Galatians he headed up the Jerusalem Church. The Book of James outlines the faith walk through *genuine religion* (1:1-27), *genuine faith* (2:1-3:12) and *genuine wisdom* (3:13-5:20). We will even pick up in our readings the discourse on faith in action..... hence our theme ..... LIVING AS A CHRIST FOLLOWER. It is about “Walking the Talk.”

### Week 1. Trails and Temptations – 22 June.

**Week 2.** Listening and doing – 29 June.

**Week 3.** Faith and works – 6 July.

**Week 4.** Taming the Tongue – 13 July

**Week 5.** Two types of Wisdom – 20 July.

**Week 6.** Worldliness and Riches – 27 July.

## TRIALS AND TEMPTATIONS

God allows trials for our benefit, while temptations originate from evil and seek to destroy. So, while trials are difficult, they have an ability to strengthen our faith in God. Temptations can be subtle and if we are not careful can lead to our death if we allow them to direct who we have been designed and created to be, children of God.

**Worship Song:** Matt Maher - Lord, I need you - <https://youtu.be/LuvfMDhTyMA>

**Readings:** Psalm 13:1-6 / James 1:2-18 / Luke 4:1-13

### Psalm 13

<sup>1</sup>How long, Lord? Will you forget me for ever? How long will you hide your face from me? <sup>2</sup>How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and day after day have sorrow in my heart? How long will my enemy triumph over me? <sup>3</sup>Look on me and answer, Lord my God. Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death, <sup>4</sup>and my enemy will say, 'I have overcome him,' and my foes will rejoice when I fall. <sup>5</sup>But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation. <sup>6</sup>I will sing the Lord's praise for he has been good to me.

### James 1:2-18

*Trials and temptations*

<sup>2</sup>Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, <sup>3</sup>because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. <sup>4</sup>Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. <sup>5</sup>If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. <sup>6</sup>But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. <sup>7</sup>That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. <sup>8</sup>Such a person is double-

*mind and unstable in all they do. <sup>9</sup>Believers in humble circumstances ought to take pride in their high position. <sup>10</sup>But the rich should take pride in their humiliation – since they will pass away like a wildflower. <sup>11</sup>For the sun rises with scorching heat and withers the plant; its blossom falls, and its beauty is destroyed. In the same way, the rich will fade away even while they go about their business. <sup>12</sup>Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him. <sup>13</sup>When tempted, no one should say, ‘God is tempting me.’ For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; <sup>14</sup>but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. <sup>15</sup>Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death. <sup>16</sup>Don’t be deceived, my dear brothers and sisters. <sup>17</sup>Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. <sup>18</sup>He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of first fruits of all he created.*

#### **Luke 4:1-13**

*Jesus is tested in the wilderness*

**4** Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, <sup>2</sup>where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry. <sup>3</sup>The devil said to him, ‘If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread.’ <sup>4</sup>Jesus answered, ‘It is written: “Man shall not live on bread alone.”’ <sup>5</sup>The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. <sup>6</sup>And he said to him, ‘I will give you all their authority and splendour; it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to.’ <sup>7</sup>If you worship me, it will all be yours.’ <sup>8</sup>Jesus answered, ‘It is written: “Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.”’ <sup>9</sup>The devil led him to Jerusalem and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. ‘If you are the Son of God,’ he said, ‘throw yourself down from here. <sup>10</sup>For it is written: “He will command his angels concerning you to guard you carefully; <sup>11</sup>they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.’ <sup>12</sup>Jesus answered, ‘It is said: “Do not put the Lord your God to the test.”’ <sup>13</sup>When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time.

#### **REFLECTION ON THE READINGS: REV HILTON VOLKWYN**

Trials and temptations are what all of us face regularly. However, we need to remember that there is a distinct difference between the two situations of TRIALS and TEMPTATIONS. Scripturally speaking trials are difficulties, challenges, and hardships that believers experience as part of their faith journey. Whereas TEMPTATIONS are an attraction to act in disobedience to the will of God. Its sources are the world, the flesh, and the devil.

Our Gospel reading reminds us that Jesus was tempted after His forty days of fasting. Satan took advantage of the weakened emotional and physical state Jesus was in. Temptations normally confront us when we are at our lowest or weakest points of our lives. We should learn how to denounce these temptations and remain firm in our faith.

So, what we do ascertain from the TEMPTATION Jesus faced then, is the fact that we should learn how to denounce these temptations and remain firm in our faith. Jesus quoted scripture every time Satan tried to tempt the Lord. Paul in his letter to the Ephesians says “.....and the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God.” (Ep 6:17b) Scripture is our weapon against evil which we suggested is temptation. TRIALS however could vary in intensity as well as it being different to what others may experience. Challenges may be in finances, relationships, illness, loss of a loved one, abuse, loneliness to name but a few.

Yet it almost sounds strange to hear James encouraging his readers to “consider it pure joy” (James 1:2) when trials come our way. The Psalmist calls on God during his time of trial “How long, Lord? Will you forget me for ever?(Ps. 13:1)

Christians are urged to view trials and temptations as opportunities for spiritual growth and maturity, rather than as setbacks. It emphasizes the importance of seeking wisdom from God. Even the Psalmist encourages us by his admission “But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation.<sup>6</sup> I will sing the Lord’s praise for he has been good to me.”

## SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

1. Discuss the differences between TRIALS and TEMPTATIONS in everyday life.
2. What was the greatest TEMPTATION you or someone you know overcame.
3. What TRIALS are you facing right now and how are you going to deal with them.

## DAILY MEMORY VERSE AND PRAYER

<b>Monday</b>	<b>MEMORY VERSE:</b> (Psalm 13:5-6) <i>"But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation.<sup>6</sup> I will sing the Lord's praise for he has been good to me."</i> <b>PRAYER:</b> Father teach me to trust without doubt. Amen
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>MEMORY VERSE:</b> (James: 1:5-6) <i>"If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. <sup>6</sup> But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind."</i> <b>PRAYER:</b> God of all wisdom, please bless me with wisdom. Amen
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>MEMORY VERSE:</b> (James 1:2-4) <i>"Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, <sup>3</sup> because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. <sup>4</sup> Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."</i> <b>PRAYER:</b> Lord God today I worship You for every situation I find myself in, good and bad. Amen
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>MEMORY VERSE:</b> (Luke 4:8) <i>"Jesus answered, 'It is written: "Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.'"</i> <b>PRAYER:</b> You alone are my God and Father and I worship only You dear God. Amen
<b>Friday</b>	<b>MEMORY VERSE:</b> (Jam. 1:13-14) <i>"When tempted, no one should say, 'God is tempting me.' For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; <sup>14</sup> but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed."</i> <b>PRAYER:</b> Father in heaven You know everything about me. And I believe that you wont burden me with that which harms. Amen

## FOR THE KIDS:

**Written by:** Jenny Blake - Children's Pastor.

**Week 1** — Trials and Temptations

### Opening Thought

As we begin the Book of James, we quickly see that following Jesus doesn't mean life will be easy. In fact, James tells us that trials and temptations will come. But God uses trials to grow and strengthen us. Temptations, on the other hand, try to pull us away from God. As Christ-followers, we need wisdom to see the difference and to stand strong.

### Bible Readings

- Psalm 13:1-6 — A cry for help during trials.
- James 1:2-18 — The testing of faith, wisdom in trials, and resisting temptation.
- Luke 4:1-13 — Jesus Himself is tempted but stands firm.

### 1 Trials Build Us Up

James says we should *"consider it pure joy"* when we face trials (James 1:2). That sounds strange at first! But God allows trials so that we grow stronger in our faith. Like exercising muscles, trials strengthen our spiritual life.

#### For Everyone:

👉 Can you think of a hard time in your life when you grew closer to God?

#### For Young Children:

👦 Have you ever had to do something hard, like learn to ride a bike or share your toys? How did you feel when

you got better at it?

🙄 Who helps you when you feel sad or upset?

### For Teens:

🙄 Can you think of a situation recently where you faced something difficult, and God helped you through?

🙄 Why do you think God allows Christians to go through tough times instead of always protecting us from them?

## 2 Temptations Tear Us Down

Temptation is different — it doesn't come from God but tries to lead us into sin. Temptation often starts small but can grow if we allow it. James describes how desire leads to sin, and sin leads to death (James 1:14-15). Even Jesus was tempted (Luke 4:1-13), but He resisted by holding on to God's Word.

### For Everyone:

👉 What are some ways temptation tries to sneak into our lives today?

### For Young Children:

🙄 What should you do if you feel like doing something you know is wrong?

🙄 Who can help you make good choices?

### For Teens:

🙄 What kinds of temptations do people your age face that adults might not even realize?

🙄 What are some practical ways you can resist temptation — at school, with friends, or online?

## 3 God Is Good and Faithful

Every good gift comes from God (James 1:17). He doesn't change like shifting shadows. God helps us through trials and gives us strength to resist temptation.

### For Everyone:

👉 How can we remind ourselves that God is always good, even when life feels hard?

### For Young Children:

🙄 What is something good that God has given you?

🙄 Can you say "Thank You" to God for something today?

### For Teens:

🙄 Why do you think it's sometimes hard to see God's goodness when we're hurting?

🙄 How can you encourage a friend who is going through a tough time to trust in God's goodness?

## Family Object Lesson (Optional)

### The Rubber Band Example:

Take a rubber band and stretch it.

- When stretched, it feels uncomfortable — like a trial.
- But when released, the rubber band is stronger and more useful.
- God allows trials to "stretch" our faith so we can grow.

### Key Verse to Memorize

*"Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him."* James 1:12 (NIV)

### Prayer

*Lord, thank You that You never leave us in our trials. Help us to grow strong in our faith and to recognize temptation when it comes. Give us wisdom and strength like Jesus, who resisted the devil with Your Word. Help us to walk as true followers of Christ. Amen.*

### This Week's Challenge

- As a family, choose one Bible verse (perhaps James 1:12) to memorize together.
- Each night, share one way you saw God help you that day, even in small trials.