



James: When You Suffer

Pastor Derek Sanford

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**Life Group Discussion Questions:**

1. Thinking back on this week's sermon, was there a particular point or passage that challenged you, confused you, or caught your attention?
2. There are two main reasons to study James: 1- He shows us how to live out our faith, and 2- To explore the impact of our faith on the world around us. Think about those two statements and ask yourself, "How am I living out my faith? How is my faith impacting the world?"
3. Read **James 1:1-18** together remembering that James' teaching can help us see God when we suffer. Derek said it like this:
  - a. Prioritize how you THINK over how you FEEL (**verses 2, 5-8**).
    - i. What is the difference between "consider it joy" or "count it all joy" and "feel happy about it" when you're going through something difficult?
    - ii. The antidote to catastrophizing about situations is to gain God's wisdom. How will the words of Jesus in **Matthew 5:25-34** and Paul's in **Philippians 4:4-8** give you wisdom in times difficulty?
  - b. When you're ready to QUIT remain STEADFAST (**verses 3-4**).
    - i. What have you faced or are facing that makes you want to quit? What does James say is the result of perseverance?
  - c. Lean on the INVISIBLE and not the VISIBLE for comfort (**verses 9-11**).
    - i. Take an honest assessment of your heart- in what does your security lie? If, for example, money is your security, what happens when you face a situation that money cannot fix?
    - ii. Read **Proverbs 3:5-6**. How can we learn to trust in God alone?
  - d. Remember that God TESTS you but He never TEMPTS you (**verses 12-18**).
    - i. God gives each of us opportunities in our lives to know Him more, to live for Him, to share His hope with the world... and Satan always brings opposition against us, often in the guise of difficult circumstances or things that bring us pleasure. How is Satan trying to oppose God's work in your life right now?
    - ii. Read **Ephesians 6:10-18**. How do we stand up against Satan? How can we do this together?

**Next Steps:** What is your current trial or temptation? Which of these 4 mindsets do you most need?

**Prayer Thought:** If it is a safe space, allow each person to share their trial/temptation and immediately pray for that person (not just for the circumstance, but also for their wisdom, their trust in God, their faith to grow). If your group isn't ready for that, give each person time to write out a prayer to God about their current circumstances and then close with a prayer for everyone.