

DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

Our Mission: Reaching Out to Leaders Who Can Change the World.

Nov 2017

FAITH IN ACTION: #1 TRIALS AND TEMPTATIONS

INTRODUCTION

“Life is 10% what happens to you and 90% how you respond.” Do you agree or disagree? Why?

OBSERVATION/INTERPRETATION

Note: As a leader of the Jerusalem church, James wrote as a pastor to instruct and encourage his dispersed people in the face of their difficulties. The letter is concerned mainly with the practical aspects of the Christian faith, consisting of maxims and counsel for everyday conduct.

Read James 1:1-18

1. What should be a Christian's attitude when facing trials? (v 2-4) **Jn 16:33** Is this realistic?
2. What is produced when our faith is tested? (v. 3-4)
3. What is wisdom? How does a person receive it? What is God's response? (v. 5)
4. What must we guard against when asking God for guidance? (v.6)

*Note: The word here is *diakrino*, which when used in the sense of “doubt” is uncertainty about something set forward as an object of faith. In James 1 we ask God what to do. He shows us. But then we hold back, uncertain whether or not we want to obey. James says that if you are going to hold back, don't bother asking. When God shows you His way, He expects you to take it.¹*

5. What effect does doubt have on a person when he prays? (6-8)
6. How does our view of God affect how we pray?
7. What reward awaits the person who perseveres? (v. 12)
8. How does James turn upside down the world's view of rich and poor? (v 9-11)
9. What will become of the rich man's wealth? (v. 10-11)
10. How can a person who pursues wealth and riches be disappointed?
11. What is the difference between trials and temptations? (v. 13-18)
12. How can you tell the difference? (v. 13-15)

Note: To say that God tempts anyone to sin is to confuse the Lord with the devil. The whole satanic purpose of temptation is to entice people away from God and His best for them.²

13. If God's goal in allowing people to go through trials and difficulties is spiritual maturity, how will you know if you have it? **Lk 8:13** Could it be how we handle trouble?
14. What can a person do to prevent an evil desire from becoming an actual act (sin)?

APPLICATION

- What is God teaching you through your current trials?
- In what specific areas do you need to ask God for wisdom? For help overcoming temptation?

To test the genuineness of a diamond, jewelers often place it in clear water, which causes a real diamond to sparkle with special brilliance. An imitation stone, on the other hand, will have almost no sparkle at all. When the two are placed side by side, even an untrained eye can easily tell the difference. In a similar way, even the world can often notice the marked differences between genuine Christians and those who merely profess faith in Christ.³

¹ Richards, L. O. (1991). *The Bible reader's companion* (electronic ed.) (871). Wheaton: Victor Books.

² Stanley, C. F. (2005). *The Charles F. Stanley life principles Bible: New King James Version* (Jas 1:13). Nashville, TN: Nelson Bibles.

³ MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1998). *James*. MacArthur New Testament Commentary (15). Chicago: Moody Press.