



A Guide for Spiritual Formation

Text for the Week: James 1:1-8

Message for the Week: Persevering

Sunday, February 23

Opening:

What is one low (a bad thing) and one high (a good thing) that happened to you this past week? Write them down and take turns sharing them with the others in your group.

Where have you seen the work of the Holy Spirit in your life this past week?

What tests or challenges are you dealing with right now?

Preparation:

Spend 1-2 minutes in silence with God to center and prepare yourself for your time with God today.

Read:

Read / Have two people in your group read [James 1](#) out loud.

[Clicking the link will bring you to multiple translations.]

As you read and/or listen to the text being read, circle, highlight, or underline what words, phrases, or ideas grabbed your attention and heart in these verses?

Write them down below and/or share them with those who are with you.

Respond / Reflect:

Take some time to define perseverance. How would you describe perseverance? What does perseverance look like?

Why should we be thankful when we experience trials?

How is perseverance able to mature and complete us?

Who do you know that exemplifies perseverance?

What does it mean to be double-minded? What does double-mindedness do to us and the river of life flowing out of us?

God plays an important role in maturing and completing us. How does James say we gain access to the work of God in our lives?

What is wisdom and why should we ask for it?

What happens to us when our mind waffles around? What happens when our mind is tossed about like a boat caught on the water in the midst of wind and waves?

Take Away:

What is a main point or key message that you learned, understood, observed, or experienced that you are taking away with you from your group's reflections on the bible passage or your group's conversations today?

Prayer:

Spend time in prayer with/for the other people who are with you. Who in your group needs prayer today? Who in your group will you pray for?

Pray this prayer together:

Dear Father, thank you for your providential care for us, that we are never left alone but are always in your care. When we are in the midst of the trials and testing that life brings, strengthen our faith so we have the courage to continue pressing into you. Give us the wisdom we need to see that you are working in us, even in the darkest of days. AMEN

"Try It" - Putting our Faith into Action:

Are you experiencing a trial and temptation right now? What is it? What wisdom do you need to ask God for to persevere in the midst of it? Ask God for this wisdom.

If you are not in the midst of a trial and temptation right now, how could you come along side of someone who is? Do it.

James 1:1-8 - New International Version

1 James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes scattered among the nations:

Greetings.

² Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters,^[a] whenever you face trials of many kinds, ³ because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. ⁴ Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. ⁵ 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. ⁶ 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. ⁷ That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. ⁸ Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do.

Footnotes

- a. James 1:2 The Greek word for *brothers and sisters* (*adelphoi*) refers here to believers, both men and women, as part of God's family; also in verses 16 and 19; and in 2:1, 5, 14; 3:10, 12; 4:11; 5:7, 9, 10, 12, 19.

James 1:1-8 – The Message

1 I, James, am a slave of God and the Master Jesus, writing to the twelve tribes scattered to Kingdom Come: Hello!

²⁻⁴ Consider it a sheer gift, friends, when tests and challenges come at you from all sides. You know that under pressure, your faith-life is forced into the open and shows its true colors. So don't try to get out of anything prematurely. Let it do its work so you become mature and well-developed, not deficient in any way.

⁵⁻⁸ If you don't know what you're doing, pray to the Father. He loves to help. You'll get his help, and won't be condescended to when you ask for it. Ask boldly, believingly, without a second thought. People who "worry their prayers" are like wind-whipped waves. Don't think you're going to get anything from the Master that way, adrift at sea, keeping all your options open.