

## JAMES: A FAITH THAT WORKS

### What God is Doing in Your Trial

Small Group Discussion Guide

#### How to Use This Guide

Work top down. Page 2 continues the conversation.

Pick four or five questions — not all of them.

Leader Notes on page 2 are for you, not to read aloud.

#### Key Scripture Passages

#### James 1:2-4 NIV

What the testing of your faith is producing, and why James says to let it finish.

#### James 1:13-15 NIV

Where temptation actually comes from, and how fast desire grows up.

#### James 1:17-18 NIV

The Father who doesn't shift, and the second birth that came out of that season.



# Talk It Over

## Opening Icebreaker

*Low-stakes. Just get people talking.*

- **When have you had to wait for something with no idea how long it would take?** What did the waiting do to you?

## Discussion Questions

*Move at the group's pace. You will not get to all of these.*

- **What did you notice about how James describes the trial itself?** He never says it's good — so what does he say it's doing?
- In verse 4, James says to *let* perseverance finish its work. **What does that word tell you is possible?**
- James opens with joy instead of comfort. **What do you think he's asking people to do with their thinking rather than their feelings?**
- James says God doesn't tempt anyone — that our own desire does the dragging. **What difference does it make where the pull is coming from?**
- Read James 1:15 and 1:18 back to back. Same word both times — something *gave birth*. **What two things does James say came out of that season? Which one have you been letting name you?**
- The message said nobody blows up their life at 10 in the morning. **Where's your 11 pm, and what does it start suggesting when you're tired of waiting?**
- Of everything you could ask God for in a hard season — answers, a timeline, an explanation — James says ask for wisdom. **What would change this week if you asked for wisdom instead of an exit?**
- **What's one thing you'll do this week to stay in the waiting room without reaching for a shortcut?**



# Talk It Over

### Going Deeper

*Optional. For groups ready for harder territory.*

- James says the double-minded person shouldn't expect to receive anything — but the word he uses means *divided loyalty*, not honest questions. **Where's the line between doubting God and negotiating with Him? Which one have you actually been doing?**

### Prayer Focus

*Pray specifically, by name.*

- **Endurance:** For anyone tempted to cut short something God is still finishing.
- **Wisdom:** For those at hour three who need less information and more clarity about what not to do.
- **Identity:** For anyone convinced the version of themselves that showed up in the dark is the real one.

### Leader Notes

#### Where it usually stalls:

On “consider it pure joy.” People argue with it, or go quiet because they think they're supposed to feel something they don't. Say early that James isn't asking for a feeling — he's asking them to count what the trial is producing.

#### The other stall:

The 11 pm question, in a newer group. Take generalities and move on. Don't press anyone for specifics.

#### Where it goes off-track:

Someone will hear “the one who doubts is like a wave” and decide they're disqualified. Tell them plainly it isn't aimed at them — James is describing divided loyalty, not honest questions.

#### The other derail:

A debate about whether God caused it. Verse 13 says God doesn't tempt anyone; He may allow the environment but never dangles the bait. Don't let the group go further than the text does.