

# WOMEN OF GRACE

## Lesson 1 | James 1:1-18

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*“James, with its devotion to direct, pungent statements on wise living, is reminiscent of the book of Proverbs. It has a practical emphasis, stressing not theoretical knowledge but godly behavior. James wrote with a passionate desire for his readers to be uncompromisingly obedient to the Word of God. James’s major emphasis in the first section of his epistle is this: If a person’s faith is genuine, it will prove itself during times of trouble, whatever the nature or source of the trouble may be.” – John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: James*, pp. 2–3*

### MEMORIZATION VERSE

#### **James 1:1–2**

James, a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,  
to the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad: Greetings.  
Consider it all joy, my brethren when you encounter various trials...

### DAY 1 | Introduction and Overview | Read James 1

1. In the past what have you thought about the book of James? Has it helped you, or confused you?
2. From Mark 6:3, John 7:1–5, Acts 1:14 and 15:13, 19 and Galatians 2:9, what details are provided about the person and work of James?
3. In James 1:1, how did James describe himself? What do you note that James did *not* include in this description? What can this teach believers about how they ought to view themselves?

4. Using a dictionary or other Bible resource, define the following words used in verses 2–4: “joy,” “trial,” “endurance” or “steadfastness,” and “perfect.”
  
5. From verse 1, to whom did James write this letter? Why do you think he began by discussing trials?

## DAY 2 | The Believer’s Response to Trials | Read James 1:1-4

1. According to James 1:1–4, what allows believers to respond with joy when facing trials?
  - a. How does Hebrews 12:1–2 relate to James’ exhortation?
  
  - b. Read Matthew 26:36–42, John 11:28–36, and Psalm 6 to help you better understand James’ intent.
  
2. From the following references, what are some purposes of trials in the life of a believer?
  - a. James 1:3, Exodus 16:4
  
  - b. 2 Corinthians 12:8–10

c. Romans 8:18, 2 Corinthians 4:16–18

d. 2 Corinthians 1:3–6

e. Genesis 22:9–12, Deuteronomy 10:12

2. According to James 1:4, why is endurance (steadfastness) so important in the life of a believer? (See also Romans 5:1–5 and 2 Peter 1:5–9.)

3. What trial are you experiencing in your life now, and what is your attitude towards it?

a. Based on what you learned in James today, write down one or two practical things you can do to respond to your trial with greater obedience and joy.

b. Share with your group one or two verses that are an encouragement for you as you experience trials.

## DAY 3 | Asking for Wisdom | Read James 1:5-8

1. Use a dictionary to define “wisdom.”
  
2. In verse 5, what hope is given to believers who ask God for wisdom?
  - a. What do the following scriptures teach you about wisdom? James 3:13 and 17, Psalm 111:10, and Proverbs 2:6.
  
3. Why do you think asking for wisdom is a necessary response to trials?
  
4. In James 1:5, what is revealed about God’s character and how can that encourage you to trust Him?
  
5. According to verses 6–7, what can prevent someone from receiving wisdom?
  - a. What doubts in your life keep you from fully trusting God? In what things do you find yourself trusting instead of relying on God?

## DAY 4 | Humility in Trials | Read James 1:9-12

1. In verses 9–11, why do you think that James addressed the position of the rich and the lowly believers in the middle of his teaching on trials?
2. How do Matthew 5:3, Ephesians 2:18–19, and 1 Peter 1:3–11 help provide perspective during times of trials?
3. According to James 1:9–11, what are the rich to remember about life? What are the poor to remember? How does this understanding help believers relate to each other and to trials?
4. According to Philippians 4:10–13, how did Paul learn contentment? How does that relate to James’s encouragement to his readers?

## DAY 5 | Temptations to Sin | Read James 1:12-18

1. James 1:2–12 explains the right response to trials, then transitions in verses 13–15 to what happens when believers respond to trials by disobeying God and succumbing to the flesh. According to this text, who is responsible for man’s sin and who is not responsible?
  - a. From Isaiah 6:3, Hebrews 7:26, and 1 Peter 1:16, what is taught about God’s character that helps explain why God does not cause men to sin?

2. In verse 14-15 James shows us the progression of sin, slowing it down for us in frame-by-frame fashion. Read Genesis 3:6-7, Joshua 7:21, 25, and 2 Samuel 11:5-27. What similarities do you see in these passages with the progression of sin?

a. What is the source of your temptation (1:14, 4:1)?

b. What is the result of giving into temptation (v. 15, Romans 6:23)?

3. Read 1 Corinthians 10:13. What do you see about the character and promise of God in the battle of temptation?

a. Are you able to take the way of escape with your own temptation? Read Ephesians 5:13 and James 5:13. What could be a step you can take if you keep giving into sin?

b. What is the reward for those who persevere under trials (1:12)?

4. Jesus instructed His disciples to pray so that they wouldn't enter into temptation. Is this your approach to temptation? Think of a specific temptation you battle. How will you face the temptation before it presents itself?
  - a. Is there anything in your life that needs to change so that you are less in the way of temptation?
  
5. Read 2 Corinthians 7:7:9-11, 1 John 1:9, and Ephesians 4:22-23. If you have fallen into sin what needs to happen in your heart?
  
6. What wonderful assurance we have in the gospel and the finished work of Christ when we sin against God. What comfort can you gain from Ps 103:12, Isaiah 1:18 Romans 5:20, and 2 Corinthians 5:21?