

TODAY'S VERSES:

James 1:9-12

James 1:2

James 1:5

Revelation 5:5-6

Colossians 2:3

Romans 8:17

1 Peter 2:9-10

Romans 5:1-2

Romans 5:11

Luke 4:18

Isaiah 61:1

Luke 1:48

Mark 10:25

Matthew 13:22

Matthew 6:24

1 Timothy 6:17

THIS WEEK, I CAN APPLY THIS LESSON
TO MY LIFE IN THESE WAYS:

MY NOTES:

The word "JAMES" is rendered in a highly textured, hand-painted style. Each letter is composed of multiple overlapping, dark brown brush strokes, giving it a three-dimensional, almost sculptural appearance. The background is a solid, light beige color.

A FAITH THAT WORKS

PART THREE: JAMES 1:9-12
THE PARADOX OF SUFFERING

JAMES

A FAITH THAT WORKS

PART THREE: JAMES 1:9-12 THE PARADOX OF SUFFERING

There are trials in our lives where God is being good and growing us. Parents many times today will not deal with kids at their weak points because they don't want to deal with a meltdown, but our heavenly Father *will* push on our weak points in order to grow us.

- **Trials are inevitable** – We must not be a people who think that simply because we love or live for Jesus that there is a limit as to how bad things could ever get. God has no obligation to keep a person from suffering, but there is always a purpose.

Jesus lived a perfect life, completely in step with the Spirit of God, and yet He suffered more comprehensively than anyone has ever suffered. On the cross, as sin was laid upon Him and He was forsaken, we see that there is not a thing in this world that a person could suffer that Jesus did not.

- **Trials can bring wisdom** – God Himself will give us wisdom during our trials. The Bible tells us that the difference between a fool and a wise person is that fools think they're wise while wise people know they are foolish.

James reminds us of a Gospel-centered perspective that is paradoxical: we are to acknowledge and boast (or rejoice) how we are poor in spirit—understanding our dependence on God for wisdom in the midst of suffering.

We are to have a humility that understands our position in relation to God. He is both the Lion (the one who is victorious and conquers over all) and the Lamb (the one who was slain and suffered in our place). Therefore, we can trust God and what He says about who we are, even when we are made to feel low or weak in this world. In our trials, we can find identity, strength, restoration, and glory in Him. The Gospel challenges the world's economy by acknowledging humanity's universal need for a Savior to redeem us from brokenness.

Read James 1:9-12.

- Define what a paradox is.
- What are some of your favorite paradoxical truths?
- How does what God values clash with what the world values?
- How is there a paradox in the Gospel (good news)?
- Has a trial ever exposed your feelings of entitlement - that something like that shouldn't happen to you? Explain.
- In what ways have you assumed yourself wise?
- In what ways do you see yourself a fool?
- Is it offensive to you to be considered a fool?
- In what current situation(s) do you find yourself needing wisdom?

The message talked about different ways people react to hard circumstances...

- What is your tendency? How has that worked? How has that failed?
- How can you encourage those around you (feeling poor, lowly, and weak)?
- How can you offer perspective to those who take pride and boast in their own strength, achievements, etc.?
- Do you consider yourself rich poor or poor rich?
- What do you have in your life that is of security or comfort that might hinder your faith?
- How do we gain more humility?

Take time speaking the realities of our fallen state and our need for a rescuer.

Spend time thanking God together that He is good enough to rescue.