



God Has an App for That!

Leaders Notes Week 1

“Turn Stress into Joy”

James 1:1-12

1. James was the brother of the Lord (Gal. 1:19) and leader of the Jerusalem church (Acts 12:17; 15:13; 21:18; Gal. 2:9, 12). One of the qualifications for apostleship was seeing the risen Lord (1 Cor. 9:1). The risen Lord appeared to His brother, James (1 Cor. 15:7; cf. Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3; Gal. 1:19). Jesus also had a brother named “Judas” (Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3), and this is probably the same person who authored the Letter of Jude (or Judas) and calls himself “the brother of James” (Jude 1).

2. Verse 2: Trials are inevitable in the life of a believer. In fact, James says “when we encounter” not “IF we encounter”. Therefore, we should not be surprised when we do. In the midst of those trials, we should consider it joy.

Verse 3: Our faith will be tested. James offers us a different perspective on this testing. In fact, he says, “the testing of our faith develops perseverance”. In other words, being tested is not a bad thing.

Verse 4: Carrying on from verse 3, perseverance does something in us to complete us. The perspective that James offers is, in order for us to be mature and complete, there is a process that we must go through. Most of us don't like it, but in this case it seems necessary.

3. Answers may vary. This is week 1 of an 8-week series. You may have to answer the question 1st, but as always, you want to implement the 8-second rule of allowing others to answer the question 1st. Some people respond by getting stressed out, depression, complaining, blaming others, etc...there are many ways people respond. Allow members to share their experiences.

4. We must ask God in order to gain wisdom. James is very clear that wisdom comes from the Lord. He also reminds us that we must not doubt; otherwise, we are like a wave of the sea that gets tossed back and forth.

He provides us with a practical solution to seeking guidance and wisdom...just ask and don't doubt!

5. A person who doubts God's goodness dishonors Him. Such a person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord, since he is unsure whether God is good or will do good. He is a double-minded man, that is, in "two minds," torn between God and the world, and is therefore, unstable in all his ways.

6. There is a reward for those who endure. James returns to the theme introduced in v. 2. Crown of life alludes not to the jewel-encrusted ruler's crown but to the laurel wreath given to winners in athletic games (1 Cor. 9:25) and victorious emperors. The reward for faithful perseverance is eternal life with all its abundant blessings (cf. Rev. 2:10).

7. Go around and share. This passage is encouraging because of the above mentioned. (see answer #6)

8. Go around and share. Since this is week 1, be sure to encourage members to share, and remember...no quick answers, no quick fixes.

9. Knowing that God does not allow a trial to go to waste is comforting. God weaves everything together for good for His children. The "good" in this context does not refer to earthly comfort, but conformity to Christ (v. 29), closer fellowship with God, bearing good fruit for the kingdom, and final glorification (v. 30).

10. Go around and share. Members will have different ways of rating their love. The point is to have them look deeper into their hearts desire to follow Jesus.

11. Take this time to write down in your study guide the prayer requests of those who share. Be sure to share the praise reports on a weekly basis as the series progresses.



FURTHER STUDY |

There is a reoccurring theme throughout scripture for each one of these topical studies. Take this week as the Leader of your group to immerse yourself in the reading of the Word and see how these verses can help you download God's app to turn stress into joy.

- Matthew 6:25-34
- Philippians 4:6-7
- 1 Peter 5:6-7
- Matthew 11:28-30
- Romans 5:1
- John 14:27
- 1 Peter 1:6-7
- John 9:1-3
- Job 1:1-22

