

The Book of James

Go back to the second study, where you learned about the persecution and trials being suffered today by believers in Russia.

Has anyone found out more about this situation? How can you keep praying about this injustice?

NOW GO TO JAMES 1:9-12. HUH? How does this connect with what we've been studying?

Everyone goes through trials at various times in their lives. Make a list of "trials" that either you or others you know of have experienced - avoid trivial examples.

Look at verse 9 again. What do you think are "humble circumstances"? Look up this passage in another translation - preferably The Message.

QUICKLY FLIP TO JAMES 2:5. What are true riches in God's eyes? Does this just sound corny to you?

Living in Santa Barbara does not give you an accurate picture of what it means to be rich and what it means to be poor. You may go to school with other students who are so incredibly wealthy that it makes you feel poor by comparison. However, let's get some perspective...

You don't have to share this with the group, but think about how much money you have - either in a savings account or in your possession. For every dollar that you have, do you know that a person living in Guatemala only has **5 cents**? That the average person from India has less than **2 cents**? Even in Spain – the average person only has **46 cents** compared to our dollar?



NOW, RE-READ JAMES 1:9-12. Why do you think a rich person will "fade away"? So do you think James is saying it's wrong to even have much money?

READ DEUTERONOMY 6:10-12. How can you apply these words to your own life?

END WITH PROVERBS 21:13 – ALL PLAY: What is one way you can live this out as a small group in the next 3 weeks?

LEADERS' GUIDE

Make sure you spend time going over this study before you study it with the students. ***Please don't show them this leader's guide, or have them download the study ahead of time from the website, since this guide is included in the lesson.***

If you don't finish it all this week, it's fine to extend it. Just don't drag it out – otherwise, they'll get sick of the Book of James before they even get to the good stuff!

Encourage them to each bring a Bible. Help them get one if they do not have one, or just own a "little kid" Bible from their childhood.

Ask them to:

1. Write their name on their copy of the study.
2. Bring the study back each week.

THIS WEEK'S DISCUSSION:

When discussing examples of "trials," guide the discussion firmly. Don't let this descend into talking about homework or "stress." Help them by giving some examples: a family member struggling with cancer, a marriage breaking up... and then move it outward to world issues like the war in Iraq, AIDS in South Africa, etc.

Be sensitive that your own students may be experiencing trials of some sort. Take the time to share and pray if necessary. You may have to split this lesson into 2 meetings if this happens.

PROVERBS 21:13 = Try to plan a tangible project as a small group - ideas:

- Sponsor a child through Compassion International or Students International (I can give you details on this).
- Challenge each other to bring money to church to give away each week for 4 weeks in a row.
- Commit to serving at the Rescue Mission every time, no matter what.
- Provide a dinner as a small group (combine with another group?) either at the Rescue Mission or Transition House.

Discuss the habit of giving monthly - help them to hold each other accountable on this. I can help with several more passages on this if you need it.

This is a CRUCIAL discipline for your students to grow in – please take the time to help them think through this.