

A Hopeful Life: Hope Under Pressure

Series: What 2 Live 4

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Scripture: James 1:1-12

¹James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,
To the twelve tribes scattered among the nations: Greetings.

²Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, ³because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. ⁴Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. ⁵If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. ⁶But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. ⁷That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; ⁸he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does.

⁹The brother in humble circumstances ought to take pride in his high position. ¹⁰But the one who is rich should take pride in his low position, because he will pass away like a wild flower. ¹¹For the sun rises with scorching heat and withers the plant; its blossom falls and its beauty is destroyed. In the same way, the rich man will fade away even while he goes about his business.

¹²Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.

Group Session

Opening Questions

Describe the times in this world that most cause you to lose hope? What are the things in your life that most cause you to lose hope?

Discussing the Scripture & Life

1. Read the passage above (James 1:1-12). In light of this verse, how do we deal with the things we've mentioned that cause us to lose hope?
2. Everyone experiences trials. Have you ever asked "Why me?" What are other questions we ask when trials come?
3. 1 Peter 4:12 tells us not to be surprised when ordeals come upon us. If we realize that God uses trails to grow our faith, we shouldn't expect to be exempt. Do you believe that God can grow our faith in a deep manner without trials?

4. Every trial has a purpose. Sometimes we won't be able to identify the purpose until we arrive in heaven. Have you been able to identify the specific reason for any trials in your life thus far?
5. It is helpful to know that sometimes we go through a trial for the benefit of someone else. Can you think of any real or possible examples of this?
6. I'll handle trials better if I use wisdom from God. Do you currently use God's word as a filter for everything you experience in life? Ask someone to "Share with the group how you go about putting God's word in your life on a daily basis?"
7. The person who perseveres under trials is blessed. What type blessings do you think come to those who persevere?

Closing Challenge

As a result of this lesson, what are some things we can and should do differently as a result of challenges and trials in our lives?