



Faith In Real Life - James 1:9-18 Faith under the influence

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: (Page 1)

TRADITIONAL MODEL

Using James' measure, would you classify yourself as rich or poor?

Or

Have you ever been "conned?" What happened and in what ways did you think to yourself afterward, "I should have seen it coming?"

Read James 1:9-11. In what ways do you think Christians today make false assumptions about our standing with God based on our checkbooks?

How does wealth and/or poverty affect our relationship with God?

In James 1:9-11, what does James say the poor are to celebrate? What does that mean?

What does James say about temptation in vvs. 12-15? When have you felt God was tempting you before? What does James say about temptation in vs. 14?

James uses the same word for trials and temptations in chapter one, but clearly is referring to two different concepts. How would you describe the difference between trials and temptations?

Read v.16. Why do you think Christians are vulnerable to deception? In your opinion where is the *evil one* most effective in deceiving people today?



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: (Page 2)

What do you think a Christian can do to become less vulnerable to deception?
(See vs.18, 2Tim 2:26)

When God speaks, his words cause change. (v.18) In what ways is the word of truth changing you?

CONTEMPLATIVE MODEL:

What are you learning about God from this message?

What are you learning about yourself from the message?

What questions does this message bring up for you?

What is God doing in your heart lately?

What things do you feel are getting in the way from what God wants to do in you?

What is the biggest thing causing you concern these days? (something to pray about)



Leader Guide **Faith under the influence** **James 1:9-18**

Faith In Real Life

Honest, realistic and practical words about faith in a real life world from the Epistle of James.

James 1:9 The brother in humble circumstances ought to take pride in his high position. 10 But the one who is rich should take pride in his low position, because he will pass away like a wild flower. 11 For 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. 12 Blessed 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. 13 When tempted, no-one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; 14 but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. 15 Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death. 16 Don't be deceived, my dear brothers. 17 Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. 18 He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.

I should have known better. I should have seen that coming.

James 1:16 Don't be deceived, my dear brothers.

FUI: Faith under the influence

Two Deceptions Exposed

1. Economic status is not an indication of standing with God

False conclusions for rich and poor

1. God doesn't love me.
2. God loves me the most.

Both need fresh perspective:

- Poor



James 1:9 The brother in humble circumstances ought to take pride in his high position.

1Pe 2:9 *But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God*

- Rich
10 But the one who is rich should take pride in his low position, because he will pass away like a wild flower.
1Ti 6:18 *Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share.*

2. Temptation comes from within not God

- Trials: From outside in. Lead to life and maturity, can come from God.
- Temptations: from inside out. lead to death and maturation of sin consequences, do not come from God

James 1:13 When tempted, no-one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone;

Truth

- 14 but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed.

Deception has serious consequences

15 Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

- 17 Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.

16 Don't be deceived, my dear brothers.

Faith in real life must be under the control of the truth

James 5:18 He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.



HOW DO I BLOCK DECEPTIVE INFLUENCES ON MY FAITH?

The answer is not isolationism

John 17:15 My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of it.

1. **Acknowledge the influence of society and culture on faith**

Col 2:8 See to it that no-one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ.

3 cultural streams influencing faith today:

1. **Secularization:** I believe in God but not religion. God with no creed.
2. **Privatization:** Faith is based on my personal reality.
3. **Pluralization:** The staggering number of faith options.

2. **Become a student of the bible**

Mt 22:29 Jesus replied, “You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures”

3. **Think deeply about the matters of our time**

We have an obligation to think.

1Jo 4:1 Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

4. **Speak up**

Our response choices:

1. Indifferent
2. Hostile
3. Hopeful
4. Cautious
5. Engage



2Ti 4:2 Correct, rebuke and encourage--with great patience and careful instruction.

5. Point people to true, good, beautiful and causal Jesus

Joh 14:6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life.

Faith in real life is intentionally under the influence of the truth

What is the Gospel?

The Gospel is the "good news" that Jesus entered into our broken world to rescue us from sin. The good news is that through Christ's redemptive sacrifice on the cross, sinners are pardoned, the undeserving are given grace, and the broken are restored. There is no sin too heinous for God's forgiveness. There is no person so good in-and-of-themselves that they do not require forgiveness. Salvation is a free gift of God to anyone who genuinely acknowledges their brokenness and confesses saving faith in the Son of God. It doesn't take strong faith, just genuine faith in order to be saved.

An example prayer you could pray:

Heavenly Father, I acknowledge I'm broken and a sinner. I believe that Christ died on the cross for sin, and through his resurrection overcame sin and death. I believe in you. I thank you for saving me.

The good news does not end with a confession of faith. New faith can grow into deep faith if cultivated. Let someone at Sunridge know about your new-found faith, and inquire about our new believer's resource: God Time: Your First 31 Days. Follow Christ wholeheartedly by professing your faith publicly through baptism, learning the Bible by attending church regularly and pursuing the unique calling of Jesus in your life!