



LEADER'S GUIDE – FEBRUARY 10



HIGHLIGHT: *Primary Passage from Sunday*

James 1:13-27: 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 person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire 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 and sisters. 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.

¹⁹ My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, ²⁰ because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires. ²¹ Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.

²² Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. ²³ Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror ²⁴ and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. ²⁵ But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.

²⁶ Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless. ²⁷ Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.



EXPLAIN: *To Be Reviewed before the group gathering*

Last week we discussed James 1:1-12 and we learned a few things about trials: 1.) Trials are inevitable 2.) Trials mature us and complete our faith 3.) We must seek wisdom from God in the midst of trials and 4.) Jesus endured the ultimate trial for us. This week, we will discuss temptations in our life. Often in life, trials and temptations go hand in hand. Thankfully, James shows us how to approach each of these!

A

APPLY: For Group Discussion

1.) In your own words, what does it mean for someone to be deceived? Deceived means to be led astray, to be convinced that something false is true. **What would be a lighthearted example of this?** Mirrors at carnivals, Ads for free products, counterfeit money, etc. **How does one realize they are being deceived?** Truth is the antidote to deception. They must see the “real thing,” to identify the “fake thing.” *Illustration: People are trained to spot counterfeit money by focusing on a real dollar bill. By knowing the “real thing,” they then can spot anything that is not authentic.*

2.) Read vv. 13-18. What do these verses tell us about temptation? 1.) God does not tempt, 2.) Temptation occurs as we are dragged away from walking faithfully with God by their own desires, 3.) There is a progression to temptations. Deception -> Desire -> Disobedience -> Death. (Optional Side question: *Look at the progression in vv. 14-15 and also read Hebrews 4:15. What does this tell us about the relationship between sin and temptation? Temptation is not a sin, when we act on temptation it becomes a sin. Jesus, like you and I endured temptation, but never sinned.*

3.) In vv. 16-18, How does James encourage people to avoid the deception of temptations? Focus on the goodness of the Father and his gifts. He desires to give us an abundant life. Practically this would be reading his word, praying, meditating on the gifts he has given us (e.g. salvation, blessings, etc.) **Read Hebrews 3:12-13. What does this say about our need for community to help reveal where we have been deceived?** Along with the Word of God, we need one another so that we will not stay deceived. This means that self-examination is a group project. You need people who can point out “blind spots” in your spiritual walk.

4.) In vv.19-27, James gives us some helpful insights for how we can resist temptations. In these verses, which do you find most helpful and which do you have questions about? Some of the insights: Vv. 20-21 Addressing Anger; vv. 21 Evaluating places in their life that evil is present and leading to moral filth in their life (if you struggle with alcohol, don't go to a bar); vv.21-26 Applying what you are reading/hearing about the word of God.

R

RESPOND: Bringing the discussion to a point of action

The Response section is where we begin to get more personal. We would recommend giving more time to this than usual. As the leader of the group, you will know your group best and know how to facilitate this discussion. Few recommended options: 1.) Split up into guys and girls and discuss these questions. 2.) Stay in a big group and ask people to share as they are comfortable. 3.) Ask them to write down the questions and journal about them and share it with someone.

Think of a current temptation that you struggle to resist in your life. Either share with the group or write down your responses and discuss with someone this week.

- **What does God's Word say about this and how can you meditate on that this week?**
- **How can you share this with other believers in your life and ask them to help you?**
- **How can you remove yourself from situations that “trigger” this temptation?**