

Week One (August 1 – 7)

Day One: Perseverance

Read: Matthew 13:18-23, James 1:1-12

Reflect:

- 1) In the parable of the sower, Jesus talks about people who hear the message of the Gospel but don't "root" themselves in it. What happens to these people when trouble or persecution comes because of the Word?
 - a) They write insightful blogs about the struggle between society and religion
 - b) They muddle through somehow
 - c) They fall away
 - d) They stand strong and prove themselves to be "Super Christians"
- 2) James says to "consider it pure joy... whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces..."
 - a) Wealth
 - b) Health
 - c) Perseverance
 - d) Character
- 3) James addresses his letter to those "scattered among the nations". Why do you think his first words to such a group are about perseverance in the face of trials?
- 4) James says perseverance must finish its work so that you may be **mature** and **complete**, not lacking **anything**. Think about a difficult situation you have faced in the past. How did your choice to persevere change your attitude and outlook? How did your faith in God mature and become more complete?

Memorize:

"Blessed are those who persevere under trial, because when they have stood the test, they will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him." James 1:12 (TNIV)

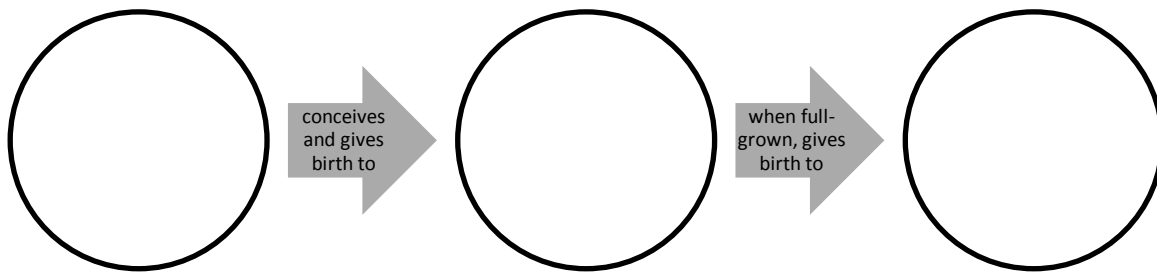
Day Two: Temptation

Read: James 1:13-15 & 1 Corinthians 10:12-13

Reflect:

- 1) According to James, who is responsible when we are tempted?
 - a) God
 - b) The devil
 - c) The world
 - d) Our own evil desire

- 2) James lays out a family tree of temptation. Use the following words to fill in the “generations” based on verse 15: Death, Sin, Evil Desire



- 3) In discussing temptation with the church at Corinth, Paul warns them: “If you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don’t fall!” Why do you think he needed to offer that warning? Can you think of a time when your Christian walk had a powerful experience, and then, soon after, you found yourself faced with temptation?

Memorize:

“No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.”
1 Corinthians 10:13 (NIV)

Day Three: Holy Living

Read: James 1:19-27, Isaiah 58:1-7

Reflect:

- 1) Fill in the blanks for verses James 1:19 – 20 using the following words:
righteous, slow, anger, quick, desires, slow
“My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be _____ to listen
_____ to speak and _____ to become angry, for man’s _____
does not bring about the _____ life that God _____.”
- 2) In verse 21, James admonishes his listeners to get rid of two things. What are they?
a) _____ b) _____
- 3) Twice James says that people who do certain things deceive themselves. Write down the two things these people do, according to verses 22 and 26:
a) _____
b) _____
- 4) How does Isaiah 58:3-4 highlight the previous question?
- 5) James describes “religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless”, and Isaiah speaks of “the kind of fasting” God has chosen. Determine whether the following statements are from James or Isaiah by circling either the J or the I:
J / I Look after orphans and widows in their distress
J / I Share your food with the hungry, and provide the poor wanderer with shelter
J / I Keep oneself from being polluted by the world
J / I Loose the chains of injustice, and untie the cords of the yoke
J / I When you see the naked, clothe them

Memorize:

“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.” James 1:27 (NIV)