

## Session 2: Actions

### Scripture questions:

James 1:2-4

James 1:13-17

**Compare trials and temptations. Is one good and the other bad? Why do you think this is the case?**

James 2:1-9

James 5:1-6

**What kind of behavior does James warn the people about? Why is it wrong? What is the perspective of the rich in these two passages?**

James 2:14-26

**What two things does James contrast? Why does he contrast them?**

**Why is it bad to believe in Christ without acting upon it?**

James 3:1-12

**What three things does James compare the tongue to? What point is he trying to make through these illustrations?**

**Why is the relationship between what a person says and what a person believes so important?**

**The book of James** has been called “New Testament Wisdom” because of the way it’s written and its theological emphasis. Some believe it has a greater connection with the Old Testament than the New Testament. James covers a variety of topics that emphasize that faith is found in what we do.

## **Trials and Temptations**

- We should celebrate and rejoice in trials because they provide us an opportunity to grow in our faith.
- Trials and Temptations are allowed by God for our growth and spiritual maturity.
- Trials and Temptations are not from God, but are born of our own sinful desires.

**James warns us about favoritism in the Church**, and reminds us that faith in Christ means that we are to treat everyone the same, regardless of a person’s wealth or status. We are called to love our neighbors as ourselves, which means that we should treat everyone as close neighbors, not just the wealthy. We should also keep in mind that **faith without action is dead**. There is no way that we can separate our actions from our beliefs. The love of Christ must be expressed in what we do so that others will know who we are by how we serve.

The tongue, a small part of our body, is capable of being greatly constructive or destructive. **What comes out of our mouths must reflect what is in our hearts**. This relates back to James’ discussion of faith and works. What we say must reflect the transformation that has occurred within us.

### **Application Questions:**

**Recalling James’ discussion of trials and temptations, give an example of one of each in your life. If trials benefit you, how do you develop a joyful attitude when facing them? How do you overcome temptations that are born inside of you (see Romans 8)?**

**Why do you think it is easier to treat the wealthy and famous better than those who are poor,**

**unknown, or unnoticed? How prevalent is this sin in the Church? What can you do to avoid falling into this trap?**

**If someone followed you for a day, would your actions show that you were a follower of Christ? If faith without works is dead, how would you rate your faith? What is one specific and recurring act of service that you can commit to as an expression of your belief in who Christ is?**

**What kind of ideas and words come out of your mouth? Why do you think you are tempted to be negative and destructive with your speech? How do you remedy this problem?**

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