

### **James 1:1-12 – January 23**

1. Given that he is writing to the ‘twelve tribes *scattered* among the nations,’ James knows that his audience will be familiar with trials. And yet he opens his letter by saying “Rejoice in trials!” Why? Is he saying that suffering is inherently good or that suffering refines and strengthens our faith (which is reason for rejoicing)? What’s your attitude when under pressure?
2. ‘God gives wisdom generously if you’re willing to ask.’ If you’re willing to ask, are you willing to hear and apply it?
3. James reverses the world’s values when he calls riches ‘worthless’ and humility ‘valuable.’ How can your use of money reflect God’s values?

### **James 1:13-20 – January 25**

1. Consider the ‘life-cycle’ of sin. We all have desires, some God-honouring, some not so much. When we begin to desire something that is outside of God’s goodness, we are tempted. When we give in to that temptation, our desire for it ‘conceives’ and gives birth to sin, which when then grows into death. Knowing this cycle, how can you ‘short-circuit it’ early on, keeping desire from getting out of hand?
2. “Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry...” (James 1:19). How would your relationships changed if you put that into practice?

### **James 1:21-27 – January 27**

1. ‘The word planted in you’ implies that we will internalize God’s Word. What strategies are most effective for you in doing that? (Reading the Bible with or without a plan, writing out Scripture verses, posting them on mirrors, memorizing Scripture, listening to recordings and sermons, etc.)
2. How can you personally ensure that you are a ‘doer’ of the Word and not just a ‘hearer’?

### **James 2:1-9 – January 30**

1. How does ‘favouritism’ violate the command to ‘love your neighbour as yourself’?
2. Langford is a pretty homogenous group compared to the churches who received James’ letter where rich and poor, slave and master would sit side-by-side in church. How could we do things differently at Langford to welcome people who were ‘different’ from us? And how could we avoid favouritism in that situation?

### **James 2:8-13 – February 1**

1. “...Whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it” (James 2:10). Why? How does God’s character affect your answer? How does this passage change your understanding of sin?
2. By giving us life when sin deserved death, God has demonstrated how ‘mercy triumphs over judgment.’ Having modelled that idea, God calls us to apply it ourselves. Pick an applicable situation in your life. What will it mean for you to put mercy before judgment in your circumstances?

### **James 2:14-26 – February 3**

1. Why are faith and deeds so intrinsically connected? How are you applying your faith? Does your faith motivate your actions?
2. Paul says that we are saved by faith alone (eg. Galatians 2:16) while James says that we are not justified by faith alone (James 2:24). Are these verses in conflict? Or could it be that deeds/works play a different role in their thinking? (Consider this – Paul is arguing that a person can only be saved by faith, not by works; James is saying that an already saved person will do works that reflect their salvation).

### **James 3:1-12 – February 6**

1. In what areas can you be more self-controlled?
2. If you were to ask a co-worker/family member/friend, would they say that you use your words to build others up or to complain and grumble and tear others down?

### **James 3:13-18 – February 8**

1. Where do you see ‘earthly wisdom’ at work in your workplace or family? What are the results?
2. If you showed people verse 17, would they say that your thoughts and actions reflect ‘heavenly wisdom’? How can you test your thoughts and aim them towards pure, peaceful, considerate ends?

### **James 4:1-10 – February 10**

1. What motivates your prayer life? How can the wisdom of the world skew our vision of what's reasonable to pray for?
2. This passage of Scripture ends with a series of commands. Which do you most need to hear and apply today?

### **James 4:11-17 – February 13**

1. 'Judge not lest ye best judged.' That verse is often quoted when Christians attempt to hold people accountable for sin. James too tells us here '...not to judge your neighbour.' How do we express our concern over sin without falling into slander? Is this even something we should do in the secular world? Does this apply only to 'brothers'/ie. other believers? Same question though – how do we interact with other Christians when we don't agree on things without resorting to judgmentalism?
2. Some believers would argue that whenever you make plans, you should really say 'if it is the Lord's will.' Is that reasonable? Or is it enough to know that God's will will be accomplished and that that's a good thing? Knowing the sovereignty of God's will, how can you use prayer to tap into it and make plans accordingly?

### **James 5:1-7 – February 15**

1. Who are the 'rich people' that James is addressing here? Christians? Non-Christians? Employers? Everyone? There seem to be two principles at work here: 1. Failing to properly compensate those who work for you 2. Hoarding resources for your own indulgence. How does a passage like this inform charitable giving? Tipping? Advocating for living wages? Luxuries?

### **James 5:8-20 – February 17**

1. Why is patience so important? How do the experiences of other believers and they tell us about God help us in the face of struggles?
2. How would your life change if you put verse 16 into action?