

LIFE IS HARD

Part 3

Key Scriptures: James 1:9-11; 12; 13-15; 16-17.

1. Start talking. Find a conversation starter for your group.

- I know you're awesome! But tell us of a time when someone humbled you.
- Tell of a time when God humbled you.
- Which was easier to handle, being humbled by others or by God? Why?

2. Start thinking. Ask a question to get your group thinking.

- Life can be hard...and GOOD. Life can be hard... and BAD. What determines if things go GOOD or BAD in hard times?
- What defines you? Your circumstances (hard times/good times) or your relationship with Jesus? Why?
- When life is hard, James points out that "Believers in humble circumstances ought to take pride in their high position." – James 1:9. Why does he address this to "believers"? Why not "You" or "Everyone"?
- "Gospel" means the good news. What in the Gospel of Jesus is good news to those in hard times?

3. Start sharing. Choose a question to create openness.

- Have you ever "jumped out of the frying pan and into the fire"? Were you making thoughtful decisions at the time or reacting to the difficult moment?
- When he says, "Take pride in your high position", James is basically challenging us with "Life is not just about what is happening to us. It's about what Jesus has done for you." What "high position" gives you the perspective to get through hard times?
- It is tough to look beyond the way things are NOW and to look at the promises of how things will be FOREVER. What promises of FOREVER give you the most comfort?
- Sin promises to make you feel better, but it does not make things better. How does your faith actually make things better in your life??

4. Start praying. Be bold and pray with power.

- A relationship with Jesus doesn't just lead to eternal life, It changes how you deal with the trials in this life. Pray for wisdom that leads to:
 - PEACE, not PANIC.
 - WISDOM, not REACTIONS.
 - PERSPECTIVE, not TUNNEL-VISION.

5. Start doing. Commit to a step and live it out this week.

- Strengthen your faith this week by memorizing this verse:
 - Isaiah 41:10 – So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.