

## New City Fellowship Core Values Class: Trials – Wisdom and Faith – our character and the accomplishment of God’s Justice

The book of James as a focused theology for going through trials the way God intends.

- What God offers: James 1:5-7 – Ask for Wisdom
  - Belief vs. Doubt
  - Framed in economic realities (1:9-11) – boasting in poverty
  - Endurance vs. Temptation (1:12-18)
  - Checking your state of mind (1:19-21)
    - Guard against anger
    - Accept the Word
    - Obedience flowing through faith
      - Why the focus on the orphan and the widow and keeping yourself from being unstained?
- Pitfalls to avoid when dealing with Trials
  - Replacing mercy / identification with the poor with envy / favoritism towards the rich (2:1-13)
    - Cultural values / controls that exclude or displace / undervalue the poor
    - Quite possibly a means of dodging the painful trials or positioning ourselves to moderate them
    - Does not mean that we are never to enjoy the good gifts from God or that we should not make financially sound / accountable decisions

- Thinking that a theological understanding of mercy is the same as living a life of mercy towards others (2:14-26)
  - Not enough to try to avoid living a self-serving life – we need to be filled with mercy that is active towards others
  - Key element of wisdom from God in the face of trials
  
- Self Righteousness (3:1-12)
  - Evidenced in how we speak about others – particularly when we are in conflict – cursing, boasting about bitter jealousy and selfish ambition – many times expressed when we feel like we have been “wronged” or treated unfairly by others
  - Instead we ought to be peacemakers, through wisdom from heaven.
  
- Self-Indulgence or the Love of Money 4:1-5:6
  - Driven by desires to have
  - The reality is that it is completely in opposition to the call of God to belong to Him
  - Looks like good vision / drive for success – but ignores the presence of God’s kingdom agenda in the day to day tasks and decisions
  - Accumulation of wealth, luxurious living and self indulgence IS oppressive to the poor
  
- Hitting the reset button (5:7-20)
  - Patience in suffering
  - Pray, pray, pray > fellowship with God and with His family