

**Title: Facing Obstacles, Trials and Failure  
in your life without God\***

\*Small Group Leader "Guidelines"

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**PRAY: A suggested one or two sentence opening prayer for small group members to invite God to connect with them as they seek Him in his Word.**

*Lord, as I face new obstacles and major trials in my life help me to realize that I am not alone. When I do fail, help me to seek forgiveness and then move forward with total dependence on God. Amen*

**READ: Scripture Reference (James 1: 2-5)**

**Key Verse** *(<sup>2</sup> My friends, consider yourselves fortunate when all kinds of trials come your way, <sup>3</sup> for you know that when your faith succeeds in facing such trials, the result is the ability to endure.")*

**A suggested "devotional" below focused on drawing small group members deeper into the text and helps them personally engage with Scripture.**

*Many times men believe they are "in charge" and sometimes when faced with major obstacles or realizing failure in their lives, don't know what to do or where to turn. This can be true even for Christian men.*

*One of the reasons men act this way is that God created us to "be strong". We are to make a living, support our wives, lead our families in Faith and help others. Men are strong or act strong so much of the time that sometimes it is hard to let go and fully trust God. Many times it is not until we face trials and failure that we are fully open to realizing God's Love is perfect and can handle anything we face.*

**It also says in James 1:5** *"But if any of you lack wisdom, you should pray to God, who will give it to you; because God gives generously and graciously to all."* For men, the operative words are definitely "wisdom" and "pray".

Have you ever experienced times in your life when you thought you knew something and then found out you were mistaken? Or, after the fact you realized you should have known better or anticipated a major problem.

Prayer should always be the starting point when facing obstacles, trials, or failure in our lives. The ultimate source of all wisdom is God, who in **James 1: 6** says, *“But when you pray, you must believe and not doubt at all”*.

Studying James will help us realize God wants to help us. James is overflowing with Truth that is relevant to “all of life’s circumstances”. The benefits from reading James begin when we truly pray and trust Him completely.

## **REFLECT:**

Two questions to help us consider how the passage applies to our life.

1. **James 1:12** says, *“Happy are those who remain faithful under trials, because when they succeed in passing such a test, they will receive as their reward the life which God has promised to those who love him.”* If we fail any given test in life does that mean we forfeit all that God has promised us? Where does temptation from our trials originate.
2. **In James 1:22** it says, *“Do not deceive yourselves by just listening to his word; instead put it into practice”*. The message here is quite clear. How will you put this into practice tomorrow? The next week? For the rest of your life?

## **Discipleship Study Questions:**

Three suggested discussion questions that encourage small group members to search Scripture.

1. **Read Isaiah 43:2** and discuss what this Scripture says to you personally. When faced with major troubles do you think you can let go and trust God? Remember the last time you faced an overwhelming problem or obstacle. Do think praying would have helped you get through the issue and will you pray next time you face similar problems?
2. **In Peter 2:9** it says *“the Lord knows how to rescue godly people from their trials”*. How does God know about our trials? How do you know God will always be there for you when you are enduring a major problem in your life?
3. **Read 1 Peter 1:6-7** which talks about *“for you to be sad for a while”* and *“to prove your faith is genuine”*. Do you think we can become closer to God without the trials and tribulations we face on earth? Do you believe the sole purpose of our trials and problems is to “test us and our faith”?

**A suggested closing prayer:**

*Lord, when faced with problems and obstacles in my life help me to let go and trust you will give me wisdom which I do not have myself. Knowing I will sometimes fail when faced with life's multiple challenges, help me remember to seek your forgiveness and then move forward with dependence on you.*