

Facilitator:

1. Open with prayer.
2. Welcome any newcomers
3. Read James 1:2-4 and give a 5 minute review of the sermon using Peppy's sermon notes.

CONNECT Group study question, James 1:2-4

February 9, 2014

Title: No Pain, No Gain

Read to the Group: Have you ever heard it said that once you become a Christian, life gets easier, your bank account turns from red to black, and you'll never suffer anything worse than the sniffles? Maybe not in those words, but did it sound something like that? I have, and apparently so did the people James was writing to. They were perplexed by the heavy persecution they were suffering, and by the temptation to end the suffering by rejecting their new found faith in Christ.

Question: How easy do you think it would be to slip back into the old life and go with the flow of the society they lived in? (Explain your answer.)

Read to the Group: John Blanchard said, "Temptations are sent by the devil to make a person fall; trials are sent by God to make a person stand." Therefore, temptations are a negative thing and trials are a positive thing.

Question: What has been your perspective of trials? Do you see them as positive or negative? Why?

Question: What are some examples in Scripture where someone's faith was tested? Did they pass or fail? Why?

Read to the Group: We learned through the sermon that God uses trials to produce spiritual toughness (patience and endurance) and the end result is spiritual maturity or Christlikeness.

Question: Share a trial or faith test that God has used in your life to make you more Christlike.

Read to the Group: Most of us pray prayers like: Oh Lord, please don't let me go through this trial, or Lord, please don't let me suffer.

Question: Would you be willing to pray a prayer that sounds something like this: Lord, do whatever it takes to make me Christlike or to make a difference for you in this world, even if it means suffering. Explain your answer.