

Study Guide for the Week of April 20, 2008

This study guide is designed to help you to become more familiar with the Bible. Study these passages on your own, with a friend, or with a group. If you or someone you know needs a Bible, please take one from under a chair in the Worship Center. They are there for you to take home and use! Sermon manuscripts are available at www.spwired.com.

Monday, April 21 – Through this series we're going to memorize one verse each week. Memorization helps put God's word in our minds and hearts. Memorize James 1:22. *"Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says"* (James 1:22, NIV). **Read James 1:1-4.** Aaron talked about how James called himself a servant, literally a slave, of Jesus Christ. Would you call yourself a slave of God? Why or why not? James tells us to consider it a joy when we face trials. What does he say trials bring? Have you found this to be so in your life?

Tuesday, April 22 – Go over the memorization passage for the week. **Read James 1:5-8.** This passage tells us that if we are to live up to our potential we should ask God for the gift of wisdom. But we must ask in such a way that we remember God's generosity, trust God in his promises, and believe God will give us what we truly need. Why is this difficult? How can you put it into practice? **Read James 1:9-11.** This passage is a commentary on the world then and now. James is reminding followers of Christ that if they are poor, they are people of great worth. And he is reminding the rich, that it is not their wealth that makes them valuable. Riches give a false sense of security. James is saying to the poor and the rich to put their trust in that which cannot be taken from them, their connection to God through Jesus Christ. What does this tell you about God? About yourself?

Wednesday, April 23 – Hit the memorization verse again. **Read James 1:12-18.** This passage speaks on the theme of temptation. James is responding to those who would say, "God is tempting me to test me." His response is meant to be very clear: God does not tempt anyone. Instead it is our own desire that we leave unchecked that leads us into sin. What stages of temptation does James list? How have you seen these in your life? James emphasizes that God is the giver of good and perfect gifts, and that God doesn't shift like shadows, but that God is predictable in his goodness. In other words, God doesn't play games with humanity. What does this tell you about God?

Thursday, 24 – How are you doing on the memorization verse? Is it locked in? **Read James 1:19-25.** How might your life be different, better, if you were to practice verses 19-20? How do these verses relate to the memorization passage? Verse 21 is a challenge to do some spiritual housecleaning. If you could hire a housekeeper for your soul, what would you want them to clean first? What is the dirtiest part of your soul? What do the verses about the mirror say to you today? What parts of God's word would you like to forget the moment you hear them?

Friday, April 25 – Hit James 1:22 one more time. **Read James 1:26-27.** James gives a few indicators of spiritual maturity. What are they? There are many indicators of spiritual growth, why do you think James chose these? How do you keep control of your words? How do you go beyond yourself to meet the needs of those James mentions? How does the memorization passage relate to what James is talking about in today's verses? What can you **do** about these verses?