

Small Group and Personal Bible Study - Week of 5/13

Memory Verse: Hebrews 4:16

Let us approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Small Group Questions:

Read James 1:12-18

1. What lessons do you find in these verses about temptation?

In these verses I learn that I will be tempted! Not of but when, verse 13. I also learn that temptation is not from God. It is evil and leads to sins. When I am tempted it can lead to "desire" verse 14 & 15. That gives birth to sin and to death.

2. What do you learn about God from these verses

I learn that nothing evil (including temptation) can come from him. He has nothing to do with evil. He blesses that person who perseveres under trials. He honors those who stand the test. Everything good and perfect is from God. Temptation is not good, it is not from God. He has given us a birth (regeneration) through the word of truth (the Gospel/Jesus Christ). That is all I need.

3. What do you learn about yourself from these verses?

I will be tempted. God gives good things and he will help me overcome. I have a crown of life as my reward from God. I have all I need in Jesus Christ, verse 18!

Read Hebrew 2:5-18 and Hebrew 4:14-16

4. What do additional lessons, regarding temptation, do you learn from these verses in Hebrews?

Jesus was subjected to temptation as I am. He understands my trials. He will help me through it if I cry out to him.

5. How and why can the Lord help us through temptation?

He understands our struggles because he endured them himself. He is our Lord. We belong to him and everything is subject to him. He alone is our help and only through Him can we overcome temptation.

Note: This week we are reading a number of scriptures around temptation and sin. You may choose to dive in deeply into one or more of these stories.

This Week's Daily Reading Plan:

- Matthew 4 - Jesus overcomes temptation

In Matthew 4, we learn how Jesus relied on the truth of God to overcome Satan and his lies. Knowing the truth of God's word is a powerful lesson in overcoming temptation.

- Genesis 39 - Joseph runs from temptation

In Genesis 39, we see how Joseph understood his sin would be against God and that he could not do such an evil thing so he ran. Running from temptation is something most of us could stand to do a lot more often. This might mean getting out of conversations that pull you in to sin (gossip, lies, anger...). This might mean turning off the TV or the computer that pulls you into sin (lust or idolatry...). This might mean staying away from people and places that pull you into addictive sins (drugs, alcoholism, gambling). The bottom line is you need to acknowledge temptation and then get away from it. Don't try to overcome it by being stronger in your own power.

- **2 Samuel 11 - David gives into temptation**

In this lesson, we learn how David entertained the thought of temptation. David was a man of God yet he fell into the sin of adultery because unlike Jesus, he didn't look to God for direction and unlike Joseph, he didn't flee from temptation. Instead, he sinned and then tried to hide his sin with more sin, murder of Bathsheba's husband. On top of that, he lied to his people.

- **2 Samuel 12:1-25 - David repents of sin**

In this lesson, we learn how David was confronted of sin by the prophet Nathan. This teaches us how much God wants us to turn from our sin and seek him. David needed to be broken so that God could restore him and use him. God did not cause David's sin but God used David's repentant heart to serve him. In Psalm 51, we read about David's prayer of repentance.

- **Psalm 51 - David's Repentant Prayer**

David sinned and tried to hide it until God got hold of him. Then finally David was broken and desperate for God that he acknowledged his sin. He agreed with God. He recognized the depth of his sin but also the greatness of God's grace. He accepted forgiveness and turned from His sin. David did what all of us must do when we sin. He repented. Repentance is far more than confessing sin. It is turning from sin; to the point that sin becomes distasteful to us and we cease sinning. Repentance is not a one time thing but a repeated process. We must come to true repentance as David did so that God can create in us a new heart.