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Dependable or Double-minded?

James 1:1-18

No pain. No gain. Or so the saying goes. Athletes remind themselves of this to get their best possible performance. Sometimes they have to go through grueling training. Without it, there is no improvement. James suggests it is the same for Christians.

1. “Getting in shape is simple. Just eat right and exercise regularly.” Why do you find this easier said than done?

2. Read James 1:1-18. Why does it seem strange that we should “consider it pure *joy*” whenever we “face trials of many kinds” (v. 2)?

3. How are perseverance and maturity developed in us by enduring trials (vv. 3-4)?

4. What difficult experiences have increased your perseverance and maturity?

5. How might trials expose our need for God's wisdom (v. 5)?

6. Under pressure, how does the faithful Christian (vv. 5-6) contrast with the person described in verses 6-8?

7. In the context of trials and perseverance, why does James contrast rich and poor Christians (vv. 9-11)?

8. In what ways do you tend to rely on your possessions?

9. How are temptations different from trials (vv. 2-16)?

10. What role does God play when we face trials and when we face temptations (vv. 2-16)?

11. How is God the ultimate example of goodness and dependability (vv. 16-18)?

How is this a source of joy and hope for you?

12. Think of trials or temptations you are currently facing. How can this passage encourage you to depend on God?

13. Take time now to talk to God about your needs. Ask him to help you be like him in his goodness and dependability.