

TAKEAWAY

LIFE HACKS

Weird words of wisdom

CONSIDER IT JOY

Sunday 16th February 2020

INTRODUCTION

We've started a new series looking through this little letter written by Jesus' brother James. It's jam packed full of proverbs and challenges as James' writes to show what 'true religion' really looks like. It's a challenge to move beyond listening and nodding to wise words and to really put into action what you hear.

READ

James 1:1-12

DISCUSS

1. James kicks straight off with some tough wisdom. What's your gut reaction to his challenge about considering trials? How realistic do you think it is?

2. 'Consider it Joy'. When life throws us challenges we get to choose how to respond. How in control of your emotional response to situations do you consider yourself to be? Does it feel like situations control your emotions? Or you?

3. Verses 6-7 seem to throw a spanner in the works – what does James mean when he says if you doubt, don't expect to get anything from God? He has already said God is generous and doesn't look at our faults. So which is true? I think the answer is in verse 8 – the double-minded person. James is saying, if you go to God for wisdom, be ready to listen. So often we only want to listen to what we want to hear. We go to God for Him to fix things. We don't want Him to tell us to stick at it and be more patient, selfless or humble. So

we treat God like one of our advisors, if we don't like the answer we'll go to someone who says what we want to hear. Does that ring true for you? Do you have friends who will give you tough advice when you need it?

4. Verses 9-11 are complicated too. Essentially, those who are poor can delight that they live in a position where their need for God's provision is obvious because they see him at work more clearly, and those who are rich should delight in those areas of their life which remind them of



their need for God. It's so easy in our relatively wealthy western world to forget we need God. What strengths do you have that can stop you relying on God?

Riches, education, health, popularity, success, family?

5. When have you experienced a great need for God? How did that change your relationship with him?

PRAY

Re-read verses 5-8 – James suggests that when we don't know

how to find the joy in a situation, we should ask God for wisdom. It's good to pray for a deeper understanding of what God's doing in our life. Why not take some time to pray for each other now?

