

JAMES

BLUEPRINTS FOR A BETTER LIFE

[Calluses]

PURPOSE OF GROUP

Grow: Take next steps in our faith journey.

Invite: Make room for others to grow.

Support: Care and serve one another.

PRAY

CONNECT

- How were you first introduced to the Bible?
- Has your view of the Bible changed as you've gotten older?
 - If so, how?

Most people are bothered by those passages of Scripture they do not understand, but the passages that bother me are those I do understand.

—Mark Twain

READ JAMES 1:21-25

- What stuck out to you in the sermon/text this week?
- James 1:21 The word for “filth” is a rare word that has the idea of wax in your ears. How does this “wax” or “callous” build up around our hearts?
- Check your own heart. Which of these signs do you see in yourself most?
- James compared the Word of God as a seed and a mirror.

• SEED

- What are some implications of God's Word being a seed?
- James saw the human heart as a garden. If left to itself, the soil would produce only weeds. He urged us to “pull out the weeds” and prepare the soil for the “implanted Word of God.”
- The Word of God cannot work in our lives unless we receive it in the right way. We are called to receive with humility. What does it look like to receive God's Word with pride vs humility?
- When you read God's Word at home what is your natural reaction? What about when you hear teaching at church?
- When you receive the Word with meekness/humility, you accept it, don't argue with it, and honor it as the Word of God. You do not try to twist it to conform it to your thinking.
 - What is the biggest way God's Word has changed your thinking and your heart *since becoming a Christian*?
 - What's the biggest way it's changed your heart *in the last year*?

• MIRROR

- What are some implications of God's Word being a mirror?
- The whole point of looking in a mirror is to see your reflection, and you know whatever you need to do, maybe I missed a spot shaving, or whatever it is. But if we are not going to remember what we look like, there is no point.

Signs of a calloused ♥

1. Little to no excitement about God.
2. Difficulty worshipping.
3. A tendency toward critical.
4. Apathy toward basic Christian disciplines.

In the same way, if you attend a Bible study and you're not actually going to do something after it, if you're going to sit in a church service and there's no action, or doing, or deeds afterwards...James says, "Why do you even do that? It's worthless."

- What mistakes do Christians sometimes make when they look into God's mirror? What often gets substituted for doing what God says in the Word? Why do you think this happens?
- What is the problem with being only a hearer of the Word?
- What about only being a doer?
- How has God's Word changed your actions since *first becoming a Christian*?
- How has God's Word changed your actions *in the last year*?
- In v 25, what does James call God's law? In what way is this "a law of liberty"? Wouldn't you think it does the opposite?

FINAL QUESTION (break up into men and woman)

- Is there any sin that is causing your heart to be calloused that you need to confess?
- Is there something in Scripture you're refusing apply?

PRAY

SUGGESTED ACCOUNTABILITY QUESTIONS

(Below are three sets of accountability questions. My suggestion would be to break up into men and women and do one set of accountability questions every meeting or just do the top 3 below...)

Top 3

- What has God been teaching/challenging you in this week through Scripture and prayer?
- When it comes to your relationships, what can we pray for you about?
- Are you holding on to anything you need to confess (*anger, lust, envy, anxiety, jealousy, bitterness*)?

— OR —

How's your relationship with God?	How's your relationships with others?	How's your heart?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How have you experienced God's love and goodness this week? • What has gotten in the way of your relationship with God this last week? • What has God been teaching/challenging you in this week through Scripture and prayer? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you angry/bitter/resentful toward anyone? Anyone you need to apologize to or reconcile with? • What have you done to serve, encourage, and lead your family/friends closer to God? • Who are you actively trying to share the love of God with? (Inviting to church, serving them, reaching out) (pick a new person every month) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you holding on to anything you need to confess? (<i>lust, lying, greed, anger, envy, pride, laziness, gluttony — I would use this question to talk about purity.</i>) • How has your anger/envy/anxiety/addiction shown up this week? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does that reveal what you're trusting in besides God?