



Good Shepherd  
Sermon-Based Study Guide  
James 1:12-18 | September 14, 2025  
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## I. Introduction to this Study

James continues his practical call to a faith that shows itself in everyday life. In this passage he revisits the theme of perseverance, but with a sharper focus on *desire*. He reminds us that God blesses those who remain steadfast under trial and makes it clear that temptation never comes from God. Instead, our own unchecked desires can lead us toward sin and death.

At the same time, James points us to God as the source of “every good and perfect gift,” the Father who never changes. True life and lasting joy are found not in what we grasp for, but in God himself. This week we are invited to look beneath the surface and examine the deepest longings of our hearts—reorienting our desires so that they align with God’s best gift: life with Him.

## II. Connecting with One Another

What’s the last thing you really wanted and finally got? Was it as satisfying as you imagined it would be?

## III. Study the Text

*Read James 1:12*

- James promises “the crown of life” to those who persevere under trial. What does this crown represent?
- How does the lasting reward of the crown of life differ from the temporary successes or pleasures we often chase?

*Read James 1:13-15*

- Why is it significant that James insists God never tempts us? How does this shape the way we see our struggles with sin?
- According to these verses, how do unchecked desires grow into sin and ultimately lead to death?



*Read James 1:16-18*

- Why does James warn, “Do not be deceived”? About what?
- What does he reveal about God’s character as the giver of “every good and perfect gift”?

*Going Deeper on Desire*

- How can we discern what we truly long for beneath surface wants like comfort, recognition, or success?
- How might our response to trials reveal the real desires of our hearts?
- In what ways can we reorient our hearts so that God Himself is our greatest desire?

*Reflect and Respond*

- Where are you experiencing trials right now? How might God be inviting you to persevere and trust Him?
- What “desires beneath the desire” might be shaping how you see these trials?
- How have you experienced God as the giver of good gifts—gifts that go beyond material things?
- What specific step could you take this week to nurture a deeper desire for God himself?

#### **IV. Prayer**

*Spend time in prayer together:*

- Thank God for His unchanging goodness and every good gift He provides.
- Confess any areas where selfish desires have led to temptation or sin.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to deepen your love for God so that He becomes your greatest desire.
- Pray for strength to persevere faithfully in trials.

#### **V. Digging Deeper**

*For additional reflection:*

- **Psalm 37:4** – How does delighting in God reshape our desires?
- **Matthew 6:19–21** – What do Jesus’ words about treasure reveal about the heart’s longings?
- **1 Corinthians 10:13** – What does God promise when we face temptation?
- **Philippians 4:11–13** – How can contentment in Christ guard our desires?

