

- **Weekly Recollection:** Think back through this past week. If you captured any of your week in your journal, look through those pages. On a new page, write down three good things that happened in your life. Next, write down three difficult or challenging events from the same time. Answer these prompts in your journal:
  - How did you react to both the negative and positive events of last week?
  - What did you learn about yourself or God from one of these events?
  - Have you given God thanks for the difficult things as well as the good?
  - Share an event from your list with the group.

**CONNECT WITH SCRIPTURE** (Read the passages and review the sermon outline. Then select the best questions or customize the questions for your group.)

- Read James 1:16-27.
- Read the main points from the sermon outline.
- What topic in the sermon and scripture stood out to you?
- What good and perfect gifts come to your mind when you read this passage?
- How does God's unchanging nature (immutability) bring you peace or fear?
- Who, in your life, has exemplified the commands of verse 19?
- What does it mean to forget what your reflection looks like spiritually (vv. 23-24)?
- How does God's perfect law bring you freedom?
- How would you define pure and faultless religion?

**CONNECT WITH GOD'S MISSION IN THE WORLD** (select one question for discussion and pray together)

- Who are the orphans and widows or other vulnerable people in your circles and how can you care for them?
- Given the mental health challenges we face today, how can you partner with the Holy Spirit to bring healing, help, and wholeness to your: self, family, church, and neighborhood?
- How can you allow God's word to be planted in you so that you have life this week?
- Share with each other an area of moral filth or moral pollution that is heavy on your heart (i.e. unholy anger, slander, lust, greed, injustice, racism). Pray with your group asking God for forgiveness for your own failings and ask the Lord to complete the sanctifying work he began in you.
- End your time in prayer writing down any prayer requests in your journal.

## MESSAGE OUTLINE

September 26, 2021  
Pastor Mike McClenahan

**HUMILITY  
& WISDOM**

### WEEK 2—JAMES 1:16-27 (NIV)

<sup>16</sup> Don't be deceived, my dear brothers and sisters. <sup>17</sup> Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. <sup>18</sup> He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.

<sup>19</sup> My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, <sup>20</sup> because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires. <sup>21</sup> Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.

<sup>22</sup> Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. <sup>23</sup> Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror <sup>24</sup> and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. <sup>25</sup> But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.

<sup>26</sup> Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless.

<sup>27</sup> Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

(Message Outline Points on the next page.)

## MESSAGE OUTLINE POINTS

### The truth is...

*Don't be deceived, my dear brothers and sisters...*

- **God is good and faithful.**  
*Every good and perfect gift is from above... the perfect law that gives freedom...*
- **We have a unique identity and purpose.**  
*...that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.*

### Therefore, it matters that we...

- **examine our own lives,**  
*Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry...*
- **do what we believe,**  
*Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.*
- **and care for the vulnerable.**  
*...to look after orphans and widows in their distress...*

I love the Lord, for he heard my voice; he heard my cry for mercy. Because he turned his ear to me, I will call on him as long as I live. The cords of death entangled me, the anguish of the grave came over me; I was overcome by distress and sorrow. Then I called on the name of the Lord: "Lord, save me!" The Lord is gracious and righteous; our God is full of compassion. The Lord protects the unwary [simplehearted]; when I was brought low, he saved me. Return to your rest, my soul, for the Lord has been good to you. For you, Lord, have delivered me from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling, that I may walk before the Lord in the land of the living. **Psalm 116:1-9**

### NOTES:

## SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

September 26, 2021

*James: Humility and Wisdom*

Part 2: James 1:16-27

**CONNECT WITH GOD** (choose one of these practices that best suits your group or use a practice from a previous week)

- **Slowing:**

Read: "If you can't take time to do nothing, you are a slave to doing. Doing nothing is a radical, revolutionary act. It frees you from the universal slavery of our age: slavery to the clock. The clock measures doing but not being." —Peter Kreeft

Explain: During these next 3-5 minutes write down all of the tasks that are occupying your mind and keeping you from simply being in the presence of the God who loves you. When you have written down the things you are hurrying from, simply sit focusing on Jesus.

- **Breath Prayer:** This ancient form of prayer is a reminder of the nearness of God in everyday life and his provision—even in each breath we take. As we breathe in, we pray in our mind and heart "Lord Jesus Christ..." and as we exhale, pray "have mercy on me." Do this in silence, together at your own pace, until everyone has prayed/breathed this ten times.
- **Opening prayer:** Simply open your small group time in a focused prayer. Ask God to reveal his truth to you through scripture and the Holy Spirit. Give praise to God for what he has been doing in your life and the world, and recognize Jesus Christ as the great mediator between us and God.

## CONNECT WITH EACH OTHER

- **Journaling:** Many spiritual practices this year will require a journal. If you are a small group leader be prepared with paper and pen for those who are without. Please remember that there is no right way to journal. Journals can be intermittent, upside down, written, drawn, or doodled. They are a way to capture what God is doing in you over time. Journaling with your small group will include a prompt; however, in your time alone with God, allow the Spirit to be your leader.

(Small Group Questions continued on the back)