



# Discussion Guide

## January 18, 2015



Discussion Questions	Leader Notes
<p><b>Real Life Hard Knocks</b>            The word Hershey is synonymous with chocolate and for years has been responsible for many smiles across the faces of the world's chocolate lovers. However, this simple pleasure had a bumpy beginning. Milton Hershey dropped out of school in the fourth grade and took an apprenticeship with a printer, only to be fired. Before developing the company that delivers a sweet bite of sugar, chocolate and calories, Hershey started three unsuccessful candy companies in Philadelphia, Chicago and New York.</p> <p>Fortunately, Milton Hershey did not give up. He moved back to Lancaster and began the Lancaster Caramel Company. His unique caramel recipe was a huge success. In 1900, Hershey sold the Lancaster Caramel Company for \$1 million and started the Hershey Company, which brought milk chocolate - previously a Swiss delicacy - to the masses.</p>	<p>Before you begin today, think of a recent problem or difficulty in your life. How did you work through it? How did God help you face the situation, and work through it? You may want to share this with your group to get your group on the same page.</p> <p>The first step to leading good discussion is getting several people involved in the discussion by asking non-threatening questions that will engage the whole group and get everyone thinking about the same thing.</p>
<p><b>Discussion Kick Off</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tell of a time in your life when you went through a trial. How did you respond?</li> <li>2. In your opinion, what is the world's view toward trials?</li> <li>3. What is perseverance and maturity? How do faith tests produce such attributes in us?</li> <li>4. In verse 4, James speaks of the fruit of perseverance and then follows those words with instructions to ask God for wisdom. Why does he do this?</li> <li>5. What good has God brought into your life as a result of trials you've gone through?</li> </ol>	<p>Read James 1:1-18. Make it more interesting by reading from the Message version (free on the You Version Bible App).</p> <p>"People are like tea bags. You find out how strong they are when you put them in hot water."</p> <p>- First Lady, Eleanor Roosevelt</p>
<p><b>Evaluate It</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We tell the stories of those who have persevered. Why do we seldom, if at all, tell the stories of those who did not persevere?</li> <li>2. Describe the double-minded man. Why should he expect to receive little from the Lord?</li> <li>3. In verses 9-11, James implies that the trials of life erase superficial distinctions between the rich and the poor. Why is this true?</li> <li>4. How have life's "hard knocks" challenged you to seek God?</li> </ol>	
<p><b>Make It Personal</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In verse 12, James states that the person who perseveres will receive the crown of life. How can this future reality help us to persevere in the present and how can we focus on it?</li> <li>2. How will you see God in the unexpected circumstances in your life?</li> </ol>	<p>It's easy to talk about what impact the sermon has on others, but we need to evaluate the impact it has on us as individuals.</p>
<p><b>Take It Home</b></p> <p>Consider Joni Eareckson Tada. As a teenager, she enjoyed riding horses, hiking, tennis and swimming. On July 30, 1967, she dove into Chesapeake Bay after misjudging the shallowness of the water and suffered a fracture between the fourth and fifth cervical levels leaving her paralyzed from the shoulders down.</p> <p>During her two years of rehabilitation she experienced anger, depression, suicidal thoughts and religious doubts. However, Joni learned to paint with a brush between her teeth and began selling her artwork. To date, she has written over forty books, recorded several musical albums, starred in an autobiographical movie of her life, began a nonprofit organization (Joni and Friends) and is an advocate for disabled people.</p>	<p>At the end of the discussion take a moment to take prayer requests from the group (if you haven't done so) and pray for your group before you end your time together.</p>

Starting a Table or Life Group? Take a look at the helpful information below:

Who establishes and makes up a table group?

1. Husband & Wife
2. Family
3. 2-5 Guys
4. 2-5 Ladies
5. 2-5 Couples

Where do they meet?

1. Kitchen table
2. Coffee table
3. Cafe table
4. Restaurant table
5. Picnic table
6. Work table
7. Round table

- Meeting (how often, how long): Weekly or bi-weekly (day and time is decided by the group). No more than 2 hours.
- Who leads a table group? Leadership can be shared, or the group may choose a leader.
- How long does the group stay together? The group should commit to stay together 6-8 weeks. Groups can renew their commitment to meet together for another season (6-8 weeks).
- What happens if the group is too big to meet around a table? No table group should have more than 15 individuals. If a group grows to have more than 15 participants, there are two options:
  - Multiply into separate tables (groups of less than 15) or
  - Seek to establish a life group (10-20 participants)
- If you have any questions or would like to establish a life group, please contact Jason Fox at 270-765-4994 or [jason@fcctown.com](mailto:jason@fcctown.com).

If you would like to talk with a minister,  
call 270-765-4994 to set up an appointment or contact:

Stuart Jones [stuart@fcctown.com](mailto:stuart@fcctown.com) Senior Minister  
Chris Kiger [chris@fcctown.com](mailto:chris@fcctown.com) Student Minister  
Jason Fox [jason@fcctown.com](mailto:jason@fcctown.com) Small Group Minister

Doug Mitchell [doug@fcctown.com](mailto:doug@fcctown.com) Connections Minister  
Tim Hurd [tim@fcctown.com](mailto:tim@fcctown.com) Children's Minister  
Shannon Smith [Shannon@fcctown.com](mailto:Shannon@fcctown.com) Assistant Children's Director