



Study Guide: Doing Hard Things

Link: <https://oregoncitychurch.org/podcasts/media/2026-03-03-how-to-do-hard-things>

Scripture Focus	Preacher	Date
James 1:9-18	Steve Haney	March 1, 2026

This study guide is designed to help you reflect on and apply the principles from Steve's sermon on James 1:9-18. Use it for personal reflection or share it with a small group this week.

1. Focus on the Crown (Monday - Tuesday)

Steve highlighted that "doing hard things" becomes easier when we shift our focus from our immediate pain to the eternal reward.

- **Reflect:** Read **James 1:12**. What "hard thing" are you currently facing? Are you focusing more on the "agony" of the trial or the "crown of life" promised by God?
- **Practice:** This week, when you feel overwhelmed by a challenge, take 60 seconds to visualize the peace of heaven. Remind yourself: *"This trial is temporary; the reward is eternal."*

2. Boasting in Every Circumstance (Wednesday)

James encourages both the lowly and the rich to boast—not in themselves, but in their position before God.

- **Reflect:** Review **James 1:9-11**. Do you find it harder to be joyful when you are "brought low" (facing trials) or to remain humble when you are "exalted" (experiencing success)?
- **Practice:** Identify one area where you've felt "low" lately. Write down one way God has used that situation to strengthen your faith. If you are in a season of "exaltation," identify one way you can use your blessings to serve others rather than yourself.

3. Trials vs. Temptations (Thursday - Friday)

A key takeaway from the sermon was that God tests our faith through trials to help us grow, but He never lures us into sin through temptation.

- **Reflect:** Read **James 1:13-15**. Steve noted that "temptation does not equal sin." Have you been carrying unnecessary guilt just for being tempted?
- **Practice:** When you feel a "lure" toward an old habit or a sinful desire, stop and pray immediately: "*Lord, this desire is not from You. Help me see the path to remain steadfast.*" Remember that shame only has a place if we give in; let the victory of overcoming be your "boast" instead.

4. You are a Good Gift (Saturday)

The sermon concluded with the powerful idea that we are created in God's image and are "good gifts" to one another.

- **Reflect:** Read **James 1:17-18**. Steve asked, "*Do you realize that you are somebody else's good gift?*" How does this change the way you view your value and your interactions with your church family?
- **Practice:** Reach out to one person in the congregation this weekend. Tell them one way their presence has been a "good gift" or a blessing in your life.