



Bible Books Chapter by Chapter Series

JAMES

James 1:12 "Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him."

Course Text: James

The book of James has been called "the Proverbs of the New Testament." This is because James talks a little about many things instead of a lot about a few things. It is difficult to put a book like this, which touches so many different topics, into a couple of summary statements. Perhaps "praying, loving, and doing right is much better than shooting off your mouth." Two important applications would be "listen twice as much as you talk" and "let your faith in Jesus Christ show."

Which James is the author of this epistle is a matter of some controversy, because there are four or five men named James mentioned in the New Testament: two apostles (1&2); a father of an apostle (3); a half-brother of Jesus, son of Joseph and Mary (4); and James the leader of the early Jerusalem church (5).

Acts 1:13 When they had entered the city, they went up to the upper room where they were staying; that is, Peter and John and James (1) and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James (2) the son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas the son of James. (3)

Mark 6:3 Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, and brother of James (4) and Joses and Judas and Simon? Are not His sisters here with us?" And they took offense at Him.

Acts 21:18 And the following day Paul went in with us to James, (5) and all the elders were present.

Some people think the James in Acts 21(5) is the same as one of the others, and some think he was a different James. Most Christian scholars think the James that wrote this letter was the leader of the early Jerusalem church, who was also the half-brother of Jesus. (4&5) It is also generally thought that James, the brother of Jesus, did not become a believer until after the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Whichever James it was, this epistle was widely accepted by the early Christian church as the word of God. There is also disagreement whether it was written before or after Paul wrote his letters. Either way most agree it was written before the gospels were written. Many Christians will find this reading challenging as James presents us with 60 obligations in only 108 verses. It is hard-hitting as he asks us in verse 1:23 to look at ourselves in the mirror and then straighten ourselves up. He focuses on the truths of Jesus' words in the Sermon on the Mount and motivates us to act upon what He taught.

Suggested methodology for each lesson:

1. Fellowship (Save most of this for the end of class)
2. Take prayer requests (Try to keep it from becoming a competition to see who has the most or the worst)
3. Pray (The idea is to leave our troubles with God so we can give Him our full attention.)
4. Read the lesson's chapter aloud from the Bible (or a few verses at a time as you answer the questions.)
5. Answer and *briefly* discuss the "fill in the blank" questions. (Let those who prefer to listen, listen. My answers on the next page are just one opinion; you may have a better answer if it is Scripture based.)
6. On the final "Think & Pray" question everyone should take a few minutes to pray over it and jot down their own thoughts before the discussion. **This will give the Holy Spirit a time to speak .**
7. Discuss your Think & Pray answers. (Never force anyone to share theirs. As with the other questions, my answer is just one more opinion; you may have a better answer.)
8. Close in prayer (It is good to call on others to pray, but try to get their permission first.)
9. Fellowship (Leave this as open ended as possible for the time and place you meet.)

Depending on the number of people, each lesson is expected to take about one hour. Steps 4 thru 7 are about half of that. If you take longer, let each lesson take more than one meeting. If you take less time, extra questions are provided for discussion called "For Further Thought"

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James Chapter 1 tells us to have patience in trials whether from our circumstances or internal struggles. Please read the chapter and answer the following questions:

[1A] James 1:1 Who is the letter to: _____

[1B] James 1:2-3 What does the testing of our faith produce? _____

[1C] James 1:4 What are we to lack? _____

[1D] James 1:5-6 If we do not have enough wisdom how can we get more? _____

[1E] James 1:7-8 How many ways is a double-minded person unstable? _____

[1F] James 1:9-11 When will a rich man fade away? _____

[1G] James 1:12-14 What entices us to sin? _____

[1H] James 1:15 What does lust bring about? _____

[1I] James 1:16-17 Where does everything good come from? _____

[1J] James 1:18 He brought us forth by what? _____

[1K] James 1:19-21 What is able to save our souls? _____

[1L] James 1:22-25 What proves we have heard the perfect law of liberty? _____

[1M] James 1:26-27 What are we expected to bridle or keep under control? _____

[1N] James 1:2-3 What is the writer talking about when he says we should be happy to have difficulties and trials?

Think & Pray _____

HAMMER & NAIL A Joyful 'toon by Mike Waters



Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. — JAMES 1:2-3 NIV

MIRROR OF GOD'S WORD A Joyful 'toon by Mike Waters



Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. — JAMES 1:23,24 NIV

----- ANSWERS -----

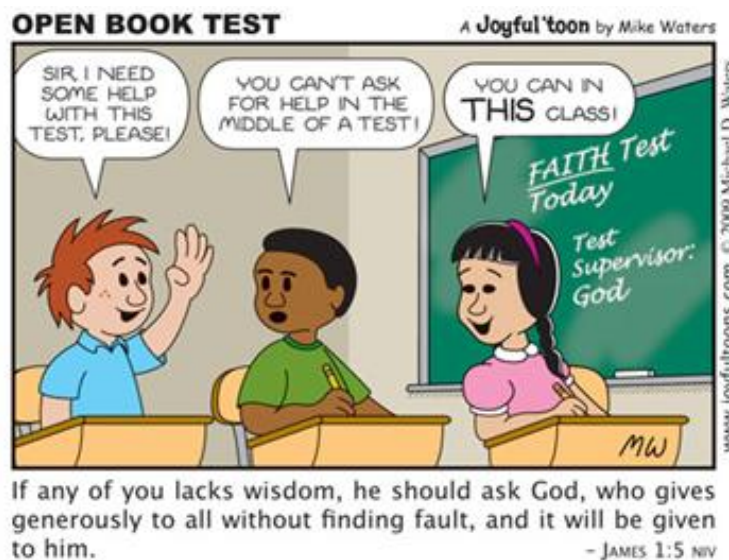
James Chapter 1

- [1A] James 1:1 Who is the letter to: The twelve tribes dispersed abroad
- [1B] James 1:2-3 What does the testing of our faith produce? Endurance
- [1C] James 1:4 What are we to lack? Nothing
- [1D] James 1:5-6 If we do not have enough wisdom how can we get more? Ask God for it
- [1E] James 1:7-8 How many ways is a double-minded person unstable? All of them
- [1F] James 1:9-11 When will a rich man fade away? In the middle of his pursuits
- [1G] James 1:12-14 What entices us to sin? Our own lust
- [1H] James 1:15 What does lust bring about? Sin and death
- [1I] James 1:16-17 Where does everything good come from? From the Father of lights
- [1J] James 1:18 He brought us forth by what? The word of truth
- [1K] James 1:19-21 What is able to save our souls? The implanted word receive in humility
- [1L] James 1:22-25 What proves we have heard the perfect law of liberty? Obeying it
- [1M] James 1:26-27 What are we expected to bridle or keep under control? Our tongues

[1N] **HAPPY DIFFICULTY** The answer is in the context. James 1:4 "And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing." "Lacking in nothing" seems like a good enough reason for joy to me.

For further thought:

- (1o) Read James 1:19. I could spend hours writing examples of the poor consequences I have had in my life from not listening carefully, speaking before I have thought it out, and becoming angry without sufficient reason. Getting angry with my boss and quitting a job before I had another one comes immediately to mind. I did that one twice. What about you? Can you give some examples from your own life that show that verse 19 is true?
- (1p) Compare James 1:13 and Genesis 22:1. What did you learn?
- (1q) Some people, perhaps Martin Luther being the most well known, believed that Paul's message and James message were contrary to one another. Compare Romans 2:13 and James 1:27. What do you think about this and why?
- (1r) If someone asked you what James chapter 1 was about what would you tell them?
- (1s) What did you learn about James chapter 1 that you would like to remember?
- (1t) What verse or passage from James chapter 1 would be best to memorize? Why?



James Chapter 2 tells us to show no favoritism and to show our faith in our actions.

Please read the chapter and answer the following questions:

[2A] James 2:1 How does James describe Jesus? _____

[2B] James 2:2-4 When we make judgments based on appearances what kind of motives do we have? _____

[2C] James 2:5 Who did God choose to bless with richness of faith? _____

[2D] James 2:6-7 What do the rich do to the fair name by which you have been called? _____

[2E] James 2:8-9 What kind of law does James call, "Love your neighbor as yourself?" _____

[2F] James 2:10-12 How much of the law must you violate to become guilty? _____

[2G] James 2:13 What happens to those who show no mercy? _____

[2H] James 2:13 What triumphs over judgment? _____

[2I] James 2:14-17 Can faith without works save you? _____

[2J] James 2:18-19 Who shudders or tremble in fear because they believe in God? _____

[2K] James 2:20-22 What perfected or completed Abraham's faith? _____

[2L] James 2:23 What was reckoned to Abraham as righteousness? _____

[2M] James 2:24-26 How was Rahab the harlot justified? _____

[2N] James 2:17, 20, 26 What is useless or dead without works? _____

[2O] Thinking about James 2:17-18 -- if it was against the law to be a Christian, what evidence would they have against you besides your words?

Think & Pray _____

The Back Pew - Jeff Larson



Judgment looms under every steeple, where lofty glances from lofty people -Casting Crowns
 -Can Ruin a Good Church- Mt 7:3-5, Jk 2:3,15-16

----- ANSWERS -----

James Chapter 2

- [2A] James 2:1 How does James describe Jesus? Our glorious Lord
- [2B] James 2:2-4 When we make judgments based on appearances what kind of motives do we have? Evil
- [2C] James 2:5 Who did God choose to bless with richness of faith? The poor
- [2D] James 2:6-7 What do the rich do to the fair name by which you have been called? Blaspheme it
- [2E] James 2:8-9 What kind of law does James call, "Love your neighbor as yourself?" Royal Law
- [2F] James 2:10-12 How much of the law must you violate to become guilty? One point
- [2G] James 2:13 What happens to those who show no mercy? They get no mercy
- [2H] James 2:13 What triumphs over judgment? Mercy
- [2I] James 2:14-17 Can faith without works save you? James does not answer this question. It is a rhetorical question with an implied answer that only the right kind of faith can save you. The discourse that follows makes it clear that the right kind of faith will have an impact on what you do and say, but James never says that the works themselves are of value in the process of salvation, only in justifying God's faith in us.
- [2J] James 2:18-19 Who shudders or tremble in fear because they believe in God? Demons
- [2K] James 2:20-22 What perfected or completed Abraham's faith? The things he said and did
- [2L] James 2:23 What was reckoned to Abraham as righteousness? His belief of God
- [2M] James 2:24-26 How was Rahab the harlot justified? By what she did
- [2N] James 2:17, 20, 26 What is useless or dead without works? Faith

[2O] EVIDENCE OF CHRISTIANITY It is difficult to answer this question without sounding prideful. Writing these lessons and working with the students of them seems like evidence of my Christianity I could offer to others, but it doesn't really seem like all that much. Perhaps your outward evidence, like mine, is not much. That does not really matter at all, and is not what James is talking about, in my opinion. What matters is the inward evidence of the motives behind what we do. For myself, over the last four decades I have watched my own heart gradually become more and more genuinely concerned about others. I know there was nothing in me that could have caused that. It has to be Jesus Christ's Holy Spirit within.

For further thought:

- (2p) Do you agree with my comments above to Question 2I? Why or why not?
- (2q) One ancient Greek manuscript of James 2:19 reads, "You believe that there is one God. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder." Does this difference matter? Why or why not?
- (2r) Compare Genesis 15:1-6 with James 2:22-24. What did Abraham believe? Does it matter to the point James is making?
- (2s) In Joshua 2:1-24 Rahab is a traitor to her own community and betrays them to the enemy. Then she lies about it. How can James say, "... Rahab the harlot also justified by works ..." in James 2:25? How is lying and betrayal justifying?
- (2t) What does James 2:12 mean?
- (2u) If someone asked you what James chapter 2 was about what would you tell them?
- (2v) What did you learn about James chapter 2 that you would like to remember?
- (2w) What verse or passage from James chapter 2 would be best to memorize? Why?

James Chapter 3 tells us to teach wisely and keep our tongues closely under control. Please read the chapter and answer the following questions:

[3A] James 3:1-2 Who is judged more strictly? _____

[3B] James 3:3 What can we do with a small bit in the mouth of a horse? _____

[3C] James 3:4 What can turn a great ship? _____

[3D] James 3:5-6 What is the tongue? _____

[3E] James 3:7 Man has done what with all kinds of animals? _____

[3F] James 3:8 Who has tamed his own tongue? _____

[3G] James 3:9-10 What comes out of the same mouth? _____

[3H] James 3:11-12 What does not grow on fig trees? _____

[3I] James 3:13 How do we show our understanding and wisdom? _____

[3J] James 3:14-16 What do you find where there is jealousy and selfish ambition? _____

[3K] James 3:17 What is pure, peaceable, gentle, reasonable, merciful and fruitful? _____

[3L] James 3:18 The seed planted in peace by those who make peace yields what kind of fruit? _____

[3M] James 3:5 Can you give some examples from your own life that show that this is true?

Think & Pray _____

The Back Pew - Jeff Larson



And EMAIL is like a flame.. no one can stop an EMAIL.. it is an uncontrollable evil, full of deadly poison.. and so BLESSING & CURSE come pouring out of the same email. **James 3:5-10**

James Chapter 3

- [3A] James 3:1-2 Who is judged more strictly? Teachers
- [3B] James 3:3 What can we do with a small bit in the mouth of a horse? Control the whole horse
- [3C] James 3:4 What can turn a great ship? The small rudder
- [3D] James 3:5-6 What is the tongue? A fire
- [3E] James 3:7 Man has done what with all kinds of animals? Tamed them
- [3F] James 3:8 Who has tamed his own tongue? No one
- [3G] James 3:9-10 What comes out of the same mouth? Blessing and cursing
- [3H] James 3:11-12 What does not grow on fig trees? Olives
- [3I] James 3:13 How do we show our understanding and wisdom? By what we say and do
- [3J] James 3:14-16 What do you find where there is jealousy and selfish ambition?
Disorder and every evil thing
- [3K] James 3:17 What is pure, peaceable, gentle, reasonable, merciful and fruitful?
Wisdom from above
- [3L] James 3:18 The seed planted in peace by those who make peace yields what kind of fruit?
Righteousness

[3M] REAL LIFE EXAMPLES If I had a nickel for everything I have said that I would like to take back, I would be a wealthy man. Words are like bullets. Once you have fired them, there is no way to change what they have done.

For further thought:

- (3n) If someone asked your advice about how to take more control over their own tongue, what would you say?
- (3o) Please give an example of each of the attributes listed in James 3:17.
- (3p) Thinking about James 3:13-18. How do you show your "wisdom from above?"
- (3q) Compare James 3:17 with Galatians 5:22-23. What did you learn?
- (3r) If someone asked you what James chapter 3 was about what would you tell them?
- (3s) What did you learn about James chapter 3 that you would like to remember?
- (3t) What verse or passage from James chapter 3 would be best to memorize? Why?

James Chapter 4 reminds us of the poor results of wrong motives, talks about our relationship with our enemies, and exhorts us to listen carefully. Please read the chapter and answer the following questions:

[4A] James 4:1-2 Why do we not have what we want or need? _____

[4B] James 4:3 Why do we not get what we ask for? _____

[4C] James 4:4 What is hostility toward God? _____

[4D] James 4:5 What does He jealously desire? _____

[4E] James 4:6 Who does God oppose? _____

[4F] James 4:7 What will the devil do if we resist him? _____

[4G] James 4:8 If we draw near to God, what will He do? _____

[4H] James 4:9-10 If we humble ourselves before God, what will He do? _____

[4I] James 4:11-12 How many lawgivers are there? _____

[4J] James 4:13-14 What do we know about tomorrow? _____

[4K] James 4:15-16 Arrogant boasting is what? _____

[4L] James 4:17 Is it possible to do nothing at all and still sin? _____

[4M] Compare James 4:13-16 with Proverbs 27:1 and Luke 12:18-20. What is the same and what is different?

Think & Pray _____

The Back Pew - Jeff Larson



Give yourself completely to God. Stand against the devil, and he devil will run from you. **Js 4:7**

The Back Pew - Jeff Larson



A scripture truth any dog can appreciate. **James 4:7** delivered by Rev. Rover

James Chapter 4

- [4A] James 4:1-2 Why do we not have what we want or need? Because we do not ask
[4B] James 4:3 Why do we not get what we ask for? because we ask with wrong motives
[4C] James 4:4 What is hostility toward God? Friendship with the world
[4D] James 4:5 What does He jealously desire? The Spirit which He has made dwell in us
[4E] James 4:6 Who does God oppose? The proud
[4F] James 4:7 What will the devil do if we resist him? Run or flee
[4G] James 4:8 If we draw near to God, what will He do? Draw near to us
[4H] James 4:9-10 If we humble ourselves before God, what will He do? Exalt us
[4I] James 4:11-12 How many lawgivers are there? One
[4J] James 4:13-14 What do we know about tomorrow? Nothing
[4K] James 4:15-16 Arrogant boasting is what? Evil
[4L] James 4:17 Is it possible to do nothing at all and still sin? Yes, by not doing the right thing

[4M] LIFE IS SHORT The difference is that Proverbs has less detail and Luke an actual example. They all three have the same message – I should not brag about what I am going to do; I have no idea what the future holds. What is comforting is that Solomon, Jesus and James are in complete agreement. Centuries or decades separate them, but wisdom does not fail or change. The difficult part for me is to remember not to brag, even to myself, about what I'm going to do. (See also Psalm 39:6)

For further thought:

- (4n) In James 4:16 "arrogance" could be translated "pretensions." Does it matter?
(4o) Compare James 4:5-6 with Psalm 138:6 and Proverbs 3:34. What did you learn?
(4p) What does James 4:9 mean?
(4q) Compare James 4:8 with Zechariah 1:3 and 2 Chronicles 15:2. What did you learn?
(4r) If someone asked you what James chapter 4 was about what would you tell them?
(4s) What did you learn about James chapter 4 that you would like to remember?
(4t) What verse or passage from James chapter 4 would be best to memorize? Why?

James Chapter 5 talks about prayer and patience in times of trouble.

Please read the chapter and answer the following questions:

[5A] James 5:1 Why should the rich weep and howl? _____

[5B] James 5:2-3 What will be a witness against the rich? _____

[5C] James 5:4 What cries against them? _____

[5D] James 5:5-6 What kind of life do they have? _____

[5E] James 5:7-8 How long should we be patient? _____

[5F] James 5:9 Why should we not complain against each other? _____

[5G] James 5:10-11 What is the Lord full of? _____

[5H] James 5:12 What should we swear by? _____

[5I] James 5:13 What should we do if we are cheerful? _____

[5J] James 5:14-16 What can the effective prayer of a righteous man accomplish? _____

[5K] James 5:17-18 When Elijah prayed how long was their no rain? _____

[5L] James 5:19-20 What covers a multitude of sins and saves a soul from death? _____

[5M] James 5:16 What is this verse talking about? (Hint: 1 Kings 17 & 18)

Think & Pray _____

TIME TRAVELERS

A Joyful 'toon by Mike Waters



You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near.
- JAMES 5:8 NIV

----- ANSWERS -----

James Chapter 5

[5A] James 5:1 Why should the rich weep and howl? Because of their coming miseries

[5B] James 5:2-3 What will be a witness against the rich? The waste of their wealth

[5C] James 5:4 What cries against them? Withheld pay

[5D] James 5:5-6 What kind of life do they have? Luxurious and pleasurable

[5E] James 5:7-8 How long should we be patient? Until the Lord comes

[5F] James 5:9 Why should we not complain against each other? To avoid judgment

[5G] James 5:10-11 What is the Lord full of? compassion and mercy

[5H] James 5:12 What should we swear by? Nothing

[5I] James 5:13 What should we do if we are cheerful? Sing praises

[5J] James 5:14-16 What can the effective prayer of a righteous man accomplish? Much

[5K] James 5:17-18 When Elijah prayed how long was their no rain? 3 ½ Years

[5L] James 5:19-20 What covers a multitude of sins and saves a soul from death?

Turning a sinner from the error of his ways

[5M] EFFECTIVE PRAYER Certainly being part of a group of Christians that will hold you accountable is an important part of the meaning of this verse. The last sentence in the verse opens another aspect of the topic. "The effective prayer of a righteous man ..." What does that part mean? The answer is in the context. James explains himself by referring to an Old Testament passage about Elijah. (First Kings chapters 17 and 18). If you read that story you find that Elijah prayed for what he understood God to want. If you pray for what God wants you are sure to get your prayers answered.

For further thought:

(5n) Does James 5:1-6 apply to all wealthy people or just some? How do you know?

(5o) What is James 5:12 talking about?

(5p) If James 5:13-16 is true, why aren't we all healthy?

(5q) James 5:16 says, "... confess your sins to one another ..." Do you? Why or why not?

(5r) If someone asked you what James chapter 5 was about what would you tell them?

(5s) What did you learn about James chapter 5 that you would like to remember?

(5t) What verse or passage from James chapter 5 would be best to memorize? Why?

(5u) If someone asked you what James was about what would you tell them?

(5v) What did you learn about James that you would like to remember?

(5w) What verse or passage from James would be best to memorize? Why?

