



James



Introduction to James

Author, Date, and Recipients

This letter was written by James, the brother of Jesus (Matt. 13:55) and leader of the Jerusalem church (Acts 15). It was probably written about A.D. 40–45 to Jewish Christians living outside Palestine.

Theme

Christians must live out their faith. They should be doers, not just hearers, of God's Word.

Purpose

James's readers were suffering persecution and living in poverty. They were in social and spiritual conflict. Many believers were living in a worldly manner. James corrects them and challenges them to seek God's wisdom to work out these problems.

Key Themes

- God is a gracious giver, the unchanging Creator, and merciful and compassionate. He is also a Judge, the one and only God, a jealous God, a gracious God, and a healing God (1:5, 17–18; 2:5, 13, 19; 4:5–6; 5:1–3, 9, 15).
- Wisdom comes “from above.” It enables believers to withstand trials and to have peace rather than divisions among themselves (1:5; 3:13, 17).
- God allows tests and trials (1:2–4), but temptation comes from self and Satan. The required response is patient endurance (1:3, 13–14; 4:7; 5:7–8).
- These trials include poverty and mistreatment by the rich. The poor are the special focus of God's care. They must be cared for by his people. They must not be taken advantage of or ignored. The wealthy are condemned for pride and for stealing from the poor (1:9, 27; 2:1–5, 15–16; 4:13–17; 5:1–6).
- There is both future judgment and future reward (1:12; 2:5, 12–13; 3:1; 4:12; 5:1–7, 9, 20).
- What a person says has power both to destroy and to bring peace (3:1–4:12).
- Rather than merely hearing God's word, believers must obey it in their daily actions (1:19–27; 2:14–26).
- Prayer is the proper response to trials, but it must not be self-seeking. It is to be central in all of life's circumstances, good or bad. God has great power to heal physical and spiritual problems (1:5–7; 4:2–3; 5:13–18).
- James and Paul agree that justification comes only by God's grace through faith, and that true faith always results in good works. If no works result, there was no justification in the first place (2:14–26).



James 1:1-8 *James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes in the Dispersion: 2 Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, 3 for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. 4 And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. 5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. 6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. 7 For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; 8 he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.*

Questions to consider:

What should our response be when we meet various kinds of trials? (1:2)

What do we know that should lead us to be joyful even as we meet trials of various kinds? (1:3-4)

What should we do if we lack wisdom, and what is God's response? (1:5)

If we lack faith that God will provide wisdom to us when we ask, how does James describe us? (1:6-8)

The Perfect Wisdom Of Our God

The perfect wisdom of our God,
Revealed in all the universe:
All things created by His hand,
And held together at His command.

He knows the mysteries of the seas,
The secrets of the stars are His;
He guides the planets on their way,
And turns the earth through another day.

The matchless wisdom of His ways,
That mark the path of righteousness;
His word a lamp unto my feet,
His Spirit teaching and guiding me.

And oh, the mystery of the cross,
That God should suffer for the lost
So that the fool might shame the wise,
And all the glory might go to Christ!

Oh grant me wisdom from above,
To pray for peace and cling to love,
And teach me humbly to receive
The sun and rain of Your sovereignty.

Each strand of sorrow has a place
Within this tapestry of grace;
So through the trials I choose to say,
"Your perfect will in Your perfect way!"



James 1:9-15 *Let the lowly brother boast in his exaltation, 10 and the rich in his humiliation, because like a flower of the grass he will pass away. 11 For the sun rises with its scorching heat and withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beauty perishes. So also will the rich man fade away in the midst of his pursuits. 12 Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him. 13 Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God,” for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. 14 But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. 15 Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.*

Questions to consider:

What does James teach us about the rich man? (1:9-11)

What does this suggest about what we should and shouldn't be pursuing in life?

Who or what isn't the cause of temptation in our lives? What is the cause of temptation? (1:13-15)

What is the result of sin? (1:15)

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James 1:16-18 *Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers. 17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. 18 Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.*

Questions to consider:

Where does every good gift come from? (1:17)

How does the truth that God is unchanging encourage your heart? (1:17)

Are we given new life because of our own will, or because of someone else's? (1:18)

What is the means through which God gives new life? What does this suggest about the importance of the Word? (1:18)

*****Note***** *In verse 15, sin brings forth death. In verse 18, according to God's will, the Word brings forth life! Rejoice!*

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by Stuart Townend and Keith Getty



James 1:19-25 *Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; 20 for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God. 21 Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. 22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. 23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. 24 For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. 25 But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.*

Questions to consider:

What should we as Christians be slow to do and what should we be quick to do? (1:19)

Why should we as Christians be slow to anger? (1:20)

What are we to put away and what are we to receive? (1:21)

How does the Word of God compare to a mirror? (1:23-25)

Jesus Shall Reign

Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Does his successive journeys run;
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore
Till suns shall rise and set no more.

Blessings abound where'er He reigns;
The prisoner leaps to lose his chains;
The weary find eternal rest,
And all the sons of want are blessed.

*To our King be highest praise
Rising through eternal days
Just and faithful - He shall reign.
Jesus shall reign*

People and realms of every tongue
Dwell on His love with sweetest song;
And infant voices shall proclaim
Their early praising of His Name.

Chorus

Let every creature rise and bring
Blessing and honour to our King
Angels descend with songs again
And earth repeat the loud amen!

Chorus



James 1:26-27 *If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless. 27 Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.*

Questions to consider:

How does James describe the religion of someone who doesn't bridle his/her tongue? (1:26)

What is a religion that is pure and undefiled to God? (1:27)

How can we better serve widows and orphans? (1:27)

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Chorus

Isaac Watts / Keith Getty / Edmond Martin Cash / Kristyn Getty / John L. Hatton



James 2:1-7 *My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory. 2 For if a man wearing a gold ring and fine clothing comes into your assembly, and a poor man in shabby clothing also comes in, 3 and if you pay attention to the one who wears the fine clothing and say, “You sit here in a good place,” while you say to the poor man, “You stand over there,” or, “Sit down at my feet,” 4 have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? 5 Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him? 6 But you have dishonored the poor man. Are not the rich the ones who oppress you, and the ones who drag you into court? 7 Are they not the ones who blaspheme the honorable name by which you were called?*

Questions to consider:

Who should we show partiality towards? (2:1)

How does James describe the thoughts of someone who distinguishes between the rich and the poor? (2:2-4)

Who has God chosen to inherit the kingdom? (2:5)

Have the rich done something in this case to gain honor or dishonor? (2:6-7)

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Chorus

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Chorus



James 2:8-13 *If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing well. 9 But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. 10 For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it. 11 For he who said, “Do not commit adultery,” also said, “Do not murder.” If you do not commit adultery but do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. 12 So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty. 13 For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.*

Questions to consider:

What are you guilty of if you show partiality? (2:9)

If we are tempted to think that partiality is a lesser sin than murder or adultery, what does James say? (2:9-11)

How should this effect the way we act as Christians? (2:12)

Why is it important to show mercy? (2:13)

My Jesus, I Love Thee

My Jesus I love Thee, I know Thou art mine
For Thee all the follies of sin I resign
My gracious Redeemer, my Saviour art Thou
If ever I loved Thee my Jesus 'tis now

I love Thee because Thou has first loved me
And purchased my pardon on Calvary's tree
I love Thee for wearing the thorns on Thy brow
If ever I loved Thee my Jesus 'tis now

I'll love Thee in life and I will love Thee in death
And praise Thee as long as Thou lendest me breath
And say when the death dew lies cold on my brow
If ever I loved Thee my Jesus 'tis now

In mansions of glory and endless delight
I'll ever adore Thee in heaven so bright
I'll sing with the glittering crown on my brow
If ever I loved Thee my Jesus 'tis now



James 2:14-17 *What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? 15 If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and filled,” without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? 17 So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.*

Questions to consider:

What good is it to tell a brother or sister in Christ to be warmed and filled if they lack clothing and food? (2:15-16)

What would be the proper response?

How does James describe faith without works? (2:17)

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James 2:18-26 *But someone will say, “You have faith and I have works.” Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. 19 You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder! 20 Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless? 21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? 22 You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works; 23 and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness” —and he was called a friend of God. 24 You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone. 25 And in the same way was not also Rahab the prostitute justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way? 26 For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.*

Questions to consider:

How does James show us His faith? (2:18)

What is the proof that a belief in God with no sign of repentance is useless? (2:19)

What examples from the Old Testament does James give us to prove that faith without works is useless? (2:21-25)

From this passage and Ephesians 2:8-10, what is the relationship between faith and works?

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James 3:1-12 *Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. 2 For we all stumble in many ways. And if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle his whole body. 3 If we put bits into the mouths of horses so that they obey us, we guide their whole bodies as well. 4 Look at the ships also: though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. 5 So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things. How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire! 6 And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and set on fire by hell. 7 For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind, 8 but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. 9 With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God. 10 From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so. 11 Does a spring pour forth from the same opening both fresh and salt water? 12 Can a fig tree, my brothers, bear olives, or a grapevine produce figs? Neither can a salt pond yield fresh water.*

Questions to consider:

Why should many not become teachers? (3:1)

How does James describe the man who is able to tame his tongue? (3:2)

What two analogies did James use to describe the power of the tongue? (3:3-5)

What ought not to be so according to James? (3:6-10)

Before The Throne Of God Above

Before the throne of God above
I have a strong and perfect plea
A great High Priest whose name is love
Who ever lives and pleads for me
My name is graven on His hands
My name is written on His heart
I know that while in heav'n He stands
No tongue can bid me thence depart
No tongue can bid me thence depart

When Satan tempts me to despair
And tells me of the guilt within
Upward I look and see Him there
Who made an end of all my sin
Because the sinless Savior died
My sinful soul is counted free
For God the Just is satisfied
To look on Him and pardon me
To look on Him and pardon me

Behold Him there, the risen Lamb
My perfect, spotless Righteousness
The great unchangeable I AM
The King of glory and of grace
One with Himself, I cannot die
My soul is purchased by His blood
My life is hid with Christ on high
With Christ my Savior and my God

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James 3:13-18 *Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. 14 But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. 15 This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. 16 For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice. 17 But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. 18 And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.*

Questions to consider:

How does James suggest we can know if someone is wise? (3:13)

How do we know when wisdom doesn't come down from above? (3:14-15)

What does jealousy and selfish ambition produce? (3:16)

How does James describe wisdom from above? (3:17)

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James 4:1-4 *What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? 2 You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. 3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions. 4 You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.*

Questions to consider:

What causes quarrels among the people that James is writing to? (4:1)

What are some examples of wrong passions that lead to wrong actions? (4:2)

Why aren't the people receiving? How are they asking wrongly? (4:3)

How does one make himself an enemy of God? (4:4)

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James 4:5-10 *Or do you suppose it is to no purpose that the Scripture says, “He yearns jealously over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us”? 6 But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” 7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8 Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. 9 Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. 10 Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.*

Questions to consider:

What does jealous mean? What is God jealous for? (4:5)

Who does God give grace to? (4:6)

What are some of the commands listed in this passage? (4:7-10)

What will the devil do when we resist him? How do we resist the devil? (4:7)

Grace

Your grace that leads this sinner home
From death to life forever
And sings the song of righteousness
By blood and not by merit

Your grace that reaches far and wide
To every tribe and nation
Has called my heart to enter in
The joy of Your salvation

*By grace I am redeemed
By grace I am restored
And now I freely walk
Into the arms of Christ my Lord*

Your grace that I cannot explain
Not by my earthly wisdom
The Prince of life, without a stain
Was traded for this sinner

Chorus

Let praise rise up and overflow
My song resound forever
For grace will see me welcomed home
To walk beside my Saviour

Chorus

Chorus

written by Cityalight

Check it out on YouTube if you don't know it! So good!!

May 25



James 4:11-12 *Do not speak evil against one another, brothers. The one who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks evil against the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge. 12 There is only one lawgiver and judge, he who is able to save and to destroy. But who are you to judge your neighbor?*

Questions to consider:

If we speak evil against a brother in Christ, what are we guilty of? (4:11)

What other passages in James have we read that speak on the dangers of the tongue? (1:26, 3:1-12)

If we speak evil against the law and judge the law, we are not what according to James? (4:11)

Who is the only lawgiver and judge? (4:12)

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May 27



James 4:13-17 *Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit” — 14 yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. 15 Instead you ought to say, “If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that.” 16 As it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil. 17 So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.*

Questions to consider:

What is wrong with the attitude we see in verse 13? (4:13-14, 16)

What illustration does James use to describe the shortness of life? (4:14)

What is right with the attitude we see in verse 15? (4:15)

What is it called when we know the right thing to do but we fail to do it? (4:17)

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May 29



James 5:1-6 *Come now, you rich, weep and howl for the miseries that are coming upon you. 2 Your riches have rotted and your garments are moth-eaten. 3 Your gold and silver have corroded, and their corrosion will be evidence against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have laid up treasure in the last days. 4 Behold, the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, are crying out against you, and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts. 5 You have lived on the earth in luxury and in self-indulgence. You have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter. 6 You have condemned and murdered the righteous person. He does not resist you.*

Questions to consider:

Why is it pointless to store up treasures on earth? (5:2-3)

What were the rich guilty of concerning their workers? (5:4-6)

What is self-indulgence? Is this something we see today? (5:5)

What should be the response of the rich upon hearing of their sin and the consequences that are to come? (5:1)

A Christian's Daily Prayer

*As morning dawns and day awakes,
To You I bring my need
O gracious God, my source of strength,
In You I live and breathe*

*Each hour is Yours by wisdom planned,
Each deed empowered by sovereign hands
Renew my spirit, help me stand;
Be glorified today*

*As day unfolds, I seek Your will
In all of life's demands
And though the tempter tries me still,
I cling to Your commands*

*Let every effort of my life
Display the matchless worth of Christ
Make me a living sacrifice;
Be glorified today*

*As sun gives way to darkest night
Your Spirit still is here
And though my strength fades like the light
New mercies will appear*

*I rest in You; abide with me
Until our trials and suffering
Give way to final victory
Be glorified, today*

*I rest in You; abide with me
Until our trials and suffering
Give way to final victory
Be glorified, today
Be glorified, I pray*

song by Sovereign Grace

June 1



James 5:7-12 *Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. 8 You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. 9 Do not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door. 10 As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. 11 Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful. 12 But above all, my brothers, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or by any other oath, but let your “yes” be yes and your “no” be no, so that you may not fall under condemnation.*

Questions to consider:

What examples does James give us to encourage us to be patient? (5:7, 10)

Sandwiched between two verses that encourage us to be patient, what does James command us not to do? (5:9)

What does the example of Job in the Old Testament teach us about the Lord? (5:11)

What does verse 12 teach us about being men and women of our word? (5:12)

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song by Sovereign Grace



James 5:13-20 *13 Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise. 14 Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. 15 And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. 16 Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working. 17 Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. 18 Then he prayed again, and heaven gave rain, and the earth bore its fruit. 19 My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, 20 let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.*

Questions to consider:

If a person is sick, who should he call on and what are they to do? (5:14)

According to verse 14, who raises up the sick person? (5:14)

What Old Testament example does James give showing the power of prayer? (5:17-18)

Why is it important to have brothers and sisters in Christ in our lives to help us in our Christian walk? (5:19)

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