



Sunday March 06, 2022
James Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE EPISTLE

It is always good to have some background about the author, the context, and the audience to whom the book was addressed.

Profile Of The Author

James, the author of this epistle was the half-brother of our Lord Jesus Christ (Galatians 1:19), and the brother of Jude, who wrote the epistle of Jude (Jude 1:1). Jesus had four half-brothers and sisters. The names of the brothers are given in Matthew 13:55-56 as James, Joses, Simon, and Judas (also called Jude, the author of Jude).

Growing up with Jesus

Imagine what it would have been like for these four brothers and sisters to grow up together, with Jesus. They would have had a typical Jewish home. The typical Jewish family was a religious as well as a social unit and very closely knit. Solidarity and harmony among brothers were highly esteemed and so we can be sure that the five brothers were quite close. They would have engaged in their father's trade which was carpentry and would have been known as the carpenter's sons.

Unbeliever

How did James, his three brothers react and respond to Jesus as He began His earthly ministry? Unbelief!

John 7:5 For even His brothers did not believe in Him.

James and his brothers did not believe in Jesus. He did not have honor among His own family and His own house (Mark 6:4). There seemed to be a distance between Jesus and His own family (Luke 8:19-21). In many ways, Jesus became a stranger and an alien to his own family, fulfilling Scripture (Psalm 69:8-9).

Saved, baptized, filled with the Holy Ghost

After His crucifixion and resurrection, the apostle Paul records that Jesus appeared to James, His half-brother. This must have been the turning point for James and his brothers. The One they saw crucified they now saw resurrected! They now believed and were saved.

1 Corinthians 15:7 After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles.



And so, we see that after Christ's ascension, the brothers of Jesus were gathered with other disciples in the Upper Room waiting for the Spirit's outpouring, the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 1:14 **These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.**

James and the other brothers of Jesus were filled with the Spirit and were part of the Early Church from its inception.

Leading the Church

Eventually, we see that James, the half-brother of Jesus became the leader of the church in Jerusalem. By the time we reach Acts chapter 12 (A.D. 44, the year that king Herod Agrippa died) James had come into a leadership role at the church in Jerusalem. We state this because when Peter was released by angels from prison, he requested specifically that James be informed about his release (Acts 12:17). In Acts chapter 15 at the Church Council in Jerusalem (A.D. 51), when the apostles and elders deliberated on how to welcome gentiles who became believers, it was James who announced the final decision (Acts 15:13). Later in Acts 21:19, at the end of his third missionary journey (A.D. 58), Paul and his team went and met with James, to report what the Lord had done through their ministry among the Gentiles. The apostle Paul recognized James as first among the eldership at Jerusalem (Galatians 2:9).

James was married (1 Corinthians 9:5). James was known as "James the Just" because of the life he lived. Tradition has it that he was a devout man, who spent many hours in prayer at the Temple, in Jerusalem.

Martyred

History has it that James was thrown down from the pinnacle of the temple, stoned and beaten to death by the religious leaders (Pharisees, Scribes, Sadducees) around A.D. 62. James, like Stephen and many others died as a martyr.

Date And Context

Since there is no reference to Gentile Christians, this epistle was probably written from Jerusalem, about A.D. 45 before the first Christian council in Jerusalem (A.D. 51). Hence, James could very well be the earliest New Testament book that was written.

James is writing to the Christian Jews who had been scattered through various parts outside Palestine, across Europe, Asia, and Africa following the persecution that rose after Pentecost. James could be addressing all of them in general or perhaps and more



likely the Jewish Christian dispersed specifically in regions around Syria and what would be modern day Iraq (Mesopotamia and Babylonia).

James seems to focus, not on doctrine but on practical aspects on how to live the Christian life given their Jewish heritage and the challenging situations these Jewish Christians found themselves in. There was persecution, specifically from rich and overbearing Jews. There are several statements made in James that seem directly connected to Jesus' sermon on the mount. Some have listed 14 points of comparison.

James, being the leader of the Jerusalem Church, and the half-brother of Jesus, would certainly have been held in high regard by these Jewish Christians to whom he was addressing his epistle.

Faith In Daily Life

One of the main themes in the book of James is how faith matters in everyday life. Here is a quick summary of how James applies faith to daily living:

- Faith sustains us when going through trials (1:2-4; 5:7-12).
- Faith is key in prayer when asking and receiving from God whether for wisdom, healing, or anything else (1:5-7; 5:13-18).
- Faith is expressed in how we face temptation and resist the devil (1:13-16; 4:7).
- Faith receives the Word of God and follows through with action (1:26-27).
- Works or actions in daily life matter because these actions express our faith (2:14-26).
- Faith is demonstrated as we treat people equally (2:1-9; 5:1-6).
- Faith depends on mercy of God and not on the law (2:10-13).
- Faith is also seen in speech that is consistent and glorifying God (3:1-12).
- Faith can not only pray and receive wisdom from God (1:4) but also express this heavenly wisdom by walking in peace and righteousness (3:13-18).
- Faith is expressed as we live lives that express our friendship with God (4:1-5) and our dependance on God (4:13-17).
- Faith is expressed through an expectant heart anticipating Christ's return (5:7-8).
- Faith is expressed through passionate, earnest prayer (5:13-18).
- Faith enables us to reach out to an erring one restoring them to the truth (5:19-20).

CHAPTER ONE



Hi, This Is James

1 James, a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad: Greetings.

James introduces himself as a “bondservant” (Greek: *doulos*), one giving himself wholly to another’s will and in permanent servitude to another. He acknowledges Father God and the Lord Jesus Christ. He makes no mention of himself as a brother of the Lord and does not make mention of his earthly relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, as something to brag about.

He is addressing Jewish Christians (“the twelve tribes”) who have been dispersed in various places outside Jerusalem.

In the initial part of the letter, James moves quickly through several points (topics) of immediate importance to his audience: trials, wisdom, social/economic standing, temptations, obeying the Word and true religion.

Joy In Trials

2 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials,

3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.

4 But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

1:2 The word trials (Greek: *peirasmos*) literally means a putting to proof, by experiment with good or experience of evil. Includes facing adversity, trial, attack, temptation, provocation, put to proof, examine, question. A trial of any kind and could also be used as temptation to sin. The same word is used later in James 1:12-13 to specifically refer to inducement to sin.

The Lord Jesus did tell us that we will face hardships in life (John 16:33).

The word “count” in the Greek has the idea of a chief, governor, leader, judge, commander, or ruler who takes the lead and shows the way and therefore deems, commands, or counts something to be so. Figuratively, the word is also used to mean to think, consider, count, esteem, regard.

Therefore, to “count it all joy”, implies that you take the lead, you choose to deem it so, to call it so, to command it so, to consider it so, to think of it as joy!



The Greek word “fall into” has the idea of being surrounded by or encompassed. He is not referring to facing one challenge but conveying the idea of being surrounded by challenges. When you fall into or are surrounded by and find yourself encompassed with troubles all around, James instructs us to “count it all joy”.

The word “joy” has the idea of cheerfulness, rejoicing and calm delight.

What should our response be when surrounded by challenges, adversities, etc.? Make a deliberate choice, take the lead, your first response (not your last response or an afterthought) to stay joyful. You choose to count and consider it joy, and you lead the way to stay joyful, cheerful and walk with a sense of calm delight!

You are determining your emotion during the situation, instead of letting the situation dictate your emotion.

Now how and why can a believer do this?

1:3 Because of what we know. We know that the testing (proving, trying, putting to the proof, examining trustworthiness) of our faith develops (accomplishes, bring out as a result, to shape into fitness) patience (endurance, perseverance, steadfastness, cheerful endurance, hopeful constancy, patient continuance, sustained waiting).

The word patience presents the picture of a person who is not swerved from his/her continued faith and purpose over time.

The trails we go through fashion and form in us this quality of patience or cheerful endurance.

Why is patience important in the Christian life?

The apostle Paul helps us understand this, almost reiterating what James has written for us:

Romans 5:3-4

3 And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance;

4 and perseverance, character; and character, hope.

Tribulations (pressure, compressing together, hence referring to trials, challenges) produces (same as in James 1:3) endurance (same as in James 1:3). And endurance



develops character (approved character, that which has been tried and approved, tried integrity, tried character, a specimen of tried worth).

Endurance develops character, the quality of personal, moral, and spiritual strength and integrity, that can only be developed and proved by enduring through trials.

Consider how a diamond is formed. Diamonds are formed from pure carbon under extreme heat and pressure. Something of great worth comes through this process. Even so in our lives. Character is developed as we endure through trials.

In general, whom would you trust with a significant assignment or task – a novice, someone who has not been proven, or someone who has been proven through life experiences? Of course, the greater the assignment, when a whole lot is at stake, you would choose someone who you know has been tried and approved. Even so, the Lord can entrust us with greater assignments, as we have been tried and approved.

People who have gone through trials, developed endurance and have character are people of hope (Romans 5:4). They can stay positive through time.

1:4 However, we must let endurance run its full course, so that we become complete (fully developed, mature, full grown) and entire (complete in all respects, nothing lacking, whole, perfect).

Enduring through trials not only develops character, but also produces maturity, a coming of full age.

Later in chapter 5:13, James will instruct us *"Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms"*. The suffering here refers to hardships and difficulties (not sickness which is addressed separately in 5:14). The key he points us to when going through hardships, is prayer. And if cheerful, sing psalms!

So, when going through hardships, trials, challenges, pray. And what must we pray for? Wisdom, surely.

Wisdom

5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind.



**7 For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord;
8 he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.**

1:5 James now turns his attention to asking God for wisdom. Why would this be? One of the things we need most when journeying through trials is wisdom. Wisdom gives us the ability to know and understand the mind and purpose of God, what He is unfolding and working towards in the future. Hence, if in general, we lack wisdom, or specifically while surrounded by trials, we lack wisdom, we need to ask God to give us wisdom.

James will bring up the matter of godly wisdom once again in chapter 3 (3:13-18), in relation to our daily conduct. We must keep in mind that he has already spoken to us here on how to receive wisdom from God.

James then reveals truth about the nature of God. This he most likely observed in the person of Jesus Christ and hence could write confidently about the giving nature of God.

James teaches us that we can ask God because:

- God gives – God is a giving God.
- God gives to all – God is fair, equitable and impartial in His giving.
- God gives liberally – God is a generous God giving us more than sufficient.
- God gives without reproach – God gives to us without scolding or making us ‘feel bad’ or shaming us.

1:6 James then teaches us to ask in faith without doubting. This is so much like the teaching of Jesus in Matthew 21:22 and Mark 11:24.

1:7 It is the prayer of faith that receives from God. James repeats this later in chapter 5 as well in connection with receiving healing from God (5:14-16).

1:8 If we doubt, we are being double minded and unstable, irresolute in our praying and believing. We will not receive any thing from the Lord.

Interestingly, James addresses another kind of double mindedness in the believer in chapter 4 (4:8), having to do with fleshly pleasures and friendship of the world.

So essentially James teaches us that you cannot be double minded when it comes to FAITH in God, and FRIENDSHIP with God. We must be single minded, fully persuaded, about faith in God and friendship with God. No two ways about these.



The Lowly And The Rich

9 Let the lowly brother glory in his exaltation,

10 but the rich in his humiliation, because as a flower of the field he will pass away.

11 For no sooner has the sun risen with a burning heat than it withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beautiful appearance perishes. So the rich man also will fade away in his pursuits.

The lowly and the rich (1:9-11), the rich and the poor (2:1-9,15-16), rich employers and poor laborers (5:1-6) are part of the audience James is writing to and hence addresses them at different points in his epistle.

1:9 He begins by emphasizing the need to walk in humility being mindful that life like the flower of the field will pass away.

The poor brother can rejoice when God lifts him up out of his poverty and weak economic condition.

1:10 The rich man can glory when God works in him to keep him humble in his heart. How would God do this? First, by working in his (the rich person's) heart to let him know that all things have come from God Himself. The rich brother can choose to walk in humility before the Lord depending on the Lord who lifted him up, as James makes clear in James 4:6,10: *"But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "GOD RESISTS THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE." Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up."*

This is in keeping with what Jeremiah teaches in Jeremiah 9:23-24 : *"Thus says the LORD: "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, Let not the mighty man glory in his might, Nor let the rich man glory in his riches; But let him who glories glory in this, That he understands and knows Me, That I am the LORD, exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight," says the LORD."*

1:11 Second, the rich man stays humble and glories in this, that he recognizes that everything is temporary and fleeting, and he has his faith in God who is eternal. This is something James reiterates in James 4 (4:13-17) reminding us that life is like vapor, and our focus remains to do the will of God. This also echoed by John the Beloved disciple in 1 John 2: 17 *"And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever."*



Overcoming Temptation

12 Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

13 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone.

14 But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed.

15 Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.

16 Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.

17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.

James now turns his attention to dealing with temptation. Christians of all ages have had to learn how to overcome temptation. There is the pull of the world, which James addresses again in chapter 4:1-10, calling us out from living for our pleasures and in friendship with the world.

1:12 We begin with the promise of a glorious reward, the crown of life, for enduring (similar root word as patience in 1:3) temptation and coming out approved (or tried, as in 1:3).

Notice that just because you love the Lord, does not mean you won't be tried by temptation.

In James chapter 1, we observe two things that "try" (put to proof) the faith of the believer: TRIALS (1:3) and TEMPTATIONS (1:12).

1:13 James clarifies how temptation happens. It is not God who is tempting us or inducing us to sin. God will not do this. Temptation happens when our own desires are working to take us into something that is wrong. Satan can *play* on our desires, or it could simply be the pleasures of the world, that can *pull* on our desires.

1:14 Ultimately, it is our own desires that draw (to draw out, to allure, lure as in hunting or fishing to lure a game from its place of hiding) and entice (to catch with a bait, trap, delude, deceive) us.

1:15 When our own desire has conceived (to seize, to take as prisoner, to capture, to arrest, also to conceive as a woman), or is given in to, that is when we sin. And sin, if it is continued in, so that it becomes "full grown" in the believer, dominating his life, it will



lead to death. Interestingly, James later addresses restoring a believer who has erred in his ways, in 5:19-20

The solution is to subdue ungodly desires in our flesh, through faith in God, with the Word of God and by the power of the Holy Spirit.

1:16 It would be deception to place the problem of temptation on anything or anyone else. James calls us to take responsibility in doing our part in overcoming temptation.

1:17 In view of this, James reminds us that good things come from God. God is light. What He gives is “good and perfect”, not leading us astray in any way.

Receiving And Doing The Word

18 Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.

19 So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath;

20 for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

21 Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of 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 observing his natural face in a mirror;

24 for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was.

25 But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.

Having addressed the matter of facing up to and overcoming temptation, James now brings our attention to the Word of God.

1:18 We (the early Christians) were born again by the Word and are the firstfruits, the beginning, the early part of the harvest of His new creation.

1:19-20 Since we are His born-again new creation people, we demonstrate this in our daily lives by being eager to listen and restrained with our speaking, and in our temper. Giving in to anger will keep us from walking in righteousness.



1:21 Not only are we born again by the Word, but as part of our Christian life, we choose to lay sin aside and continually receive the Word to be implanted into our lives. This will result in the “saving of the soul”, specifically the transformation of our soul (mind, will, emotions).

1:22-25 Taking this further, we not only receive the Word, but we are to be doers of the Word. Faith receives the Word of God and follows through with action (1:26-27). This is an important truth that James expands on further. Works or actions in daily life matter because these actions express our faith (2:14-26). The Word acted upon brings blessing.

If we do not act in line with the Word, we are forgetful hearers, forgetting what kind of people we really are – those born again by the Word, new creation people.

If we feel satisfied just hearing the Word without becoming doers of the Word, we end up deceiving our own selves.

True Piety

26 If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless.

27 Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

1:26 James emphasizes taming the tongue both here (1:26) and later in chapter 3 (3:1-12) as an expression of true religion and spiritual maturity. If a believer does not tame his tongue, but claims to be deeply religious and spiritual, he is in self deception and his claimed spirituality is useless (empty, profitless).

1:27 What would acting in line with the Word look like? How is faith expressed in everyday life? It is serving orphans and widows and living free from the world's influence. James addresses this further in chapter 4 (4:1-10) when he calls believers to be friends of God and separate themselves from the world (enemy of the world).

Avoiding Self-Deception

There are three forms of self-deception that James mentions in this chapter.

1:16 The first self-deception is failing to take responsibility of the temptation we face, recognizing that it is our own desires that are at work. It is self-deception to blame someone else or something else for the temptation we face.



1:22 The second self-deception has to do with being satisfied in just listening to the Word but not following through with determined action, being doers of the Word. The Word acted upon brings results and blessing, not just the message listened to.

1:26 The third form of self-deception is to think one is spiritual, but have no self-governing ability, starting with taming the tongue. As James explains later, if we tame our tongue, we can tame our whole being (3:2) and thus demonstrate true spiritual maturity.

SALVATION CALL

If you ask, does God love me? We can tell you what the Bible says: John 3:16, Romans 5:8

If you ask, how can I have my sins forgiven? We can tell you what the Bible says: Acts 10:43; 1 John 2:2,12

If you ask, what is the way to God? We can tell you what the Bible says: John 14:6

If you ask, how can I become a child of God? We can tell you what the Bible says: John 1:12

If you ask, where can I find salvation? We can tell you what the Bible says: Acts 4:12

If you ask, what must I do to experience salvation? We can tell you what the Bible says: Acts 16:30-31

As an act of your own free choice, we invite you to make this decision to follow Jesus.

SUPERNATURAL MINISTRY TIME

Minister as the Spirit leads



LIFE GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Sunday March 06, 2022
James Chapter 1

The is a simple guide for use in Life Group discussions. Our objective is to focus on the application of the Sunday sermon - how each one is becoming a doer of the Word and building their life on God's Holy Word. The Life Group meeting would normally last for 2 hours. Each Life Group would have up to 12-15 people.

Preparation

To prepare for the Life Group meeting, you can listen to the Sermon Key Points (sermon summary in five minutes) or the full-length Sunday sermon. You can also review the Sunday Sermon notes. All these are available in the "All Peoples Church Bangalore" mobile App or online at our [sermons page](#) . Pray for the Life Group meeting and invite the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Welcome

The Life Group meeting may commence with a time of prayer, worship, and a fun activity.

LISTEN to God's Word

Read the following Scripture reference: *James 1*

INVESTIGATE God's Word Together

Please discuss a few of these together, giving time for people to share their insights. We encourage each one individually to make notes of their personal learning during the Group discussion.

There is a lot in James chapter 1. Here are three recommended questions. You can use these or open for discussion on this chapter to any other theme in this chapter.

1, Discuss how faith works itself (expresses itself) amid trials and life's difficulties according to James 1:2-5.

2, Discuss what James teaches us about temptation in James 1:12-16.



3, *Discuss what James teaches us about receiving the Word of God in James 1:18-25.*

If time permits, each one can take a few (3 minutes max) to share one or two key learning and how they see themselves applying it into their specific life situations. Encourage each one to participate and share.

FELLOWSHIP by sharing your life and spiritual journey

Each one takes a few (3 minutes max) to share anything from their walk with God, something God has been teaching them, a testimony of answered prayer or a specific challenge that they would like prayer for. Encourage each one to participate and share.

ENCOURAGE each other by praying and ministering to one another

Get into small groups of two or three and take turns to thank God and pray for each other in the light of what was learnt today. Listen to the Holy Spirit. Expect the gifts of the Holy Spirit to flow bringing healing, releasing miracles, prophecy, etc.

Regroup and pray together for:

1, families to be protected and strengthened

2, a mighty outpouring of God's Holy Spirit on us as a church and through us to bless many others in our city and nation. Nothing but a mighty work of God's Spirit can change our city and nation.

3, for the BUILD TO IMPACT project - for God's hand to guide us through the land search and acquisition process, and for finances to be more than enough to get this project done.

Close by thanking God together.



USEFUL RESOURCES



Watch our online Sunday Church service live stream every Sunday at 10:30am (Indian Time, GMT+5:30). Spirit filled, anointed worship, Word and ministry for healing, miracles, and deliverance.

YOUTUBE: <https://youtube.com/allpeopleschurchbangalore>

WEBSITE: <https://apcwo.org/live>

Our other websites and free resources:

CHURCH: <https://apcwo.org>

FREE SERMONS: <https://apcwo.org/resources/sermons>

FREE BOOKS: <https://apcwo.org/books/english>

DAILY DEVOTIONALS: <https://apcwo.org/resources/daily-devotional>

JESUS CHRIST: <https://examiningjesus.com>

BIBLE COLLEGE: <https://apcbiblecollege.org>

E-LEARNING: <https://apcbiblecollege.org/elearn>

COUNSELING: <https://chrysalislife.org>

MUSIC: <https://apcmusic.org>

MINISTERS FELLOWSHIP: <https://pamfi.org>

CHURCH APP: <https://apcwo.org/app>

CHURCHES: <https://apcwo.org/ministries/churches>

SERMON BRIEF

James – A book study. James Chapter One. This is part-1 in this sermon series, a study in the book of James.

KEYWORDS

James chapter one, book study of James, the epistle of James, faith in everyday life, overcoming temptation

REFERENCES/CITATIONS

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the Holy Bible, New King James Version. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc., Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Biblical definitions, Hebrew and Greek words and their meanings are drawn from the following resources:

Thayer's Greek Definitions. Published in 1886, 1889; public domain.

Strong's Hebrew and Greek Dictionaries, Strong's Exhaustive Concordance by James Strong, S.T.D., LL.D. Published in 1890; public domain.



Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words, © 1984, 1996, Thomas Nelson, Inc., Nashville, TN

Mounce Concise Greek-English Dictionary. Edited by William D. Mounce with Rick D. Bennett, Jr. (1993)

Word Pictures in the New Testament. Archibald Thomas Robertson. Published in 1930-1933; public domain.

Word Studies in the New Testament. Marvin R. Vincent, D.D. (1886)