

LESSON 2
THE BOOK OF JAMES
CHRONOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT
SECOND SEMESTER

Key verse: If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. James 1:5-6 **NIV**

Resources: www. Padfield.com; <http://www.free-online-bible-study.com/james-chapter-2.html>; *The Untold Story of the New Testament Church* by Frank Viola; and <http://www.free-online-bible-study.com/james>

PRAYER FOCUS: As you study the book of James this week, ask the Lord to make you very aware of your words and how significant they are. You may want to do a further topical study on the tongue. Be open to the Holy Spirit's work in your life to convict you and change you in areas that may not be completely yielded to Him. Be prepared for the greater work that the Lord wants to do in you! There is lots of wisdom in this book. Just ask for it! It's a blessing!

Author: James (James 1:1).

James, the half-brother of Jesus, is often called "James the Righteous" or "James the Just, which implies his faithful observance to the Law. He became a believer after Jesus' resurrection and developed into the central leader in the church of Jerusalem. James encourages the Jewish believers in their time of trial and persecution. In reply to the false rumors that they have heard about Paul's teaching and the Jerusalem council, James distinguishes between the works of the Law and works of faith. He makes clear that true faith will produce good works. James reproves worldliness in the church. He admonishes those who are showing favoritism to the wealthy and rebukes the rich who are discriminating against the poor. James reproves critical speaking and exhorts the sick to ask for the elders to pray for their healing. The letter alludes to Jesus' "Sermon on the Mount" over twenty times. It also draws a lot from the book of Proverbs.

Purpose: To insulate Christians against worldly temptations. It addresses some misunderstandings about the relationship between salvation by faith in Jesus and the need for believers to live godly lives. Also known as: The Gospel of Common Sense.

DATE: probably written around the time of Paul's first missionary journey, before the Jerusalem Council.

DAY ONE:
READ JAMES 1

In James Chapter 1 verse 1 this epistle is addressed to "the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad". Various commentators provide insights on this point.

The phrase "*the twelve tribes,*" was the common term by which the Jewish people were designated, and was in use long after the ten tribes were carried away, leaving, in fact, only two of the twelve in Palestine.

The phrase "the twelve tribes" became a sort of technical expression to denote the people of God - the church. The *John MacArthur Study Bible* states that James was addressing those who were scattered abroad due to persecution, and the *Jamieson, Fausset and Brown Commentary* observes that the dispersion of the Israelites, and their connection with Jerusalem as a center of religion, was a divinely ordered means of propagating Christianity.

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1. How do we benefit from trials (1:2-4)? _____

2. What are we to ask God for (1:5)? _____ How are we to do this (1:6-8)? _____

3. Consider the instruction we receive in James 1:5 - 8. Rewrite in your own words how one is to acquire wisdom based on this instruction.

4. Describe the progression of temptation (1:12-16)? _____

❖ Think about what your greatest temptation is. How do you go about resisting that temptation?

5. Why should we be swift to hear and slow to speak as James teaches us in James 1: 19?

❖ What are three things we can do to become “faster” hearers and “slower” speakers?

DAY TWO
READ JAMES 2

1. What is wrong with showing personal favoritism ? _____

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2. Why do we show partiality based on outward appearances? _____

Luke 18:10-14 gives an example of a group that is “confident of their own righteousness”. What bad example do they set for us? _____

3. What is the point of James 2:10-13? _____

❖ **Was there ever a time in your life when you were loved by someone that would demonstrate the idea of “love your neighbor as yourself”**

❖ **How can we love our neighbors as ourselves? (*Remember as Jesus pointed out in Luke 10 that our neighbor is anyone who needs our help.*)**

4. What type of faith is described in James 2:14–26? _____

5. Does the second half of James Chapter 2 say that one is saved by works or good deeds and not by faith? _____

6. What is the main point of the second half of James Chapter 2? _____

7. Does James' statement in James 2:18 that says one can demonstrate his faith by his works contradict Paul's statement in Romans 3:28 that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law? _____

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DAY THREE
READ JAMES 3

1. What is the danger of careless talk (James 3:1–12)? _____

2. What are the analogies of the tongue from the following verses of James Chapter 3?

- Verse 3 _____
- Verse 4 _____
- Verses 5-6 _____
- Verses 7-8 _____
- Verses 11-12 _____
- Verses 12 _____

❖ **Examine your life. Could you make a list of the top three regrettable things you have said to other people? Why was it regrettable?**

Why do we say these things? _____

3. What can we do to avoid future regrets and control our tongues? Look at the following verses. What advice do they offer?

- Matthew 15:19 _____
- Romans 12:2-3 _____
- Proverbs 13:3 _____
- Proverbs 14:7 and 20:19 _____
- Ecclesiastes 3:7 _____

4. How can you raise a “harvest of righteousness”? (3:17-18)? _____

5. James includes himself as teacher in James 3:1 and states that teachers will be judged more strictly. Why should teachers be judged more severely? _____

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What insight do we gain from Mark 12:38-40?

6. In the last five verses of James Chapter 3 the author contrasts the wisdom of man with the Wisdom of God. Compare the wisdom of God and the wisdom of man in these verses.

WISDOM OF GOD:	WISDOM OF MAN:

DAY FOUR
READ JAMES 4

1. What is the source of strife (4:1-4)? _____

2. Does the source of strife still continue today with the same reasoning and results? _____
Explain: _____

3. How do these ideas already provided in the first three chapters of James help the reader avoid quarreling and fighting?

- James 1:19-20 _____
- James 2:8-9 _____
- James 3:8 _____
- James 3:16-18 _____

The King James Version James tells us in verse one that the wars and fighting among the believers come from their lust.

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4. What is the result of lusting or lust in the following verses?

- James 4:1 _____
- James 4:2 _____
- James 4:3 _____
- James 4:5 _____

5. What does 4:11 tell us not to do? _____

What do the following verses help us understand about this Biblical truth?

- James 4:12 _____
- Matthew 7:1-2 _____
- Romans 2:1 _____
- Romans 14:10-12 _____
- I Corinthians 4:3-5 _____

❖ **As Christians are we never to judge actions or behavior of others? Can we judge others and yet not sin? What about the judges in our civil and criminal court systems and Christians on jury duty; do they sin when carrying out these duties?**

6. What exactly is the evil James speaks of in verses 13 through 16? _____
Why is this evil? _____

DAY FIVE
READ JAMES 5

1. What did the rich do with their wealth that was wrong and sinful? (5:2-3) _____

2. What advice is given in verses 7-11? _____,

To whom is it given? _____

Who was offered as an example? _____

Why is this advice given? _____

3. Again and again James calls for control of one's speech or tongue. We have seen a call for control of

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our speech in James 1:26, 2:12, 3:2-11, and 4:11. Finally he calls for control of our speech in verse twelve. Why does James emphasize this so much? _____

4. What are the two things that believers are told to do when they are sick? (5:14)

What are the two results that are promised in 5:15? _____

❖ **What is the most significant lesson you have learned and applied to your life from this book?**
