

THE KINGDOM, THE POWER AND THE GLORY

A SURVEY OF
THE NEW TESTAMENT
Pastor Dan Betzer, Instructor

Study Number Nineteen / The Book of James

June 10, 2009

1 (From Halley's Bible Handbook / Henry H. Halley / Halley Publishing 1924 - p. 602)

2
3 *The oldest brother of Jesus was named James (born to Mary and Joseph following our*
4 *Lord's immaculate conception and birth). James was early recognized as the leading*
5 *Overseer of the Jerusalem Church. Acts 12:17 But he, beckoning unto them with*
6 *the hand to hold their peace, declared unto them how the Lord had brought him out of*
7 *the prison. And he said, Go shew these things unto James, and to the brethren. And he*
8 *departed, and went into another place. Galatians 1:19 But other of the apostles saw I*
9 *none, save James the Lord's brother. James was the author of this epistle.*

10
11 *James was known as an unusually good man who was surnamed "the Just" by his*
12 *countrymen. It is said that he spent so much time on his knees in prayer that they*
13 *became hard and callous like a camel's knees. James is thought to have been married.*
14 *He was very influential both among the Jews and in the Church. He himself was a strict*
15 *Jew but authored the tolerant letter to Gentile Christians (Acts 15:13-29). He endorsed*
16 *the work of Paul to the Gentiles but was himself mainly concerned with Jews.*

17
18 *Shortly before Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans in 70 A.D., when Jews in large*
19 *number embraced Christianity, the High Priest at that time, Ananus, and the Scribes and*
20 *Pharisees (about the year 62 or 66 A.D.), assembled the Sanhedrin and commanded*
21 *James to proclaim publicly that Jesus was not the Messiah. But James instead cried out*
22 *that Jesus was indeed the Son of God and the Judge of the world. His enraged enemies*
23 *hurled him to the ground and stoned him until a "charitable" onlooker ended James's*
24 *sufferings with a club. James died, on his knees, praying, "Father, forgive them, they*
25 *know not what they do.*

- 26
27 • The book of James is the first in a group of biblical books called "the General
28 Epistles," that is, they do not seem to be addressed to any particular group or church.
29 The other books in this category include 1 and 2 Peter, 1, 2 and 3 John and Jude.

- The two main words to remember in this study of James are these:
FAITH and WORKS! James believed that FAITH was the ROOT of salvation, but WORKS were the FRUIT of salvation.
- One of the things you will quickly note about James is that he was extremely practical!

CHAPTER ONE

James 1:1

James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting.

I believe that almost anyone other than James would have introduced himself in this opening verse as James, the half-brother of Jesus Christ. But James does not do that; instead he introduces himself as “the servant of Christ.”

His book is written to the Jews who have followed Christ - the twelve tribes of Israel.

James 1:2

Consider it a sheer gift, friends, when tests and challenges come at you from all sides.

The King James Version states “fall into divers (or various) temptations. The above rendering is from the Message and I believe it more clearly indicates what James was communicating. Why is this a gift? James 1:3 **You know that under pressure, your faith-life is forced into the open and shows its true colors.**

SOMETHING IMPORTANT TO ASK OF GOD:

James 1:5-6 **If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. [6] But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.**

1. We are not talking here of wisdom such as Solomon asked of God, but, in keeping with the theme of this chapter, asking God for His solutions to our own personal problems.

2. But ask in FAITH! (Verse 6) There it is again - the overwhelming urgency of personal faith.

1 **James 1:8 A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.**

2
3 1. Some folks just wander all over the road when they drive. And there are people like
4 that spiritually. Know your faith and convictions and live by them - all the time.
5 Consistency is a jewel!

6
7 **James 1:12 Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he**
8 **shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.**

9
10 1. Blessed is the person who endures TESTING or TRYING.

11
12 2. What is the “crown of life?” It represents eternal rewards. I am not looking for
13 some heavy gold hat when I get to Heaven; however, I would like to have merited some
14 place in God’s kingdom where He knows He can trust me. If I have caved in under
15 pressure, then my “crown” is going to be awfully small, I’m afraid.

16

Note: there will be degrees of rewards in Heaven. Can you imagine that the repentant thief on the cross will have the same heavenly reward as the Apostle Paul? Hardly!

17
18 DOES GOD TEMPT US TO SIN?

19
20 No! **James 1:13-15 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God:**
21 **for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: [14] But every**
22 **man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. [15] Then when**
23 **lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth**
24 **death.**

25
26 People often blame God for their ways. Or blame someone else. Genesis 3:13
27 **And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And**
28 **the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.**

29
30 The theology for this is simple: there is no evil in God. 1 John 1.5 **This then is the**
31 **message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in**
32 **him is no darkness at all.**

33
34 1. At this point James tells us to quit blaming other people and

35 **James 1:21 Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and**
36 **receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.**

1 2. And he closes this first chapter with this powerful word: James 1:22 **But be ye**
2 **doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.**

3 4 CHAPTER TWO

5
6 In this chapter James dwells on attitudes of the believer. Discrimination is totally off
7 limits to a Christian.

8
9 James 2:2-6

10 **For instance, suppose someone comes into your meeting dressed in fancy clothes**
11 **and expensive jewelry, and another comes in who is poor and dressed in shabby**
12 **clothes. [3] If you give special attention and a good seat to the rich person, but you**
13 **say to the poor one, "You can stand over there, or else sit on the floor"—well, [4]**
14 **doesn't this discrimination show that you are guided by wrong motives?**

15 **[5] Listen to me, dear brothers and sisters. Hasn't God chosen the poor in this**
16 **world to be rich in faith? Aren't they the ones who will inherit the kingdom God**
17 **promised to those who love him? [6] And yet, you insult the poor man! Isn't it the**
18 **rich who oppress you and drag you into court?**

19
20 Illustration: "In His Steps" drama

21
22 James points out that sin is sin - whether it's discrimination or sexual sin: James 2:11

23 **For the same God who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not**
24 **murder." So if you murder someone, you have broken the entire law, even if you do**
25 **not commit adultery.**

26 27 NOW....ABOUT WORKS....

- 28
29 • We know by now, of course, that we are to exhibit FAITH in our lives. But if the
30 faith does not result in something tangible, what good is it?

31
32 James 2:14

33 **Dear brothers and sisters, what's the use of saying you have faith if you don't**
34 **prove it by your actions? That kind of faith can't save anyone.**

35
36 Now he really hammers this truth home:

37
38 James 2:17-19

39 **So you see, it isn't enough just to have faith. Faith that doesn't show itself by good**
40 **deeds is no faith at all—it is dead and useless.**

1 [18] Now someone may argue, "Some people have faith; others have good deeds."
2 I say, "I can't see your faith if you don't have good deeds, but I will show you my
3 faith through my good deeds."

4 [19] Do you still think it's enough just to believe that there is one God? Well, even
5 the demons believe this, and they tremble in terror!
6

7 Satan "believes," but that does not mean he has a place in God's Kingdom! Faith has
8 to be followed by "doing something." James gives us some examples:
9

10 James 2:21-26

11 Don't you remember that our ancestor Abraham was declared right with God
12 because of what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? [22] You see, he
13 was trusting God so much that he was willing to do whatever God told him to do.
14 His faith was made complete by what he did—by his actions. [23] And so it
15 happened just as the Scriptures say: "Abraham believed God, so God declared him
16 to be righteous." He was even called "the friend of God." [24] So you see, we are
17 made right with God by what we do, not by faith alone.

18 [25] Rahab the prostitute is another example of this. She was made right with God
19 by her actions—when she hid those messengers and sent them safely away by a
20 different road. [26] Just as the body is dead without a spirit, so also faith is dead
21 without good deeds.
22

23 CHAPTER THREE

24
25 This chapter deals with "the tongue." One writer estimated that an average person
26 speaks 30,000 words a day. We hear a lot about "freedom of speech." But the
27 follower of Christ needs to bridle his or her tongue and watch what is said.
28

29 James 3:2-8

30 We all make many mistakes, but those who control their tongues can also control
31 themselves in every other way. [3] We can make a large horse turn around and go
32 wherever we want by means of a small bit in its mouth. [4] And a tiny rudder makes
33 a huge ship turn wherever the pilot wants it to go, even though the winds are strong.
34 [5] So also, the tongue is a small thing, but what enormous damage it can do. A tiny
35 spark can set a great forest on fire. [6] And the tongue is a flame of fire. It is full of
36 wickedness that can ruin your whole life. It can turn the entire course of your life
37 into a blazing flame of destruction, for it is set on fire by hell itself.

38 [7] People can tame all kinds of animals and birds and reptiles and fish, [8] but no
39 one can tame the tongue. It is an uncontrollable evil, full of deadly poison.
40

1 I understand this is a huge issue in some churches; I don't think it is in this one. Years
2 ago there was a lady in the church who was known for endless chatter or gossip and yet
3 she had little or no idea what she was talking about. I challenged her on it one day in
4 my office. She said, "Well, I just have to say what I'm thinking." I asked her, "Why?"
5 She left the church.

6
7 Proverbs 12:18

8 **There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword: but the tongue of the wise is**
9 **health.**

10 Our tongues are capable of praising God or cursing Him. Your words and mine
11 reveal what we really are inside: James 3:11-12 **Doth a fountain send forth at**
12 **the same place sweet water and bitter? [12] Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive**
13 **berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.**

14 **WORLDLINESS - CHAPTER FOUR**

15 We often equate worldliness with amusements, with apparel or make-up, or any number
16 of things. James will disagree sharply with you here. Here is an illustration:

17 **A pastor in New York state had a clock in his church that would never keep accurate**
18 **time. He put a sign on the clock that read: "Don't blame the hands. The trouble lies**
19 **deeper!"**

20 So it is with worldliness. The outer issues are only "the hands of the clock." The
21 break-down is inside the mechanism. James will teach us that worldliness is the inner
22 strife within a man or woman that keeps him from becoming a committed follower of
23 Christ.

24 James 4:1-3

25 **What is causing the quarrels and fights among you? Isn't it the whole army of evil**
26 **desires at war within you? [2] You want what you don't have, so you scheme and kill**
27 **to get it. You are jealous for what others have, and you can't possess it, so you fight**
28 **and quarrel to take it away from them. And yet the reason you don't have what you**
29 **want is that you don't ask God for it. [3] And even when you do ask, you don't get it**
30 **because your whole motive is wrong—you want only what will give you pleasure.**

31
32 Worldliness is the desire to please yourself more than to please God!
33

1 In our prayers we should be aware of this “selfishness.” James 4:3 **And even when**
2 **you do ask, you don't get it because your whole motive is wrong—you want only**
3 **what will give you pleasure.**

4
5 I often speak to people who are floating on the tide of life - a tide that is leading to their
6 death. They don't seem to understand that they have to actively turn themselves around
7 and go the other way: James 4:7-8 **So humble yourselves before God. Resist the**
8 **Devil, and he will flee from you. [8] Draw close to God, and God will draw close to**
9 **you. Wash your hands, you sinners; purify your hearts, you hypocrites.**

10
11

You can get as close to God as you want! You are, in fact, at this very moment, as close to God as you really want to be!

12
13 **THE BREVITY OF LIFE**

14
15 James 4:13-16

16 **Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and**
17 **continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: [14] Whereas ye know not**
18 **what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that**
19 **appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. [15] For that ye ought to say, If**
20 **the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that. [16] But now ye rejoice in your**
21 **boastings: all such rejoicing is evil.**

22
23 I can never relive the past 72 years; but I can put everything I've got into what time I have
24 left!

25
26 **THE OTHER SIDE OF SIN**

27 James 4:17

28 **Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.**

29
30 There are sins of COMMISSION....those things we shouldn't do, but still do.
31 There are also sins of OMISSION....those things we should do, but don't do.

32
33 **CHAPTER FIVE**

34
35 In his closing chapter, James warns us against holding onto “things” so tightly.

36
37 James 5:1-3

38 **Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon**

1 you. [2] Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. [3] Your gold
2 and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall
3 eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.
4

5

A man was being taken through a mansion. He said to the owner, "All this and heaven, too, would be wonderful. But all this and hell would be horrible."
--

6
7 The question asked here basically is this: if God has prospered you, how are you using
8 that prosperity? Christ and His Kingdom are coming:
9

10 James 5:7-8

11 **Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the**
12 **husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for**
13 **it, until he receive the early and latter rain. [8] Be ye also patient; stablish your**
14 **hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.**
15

16 How often have we heard that - Jesus is coming? And many scoff. But the fact is:
17 He IS coming!
18

19 **EFFECTIVE PRAYERS**

20
21 James 5:14-16

22 **Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray**
23 **over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: [15] And the prayer of**
24 **faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed**
25 **sins, they shall be forgiven him. [16] Confess your faults one to another, and pray**
26 **one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous**
27 **man availeth much.**
28

29 1. There is nothing special about the "oil." It is only a point of contact and a symbol of
30 the Holy Spirit. It is the PRAYER OF FAITH that does the work.
31

32 2. James uses Elijah as a reference point:

33 James 5:17-18

34 **Elijah was as human as we are, and yet when he prayed earnestly that no rain**
35 **would fall, none fell for the next three and a half years! [18] Then he prayed for**
36 **rain, and down it poured. The grass turned green, and the crops began to grow**
37 **again.**
38

1 The great prophet Elijah was just a man and he had all the ups and downs you and I do.
2 He went from the great victory on Mount Carmel to running for his life the next day.
3 Yet when he prayed, things happened. Why? Because he prayed in FAITH. He
4 believed that God heard Him.
5
6

7 This will temporarily conclude this series as Darlene and I leave on vacation tomorrow. I
8 will return for the Father's Day weekend and then we continue on - going as far as
9 Montana to Glacier Park. When we return, I will continue the series on Wednesday,
10 July 22nd with I and II Peter.
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35