

THE GENERAL EPISTLE OF JAMES

{Question outlines & notes prepared by *Boyd Jennings*}

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Authorship & Introduction

James 1:1

1. Why have scholars concluded that James, the half brother of Jesus, authored this epistle?
2. What do we know of this James from other New Testament passages?
3. If this James were the author, what would this suggest about the letter's purpose?
4. What is the theme of the epistle?
5. Who were the "twelve tribes" to whom the letter is addressed?
6. Where were these "twelve tribes"?
7. What specific and immediate need occasioned the writing of this epistle?

Tempted & Tried

James 1:2-8, 12-15

1. What is meant by the word “temptation” (kfv, 1:2)?
2. How may our trials be considered a joy?
3. How do our trials prove our faith?
4. What is the result of our faith proven by trial?
5. Define wisdom. How will it help a Christian through trial?
6. How may we expect to receive this wisdom?
7. What can we do to assure ourselves of this promise?
8. What is meant by the word “temptation” (1:12)?
9. How may our temptations be considered a blessing?
10. From the context, how do we prove our love for the Lord?
11. Is God responsible for our temptations?
12. How are we tempted?
13. How does our lust conceive?
14. When does temptation cause us to sin, or when does sin occur?
15. Should we feel guilt over temptation? Should we make light of temptation?

Equality In Christ

James 1:9-11; 2:1-13

1. Who is the brother of low degree, and how is he exalted?
2. How is the rich brother brought low?
3. What is the point of verses 9-11?
4. Upon what basis were they showing “respect of persons” (partiality)?
5. In what ways might we be showing partiality?
6. What was the problem in dealing with these two men?
7. What is the sin in this problem?
8. How were they treating the poor? How should they be treated?
9. Why shouldn't the rich be given special honor?
10. What is the “worthy” or “noble” name?
11. What is the “royal law”, and why is it so called?
12. Why is the “royal law” mentioned in this context of scripture?
13. What makes one a “transgressor of the law”?
14. What do verses 12-13 suggest was their problem?
15. What is the meaning of “mercy triumphs over judgment”?

Pure & Undeclared Religion

James 1:16-27

1. About what were they not to be deceived? (16-17)
 - a. How could they be deceived about that fact?

2. What conduct will follow one “brought forth by the word of truth”? (18-20)

3. What is the implanted word, and why is it so called? (21)
 - a. How are we to receive the implanted word? (21)

4. What is another way in which one can be deceived? (22-25)

5. What is the “perfect law of liberty”? (25)
 - a. Why is it law? Why is it perfect? What has it to do with liberty? (25)

6. What are the tests of a pure and true religion (in our text)? (26-27)

7. How can a person’s religion be considered “useless”? (26)

8. What is the meaning of “visit” in verse 27?

9. Characterize a religion that seeks the pleasure and acceptance of the world.

10. Verse 27 suggests individual responsibility in benevolence. List other passages:

Saving Faith

James 2:14-26

1. Is there a contradiction between James 2:21 and Romans 4:2-3?
2. What light does Romans 3:28 and 4:4-5 bring into Paul's discussion?
3. What light does James 2:14-17, 19-20, 26 bring into James's discussion?
4. What kind of "works" is Paul discussing in Romans (cf. Rom 3:20, 27-28)?
5. What kind of "works" is James discussing (cf. Jas 2:15-16, 18, 20-25)?
6. How does Abraham illustrate the point?
7. How were the "works" of Rahab similar to the "works" of Abraham?
8. How does James relate "faith" and "works"?
9. What is the connection between James 1:2-4 and 2:21-22?
10. When was the Scripture referred to in verse 23 (Gen 15:6) fulfilled?
11. According to James 2:21, when was Abraham "justified" (cf. Gen 22)?
12. What conclusion must we reach about "faith" from the answers to ?'s 10 & 11?
13. Does James exclude "faith" from "justification"?
 - a. Does He make "justification" solely a matter of "works"?

Taming the Tongue

James 3:1-12; 4:11-12; 5:12

1. No words can be spoken that are not first in the _____? (Scripture references)
2. How do teachers “receive a stricter judgment”?
3. What difficult thing can a person do if he can control his tongue?
4. What is the similarity between a horse’s bit, and ship’s rudder and the tongue?
5. Explain the analogies of the tongue being:
 - a. “A fire” –
 - b. “A world of iniquity” –
 - c. “So set among our members that it defiles the whole body” –
 - d. “Sets on fire the course (wheel) of nature” –
 - e. “Set on fire by hell” –
 - f. “An unruly evil” –
 - g. “Full of deadly poison” –
6. Why are animals mentioned in this context?
7. How is the tongue inconsistent?
8. Is it natural for the tongue to be inconsistent?
9. What kind of judging is forbidden? (Cf. Matt 7:1-5; not righteous judgment, Jn 7:24)
10. How does an improper judgment reflect upon the one(s) doing it?
11. What kind of swearing is James forbidding? (Matt 26:63-64; Heb 6:13-14; 1 Thes 5:27)
12. Did Jesus rebuke the Jews of His day on this matter? (Scripture references)
13. How may one “fall into judgment” if he does not speak properly?

Heavenly Wisdom

James 3:13-18

1. Can you outline the book of Proverbs?
 - a. What is the opposite of “wisdom” in the book of Proverbs?

2. From our text in James there are two types of wisdom, describe each.
 - a. “Wisdom...from above”

 - b. “Wisdom...earthly, sensual, demonic”

3. Discuss the meaning of the words & phrases describing Heavenly Wisdom in 3:17-18.

Pride versus Humility

James 4:1-10

1. Are the questions in verse 1 referring to relations in the church?

2. What does James mean by “wars and fights” (1)?
 - a. List three things that contribute to this situation (1-2) –

 - b. What will end it (2)?

 - c. What will perpetuate it (3)?

3. In what way are they committing adultery (4)?

4. Explain verse 5.

5. How will God’s grace help the situation (6)?
 - a. Who will receive God’s grace (6)?

6. How can the Christian be assured of God’s grace (7-10)?

Personal Plans & Providence

James 4:13-17

1. What do some Christians overlook when they make their plans?
 - a. How can we avoid such an oversight?

2. Do the words “if the Lord wills ...” have to be uttered when we make plans?
 - a. How might the statement “if the Lord wills” be misused?

3. What is wrong with the planning of verse 13?

4. Of what do we become guilty when we fail to consider the Lord in our plans?

5. In the context of verse 17, what “good” *must* we do?
 - a. Can this verse be applied to any “good” we know to do yet fail to do?

6. Failing to do what we know to do and are capable of doing is often referred to as sins of
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Unrighteous Mammon

James 5:1-6

1. Describe the *wealth* of the “rich” from this text?

2. Were these “rich” people Christians?

3. What would ultimately befall these “rich” people?
 - a. Why would this happen to them?

4. How may “mammon” be *righteous* instead of *unrighteous* (Matt 6:24; Lk 16:1-13)?
 - a. Did the rich, young ruler possess “unrighteous mammon” (Lk 18:18-23)?

5. Are riches a token of God’s approval (give proof)?

6. Is poverty a token of God’s disapproval (give proof)?

7. At what point does one commit sin in his use of money and wealth?

Purposeful Prayer

James 5:13-18

1. How will Christians express their joy?
2. How will Christians relieve their burden of suffering?
3. Why summon the elders when a Christian becomes ill?
 - a. What were the elders to do, and whose name were they to invoke?
 - b. What were the results of their prayers?
 - c. In what way were the sick “saved”? (See Mk 5:34; Lk 8:48; Acts 14:9)
 - d. Did the oil play a role in the healing?
 - e. Explain the source of the healing?
 - f. Does verse 15 suggest a connection between sickness and sin?
 - g. Does verse 15 suggest forgiveness apart from repentance?
4. Why good can come from confessing sins to a fellow Christian?
 - a. Where is this confession to take place?
 - b. What is the proper response after hearing a confession?
5. What does prayer accomplish?
 - a. How do we know this, what example is given?

Being Your Brother's Keeper

James 5:19-20

1. Does the one who “wanders” in verse 19 refer to a child of God?
 - a. Then explain the KJV use of the words “convert him”.

2. What does *conversion*, in this case, accomplish?

3. What must an erring Christian do to be converted?

4. What is the church's duty toward the erring that will not be converted?

5. Where do we most often fail in this process?

6. Explain the process of repentance as seen in the Prodigal Son (Lk 15:17-20).