

# James

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## Study Outline

**Background:** Though there are several people with the name “James” mentioned in the NT, the author of this book is undoubtedly the half-brother of Jesus (Matthew 13:35). James was initially a skeptic, but later believed after Jesus appeared to him in resurrected form (1 Corinthians 15:7). James would later become the pastor of the church in Jerusalem where he’d play an influential role in the spread and development of the Gospel (Acts 15, Galatians 2:9). He was a pious and righteous man often called “James the Just” or referred to as “Old Camel Knees” because of the time he spent in prayer.

**Main Point:** James was written somewhere between 45-50 AD making it the first book of the New Testament. As you read “James” keep in mind the author was the half-brother of Jesus. (They both had the same mother, but obviously had different fathers). This family dynamic gave James a unique and in many ways significant glimpse into the life and character of Jesus. Of all the people to have ever lived, no one spent as much time with Christ as James had. As the kid brother growing up under the shadow of God’s Son, James developed a no-nonsense perspective of the Christian experience. His letter to the church reflects this “no messing around” approach as it’s dominated with command verbs. James is singularly focused on the practical side of the Christian experience by making it clear what a Christian is supposed to be doing. In his “do this, do that” appeal James deals with the ethics of Christianity focusing very little on doctrine. To counter balance this “drill sergeant” tone, James addresses his audience using varying forms of the tender expression “brother”. His letter is both blunt and gracious.

At the core of James’ message is the exhortation for new believers to grow up and mature in their spiritual lives. If our lives are supposed to reflect Christ then there are some obvious things we need to be doing. James clear explains these throughout his letter.

James not only reinforces the “cause of our salvation - faith” but he also discusses the “effect of our salvation - works.” It’s been correctly stated that “we are justified by faith for works.” Though faith in Jesus is the root of our salvation, James reminds us that Godly works are the fruit of our salvation.

### **OUTLINE OF THE BOOK OF JAMES**

#### **HOW TO MATURE IN YOUR FAITH:**

- CH 1. PATIENTLY ENDURE TRIALS**
- CH 2. LIVE OUT THE WORD OF GOD**
- CH 3. CONTROL YOUR WORDS**
- CH 4. MAKE PEACE NOT TROUBLE**
- CH 5. PRAY, PRAY, PRAY**

#### **UNIVERSAL EPISTLES**

These letters were not written to one specific church or individual, but were instead written to the church as a whole.

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|-------------------|------------------|
| <b>1. James</b>   | <b>4. 1 John</b> |
| <b>2. 1 Peter</b> | <b>5. 2 John</b> |
| <b>3. 2 Peter</b> | <b>6. 3 John</b> |
|                   | <b>7. Jude</b>   |



### *Day 1: Count It....*

**James 1:1-8 // THINKING POINTS:** (1). What is significant about James choosing the words “when you fall into various trials?” (2). What does it mean to “count it all joy?” Do we have a choice to be joyous or not? What is the difference between joy and happiness? (3). How does God use your trials and hardships to spiritually grow and mature you?

### *Day 2: Enticement....*

**James 1:12-18 // THINKING POINTS:** (1). According to James what is the simple progression that takes us from temptation to actual sin? (2). Are your desires wrong? How does Satan use your natural desires to lead you into sinful decisions? (3). Compare and contrast Satan’s plans for you and the plans that God has?

### *Day 3: Dippady Doer....*

**James 1:21-27 // THINKING POINTS:** (1). In order to stand against the temptations of Satan, what two simple things are we supposed to be doing? (2). How might we deceive ourselves if we don’t act upon the things we hear from God’s Word? (3). Examine you life. Are you actively being obedient to the things of the Lord or simply deceiving yourself?

### *Day 4: Dont be Katen....*

**James 2:1-13 // THINKING POINTS:** (1). What is the difference between judging a person by their outward appearance and making judgments about that person by the way they look? (2). What is James warning you not to do? (3). In what way does the way you behave towards people reveal what you really believe about God?

### *Day 5: Cause & Effect....*

**James 2:14-26 // THINKING POINTS:** (1). What is the basic scientific law of causality (cause and effect)? (2). How does this scientific principle apply to spiritual faith and physical works? (3). If faith in Jesus is the cause of your salvation, and godly works are the effects of salvation - judging by your works how great and active is your faith?

### *Day 6: Pray, Pray, Pray....*

**James 5:13-20 // THINKING POINT:** (1). When we sin or commit a trespass what does James encourage us to do? (2). Why is it important for us to confess our sins to one another? What is the result of confession? (3). When someone confesses their sin to you, what is your responsibility at that point? Why does James encourage you to pray for the lost people around you? Is there power in prayer?

**DEVOTIONS**

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