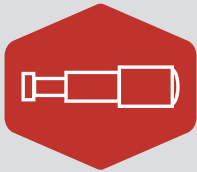




Lesson 1: Introduction

Main Idea: Before you begin to chew the bite-sized pieces of this Gospel, it's best to be familiar with the entirety of the work. This first lesson will provide you with an overview of the entire Book of James that will prepare you for the following lessons.



The Author's Lens (Spyglass)

What did the Scripture mean to the original author and audience? As you explore information on the author, content, culture, history, land, and language of the Bible, you will gain a better understanding of the intended message of God's Word.

As you begin this study, background knowledge is helpful. Please read the points below. Consider the following synopsis from the *Fire Bible*^{®1}

- Author: James
- Theme: Faith in Action
- Date of Writing: AD 45-49
- Background: This book is classified as a “general letter” because it is not specific to a particular local church but to a wider audience. James was known to his original readers.
- Purpose: James wrote this letter to encourage Jewish Christians who were suffering opposition and experiencing various difficulties that were testing their faith. He also wrote to correct wrong ideas about the nature of true saving faith in Christ and how to live out faith in practical actions.
- Survey: James has six major divisions.
 - » Trials and benefiting from them (1:2-18)

¹ Donald C. Stamps, *Fire Bible*[®]: *English Standard Version*[®], (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishing, 2011), 2167-2168.

- » Hearing the Word and doing it (1:19-27)
 - » Being unbiased and showing it (2:1-13)
 - » Professing faith and proving it (2:14-26)
 - » Recognizing pitfalls and avoiding them (3:1-5:6)
 - » Developing Christian qualities and living by them (5:7-20)
- As you read through this introduction, journal any thoughts or questions you may have.



My Lens (Eyeglasses)

What does this Scripture say to you? Through studying the biblical explanations and principles in the text and bullet points below, you will better understand what God's Word is saying to you today.

- Read the entire Book of James before the first session.
 - » Day 1: chapter 1
 - » Day 2: chapter 2:1-3:13
 - » Day 3: chapter 3:14-4:12
 - » Day 4: chapter 4:13-5:20
 - As you read each day, write down and highlight which verse speaks to you and why.
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- Read the *Fire Bible*® two-page introduction to the Book of James.
 - » What information did you learn from the introduction?

- Read through Matthew 5–7 and write out the corresponding Scripture from the Sermon on the Mount with the five topics in James. What thoughts come to mind from this comparison?

- James uses everyday life examples to illustrate what he is trying to communicate. Read the following verses and write out the example James is using to communicate:

Scripture	Illustration
James 1:6	
James 1:10-11	
James 1:13-15	
James 1:23-24	
James 3:3	
James 3:4	
James 4:14	
James 5:2	
James 5:3	

