

THE LETTER OF JAMES

Overview and Review

WHO? Who wrote the book of James?

1:1 - *James, a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad: Greetings.*

- The fact that he doesn't think it necessary to explain who he is probably means that he was _____ - _____ to those he wrote.
- The name “James” occurs 42 times in the New Testament, but there are only 4 possibilities for who this person could be.
 - ☐ James, the father of Judas (not Iscariot) (the father of one of the Twelve Disciples)
 - ☐ James, the son of Alphaeus (one of the Twelve Disciples)
 - ☐ James, the son of Zebedee, the brother of John (one of the Twelve Disciples)
 - ☐ James, the oldest half-brother of Jesus (Galatians 1:19 - *James, the Lord's brother*)
 - Lived with Jesus for 30 years in Nazareth as an _____
 - Was the recipient of a special post-resurrection of appearance of Jesus
 - Served for 30 years as the pastor of the church in Jerusalem
 - Suffered a martyr's death

WHY? Why study the book of James?

James	Matthew 5–7
1:2, Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials.	5:11–12, Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. Rejoice and be glad.
1:4, That you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.	5:48, You are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.
1:5, Let him ask of God ... and it will be given to him.	7:7–8, Ask, and it will be given to you.... For everyone who asks receives.
1:5, Let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.	7:11, How much more will your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him.
1:9, But the brother of humble circumstances is to glory in his high position.	5:3, Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
1:11, Its flower falls off and the beauty of its appearance is destroyed.	6:28–29, The lilies of the field ... clothed ... like one of these.
1:12, Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.	5:10–12, Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.
1:13, Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God,” for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone.	6:13, And do not lead us into temptation.
1:17, Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights.	5:16, Let your light shine before men ... and glorify your Father who is in heaven.
1:20, For the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God.	5:22, That everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court.
1:20, The righteousness of God.	6:33, His righteousness.
1:22, But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.	5:19, Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments ... but whoever keeps and teaches them.
1:22, But prove yourselves doers of the word.	7:24, Everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them.
1:22, And not merely hearers who delude themselves.	7:26, And everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them.
1:22–25, But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man shall be blessed in what he does.	7:24–26, Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock. Everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand.
1:23, For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror.	7:26, Everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand.
1:26–27, If anyone thinks himself to be religious, and yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this man's religion is worthless. Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.	7:21–23, Not everyone who says to Me, “Lord, Lord,” will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. Many will say to Me on that day, “Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in your name perform many miracles?” And then I will declare to them, “I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.”

James	Matthew 5-7
2:5, Did not God choose the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom?	5:3, Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
2:8, You shall love your neighbor as yourself.	5:43, You shall love your neighbor.
2:8, If, however, you are fulfilling the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing well.	7:12, Therefore, treat people the same way you want them to treat you, for this is the Law and the Prophets.
2:10, For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all.	5:19, Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments ... shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps ... them.
2:11, For He who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not commit murder." Now if you do not commit adultery, but do commit murder, you have become a transgressor of the law.	5:21, You have heard that the ancients were told, "You shall not commit murder," and "Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court."
2:13, For judgment will be merciless to one who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment.	5:5, Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.
2:13, For judgment will be merciless to one who has shown no mercy.	5:7, Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.
2:13, For judgment will be merciless to one who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment.	6:14-15, For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions.
2:13, For judgment will be merciless to one who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment.	7:1-2, Do not judge so that you will not be judged. For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you.
2:14-16, What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith, but he has no works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and be filled," and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that?	7:21-23, Not everyone who says to Me, "Lord, Lord," will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. Many will say to Me on that day, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?" And then I will declare to them, "I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness."
2:15, If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food.	6:25, Do not be worried about your life, as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, as to what you will put on.
2:26, For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.	7:21, Not everyone who says to Me, "Lord, Lord," will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter.
3:2, If anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body as well.	5:48, Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.
3:10-13, From the same mouth come both blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be this way. Does a fountain send out from the same opening both fresh and bitter water? Can a fig tree, my brethren, produce olives, or a vine produce figs? Neither can salt water produce fresh. Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom.	7:16-17, You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes nor figs from thistles, are they? So every good tree bears good fruit; but the bad tree bears bad fruit.
3:18, And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.	5:9, Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.
3:18, And the seed whose fruit is righteousness.	7:16, You will know them by their fruits.
4:2-3, You do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives.	7:7-8, Ask, and it shall be given to you.... For everyone who asks receives.
4:4, Do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.	6:24, No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.
4:8, Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.	5:8, Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.
4:9, Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning, and your joy to gloom.	5:4, Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.
4:11-12, Do not speak against one another, brethren. He who speaks against a brother or judges his brother.... There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the One who is able to save and to destroy; but who are you who judge your neighbor?	7:1-2, Do not judge so that you will not be judged. For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you.
4:13-14, Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit." Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow.	6:34, So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.
5:2-3, Your riches have rotted and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and your silver have rusted.... It is in the last days that you have stored up your treasure!	6:19-20, Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy.... But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys.
5:6, You have condemned and put to death the righteous man.	7:1, Do not judge so that you will not be judged.
5:9, Do not complain, brethren, against one another, so that you yourselves may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door.	5:22, But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever says to his brother, "You good-for-nothing," shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever says, "You fool," shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell.
5:9, Do not complain, brethren, against one another, so that you yourselves may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door.	7:1, Do not judge so that you will not be judged.
5:10, As an example, brethren, of suffering and patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.	5:12, For in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.
5:12, But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath; but your yes is to be yes, and your no, no, so that you may not fall under judgment.	5:34-37, But I say to you, make no oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by the earth, for it is the footstool of His feet, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Nor shall you make an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. But let your statement be, "Yes, yes" or "No, no"; anything beyond these is of evil.

These 45 parallel statements suggest that James heard Jesus first-hand teach the Sermon on the Mount. Thus, James is considered a _____ to the church on the Sermon on the Mount.

Why study the book of James? Its emphasis on specific practical application to the nitty-gritty of life perfectly _____ Jesus's teaching and the Apostles' teaching of lordship salvation (genuine faith in Christ as Savior will be carried out in a life of obedience to Christ as Lord).

WHEN? When was the book of James written?

- ____ - ____ AD making it the _____ book in the New Testament
- Chronologically, James fits after the Gospels and somewhere between the events of Acts 12 (when James becomes the senior pastor of the Jerusalem church) and Acts 15 (the Jerusalem Counsel).

WHAT? What are some of the characteristics of the book of James?

- It is a _____ epistle
 - No indication of the occasion for why it was written
 - No churches mentioned
 - No individuals named
 - No typical ending
 - Intended for a wide audience: *to the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad* (1:1)
 - Written in a hypothetical way: *who/whoever* (29x), *if* (19x)
- It is thoroughly permeated with references from the _____
 - There are over ____ allusions to the Old Testament
 - Douglas Moo - "*To be sure, he does not often formally quote the Old Testament (only in 2:8 [Lev. 19:18]; 2:23 [Gen. 15:6]; and 4:5 [summary of OT teaching]). But his language is thoroughly permeated with Old Testament ways of speaking, and he regularly appeals to Old Testament people and stories.*"
 - Abraham (2:21-23) ▪ Job (5:11)
 - Isaac (2:21) ▪ Elijah (5:17-18)
 - Rahab (2:25)
 - James alludes to all three parts of the OT canon—Law (2:10), Prophets (5:10), and Wisdom Literature (5:11).
 - It is the only New Testament author that refers to God by the Old Testament name, "*Lord Sabaoth*" (5:4)

- **It includes numerous examples and comparisons taken from nature and human life**

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| ○ surf of the sea (1:6) | ○ fire (3:5, 6 (3x), 5:3) |
| ○ wind (1:6, 11; 3:4) | ○ beasts, birds, reptiles, sea creatures (3:7) |
| ○ flowers and grass (1:11) | ○ poison (3:8) |
| ○ sun (1:11, 17) | ○ fountain (3:11) |
| ○ shadow (1:17) | ○ fresh, bitter, and salt water (3:11, 12) |
| ○ mirror (1:23) | ○ figs, olives, and grapevines (3:12) |
| ○ tongue (1:26; 3:5, 6, 8) | ○ vapor (4:14) |
| ○ horses (3:3) | ○ moth (5:2) |
| ○ ships (3:4) | ○ rust (5:3) |
| ○ forest (3:5) | ○ agriculture (farmer, produce, soil) (5:7) |

- **It is intensely _____**

- Out of 108 verses, there are ____ commands—the highest percentage of any book in the Bible.
- With so many commands, is James unconcerned with theology?
 - Martin Luther: “*St. James’ epistle is really an epistle of straw, compared to these others [Romans, Galatians].*”
 - In a time of medieval Roman Catholicism which emphasized works righteousness, justification by faith alone became for him the doctrine by which he found peace with God personally, and it became for him and his followers “the doctrine on which the church stands or falls.”
 - Shouldn’t theology provide the basis for biblical commands and obedience to them?
- It is true that James says little or nothing about many basic Christian doctrines, but it’s not because he is unconcerned with theology. Rather he purposely concentrates on the practical _____ of theology—a theology which he previously taught to those in his congregation who are now scattered abroad.

- Although it emphasizes the practical outworkings of theology, it does touch briefly and allusively on theology.

- Theology in James [“He presents theology, but it is implicit rather than explicit.”
--Simon Kistemaker]

- God’s character (undergirds virtually everything in the letter)

James	God is...
1:17a - Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights...	
1:17b - ...with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.	
1:12 - Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. 2:5 - Listen, my beloved brethren: did not God choose the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?	
2:19 - You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder.	
4:6 - GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.	
4:8 - Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.	
4:12 - There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the One who is able to save and to destroy.	
5:9 - ...behold, the Judge is standing right at the door.	
4:15 - Instead, you ought to say, “If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that.”	
5:11 - We count those blessed who endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord’s dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful.	

- Christology (2 direct references to Christ (1:1; 2:1), 11 indirect references of “Lord”)
- Prayer (1:5-7; 4:2-3; 5:14-16)
- Faith (16 occurrences)
- Law (11 occurrences)
- Judgment (2:12,13; 3:1; 5:9; 5:12)
- Demons (2:19); demonic (3:15); devil (4:7)
- The coming of the Lord (5:7-8)

- It is notoriously difficult to _____ and it is known for completely lacking any cohesion of _____.
- Douglas Moo: “Scholars find little agreement about the structure of James. And I have no grand, integrated structure to propose; indeed, the variety of suggestions for the specifics of James’s structure may themselves suggest that James did not write with a careful structure in mind. If this is so, it should not bother us—in contrast to some interpreters, who give the impression that a lack of clear organization puts James in a bad light. Structure is tied to genre and purpose. Some kinds of writing, by their very nature, do not have a clear organizing principle or readily identifiable logical progress. This is not necessarily a bad thing; indeed, it may be integral to the writing’s effectiveness. So if we were to conclude that James does consist of a series of brief, relatively independent exhortations, nothing negative about the letter could be inferred.”
- Proposed macro-structure:

James 1	Topic	James 2-5
Letter’s opening: 1:1 <i>James, a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the 12 tribes who are dispersed abroad: Greetings.</i>		
2-4, 12-15	Testing/temptation	5:7-11
5	Wisdom	3:13-4:3
6-8	Prayer/faith	5:13-18 (2:14-26)
9-11	Rich and poor	2:1-8; 4:13-17; 5:1-6
16-18	God’s giving/new birth through the word	--
19-20, 26	Speech	3:1-11; 4:11-12; 5:12
21-25	Doing the word	2:8-13, 14-26
27	Concern for the downtrodden	2:1-8
27	Avoiding worldliness	4:4-10
		Letter’s closing: 5:19-20 <i>My brethren, if any among you strays from the truth and one turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.</i>

○ Proposed central theme of the book

▪ **“Tests of a living faith”** [...*the testing of your faith...* (1:2)]

John MacArthur:

- I. The Test of Perseverance in Suffering (1:2-12)
- II. The Test of Blame in Temptation (1:13-18)
- III. The Test of Response to the Word (1:19-27)
- IV. The Test of Impartial Love (2:1-13)
- V. The Test of Righteous Works (2:14-26)
- VI. The Test of the Tongue (3:1-12)
- VII. The Test of Humble Wisdom (3:13-18)
- VIII. The Test of Worldly Indulgence (4:1-12)
- IX. The Test of Dependence (4:13-17)
- X. The Test of Patient Endurance (5:1-11)
- XI. The Test of Truthfulness (5:12)
- XII. The Test of Prayerfulness (5:13-18)
- XIII. The Test of True Faith (5:19-20) →

My brethren, if any among you strays from the truth and one turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

▪ **“Wholeism”**

- God is one, undivided, and whole. Therefore, His people need to be one, undivided, and whole (in who they are and how they relate to each other), so that the community is and one, undivided, and whole.

Positive	Negative
God gives “singly”/without reservation 1:5 - <i>God...who gives to all generously and without reproach</i>	Double-minded (1:8; 4:8)
God is one (2:19)	Discrimination destroys the oneness of the Christian community (2:1-7)
God does not change (He is consistent) 1:17 - <i>the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.</i>	Our speech must not be “double” (3:9-12)
There is only one Lawgiver and Judge (4:12)	Quarrels disrupt the “oneness” of the Christian community (3:13-4:3)
The Law is of “one piece” 2:10-11 - <i>For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all.</i>	Oaths can be used to escape consistency in our words (5:12)
The Word of God is one (1:18-2:27)	
The community should be one (3:13-4:3)	
God demands all of us (4:4-5)	

- Douglas Moo: “Basic to all that James says in his letter is his concern that his readers stop compromising with worldly values and behavior and give themselves wholly to the Lord. James wants to overcome the divided character of Christian existence; he is concerned about the wholeness and perfection of the Christian life. Spiritual “wholeness” is the central concern of the letter.”

HOW? How are we to approach the book of James?

- The key to understanding it comes down to 1:21

Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls.

- If we're going to live the life James calls us to live, it starts with _____.
 - _____ times he calls the recipients of his letter "brothers" so this is a letter to believers and for believers urging us, by God's grace, to continue to walk by faith and produce spiritual fruitfulness.
- "This letter is like a machine gun firing off multiple words of caution and counsel to those in the faith. But it's also a map directing the believer in how they out to live a fruitful life pleasing to God."
- So we need this book to help us discern the legitimacy of our faith and the maturity of our faith.

REVIEW

1:1 – Lessons from the Life of James

- God is sovereign in salvation: *James*
- God is sovereign in our service: *a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ*
- God is sovereign in our circumstances: *To the twelve tribes who are disperses abroad: Greetings (Rejoice).*

1:2-12 – How to Respond to Trials

Main Point: The troubles of life are God's tools to refine our character and to produce in us true Christian maturity, so...

- Develop the right attitude: *joy*
- Use the available resources: *prayer, God's wisdom, and God's grace*
- Don't focus on your circumstances: *rejoice in your spiritual position*

Transition: Every trial that we encounter (every external difficulty which God brings into our life to strengthen our faith), carries with it the possibility of an inner enticement to sin.

1:13-18 – How to Respond to Temptation

- Accept full responsibility for our temptation: *don't blame God directly or indirectly*
- Identify the source of our temptation: *your own lusts*
- Understand the process of our temptation: *attraction→decision→action→disposition→destruction*
- Unmask the deception of temptation: *God's goodness, greatness, immutability, plan*

v. 18 - *In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures.*

- God in eternity past started a plan when He chose us as His own. When we sin it doesn't change that plan. He is still going to make us one day to stand in the presence of His glory as perfect, faultless, and blameless. So in the midst of temptation, don't be deceived and believe all of the lies about God's character. God will finish what He has begun.

Transition: God's Word was instrumental in our salvation & it's important in our Christian life

1:19-27 – How to Respond to God's Word

- A teachable heart: *in humility receive the Word*
- A consistent obedience: *be doers of the Word, and not merely hearers*
- A heart change: *love of others and love of God*
 - If we receive the Word in humility and allow it to do its work in us, it will result in a changed heart. And a changed heart will express itself in being a genuine "doer of the Word" in the areas of loving God and others.

Transition: Being a genuine doer of the Word will change the way we see and treat people

2:1-13 – How to View People

Main Point: As followers of Jesus Christ, we must never tolerate the sin of partiality in any of its ungodly forms. It is inconsistent with:

- God's sovereign choice
- man's sinful cruelty
- the second greatest commandment
- genuine saving faith

Transition: See slide

2:14-26 – How to Tell the Difference Between Living Faith and Dead Faith

Main Point: In the church, there are two kinds of faith: (1) a real, living faith that saves, and (2) a deceiving, dead faith that damns. But the danger is that these two kinds of faith, have much in common: The one who has a living faith and the one who has a dead faith (1) both claim to be Christians, (2) both are convinced that they are Christians, (3) both embrace the same biblical doctrine, (4) both were present among James' readers, and (5) both are present in this church. So how can we tell the difference?

- Dead faith
 - always has an empty profession of faith
 - always has a consistent pattern of excuses
 - has a biblically accurate theology without fear
- Living faith
 - Abraham was justified by faith, but his faith was justified by works (offered up Isaac)
 - Rahab's faith was demonstrated by what she did (hid the spies)

Conclusion: A living faith will be accompanied by good/godly works

v. 26 - ...*faith without works is dead*

Transition: Word are also works

3:1-12 – Why We Should Control Our Tongue

- Because our tongues condemn, control, corrupt, confront, and characterize us

Conclusion: A living faith will be accompanied by good/godly words

Transition: A living faith will be accompanied by good/godly wisdom

3:13-18 – How to Know if You Have Godly Wisdom

- The test of godly wisdom: *A consistent pattern of obedience and an attitude of gentleness*
- A description of godless wisdom:
 - Every thought/attitude/word/act that is contrary to God's revealed wisdom in Scripture
 - The two chief characteristics/motives:
 - *bitter jealousy* - competition with others over what we want
 - *selfish ambition* - competition with God over what we want
 - The source: from the world, from the flesh, and ultimately from the devil
 - The results: *disorder and every evil thing*
- Summary:
 - Godly wisdom is obedience with a gentle attitude which shows that we're trusting God's way as the wisest and best way to respond to a circumstance or person.
 - Godless wisdom is disobedience with a self-centered attitude which shows that we're trusting our own way as the wisest and best way.
- A description of godly wisdom: *pure, peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy*

Transition: If we're not living according to the wisdom of Scripture, but out of jealousy and selfish ambition, we will have conflict with others, within ourselves, and with God

4:1-10 – How to Deal with Personal Conflict

- Identify the true source of conflict: *unfulfilled sinful desires*
- Identify the real sin behind conflict: *spiritual adultery*
- Apply the right solution to conflict: *grace*
 - The only way to receive God's forgiving and empowering grace is through humility (v. 6b - *God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble.*)
 - The way we humble ourselves to receive God's grace to help us deal with sinful conflict is repentance (turn to God, turn from sin, and cultivate godly sorrow)

4:11-5:6 – Examples of Pride

- Sinfully judging others (4:11-12)
- Presumptuous planning (4:13-17)
- Abusing wealth and power (5:1-6)