



# Practical Faith

*A Study in the Book of James*



# Book of James

## *Practical Faith*



Week	Section	Teacher
1: February 8 <sup>th</sup>	Intro & James 1:1-18	Ron Grebe
2: February 15 <sup>th</sup>	James 1:19-27	Adam Collins
3: February 22 <sup>nd</sup>	James 2:1-13	Mike Gann
4: March 1 <sup>st</sup>	James 2:14-26	Ryan Snider
5: March 8 <sup>th</sup>	James 3:1-12	Ron Grebe
6: March 15 <sup>th</sup>	James 3:13-18	Mike Gann
7: March 22 <sup>nd</sup>	James 4:1-12	Ron Grebe
8: March 29 <sup>th</sup>	James 4:13-17	Adam Collins
April 5 <sup>th</sup>	Easter	No Class
9: April 12 <sup>th</sup>	James 5:1-6	Ron Grebe
10: April 19 <sup>th</sup>	James 5:7-12	Adam Collins
11: April 26 <sup>th</sup>	James 5:13-20	Mike Gann



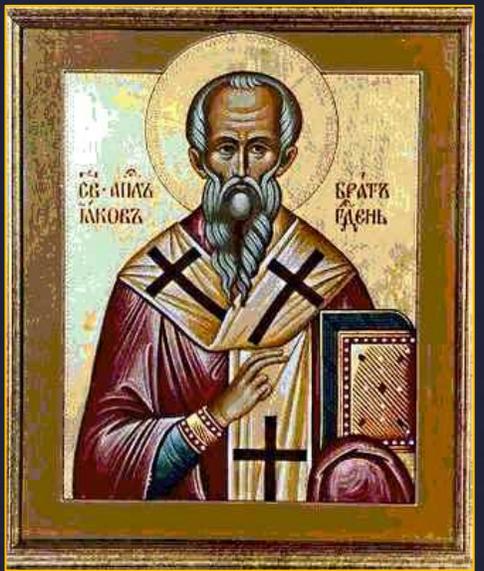
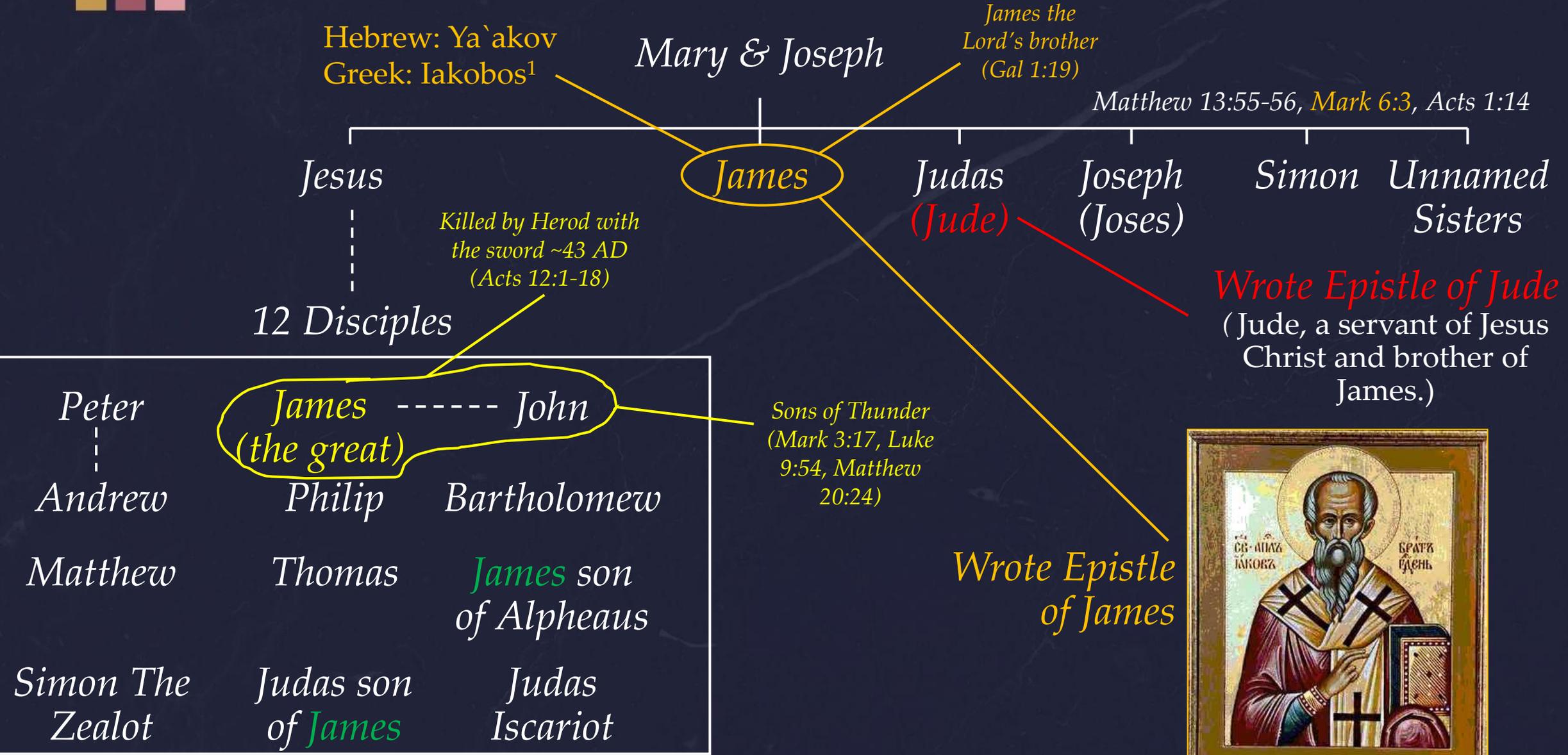


# What comes to mind when you think about the Book of James?

*The Book of James explores what it means to live out genuine, everyday faith. It focuses on practical application — connecting belief to action in areas like perseverance, wisdom, speech, and obedience.*



# Key Question: Which James?



<sup>1</sup><https://bibleproject.com/guides/book-of-james>

# James

## *Leader of the Jerusalem Church*

James may have not believed until he saw Jesus resurrected and might be why Jesus told John to take care of Mary (John 19:26-27)

- James first rejected Jesus as Messiah (John 7:3-5) but then later believed (1 Cor 15:7) and eventually led the Jerusalem church:
  - Peter acknowledged James as the leader of the Jerusalem church (Acts 12:17)
  - James settled the dispute at the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:13)
  - James implied as leader of the Jerusalem church in Acts 21:17-18
  - Likely became leader of Jerusalem church because the other Apostles departed Jerusalem due to persecution and to plant new churches
- Nickname was “James the Just” or “James the Righteous” because of his outstanding virtue:
  - Also called “Camel Knees” because of his extensive time spent in prayer
  - Epistle was probably written around 48 AD and was the first letter of the New Testament



# James

## *Leader of the Jerusalem Church*

- James was called a pillar by Paul (Gal 2:9):

*“and when **James** and **Cephas** [Peter] and **John**, who seemed to be **pillars**, perceived the grace that was given to me, they gave the right hand of fellowship to Barnabas and me, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised”*

- According to Josephus, James is believed to have been martyred in ~62 AD by a Jewish mob:
  - Some accounts say he was stoned and other accounts say he was thrown from the top of the Temple
  - Probably occurred just after the Book of Acts was written

# Style & Major Themes



- James and the other early believers in Jerusalem probably still regarded themselves as Jewish:<sup>1</sup>
  - They worshiped regularly in the main Jewish Temple
  - They continued to adhere to the old Jewish religious laws
  - Likely why James has a strong law bent
- James had a strong condemnation of social injustice (similar to Amos 8:4-6 of OT):

*“To the twelve tribes in the Dispersion”  
– James 1:1*

*“<sup>1</sup>My brothers, **show no partiality** as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory ... <sup>9</sup>**But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors.**” – James 2:1, 9*

*“<sup>4</sup>**Behold, the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, are crying out against you, and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts.**” – James 5:4*



<sup>1</sup><https://gospel-mysteries.net/james-the-just.html>

# Style & Major Themes



*Commands, absolutely necessary, urgent.*

- James has over 50 **imperatives** in its 108 verses:<sup>1</sup>
  - Does not directly address challenges of the Jerusalem church like Paul's letters – it is mostly about wisdom living
- James is made up of short challenging, wisdom speeches:<sup>2</sup>
  - Chapter 1 introduces key themes of the book
  - Chapter 2-5 Twelve teachings about wholehearted devotion to Jesus
    - Full of metaphors and easy to memorize one-liners

Location	Theme	Revisited
James 1:2-4, 12	Trials of life	5:7-11
James 1:5-8	God gives wisdom	3:13-18
James 1:9-11	Wealth is fleeting (rich/poor)	2:1-7 and 5:1-6
James 1:16-18	God gives generously	4:13-17 and 5:7-8
James 1:19-25	Be doers of the word	2:14-26
James 1:26-27	Bridle your tongue	3:1-12 and 5:12

Metaphors	Location
Like a wave of the sea	James 1:6-7
Flower that fades & passes away	James 1:9-11
Sin conceived, birth, growth, death	James 1:15
Mirror reflects	James 1:22-23
Bridle the tongue	James 1:26
Tongue is a fire	James 3:1-10

<sup>1</sup>ESV Study Bible, page 2620

<sup>2</sup><https://bibleproject.com/guides/book-of-james>

# Style & Major Themes



- James draws heavily on:<sup>1</sup>
  - Leviticus 19 (Be Holy)
  - The Book of Proverbs (Wise Living)
  - The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) — *Was not yet recorded at that time but James probably heard it in person.*

*“James has been compared with the wisdom literature of the Old Testament, particularly the Book of Proverbs, because of its direct, pungent statements on wise living.”*

*- John MacArthur,  
Introduction to James, New Testament Commentary*



<sup>1</sup><https://bibleproject.com/guides/book-of-james>



# Style & Major Themes

*Be Holy*

- Parallels to Love Your Neighbor in Leviticus 19:<sup>1</sup>

*“You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy.” –  
Leviticus 19:2*

Verse	James	Verse	Leviticus
2:1, 9	My brothers, show no <b>partiality</b>	19:15	You shall not be <b>partial</b> to the rich
2:8	Royal law of scripture ... You shall <b>love your neighbor as yourself</b>	19:18b	You shall <b>love your neighbor as yourself</b>
2:16	Say “Go in peace” ... <b>without giving them the things needed for the body</b>	19:10	Not strip vineyard bare ... <b>leave for the poor</b>
4:11	Do not <b>speak evil against one another</b>	19:16	You shall not go around as a <b>slanderer</b>
5:4	Behold, the wages of the laborers ... <b>which you kept back by fraud.</b>	19:13	The <b>wages</b> of a hired servant <b>shall not remain with you all night</b>
5:9	Do not <b>grumble</b> against one another	19:18a	You shall not take <b>vengeance</b> or <b>bear a grudge</b>
5:12	<b>Do not swear</b>	19:12	You <b>shall not swear</b>

# Style & Major Themes

## Wisdom Living<sup>1</sup>



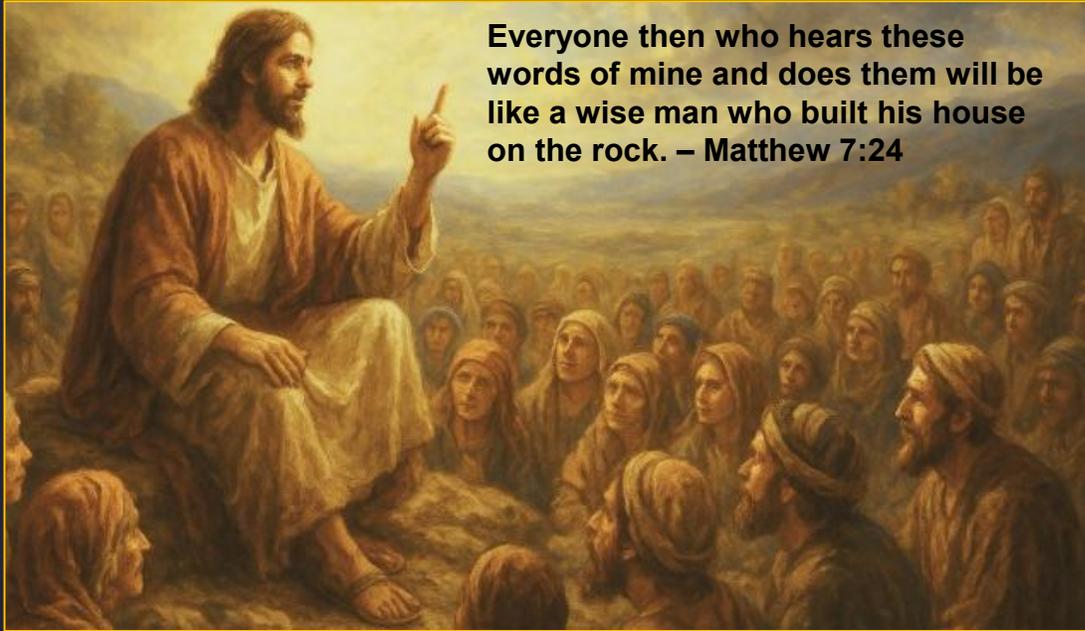
Verse	James	Verse	Proverbs
1:5	If any of you lacks <b>wisdom</b> , let him ask God	2:6	For the LORD gives <b>wisdom</b>
1:11	Rich man <b>fade away</b> in the midst of his pursuits.	27:24	For <b>riches do not last forever</b> ; and does a crown endure to all generations
1:20	The <b>anger of man</b> does not produce the righteousness of God	29:22	A <b>man of wrath</b> stirs up strife, and one given to anger causes much transgression.
2:9	Do not show <b>partiality</b>	24:23	<b>Partiality</b> in judging is not good.
3:6	And the <b>tongue is a fire</b> , a world of unrighteousness	16:27	A worthless man plots evil, and his <b>speech is like a scorching fire</b>
4:6	God opposes the proud but <b>gives grace to the humble</b>	3:34	Toward the scorners he is scornful, but to the <b>humble he gives favor</b>
4:13-16	Today or <b>tomorrow</b> we will ... you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil.	27:1	Do not boast about <b>tomorrow</b> , for you do not know what a day may bring
5:20	Whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and <b>will cover a multitude of sins</b>	10:12	Hatred stirs up strife, but <b>love covers all offenses</b>
5:16	The <b>prayer of a righteous person has great power</b> as it is working.	15:29	The LORD is far from the wicked, but <b>he hears the prayer of the righteous</b>

<sup>1</sup><https://scriptureand.blogspot.com/2017/11/james-and-proverbs-comparison-printable.html>

# Style & Major Themes



- Both Jesus and James talked about the Law extensively:



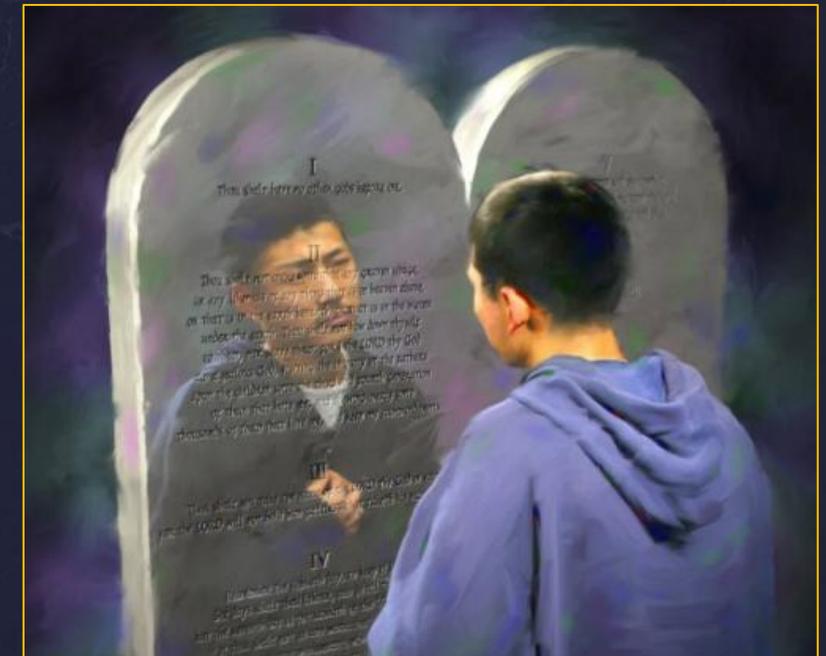
Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. – Matthew 7:24

## *Jesus used The Law as a guide*

*“<sup>17</sup>Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. <sup>18</sup>For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. <sup>19</sup>Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.” – Matthew 5:17-19*

## *James used The Law as a mirror*

*“<sup>23</sup>For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. <sup>24</sup>For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. <sup>25</sup>But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.” – James 1:23-25*



# Style & Major Themes

*Looks at his natural face in a mirror – James 1:23*

Verse	James	Verse	Sermon on the Mount
1:22	<b>But be doers of the word</b> , and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.	7:21	Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, <b>but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.</b>
2:14	What good is it, my brothers, if someone <b>says he has faith but does not have works</b> ? Can that faith save him?		
2:10	<b>For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it.</b>	5:20	For I tell you, <b>unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.</b>
2:13	<b>For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy.</b> Mercy triumphs over judgment.	6:14	For <b>if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you</b>
3:11-12	<sup>11</sup> Does a spring pour forth from the same opening both fresh and salt water? <sup>12</sup> <b>Can a fig tree, my brothers, bear olives, or a grapevine produce figs</b> ? Neither can a salt pond yield fresh water.	7:16-17	<sup>16</sup> <b>You will recognize them by their fruits.</b> Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? <sup>17</sup> <b>So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit.</b>

# Style & Major Themes

*Looks at his natural face in a mirror – James 1:23*

Verse	James	Verse	Sermon on the Mount
4:4	You adulterous people! Do you not know that <b>friendship with the world is enmity with God?</b> 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 the one and despise the other. <b>You cannot serve God and money.</b>
5:2-3	Come now, you rich, weep and howl for the miseries that are coming upon you. <b><sup>2</sup>Your riches have rotted</b> and your garments are moth-eaten. <b><sup>3</sup>Your gold and silver have corroded ...</b>	6:19-20	Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, <b>where moth and rust destroy</b> and where thieves break in and steal ...
5:12	But above all, my brothers, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or by any other oath, but <b>let your “yes” be yes and your “no” be no</b> , so that you may not fall under condemnation.	5:33-37	Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, <b>‘You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn.’</b> <sup>34</sup> But I say to you, Do not take an oath at all ... <sup>37</sup> <b>Let what you say be simply ‘Yes’ or ‘No’; anything more than this comes from evil.</b>

# Historical View of James



1 Cor 3:12-13

- Martin Luther disliked the Epistle of James:<sup>1</sup>
  - Called it an epistle of **straw** because it has no gospel character to it
  - It lacks doctrinal content and was not written by one of the 12 apostles
  - It has little teaching about the great doctrines of the Christian faith
    - It never mentions the death or resurrection of Christ
- Martin Luther stated that James is “*flatly against St. Paul and all the rest of Scripture in ascribing justification to works.*”<sup>2</sup>
  - Felt the “papists” used it to prove their understanding of justification, ignoring the rest of Scripture.<sup>1</sup>

*“But James does nothing more than drive to the law and to its works.” – Martin Luther<sup>3</sup>*



<sup>3</sup>Martin Luther, *Word and Sacrament I*, 396–97.

<sup>2</sup>Martin Luther, *Word and Sacrament I*, 395.

<sup>1</sup><https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/themelios/article/the-epistle-of-straw-reflections-on-luther-and-the-epistle-of-james/>

# Did James Disagree with Paul?

## Faith vs Works

*<sup>1</sup>What then shall we say was gained by Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh? <sup>2</sup>For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. <sup>3</sup>For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness." <sup>4</sup>Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. <sup>5</sup>And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness." – Rom 4:1-5*

*<sup>5</sup>And he [the LORD] brought him [Abram] outside and said, "Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be." <sup>6</sup>And he believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness. – Genesis 15:5-6*

*<sup>18</sup>But someone will say, "You have faith and I have works." Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. <sup>19</sup>You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe – and shudder! <sup>20</sup>Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless? <sup>21</sup>Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? <sup>22</sup>You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works; <sup>23</sup>and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness" – and he was called a friend of God. <sup>24</sup>You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone." – James 2:18-24*

# Did James Disagree with Paul?

## *Faith vs Works*

- Other passages show that James's statements about justification can be harmonized with Paul's statements about grace:

*"<sup>8</sup>For **by grace** you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, <sup>9</sup>not a result of works, so that no one may boast. <sup>10</sup>For we are his workmanship, **created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.**" – Ephesians 2:8-9*

- Even Paul stated that deeds must accompany faith:

*"<sup>19</sup>Therefore, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, <sup>20</sup>but declared first to those in Damascus, then in Jerusalem and throughout all the region of Judea, and also to the Gentiles, **that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds in keeping with their repentance.**" *  
– Acts 26:19-20



# Holy Living

*“It is true that James is not a doctrinal treatise but an intensely practical manual for Christian living. Yet that does not lessen its value, **since holy living and sound doctrine must not be separated.**”*

*– John MacArthur,  
Introduction to James, New Testament Commentary*





# Testing of Your Faith

James 1:1-18



# Bondservant (v 1:1)



- “James, a **servant** of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ”

*doulos* - a slave, bondman, man of servile condition; devoted to another to the disregard of one's own interests

- Differs from *andrapodon* (made a slave in war or sold as a slave)
- To be a *doulos* of God was considered a great honor in Jewish culture:<sup>1</sup>
  - Similar to Hebrew word *'ebed* (slave, man-servant) used to describe many OT figures
    - Abraham (Gen 18:3), Isaac (Gen 24:14), Jacob (Gen 28:25)
    - Job (Job 1:8), Moses (Ex 14:31), Joshua (Josh 24:29), Caleb (Num 14:24)
    - David (2 Sam 3:18)
    - Isaiah (Isa 20:3) and Daniel (Dan 6:20)

**THE HIGHEST  
RANK YOU CAN  
HAVE IN THE  
BODY OF CHRIST  
IS SERVANT.**

<sup>1</sup>MacArthur, John, *New Testament Commentary on James*, page 12.

# Diaspora (v 1:1)



- “To the twelve tribes in the **Dispersion**”

*diaspora* – dispersed, scatter abroad, scattered

- Could be referring to OT dispersion due to **Assyrians** (722 BC) or **Babylonians** (586 BC)
- Could be referring to NT dispersion due to persecution recorded in Acts
- God used (or designed) persecution to spread the gospel and grow the early 1<sup>st</sup> century church:
  - Acts **8:1-4**, **11:19**, **12:1-24**, **13:45-52**, **19:20-27**

Stoning of Stephen

James killed with the sword by Herod

Paul & Barnabas persecuted in Antioch Pisidia

Riot in Ephesus



# Joy in Trials (v 1:2-4)



<sup>2</sup>Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, <sup>3</sup>for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. <sup>4</sup>And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

*How do you view trials?*

*The 1<sup>st</sup> century Jerusalem church lived through the trial of famine & poverty*





Does God need to test us  
to see if we have faith?

or

Does God test our  
faith to make it  
stronger?



# Joy in Trials (v 1:2-4)



Not if ... sense of word  
indicates trials are inevitable

<sup>2</sup>Count it all joy, my brothers, **when** you meet trials of various kinds, <sup>3</sup>for you know that **the testing of your faith produces steadfastness**. <sup>4</sup>And let steadfastness have its full effect, **that you may be perfect and complete**, lacking in nothing.

*dokimion* – denotes a positive test intended to make one's faith "genuine"<sup>1</sup>

*"Because of the ever-present danger of counterfeit faith, God's word continually calls for professed salvation to be tested for validity."<sup>2</sup>*

– John MacArthur



# Trials are a Constant Theme in Scripture



- God tested the Israelites as they were leaving Egypt:

Marah

*“There the LORD made for them a statute and a rule, **and there he tested them**,<sup>26</sup> saying, “If you will diligently listen to the voice of the LORD your God, and do that which is right in his eyes, and give ear to his commandments and keep all his statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you that I put on the Egyptians, for I am the LORD, your healer.” – Exodus 15:25*

Wilderness  
of Sin

40 ↓ yrs

*“Then the LORD said to Moses, “Behold, I am about to rain bread from heaven for you, and the people shall go out and gather a day’s portion every day, **that I may test them**, whether they will walk in my law or not.” – Exodus 16:4*

Plains of  
Moab

*“And you shall remember the whole way that the LORD your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, **testing you to know what was in your heart**, whether you would keep his commandments or not.” – Deuteronomy 8:2*

Plains of  
Moab

*“who fed you in the wilderness with manna that your fathers did not know, **that he might humble you and test you**, to do you good in the end.” – Deuteronomy 8:16*



# Trials are a Constant Theme in Scripture



- God's word on testing:<sup>1</sup>

*"You have tried my heart, you have visited me by night, you have tested me, and you will find nothing;" – Psalm 17:3*

*"<sup>1</sup>Vindicate me, O LORD, for I have walked in my integrity, and I have trusted in the LORD without wavering. <sup>2</sup>Prove me, O LORD, and try me; test my heart and my mind." – Psalm 26:1-2*

*"<sup>23</sup>Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! <sup>24</sup>And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!" – Psalm 139:23-24*

*"Let us test and examine our ways, and return to the LORD!" – Lamentations 3:40*

*"Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you? —unless indeed you fail to meet the test!" – 2 Corinthians 13:5*

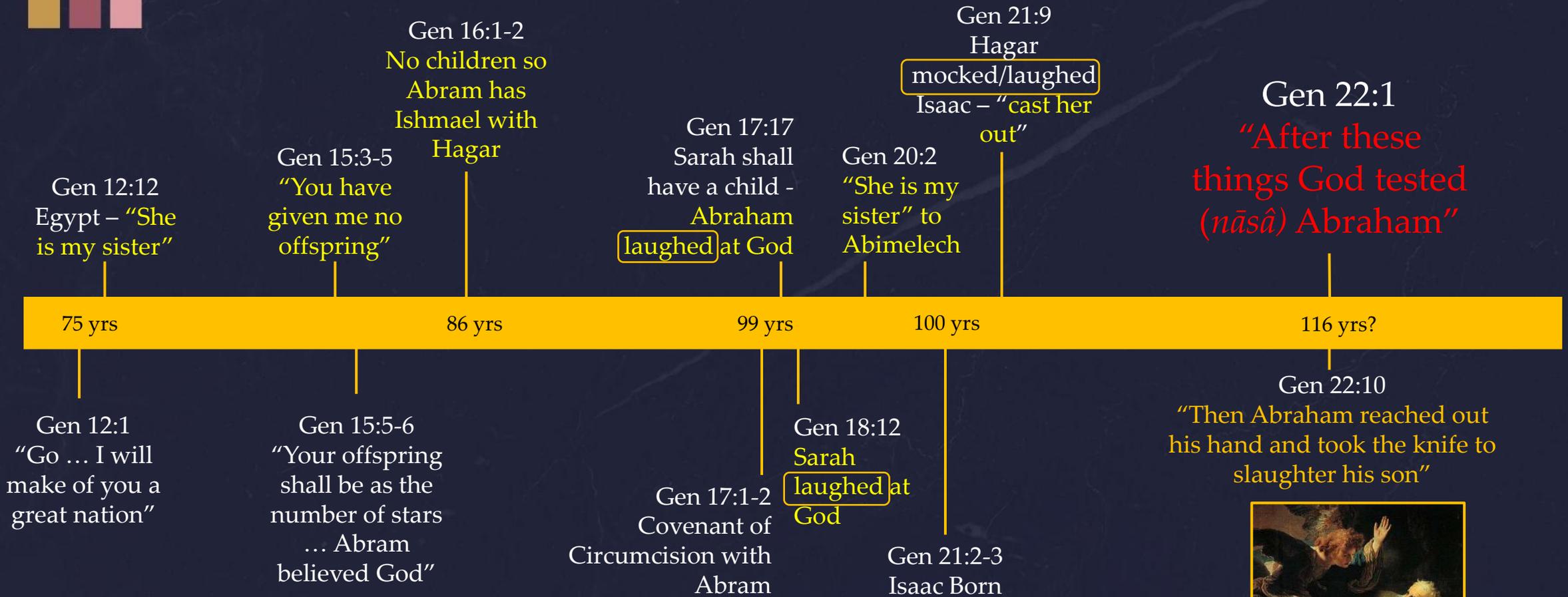
Tested by  
God



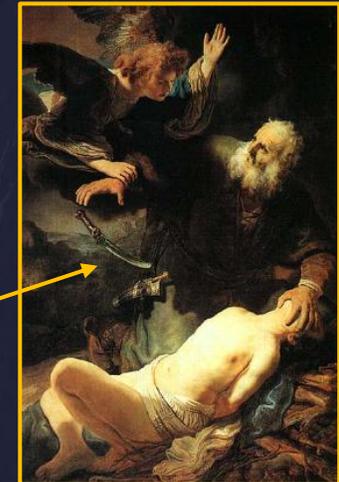
We are  
encouraged  
to test  
ourselves



# Abraham was Tested



*“<sup>18</sup>But someone will say, “You have faith and I have works.” Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works ... <sup>22</sup>You see that faith was active along with his [Abraham] works, and faith was completed by his works” – James 2:18, 22*



# Trials



Patience, endurance,  
constancy

- James says testing produces perseverance:

*<sup>3</sup>for you know that the testing of your faith produces **steadfastness***

- That is a key point in Jesus's Parable of the Sower (Matthew 13:1-22):

*<sup>5</sup>Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and immediately they sprang up, since they had no depth of soil, <sup>6</sup> **but when the sun rose they were scorched**. And since they had no root, **they withered away**.*

*<sup>20</sup>As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, <sup>21</sup> **yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away.***



# Wisdom from God (v 1:5-8)



*NASB*

*de* – but, and, now, then, also, yet, so, moreover, nevertheless

*aiteō* – to ask, beg, call for, crave, desire, require

*“But,* <sup>5</sup>If any of you lacks wisdom, **let him ask God**, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. <sup>6</sup>**But** let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. <sup>7</sup>For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; <sup>8</sup>he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

*Asking for wisdom is in light of the trials  
from verses 2-4 (wisdom to endure trials)*





**Is there a difference  
between Knowledge  
and Wisdom?**



# Greek vs Hebrew Culture



## AI Overview

Greek wisdom prioritizes **abstract knowledge**, philosophical logic, and intellectual mastery, focusing on "knowing" and understanding the "why" of the cosmos.

In contrast, Hebrew wisdom emphasizes **practical application, moral conduct, and community responsibility**, focusing on "doing" and the "fear of the Lord". While Greek wisdom seeks personal excellence, Hebrew wisdom fosters humility and righteousness.





# Wisdom vs Knowledge

“Knowledge is gained by sitting with facts and figures.

We gain Godly wisdom by sitting with Jesus.”<sup>1</sup>



# Rich & Poor (v 1:9-11)



rejoice

low estate

<sup>9</sup>Let the lowly brother **boast** in his exaltation,  
<sup>10</sup>and the rich in his **humiliation**, because like a  
flower of the grass he will **pass away**. <sup>11</sup>For the sun  
rises with its scorching heat and withers the grass;  
its flower falls, and its beauty perishes. So also  
will the rich man fade away in the midst of his  
pursuits.

perish – Same word used in 2 Peter 3:10  
“the heavens will pass away”

*“Both poverty and riches bring enormous pressure on a person to  
focus on the world rather than Christ.”<sup>1</sup>*



# Rich & Poor (v 1:9-11)

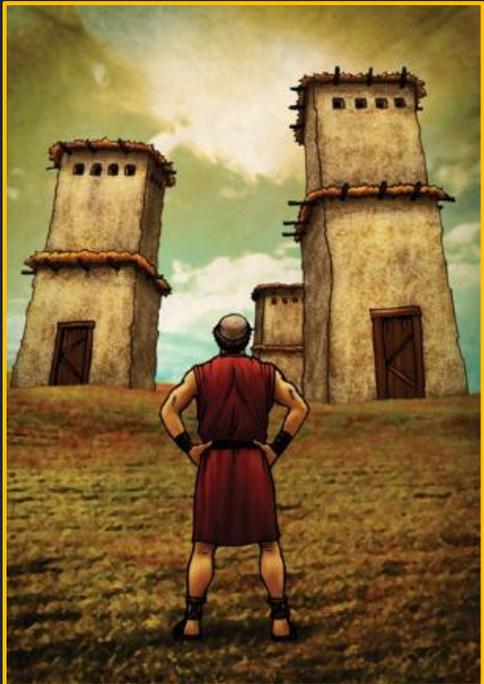
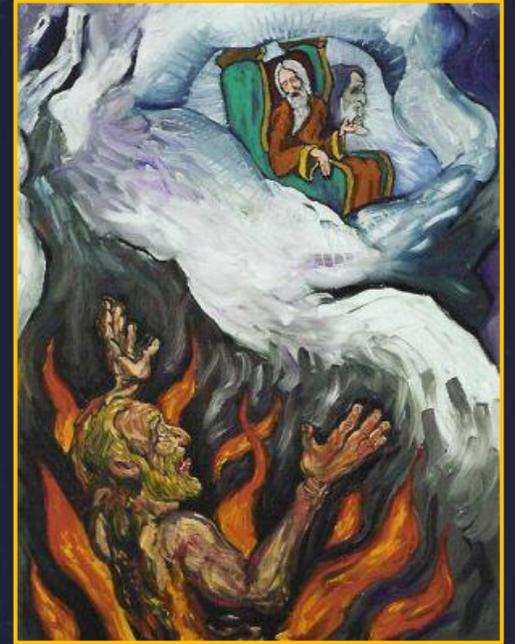


- Reminiscent of two parables taught by Jesus:

## *The Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31)*

- *The poor man (Lazarus) was exalted*
- *The rich man was in torment*

*25 But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that you in your lifetime received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner bad things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in anguish.'*



## *The Parable of the Rich Fool (Luke 12:13-21)*

*17 'What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?'*

*20 But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?' 21 So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.'*



# Crown of Life (v 1:12)



Similar to Beatitudes of Matthew 5:2-11

<sup>12</sup> **Blessed** is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the **crown** of **life**, which God has promised to those who love him.

*stephanos – It is the same word used in 1 Corinthians 9:24-27, where Paul puts forth the example of an Olympic athlete receiving a crown or wreath for winning a contest.<sup>1</sup>*

*zōē – It is the same word used by Jesus in Matthew 7:13-14 and John 3:14-15 when talking about external life.*

*“<sup>24</sup>Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. <sup>25</sup>Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable **wreath**, but we an imperishable. <sup>26</sup>So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. <sup>27</sup>But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others **I myself** should be disqualified.” – 1 Corinthians 9:24-27*

# Crown of Life (v 1:12)



- Same as **Crown of Righteousness** or **Crown of Glory**:

*“<sup>7</sup> I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. <sup>8</sup>Henceforth there is laid up for me the **crown of righteousness**, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.” – 2 Timothy 4:78*

*“<sup>4</sup>And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading **crown of glory**.”  
– 1 Peter 5:5*

*“<sup>10</sup>Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the **crown of life**.” – Revelation 2:10*

*You are not saved because you persevere.*

*You persevere because you are saved.*



# Temptation (v 1:13-15)



<sup>13</sup>Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God,” for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. <sup>14</sup>But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. <sup>15</sup>Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

*How do you view temptation?*



# Temptation (v 1:13-15)



- Let no one say “I am being tempted by God”
  - Is James thinking of Adam & Eve in Genesis 3?

## James:

Tempted by own desire -> lured & enticed -> sin -> death

## Adam & Eve:

Tempted by serpent -> delight for the eyes & make wise -> ate -> death

- Adam & Eve blamed others instead of taking responsibility:
  - Adam blamed **God** and **Eve** (Gen 3:12)
  - Eve blamed the **serpent** (Gen 3:13)



# Temptation (v 1:13-15)



- So if God does not tempt us, why did Jesus say?

*<sup>9</sup> Pray then like this:*

*“Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name.*

*<sup>10</sup>Your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.*

*<sup>11</sup>Give us this day our daily  
bread,*

*<sup>12</sup>and forgive us our debts,  
as we also have forgiven our debtors.*

*<sup>13</sup>**And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.”***

*– Matthew 6:9-13*



# Temptation (v 1:13-15)



- Paul writes about temptation:

*“<sup>6</sup>Now these things took place as examples for us, that we might not desire evil as they did.*

*<sup>13</sup>**No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man.** God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.”*

– 1 Corinthians 10:6, 13



# Temptation (v 1:13-15)



*"Sin will take you farther than you want to go, keep you longer than you want to stay, and cost you more than you want to pay."*

*– Adrian Rogers,  
Southern Baptist pastor*



# Every Good Gift (v 1:16-18)



- James ties the entire section together: **trials are good (and from God) because they strengthen our faith.**

**<sup>16</sup>Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers. <sup>17</sup>Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. <sup>18</sup>Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.**

## Greeting

1:1 James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,

To the twelve tribes in the Dispersion: Greetings.

## Testing of Your Faith

**<sup>2</sup>Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, <sup>3</sup>for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. <sup>4</sup>And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.**

**But, <sup>5</sup>If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. <sup>6</sup>But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. <sup>7</sup>For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; <sup>8</sup>he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.**

<sup>9</sup>Let the lowly brother boast in his exaltation, <sup>10</sup>and the rich in his humiliation, because like a flower of the grass he will pass away. <sup>11</sup>For the sun rises with its scorching heat and withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beauty perishes. So also will the rich man fade away in the midst of his pursuits.

**<sup>12</sup>Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him. <sup>13</sup>Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. <sup>14</sup>But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. <sup>15</sup>Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.**



# Summary



- **Trials** are to our faith what **exercise** is to our bodies:<sup>1</sup>
  - When we go to the gym, we force our bodies to do difficult things and lift heavy weights. The experience isn't enjoyable in the moment, but the effect is a stronger body.
  - Going through periods of trial, persecution, or difficulty isn't enjoyable as we are enduring, but the result is a stronger, more mature, faith.
- James will revisit each of these themes later in his epistle:

Location	Theme	Revisited
James 1:2-4, 12	Trials of life	<b>5:7-11</b>
James 1:5-8	God gives wisdom	<b>3:13-18</b>
James 1:9-11	Wealth is fleeting (rich/poor)	<b>2:1-7 and 5:1-6</b>
James 1:16-18	God gives generously	<b>4:13-17 and 5:7-8</b>



<sup>1</sup>[https://www.2belikechrist.com/articles/summary-of-james-1-in-5-minutes#google\\_vignette](https://www.2belikechrist.com/articles/summary-of-james-1-in-5-minutes#google_vignette)



# Practical Faith

*A Study in the Book of James*

