

James 2
“James’ Point”
August 16, 2026

James’ themes are arranged not tightly, but enough so, as to form a chiasmic structure, in which the forward progression of thought proceeds from the beginning and likewise proceeds backwards from the end, to the point of convergence, which is **2:14**.

1:2,3 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.

5:10 My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience.

1:5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

5:13 Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray...**14** ...pray...**15** ...prayer...**16** ...pray...prayer... **17**... prayed...**18** ...prayed

1:9,10 Let the lowly brother glory in his exaltation, but the rich in his humiliation, because as a flower of the field he will pass away.

5:1 Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon you!

1:11 ...So the rich man also will fade away in his pursuits.

4:14 whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.

1:12 Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

5:11 Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.

1:14 But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed.

4:1 Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members?

1:15 Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.

4:2 You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war...

1:17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.

3:17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.

1:26 If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one’s religion is useless.

3:2 For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body.

2:14 What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him?

This is a rhetorical question, and the implied answer is “NO, faith cannot save him.” But save him from what? From a life of worthlessness.

James is not talking about salvation from hell or justification salvation, he is talking about sanctification salvation, the progressive outworking of our faith, in growing in conformity to Jesus Christ.

It is a mistake to miss this point, and try to qualify the faith, and to add, “Can that kind of faith save him,” or “Can such faith, a faith that does not work, save him?”

“save” = Gr *sozo* = rescue; preserve; deliver

Sozo occurs 107 times in NT (Critical text; NASB)

Translated “save” 87 of 107 times

44 X = “saved from hell; eternal salvation”

43 X = “temporal salvation; deliverance”

“Saved from hell” is not part of the definition of *sozo*. Don’t read “eternal salvation” every time you see the word “save.” How to know the difference? Context, context, context. See **Matthew 8:25**.

How does it look if our Christianity is of “no profit,” if it is not “saving” us?

Seven ways:

1. Our trials defeat us. We get bitter, not better.
2. We live life with the wisdom of the world, not with the wisdom from above.
3. We live in the midst of our material riches with no comprehension of, nor appreciation for, the fleeting pleasures of our earthly possessions.
4. We live being drawn away by our own desires, and our interpersonal relationships are characterized by wars and fights, quarrels and conflicts.
5. We never learn to bridle our tongues, to bring our mouths under restraint, and, as a result, we never learn to reign in the rest of our bodies.
6. We treat pretty people pretty, and we treat ugly people ugly.
7. In short, we have a “dead faith.” No one will call us “righteous” because our works aren’t righteous. Only God can see our faith, but those around us can see only our works. When our faith is of no use, it’s dead, and we are losing our lives, not saving them.

This is perhaps the most “in your face,” hard hitting Epistle in the entire New Testament!