



Step by Step

■ 59. James



Author // James

Original Recipients // Like 1 Peter, James was written to believers who had been scattered because of rising persecution.

Date of Writing // Considered one of the earliest of the New Testament books, perhaps written as early as 49-50 AD.

Type of Literature // Didactic

Major Themes // Trials and Temptation; Faith and Works; the Power of our Words; Partiality; Prayer

Occasion for Writing // Trials are designed to help sanctify the believer. Unfortunately, they instead have a tendency to bring the worst out of us. James gets very practical, explaining to the believer how to live righteously in the midst of the challenging seasons, of life.



Simple Summary // James is perhaps the most practical and most direct book in the New Testament Canon. This short book addresses real life issues that were common in the first century and remain common today. James touches on subjects like trials, faith, works, our speech and deep issues of human nature. To do so, he uses illustrations to bring his teaching to light. It is difficult to forget his teaching on faith, works, prayer and the tongue because of his masterful use of illustration. As you read through this epistle, be prepared to be challenged.



Outline // James moves quickly from topic to topic:

1:1-20 // Trials and Temptations

1:21-27 // Doers of the Word

2:1-13 // The Sin of Favoritism

2:14-26 // Faith that Works

3:1-12 // Hold your Tongue

3:13-4:12 // Wisdom

4:13-5:12 // True Riches

5:13-20 // Prayer

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Key Verses

1:2 // My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials

1:13 // Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone.

1:22 // But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

2:17 // Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

3:8 // But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.

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.

5:16 // Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

Jesus in James



James applies many of the teachings of Christ directly to the lives of the believer:

//Teaching	//Jesus	//James
Ask, Seek, Knock	Matt 7:7	James 1:5
The Wise Builder	Matt 7:24	James 1:22
Known by Fruit	Matt 7:16	James 3:12
Peacemakers	Matt 5:9	James 3:18
Two Masters	Matt 6:24	James 3:18
Judging Others	Matt 7:1	James 4:11
Tomorrow	Matt 6:34	James 4:13
Riches Rot	Matt 6:19	James 5:2
Prophets	Matt 5:12	James 5:10
Yes/No	Matt 5:34	James 5:12

