

*Becoming
Perfect*

GENUINE FAITH | WEEK 1

Genuine Faith

- Welcome to our brand new message series in the letter of James!
- James will teach us that “Genuine Faith will lead us to faithful obedience to the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ.”
- Here is what we will learn together about displaying our own Genuine Faith:
 - Week 1— Becoming Perfect
 - Week 2— Gaining Wisdom
 - Week 3— Warning to Wealthy
 - (Happy Mother’s Day Sunday! May 14th)
 - Week 4— Reject Favoritism
 - Week 5— Controlled Tongues
 - Week 6— Earnest Prayers

James | THE BOLD LITTLE BROTHER

- James was the younger brother of Jesus born and raised by Mary and Joseph. He never used this fact as basis for authority. He related to God as “a slave.”
- He was a nonbeliever until he saw Jesus risen (1 Cor. 15:7) and then became a believer and leader of the Jerusalem church (Acts 1:14; 15:13). (He was martyred c. 62 AD by stoning.)
- This letter was written c.50AD and is thoroughly Jewish in nature.
 - James is a Jewish Believer in Messiah and leader in Jerusalem
 - He is writing to “Jewish believers scattered abroad”
 - The letter regards Christian ethics more than theology. The Hebrew way was more doing your way into right thinking.

James for us

- **James will be more coach than teacher for us.** He will talk about how to use our hands, feet, money, and tongues. He will direct our outward obedience using plain language assuming our theology is good.
- James will not pull back his words. **Some have called his letter “A beautiful punch in the gut!”** So, let’s get ready to move into action!
- **“Genuine Faith will lead us to faithful obedience to the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ.”**
- We will hear echoes of the Sermon on the Mount and Proverbs as we are challenged to action steps.

James 1:2

“Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy.”

1. “Troubles” are like storms; we don’t know when they are coming, but they are always coming.
2. For believers in Jesus we don’t consider “troubles” an interruption or a distraction, but “an opportunity for great joy.”
 - Take each ‘trouble’ one at a time! Put it in a box– 1. Fallen world, common, 2. Follower persecution or 3. Fallen into sin... then pray it through.
 - I recently shattered my son’s back window on his truck, but God came through. It was a fallen world problem.

“The Christian life must not only be empowered by faith; it must also be sustained by hope.”

(Growing in Grace, Bob George)

James 1:3-4

“For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.”

- Troubles test our faith in God. Will He come through? Does He hear me? Love me? Is this situation under His control?
- When we answer trouble with faith, we are using our “Endurance” muscle! Endurance= remaining under pressure.

James 1:3-4

- What do we think when we hear “Endurance?” We think training, finals, and entry level positions... but we know pain pays off!
 - They faced famine, poverty, and persecution to death...
- 3 benefits to enduring: 1) confident hope Rom. 5:3-5, 2) Crown of Righteousness 2 Tim. 4:8, 3) perfect and complete James 1:4

Becoming

- We are all moving from broken, fractured people to whole, completed people like Jesus. We are people who are becoming more like Jesus. Troubles present an opportunity to grow toward our goal.
- Teleios in Greek means— “brought to its end, finished; lacking nothing necessary to completeness; perfect.” We are all unfolding like a pirate’s telescope until the vision is clear.

Let it Grow!

1. Pain is God's megaphone to a deaf world. The proper perspective presents a growing opportunity for believers. Endurance leading to christlikeness will grow if we let it! Just don't bail!

Let it Grow!

2. We can all look back on how pain helped us grow. The hard part is looking forward through the trouble ahead to the reward reserved in eternity. Yet, are you willing?
 - A. Pain in relationships? Take responsibility and own your stuff. Reach out to the other in humility.
 - B. Pain in character? Be refined by this fire! Choose virtue.
 - C. Pain of frustration? Imagine what will come: a ministry, an education, or a testimony to God's faithfulness! Press on!