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# James

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## Author

James was likely written by Jesus' half-brother who did not believe until he saw the risen Christ (**John 7:5, 1Cor 15:7**). James became a leader in the early church (**Acts 15:13**).

## Primary Audience

James wrote to communities of Jewish Christians who did not live in Palestine (12 tribes scattered abroad).

## Purpose

The book of James is a practical guide on how faith works. James says others can see our real faith through our works. The book has been compared to Proverbs (wisdom), Amos (social justice), and Jesus' "Sermon on the Mount" (topics). James can encourage, motivate, and comfort Christians who undergo trials because of their faith.

## Outline

<b>Jas 1</b>	Evidence of Faith = Endurance of Temptation
<b>Jas 2</b>	Evidence of Faith = Being Impartial in Benevolence
<b>Jas 3</b>	Evidence of Faith = Control of Your Tongue
<b>Jas 4-Jas 5:6</b>	Evidence of Faith = Being Godly in All Things
<b>Jas 5:7-20</b>	Encouragements

## Lesson

True Christian faith must express itself in practical ways. Good works are a product of salvation. If a person is a true believer, he will naturally do good works. Good works are an indicator or evidence that a person has accepted Christ as Savior.

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## Personal Reflection and Application

- What benefit could there be in enduring temptation (**Jas 1:2-3, Rom 5:3-4**)?
- What is the origin of temptation (**Jas 1:13-16**)?
- In what ways does the Lord reward those who are kind to the poor (**Jas 2:5-9**)?
- What is the importance of keeping your mouth under control (**Jas 3:2-4**)?
- In what ways can a focus on material possessions be dangerous (**Jas 5:1-6**)?

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## Small Group Conversation Guide

- When experiencing trials that do not make sense to us, what does James advise us to do (**Jas 1:5-8**)?
- When asking God do help us understand, what should our attitude be (**Jas 1:6, Pro 2:3-6**)?
- In what ways can material riches tempt us (**Jas 1:9-11**)? From an eternal perspective, how important are materials riches (**1John 2:17**)?
- What problems does an out of control tongue cause (**Jas 1:26-27**)?
- What is the danger of showing partiality in judgment (**Jas 2:1-4**)?
- Why should we be merciful (**Jas 2:10-13**)?
- Give examples of ways you can express your faith (**Jas 2:14-17**)?
- If it is beyond your power to tame your tongue, what can you do (**Jas 3:5-8**)?
- What is more important than being filled with knowledge (**Jas 3:3-18**)?
- What are some reasons that God does not always give us our request (**Jas 4:1-3**)?

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## Leadership Principles from James

### Facing Problems

**James 1:1-8** gives solid advice for the leader facing problems.

- ▶ Remember the purpose of trials and help your followers grow stronger through them (**Jas 1:2-4**).
- ▶ Pray. God wants you to lean on Him (**Jas 1:5**).
- ▶ Believe that God will answer your prayers (**Jas 1:6-8**).

### Help or Hinder?

Consider the heavy responsibility of those whom God has placed in leadership positions. In what ways can your communications with our about leaders become a help or hindrance (**Jas 3:1** and **Luke 12:47-48**)?

### Boasting about Plans

Most leaders like to plan. Once they have crafted what they believe to be a good plan, they are exhilarated by the possibilities the plan promises. In what ways is boasting about your plans a problem (**Jas 4:13-17** and **1John 2:15-17**)?

### Patience

As a leader, how patient are you with yourself and others (**Jas 5:7-8**)? Our development, spiritually and as leaders, takes time. There is much Jesus has to do to mature us. What can you do to help yourself focus on Him and be patient through the process?

## Watching for Prayer Needs

One of the biggest responsibilities and opportunities of a leader is to pray for others ([Jas 5:13-20](#) and [Acts 6:4](#)). To do this effectively, a leader must be observant.

How often do you notice when people around you are suffering or struggling? When you notice, do you pray for them? Do you look to see if there is something else you could do to assist, encourage, or restore them?

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## Something to Find in Each Chapter

As you read through the book, it may help to have something to find in each chapter.

Try these:

01. Why we should rejoice when we are facing trials	02. Why it is important to treat the poor fairly
03. Why it is important to control your tongue / words	04. How God treats people who are proud / arrogant
05. What kind of influence is available to us through prayer	