



Exposition of James

Instructor

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JAMES

**“PROVE IT –
Or ‘Prove Yourselves Doers of the Word’” (1:22 NASB)**

<i>I. GREETINGS TO THE TWELVE TRIBES</i>	<i>1:1</i>
<i>II. PERSEVERE UNDER TRIAL</i>	<i>1:2 – 18</i>
<i>III. PROVE YOURSELVES DOERS OF THE WORD</i>	<i>1:19 – 27</i>
<i>IV. DO NOT BE PARTIAL</i>	<i>2:1 – 13</i>
<i>V. SHOW YOUR FAITH BY YOUR WORKS</i>	<i>2:14 – 26</i>
<i>VI. CONTROL YOUR SPEECH</i>	<i>3:1 – 12</i>
<i>VII. SHOW WISDOM BY GOODNESS AND GENTLENESS</i>	<i>3:13 – 18</i>
<i>VIII. LOVE NOT THE WORLD, BUT HUMBLE YOURSELVES BEFORE GOD</i>	<i>4:1 – 17</i>
<i>IX. BE PATIENT UNTIL THE COMING OF THE LORD</i>	<i>5:1 – 11</i>
<i>X. DO NOT SWEAR</i>	<i>5:12</i>
<i>XI. PRAY TO THE LORD</i>	<i>5:13 – 18</i>
<i>XII. RESTORE OR TURN BACK ONE ANOTHER</i>	<i>5:19, 20</i>

INTRODUCTION*

James is possibly the first New Testament (NT) book to have been written. It may have been written before the Jerusalem council of A.D. 49.

The book was written by “James” (1). There were four men with the name James in the NT. The view taken in this class is that it referred to the half-brother of the Lord Jesus Christ. (Mat 13:55, 56; John 7:2-5; 1 Cor 15:7; Acts 1:14). It appears that he did not become a disciple until after the resurrection (John 7:5). He was a key leader in the Jerusalem church (Acts 12:16, 17; 15:13-21; 21:17, 18). He took a leading role in the Jerusalem council of Acts 15.

The book is written to the “twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad” (1:1), which would refer to Jewish believers who had been scattered from Israel. The frequent references to them as “brethren” as well as statements that “He brought us forth” (1:18) and “do not hold your faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ with an attitude of personal favoritism” (2:1) would confirm that they were believers.

James challenges his readers to “Prove or Show” their faith. The book is challenging a practical Christianity, and is some ways similar to the book of Proverbs in the Old Testament and the Sermon on the Mount in the NT.

Some have thought James contradicts Paul on the doctrine of justification by faith alone. Luther is reported to have referred to it a “right strawy epistle” (J. Ronald Blue, The Bible Knowledge Commentary, Victor Books, copyright 1983, p. 815.) A popular Protestant view is that James is referring to the fruit of saving faith, or what might be called “saving faith” (Ibid, p. 816.) The idea is that true faith produces true works, and is sometimes summarized by the statement that “faith alone saves, but saving faith is never alone.” These statements are theologically correct, but the view of this class is that James and Paul are referring to different “justifications.” James is referring to a “justification before men” which requires works (cf. Luke 16:15), whereas Paul is referring to a “justification before God” (Romans 3:20, 28) which is solely on the basis of faith. With two distinct justifications referred to, there is no contradiction.

According to the ancient Jewish historian Flavius Josephus, James was martyred in A.D. 62.

(*Reference made to class notes of Lou Nicholes, James, WOL Hungary, 2001; and J. Ronald Blue, The Bible Knowledge Commentary, Victor Books, 1983. / Scripture quotations from The New American Standard Bible, copyright the Lockman Foundation, 1977.)

JAMES

“PROVE YOURSELVES DOERS OF THE WORD”*

I. GREETINGS TO THE TWELVE TRIBES	1:1
II. PERSEVERE UNDER TRIAL	1:2 – 18
A. Be Joyful in Trials	1:2 – 4
B. Ask God for Wisdom	1:5 – 8
C. Let All Glory in Christ	1:9 – 11
D. Blessed is the Man Who Perseveres under Trial Cf. Job 23:10; 2 Corinthians 4:17	1:12
E. Temptation Is Not from God Cf. Genesis 39:7-12	1:13 – 16
F. Good and New Birth Is from God	1:17, 18

III. PROVE YOURSELVES DOERS OF THE WORD

1:19 – 27

- A. Be Self-Controlled 1:19
- B. Receive the Word, which Is Able to Save Your Souls 1:20, 21
Cf. Colossians 3:16; 1 Peter 2:2
- C. Prove Yourselves Doers of the Word 1:22 – 25
- D. Bridle Your Tongue 1:26
- E. Visit Orphans and Widows 1:27

IV. DO NOT BE PARTIAL

2:1 – 13

- A. Do Not Be Partial 2:1
- B. Partiality Is Evil 2:2 – 4
- C. God Has Chosen the Poor 2:5, 6a
- D. The Rich Oppress and Blaspheme 2:6b, 7
- E. The Word Commands “Love” 2:8
- F. The Word Prohibits Partiality 2:9
- G. The Word Is a Unit 2:10, 11

H. Do Right and Show Mercy Cf. 1 Samuel 16:7; Acts 10:34	2:12, 13
V. SHOW YOUR FAITH BY YOUR WORKS	2:14 – 26
A. Faith without Works Is Useless	2:14
B. Faith without Works Illustrated	2:15 – 17
C. Challenge to Show Faith without Works	2:18 – 20
D. Abraham Showed His Faith by His Works	2:21 – 24
1) Abraham Justified by Works Cf. Luke 16:15	21
2) Abraham's Faith "Perfected"	22
3) The Scripture Was "Fulfilled" Genesis 15:6	23
4) Works Show Faith and Justify before Men	24
E. Rahab Showed Her Faith by Her Works	2:25
F. "Faith without Works Is Dead"*	2:26
VI. CONTROL YOUR SPEECH	3:1 – 12
A. Let not Many Become Teachers	3:1
B. The Tongue Controls the Whole Body	3:2 – 4

C. The Tongue Can Defile the Whole Body	3:5 – 6
D. The Tongue Is Untamable	3:7, 8
E. The Tongue Blesses and Curses, It Is Inconsistent Cf. Proverbs 13:3; 1 Peter 3:10; Proverbs 18:21	3:9 – 12
VII. SHOW WISDOM BY GOODNESS AND GENTLENESS	3:13 – 18
A. Let the Wise Show Good Deeds in Gentleness	3:13
B. Do Not Be Jealous and Selfishly Ambitious	3:14, 15
C. Jealousy and Selfish Ambition Are Earthly and Demonic	3:16
D. Goodness and Gentleness Are from Above	3:17
E. Righteous Fruit Comes from Righteous Sowing	3:18
VIII. LOVE NOT THE WORLD, BUT HUMBLE YOURSELVES BEFORE GOD	4:1 – 10
A. Lusts Lead to Conflicts	4:1 – 2a
B. Worldliness Leads to Enmity with God	4:2b – 5
C. God's Grace Can Overcome Worldliness	4:6

D. Humble Yourselves in the Presence of the Lord	4:7 – 10
1) Submit to God	7a
2) “Resist the Devil”*	7b
3) “Draw Near to God”*	8a
4) “Cleanse Your Hands”*	8b
5) “Purify Your Hearts”*	8c
6) “Be Miserable and Mourn”*	9
7) Humble Yourselves and He Will Exalt	10
E. Do Not Judge Your Neighbor	4:11, 12
F. Do Not Presume on the Future	4:13 - 17
IX. BE PATIENT UNTIL THE COMING OF THE LORD	5:1 – 11
A. Woe to the Unrighteous Rich	5:1 – 6
B. Be Patient until the Coming of the Lord	5:7 – 11
1) Be Patient	7, 8
2) Do Not Complain Against One Another	9
3) Patience Illustrated	10
4) Blessed Are those Who Endure	11
X. DO NOT SWEAR	5:12
Cf. Matthew 5:34-37; Hebrews 6:17	

XI. PRAY TO THE LORD

5:13 – 18

- A. Pray if Suffering 5:13a
- B. Praise if Cheerful 5:13b
- C. Call the Elders to Pray if “Sick” 5:14, 15
“sick” v. 14, cf. Hebrews 4:15, 11:34, *astheneo*
“sick” v. 15, cf. Hebrews 12:3, *kamno*
“healed” v. 16, cf. 1 Peter 2:24; Hebrews 12:13, *iaomai*
- D. Confess and Pray 5:16
- E. Effective Prayer Illustrated 5:17, 18

XII. RESTORE OR TURN BACK ONE ANOTHER

5:19, 20

Cf. James 1:21

“CRUCIAL QUESTIONS”

1. How many people are good?
2. How can we tell if someone is good?
3. How would you define sin?
4. How many people have always obeyed the law of God?
5. Why did Jesus die on the cross?
6. If Jesus had not died on the cross, how would people be saved?
7. If Jesus had not died on the cross, could people still have had faith in God?
8. Are you saved because of faith or because of grace?
9. What does grace mean?
10. What is the opposite of grace?
11. What does faith mean?
12. What is the opposite of faith?
13. Why do Christians think they are forgiven and others are not?
14. Should Christians think they are better than others?
15. Are Christians self-righteous?

16. Isn't it unfair for Christians to be forgiven, while a "better" non-Christian is not?
17. If someone is a "good" person why is it important to believe in Jesus?
18. How could God forgive a criminal on his death bed, but not someone who had done much good but just did not believe in Jesus?
19. Why wouldn't it be good to believe in faith plus works?
20. Should we have faith in faith itself?
21. Isn't faith alone too easy?
22. Why would keeping the Law for salvation nullify the grace of God? Gal 2:21
23. Why would keeping the Law for salvation make Christ's death needless? Gal 2:21
24. Is the Law contrary to the promises of God? Gal 3:21
25. How can the Law lead me to Christ that I might be justified by faith? Gal 3:24
26. To become a Christian do I just have to say I believe in Jesus?
27. Can you ever really know whether you have believed in Jesus or not?
28. What exactly is the gospel that must be believed?
29. Does the phrase "Give your life to the Lord" mean the same thing as the phrase "The Lord gave His life for me?"
30. If you believe Jesus is the only way to the Father, are you intolerant?

31. What does tolerant mean?
32. Is the gospel message exclusive and narrow?
33. If something is exclusive, is it wrong?
34. Could the gospel work for some, but not for all?
35. Can you preach the gospel without mentioning the cross?

When God Wants to Drill a Man

Author: Unknown

When God wants to drill a man,
And thrill a man,
And skill a man,
When God wants to mold a man
To play the noblest part;
When He yearns with all His heart
To create so great and bold a man
That all the world shall be amazed;
Watch His methods, watch His ways!
How He ruthlessly perfects
Whom He royally elects!
How He hammers him and hurts him
And with mighty blows converts him
Into trial shapes of clay which
Only God understands;
While his tortured heart is crying,
And he lifts beseeching hands,
How He bends but never breaks
When his good He undertakes.
How He uses whom He chooses
And with every purpose fuses him
By every act induces him
To try His splendor out –
God knows what He's about!



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