

James

Instructions in Godly Living

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Scripture: James 1:1-18

Introduction

Of all the New Testament writers, James tends to be the most practical of all. It was his counsel which released the Gentiles from practicing the Law. On most issues, he deals with them from a practical standpoint: if you have faith, demonstrate your faith by the results of faith. He doesn't like smokescreens.

I. Discerning in trials vv 1-12

James 1:2-4 (NKJV) My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. 4 But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

- A. The apostolic greeting to the twelve tribes of the Diaspora v. 1
- B. The recommended attitude during testing v. 2
- C. The end result of testing is patience vv. 3-4
- D. Solving the problem of inadequate wisdom vv. 5-8
 - 1. Ask God for wisdom
 - 2. God liberally gives wisdom
 - 3. Refrain from the instability of double mindedness
 - 4. The double minded man will receive nothing from God
 - 5. The double minded man is totally unstable
- E. Finding contentment in all circumstances vv. 9-11
 - 1. The poor finding contentment in his high position v. 9
 - 2. The rich finding contentment in his low position v. 10
 - 3. Understanding the temporary nature of life v. 11
- F. The reward for perseverance v. 12

James 1:12 (NKJV) 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.

II. Discerning in temptation vv. 13-15

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

- A. Temptation never comes from God v. 13
- B. Temptation originates in our own lust v. 14
- C. Lust gives birth to sin v. 15a
- D. The end of sin is death v. 15b

III. Discerning in blessing vv. 16-18

James 1:17 (NKJV) 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.

- A. Understanding the source of blessing vv. 16-17
 - 1. Every good and perfect gift comes from God
 - 2. He doesn't change
- B. He chose to give us the new birth v. 18a
- C. He chose to make us the first fruits of all that was created v. 18b

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Scripture: James 1:19-27

I. Some do's and don'ts of Christian living vv. 19-21

James 1:19 (NKJV) So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath;

A. Qualities to be desired v. 19

1. Willingness to listen
2. Reluctance to speak
3. Holding anger in check

B. Man's anger does not lead to righteousness v. 20

C. Conduct / attitudes to put aside v. 21a

1. Moral impurity
2. Evil lifestyle / philosophy of the world

D. Accept the word which saves you v. 21b

1. With a humble spirit
2. Plant (graft) the word into your heart
3. The word brings salvation

II. Acting on what we have heard vv. 22-25

James 1:22 (NKJV) But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

A. Put the word into action v. 22

1 Corinthians 4:16 (NKJV) Therefore I urge you, imitate me.

Hebrews 6:12, 13:7 (NKJV) that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of their conduct.

B. Analogy about listening and not doing v. 23-24

C. The blessing of hearing then doing v. 25

III. The measure of true religion vv. 26-27

James 1:27 (NKJV) Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

A. Practicing self control in what you say v. 26

B. Religion God accepts v. 27

1. Attending to widows and orphans
2. Preserving ones purity from the pollution of the world
3. These are accepted by God as:
 - 1) Pure
 - 2) Faultless

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Scripture: James 2:1-25

I. Dealing with favoritism vv. 1-13

James 2:5 (NKJV) Listen, my beloved brethren: **Has God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?**

A. The sin of discrimination vv. 1-4

James 2:4 (NKJV) have you not shown partiality among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?

1. Showing special favor to the rich
2. Discriminating against the poor

B. The nature of the rich vv. 5-7

James 2:7 (NKJV) Do they not blaspheme that noble name by which you are called?

C. Keeping the royal law vv. 8-11

James 2:8 (NKJV) If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well;

D. The law that gives freedom vv. 12-13

James 2:13 (NKJV) For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. **Mercy triumphs over judgment.**

II. The standard of faith vv. 14-26

James 2:17-18 (NKJV) Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. 18 But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." **Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.**

A. The word picture of talking without acting vv. 14-16

B. Action is an essential to faith v. 17

C. The absurdity of trying to demonstrate faith without works v. 18

D. Even the demons believe v. 19

James 2:19 (NKJV) You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe; and tremble!

E. The example of Abraham's faith vv. 20-24

James 2:22 (NKJV) Do you see that faith was working together with his

works, and by works faith was made perfect?

F. The example of Rahab's faith vv. 25-26

James 2:26 (NKJV) For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.