

A WALK THROUGH THE BIBLE

September 10, 2017

James

Last week we finished the book of **HEBREWS**

Remember, the **BIG IDEA** FOR THE BOOK OF HEBREWS IS

JESUS IS SUPREME!

SAY THAT TOGETHER WITH ME...

Jesus is the ultimate revelation of God's love and mercy
and He is worthy of our devotion,
even if we are persecuted because of it.

This week we want to walk through the book of James.

The author of this letter identifies himself simply as James.
James was a pretty common name; and the New Testament
lists at least five men named James.

Two were disciples of Jesus
James the son of Zebedee &
James the son of Alphaeus

One was James the ½ brother of Jesus.

And this is who we believe wrote the book of James

If you read **John chapter 7**, you'll see that during Jesus' earthly
ministry, James and other brothers were unbelievers.

I guess this is understandable. After all, how hard would it be to
believe that your big brother was the creator of the universe.

But then we read in **1 Corinthians 15:7** that Jesus made a
special appearance to James after his resurrection.

James evidently became a believer at this point, because we
see in **Acts 1:14** that James the brother of Jesus was with Mary
and the other believers in the upper room praying and
waiting for the promised Holy Spirit.

Then we see in Acts 12 & 15 and Galatians 1-2 that James became the leader of the church in Jerusalem.

Historians say that he was called James "the just" because of the righteous life that he lived.

They say that his knees were so calloused that they were as tough as a camel's knees from the amount of time he spent on his knees in prayer.

In 62 A.D., at the age of 94, James became a martyr for the cause of Christ.

The Jewish historian, Josephus records that:
"Ananus (the current High Priest) gathered the Sanhedrin, accused James of violating the Law along with some others and had them all stoned."

Though James writes to Jewish believers scattered among the nations, the wisdom of his writing is for all churches and followers of Jesus.

As he writes, he combines the wisdom of Proverbs with the teaching of his brother Jesus and frequently quotes the Sermon on the Mount.

CHAPTER 1

Chapter 1 is an introduction, designed to sum up the main ideas and key words that you are going to see in chapters 2-5.

V.2-4 James begins by letting you know that he knows that life is really hard. But, the trials we face in life produce endurance, and as we endure, we become mature and complete in every way!

We become able to live a life where our actions are consistent with the values and beliefs that we have learned from Jesus.

V.5-8 To live this kind of consistent life requires Godly wisdom. If you lack this wisdom, it's ok because James says all you have to do is ask God for it and He will give it to you.

But in verse 6, James says:

James 1:6 ^{NIV}

But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt,

This phrase has a double meaning:

1. When you ask, you must expect that God is going to give it, otherwise, why ask in the first place...

Expectancy plays a huge part in faith.

Remember Hebrews 11:1 (*Definition of faith*)

Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.

CONFIDENCE – ASSURANCE – EXPECTANCY

I ask, expecting God to give me wisdom for this situation/decision, because that's what he said he would do.

2. The second meaning is all about divided loyalties.

Let's look at James 1:6-8 ^{in the NLT} and you'll see what I mean.

But when you ask him, be sure that your faith is in God alone.

Do not waver, for a person with divided loyalty is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is blown and tossed by the wind.

(You can't ask God for wisdom and then pick and choose whether you want to do it God's way or go with your own worldly wisdom. V.7 says:)

- ⁷ Such people should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. ⁸ Their loyalty is divided between God and the world, and they are unstable in everything they do.

So how do you get wisdom? **3 WORDS**

ASK – EXPECT – OBEY

SAY THAT TOGETHER WITH ME...

V.9-11 Then James talks about an upside-down view of poor & rich.

If you're poor, take pride in your HIGH POSITION
You're learning to trust God.

If you're rich, take pride in your LOW POSITION
God is humbling you, because wealth is fleeting.
It will all pass away like a wild flower.

V.12-18 James transitions to teaching about temptation.

¹² God blesses those who patiently endure testing and temptation. Afterward they will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him. ¹³ And **remember**, when you are being tempted, do not say, "God is tempting me."

God is never tempted to do wrong, and he never tempts anyone else.

¹⁴ but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. ¹⁵ Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

The gifts that God gives are good and perfect.
He gave us new birth through Jesus!

V.19-27 Don't just listen to God's Word, **DO IT!**

James refers to the Word as
"THE PERFECT LAW THAT GIVES FREEDOM"

Jesus said, the whole law can be summed up in
two commands.

In other words **"KEEP THE MAIN THING THE MAIN THING!"**

Peoples Church... What is the main thing?

LOVE GOD – LOVE OTHERS

Showing us how to do this, James calls us to:

- * SPEAK WITH LOVE
- * SERVE THE POOR
- * BE WHOLLY DEVOTED TO GOD

Then in **chapters 2-5** James gives us 12 teachings about
WHOLEHEARTED DEVOTION TO JESUS.

These teachings come directly from James' big brother Jesus!

1. 2:1-13 – FAVORITISM VS. LOVE

Jesus: Matthew 5:46-48

You cannot truly LOVE GOD & LOVE OTHERS
and show favoritism based on:

RICH & POOR
PRETTY or UGLY
SAVED or LOST
RACE/COLOR OF SKIN
SOCIAL STATUS
OR ANY OTHER DIVIDING FACTOR

If people don't see Jesus in us, the children of God,
where are they going to see it?

2. 2:14-26 – GENUINE FAITH

Jesus: Matthew 7:21-27

FAITH WITHOUT WORKS IS DEAD!

Show me your faith by your works. That's the proof!

3. 3:1-12 – THE TONGUE

Jesus: Luke 6:43-45

You can't praise God out of one side of your mouth
and talk bad about your neighbor out of the other side!

If you hear someone who says they are a Christian spreading
gossip or tearing someone down or yelling at an employee,
why would you ever want anything to do with their Jesus,
let alone come to their church. **You will probably be next!**

4. 3:13-18 – TRUE VS. FALSE WISDOM

Jesus: Matthew 5:3-11

If you are wise, show it by the way you live your life!

5. 4:1-10 – A DIVIDED HEART

Jesus: Matthew 6:24

Going back to DIVIDED LOYALTIES...

You don't have because you don't ask God for it...

When you ask, you still don't get it because your motives are wrong!

So you resort to stealing and killing to get it!

6. 4:11-12 – CONDEMNING OTHERS

Jesus: Matthew 12:36-37

We don't call people out on their stuff;

we call them up to who they are in Jesus!

But you – who are you to judge your neighbor.

JUDGEMENT IS GOD'S JOB & HIS ALONE!

7. 4:13-17 – THE ARROGANCE OF WEALTH

Jesus: Matthew 6:28-34

Your life is a mist, here today, gone tomorrow

If you know to do good and don't do it, it's sin!

8. 5:1-6 – THE DANGER OF WEALTH

Jesus: Matthew 6:19-21

If you lie and steal to get rich, LOOK OUT, those you have wronged will call out to God, he will hear them, and JUDGMENT WILL COME!

9. 5:7-11 – PATIENCE & ENDURANCE

Jesus: Matthew 24:13

Like the farmer who waits for his land to yield the crop he has planted; be patient in suffering, wait on God and your reward will come!

10. 5:12 – TELLING THE TRUTH

Jesus: Matthew 5:37

LET YOUR YES BE YES AND YOUR NO BE NO!

11. 5:13-18 – FAITH-FILLED PRAYER

Jesus: Matthew 21:21-22

...Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

12. 5:19-20 – RESTORING OTHERS

Jesus: Matthew 18:15

¹⁹ My brothers and sisters, if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring that person back, ²⁰ remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of their way will save them from death and cover over a multitude of sins.

KEY VERSE

James 1:22

Do not merely listen to the word,
and so deceive yourselves.
Do what it says.