

Joyful Life Bible Studies

JAMES

Overview

Lesson 2

Pastor Chuck has entitled his commentary on the book of James, A Faith That Works. Truly, that title expresses James' intent as he gives us a practical picture of what the gospel is like when it is lived out faithfully. Christianity must not only be believed, it must be lived. James addresses many of the issues that we face today as he challenges believers to examine the quality of their lives in terms of attitudes and actions.

As you begin your study this week express to the Lord your desire to glean from this book all that He has for you. Make a commitment to respond to the challenge of James to practice what you learn. Write your prayer here.

May you grow in the grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

FIRST DAY: Read James 1

1. James writes from a very practical viewpoint. He does not lace his letter with extra verbiage, but is direct and focused in expressing what he has to say. Chapter 1 covers several topics, many of which are covered again in later chapters. Record one thing you learn about each of the following subjects from chapter 1:
 - a. Temptations:
 - b. Wisdom:
 - c. Listening:
 - d. Pure Religion:
 - e. Which topics are you looking forward to studying further?
 - (1.) Why?
2. The key verse of this book is considered to be James 1:22. Write it here and memorize it if possible.

- a. Why do you think this verse is so essential to our Christian walk?
 - b. We are exhorted to be *doers of the word, not hearers only*. What is the result of being a *hearer only*?
3. James' last words to us in this chapter are to *keep ourselves unspotted from the world*. What steps do you take to avoid the world's contaminating influence?
 4. Chapter 1 is not only full of admonitions to practice what we believe, but it also contains many uplifting verses. Share something from this chapter that encourages you.

*God blesses those who obey Him;
Happy is the man who puts his trust in the Lord.*

Proverbs 16:20 TLB

SECOND DAY: Read James 2

1. In chapter 2 James continues to exhort his readers towards *pure religion*. Give a brief title to James 2 that summarizes its contents.
2. *Say and works* are key words in chapter 2. Mark them and record what you discover.
3. Among other subjects, James devotes much time in this chapter to our relationship with others. Choose one example he covers that interests you.
4. What does this chapter state about *faith without works*? verses 14-26
 - a. How did James use Abraham and Rahab as examples of *faith*?

THIRD DAY: Read James 3

1. Identifying frequently used words often exposes the purpose and focus of the writer. Mark the repeated words, *tongue* and *wisdom* (*wise*) in this chapter. Briefly share what you learn about them.
2. Why do you think the *tongue* is such an important subject for Christians?
 - a. What affect does your awareness of the destructive power of the tongue have on you?
3. Contrast the traits of *wisdom not from above* (ungodly wisdom) with *wisdom from above* (godly wisdom). verses 13-18
 - a. What is the end result of ungodly wisdom?
 - b. What is the result of godly wisdom?
 - c. What have you found that helps you respond with godly wisdom rather than ungodly wisdom?

*Knowledge is horizontal.
Wisdom is vertical - it comes down from above.*

Billy Graham

FOURTH DAY: Read James 4

1. As James further describes a faith that works, he addresses several topics in chapter 4. List a few of these.
2. How would you describe the problem addressed in verses 1-3?

3. God promises to respond to our steps of faith. From the following verses, list what is our part and then complete the chart by listing the results of our obedience:

Our Part	Results
verse 7	
verse 8a	
verse 10	

- a. How does this encourage you?

4. What does this chapter say about planning for tomorrow? verses 13-15

5. Verse 17 sums up chapter 4. Write this verse in your own words.

- a. How will knowing this verse affect the choices you make?

FIFTH DAY: Read James 5

1. The book of James is full of imperatives. There are 54 commands in 108 verses, yet James tempers what might be considered harshness with warm concern by frequently using phrases like *my brethren* and *beloved*. Which term of endearment does he use 5 times in chapter 5?

- a. How do terms of endearment prepare your heart to receive instruction?

- (1.) Share a time when you have admonished or instructed someone or someone has admonished or instructed you using this principle.

2. James, in verses 1-6 addresses the misuse of riches. Summarize his warnings.

3. In what ways have the scriptures on *patience* ministered to you? James 5:7, 8, 10, 11

4. James, drawing near to the close of his letter, deals with the tremendous power of prayer. What do verses 13-18 teach us about prayer?

5. According to James 5:19,20 what is our responsibility toward those who have *erred from the truth*?

a. What are some ways we can do this?

b. What is the joyous result of *converting the sinner from the error of his way*?

SIXTH DAY: Review

1. It is important to keep in mind the reason why the author writes a book. In doing so it helps to understand the topics covered and the idea behind them. It enables us to better apply the heart of the text to our own lives. What would you say is James' purpose for writing this book?

2. How would you title the book of James?

Optional: James refers to the Lord Jesus Christ only three times in this book, yet his writings reflect the fact that he spent much time with Jesus. Observe the parallels of the verses in James to the teachings of Christ in the Sermon on the Mount by writing the main thought of the scriptures in the following chart:

James 1:22	Matthew 7:24
James 3:12	Matthew 7:16
James 4:11,12	Matthew 7:1
James 5:2	Matthew 6:19
James 5:12	Matthew 5:34-37

3. Scan the book of James and identify the portion of scripture you are most eager to study.

Personal: As you reflect on the richness of James, do you find the Holy Spirit speaking to you about a particular area of your life that you need to change? Take a moment and allow the Lord to shine His precious spotlight on your heart. Confess to Him that area of your life and express your desire and commitment to walk in obedience to His will for you.

*Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts:
And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*

Psalm 139:23,24

4. What are a few of the joys you have discovered in the epistle of James?

*I will delight in the law of the Lord
I will meditate day and night
Then, like a tree, firmly planted I'll be
Grounded in Your Word.*

*Blessed is the one who follows
The way of the Lord
Blessed is the one.*