

JAMES 1

-We will now study the book of James.

-Who was James?

-James was the half brother of the Lord Jesus, one of the sons of Joseph and Mary (Mt 13:55).

-Initially, James did not believe that the Lord Jesus was God (John 7:5).

-After the Lord Jesus rose from the dead, He appeared to His half brother James and others (1 Corinthians 15:7).

-It is thought that James finally believed that his half brother, Jesus, was God when Christ appeared to him after rising from the dead.

Let's read James 1:1

1-James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes scattered among the nations: Greetings.

-James did not call himself a brother of the Lord Jesus, but rather a servant of God and Christ.

-James finally knew that the Lord Jesus was his God.

-Who are the twelve tribes scattered among the nations?

-This is a picture of all of God's people throughout the world who believe in the Lord Jesus.

-We know this because God through James wrote this letter to all Christians.

Let's read James 1:2-4

2-Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds,

3-because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance.

4-Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

-The Word of God does not say IF we have problems, but WHEN we have problems.

-As Christians, is it certain that we will have problems?

-Yes.

-Do our problems come from God?

-No.

-Our problems come from the sins of the world, our flesh, and Satan.

-Why should Christians rejoice when we are having problems?

-Because we know that God is using our problems to strengthen our faith and to make our faith complete.

-God allows our problems to produce perseverance that we would become complete.

Let's read James 1:5

5-If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.

-Why do Christians not ask God more often to show them His will for them?

-Because we are lazy.

-Because we don't think to ask Him.

-Because we think that God will not answer.

-Because we think we know better than God.

-There are many more reasons, yet God wants us to ask Him for wisdom and guidance.

-We must ask our God to help us so that we can ask Him more and more for wisdom and guidance.

Let's read James 1:6-8

6-But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind.

7-That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord.

8-Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do.

-Does James 1:6 teach us that if we simply believe, God will give us everything we ask for?

-No.

-All that we ask for must be according to the will of God.

-These verses are teaching us that God will give us His wisdom if we ask and not doubt.

Let's read James 1:9-11

9-Believers in humble circumstances ought to take pride in their high position.

10-But the rich should take pride in their humiliation—since they will pass away like a wild flower.

11-For the sun rises with scorching heat and withers the plant; its blossom falls and its beauty is destroyed. In the same way, the rich will fade away even while they go about their business.

-If we are Christians and poor, what is our high position?

-That on earth, we do not have much money to turn us away from God.

-That in heaven, we will have all of the riches of God.

-Why should the rich take pride in their humiliation?

-Because much money can turn us away from God.

-As the sun withers plants, one day the bodies of the rich and of all people will dry up and die.

Let's read James 1:12

12-Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him.

-As Christians, we all have trials or tests or difficulties.

-On this earth, it is very normal to have trials or tests or difficulties.

-What is important, however is that we stand the test.

-How do we as Christians stand when we are tested?

-Understand that God has allowed the test

-Understand that God is with us in the test.

-Ask God to be our strength during the test.

-At the end of our tests and at the end of our lives here on earth, God has promised us a crown of life.

Let's read James 1:13-16

13-When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone;

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.

16-Don't be deceived, my dear brothers and sisters.

-When some people are tempted, they blame God.

-Does God tempt people?

-No. God tempts no one.

-How are people tempted?

-We are tempted when an evil desire comes to our thinking, and instead of asking God to take it away, we continue to allow it in our hearts and minds.

-Christians are not more powerful than temptation.

-Christians are not more powerful than sin.

-Christians are not more powerful than Satan.

-Temptation can lead to death.

-Sin can lead to death.

-Satan can lead to death.

-What did Christ do when He was tempted by Satan?

-He answered with the Word of God.

-It is Christ in us who is more powerful than sin and Satan.

-It is the Word of God in us which is more powerful than sin and Satan.

-When we are tempted, we should call on Christ to keep us from temptation.

-When we are tempted, we should answer with the Word of God just like the Lord Jesus answered Satan.

-Otherwise, temptation and sin and Satan will deceive us.

Let's read James 1:17-18

17-Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.

18-He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.

-Instead of allowing ourselves to be deceived by temptation and sin and Satan, we should rather be grateful to God for all that He has done for us.

-As children of Adam and Eve, there is no good in us.

-When Jesus spoke to a rich man, He told him this:

-“No one is good—except God alone” (Mark 10:18).

-Only God is perfect, and all that God does for us is perfect.

-For the Christian, our perfection is our God.

-It is God alone who chose us to believe, and we are the first fruits of the salvation which God has given us.

Let's read James 1:19-20

19-My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry,

20-because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.

-Why should we be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry?

-Because human anger hurts us.

-Is there a difference between human anger and anger from God?

-Yes.

-Human anger is sin, but anger from God is not sin.

-Jesus was angry with the scribes and Pharisees because their hearts were hard (Mark 3:5).

-Jesus was also angry with the people who were selling goods in the temple (John 2:15).

-Yet, in His anger, the Lord Jesus did not sin.

-Can Christians have anger from God and not sin?

-Yes, but we must allow the anger to come from Christ in us, and not from our own flesh.

Let's read James 1:21

21-Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.

-In this world, we Christians are surrounded by moral filth and evil.

-It is like walking through a world of mud which is sin.

-Even though we walk through the mud of sin in this world, it is the Word of God planted in us which saves us.

-James 1:21 teaches us to accept the Word of God planted in us.

-Our work as Christians is to accept the Word of God, for our God has already given His Word to us.

-It is the Word of God planted in Christians which we should accept that can direct our lives instead of the evil of the world.

Let's read James 1:22

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

-Simply listening to the Word of God is not enough.

-Even Satan listens to the Word of God.

-In Matthew 7 when He was teaching on the mountain, Jesus said this about those who only listen, but do not accept nor put His words in practice:

26-“Everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand.

27-The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”

-For those who listen and accept and put into practice the Word of God, the Lord Jesus said this:

24-“Everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.

25-The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.”

-Not only must we listen to the Word of God, but accept it and do what it says.

Let's read James 1:23-25

23-Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror

24-and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like.

25-But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.

-What is the work of a mirror?

-It shows that which is looking into it.

-How is the Word of God like a mirror?

-It shows us our heart.

-While we may not even know our own heart, the Word of God shows us what is in our heart.

-When someone looks in a mirror, and forgets what he looks like, then he has gained nothing.

-When someone looks into the Word of God, but does not accept it nor do it, then he has gained nothing.

-We must not only listen to the Word of God, but accept it and do what it says.

-Then we gain all that God has for us—freedom from sin, death, and Satan along with the blessings of God Himself.

Let's read James 1:26-27

26-Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless.

27-Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

-As in the days of James, there are people who say that they believe in God, but their tongues tell us that they do not.

-In Matthew 12:33, the Lord Jesus said this: “The tongue speaks that which is in the heart.”

-The people who believe in God will have the heart of God to look after orphans and widows and keep themselves from being polluted by the world.