



THE BOOK OF JAMES
FAITH THAT WORKS



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Faith // Works

HOW TO S.O.A.P BY YOURSELF

Scripture

Open your Bible to the assigned passage for the week. Take time reading and allow God to speak to you. When you are done, look for a verse that particularly spoke to you, and write it in your journal.

Observation

What do you think God is saying to you in this verse? Ask the Holy Spirit to teach you and reveal Jesus to you. There are some resources in the back of the study guide that explain the underlined and *italicized* word or phrases in the assigned text.

Application

Personalize what you have read, by asking yourself how it applies to your life right now. Perhaps, it is an instruction, encouragement, new promise, or correction for a particular area of your life.

Prayer

This can be as simple as asking God to help you use this Scripture, or even a prayer for a greater insight on what He may be revealing to you. Remember, prayer is a two-way conversation, so be sure to listen to what God has to say.

HOW TO S.O.A.P WITHIN COMMUNITY GROUP OR WITH FRIENDS

Scripture

Open your Bible to the assigned text for the week. Read the text either by taking turns or choosing one person.

Observation

Discuss the assigned questions with your Community Group members. If you see underlined or *italicized* word or phrases, refer to the resources at the back of this study guide.

Application

Ask assigned questions to your group. Ask one another how we can apply the lessons in our lives.

Prayer

Pray together with friends or Community Group members. Prayer topic is written on the study guide. Ask one person to end the prayer after the intercessory prayer.



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INTRODUCTION OF JAMES

Author and Date

This letter was written by James, the brother of Jesus and leader of the Jerusalem church. It was probably written about AD 40–45 to Jewish Christians living outside Palestine who were suffering persecution and living in poverty.

Theme

James's primary theme is living out one's faith, being a doer and not just a hearer of the word. This theme is developed in view of the social conflict between rich and poor and the spiritual conflict between factions in the church. James rebukes his readers for their worldliness and challenges them to seek divine wisdom in working out these problems and getting right with God.

Purpose, Occasion, and Background

The audience for James's letter is almost certainly Jewish Christians, as evidenced by the designations "the twelve tribes in the Dispersion" and "assembly", the Jewish reasoning throughout, and James's frequent reflection on the Torah (Mosaic law). If "Dispersion" is literal as well as metaphorical, then these are a group of Jewish Christian house churches outside Palestine, which fits the situation of persecution and poverty in the letter. More than that cannot be said, but the social situation can be gleaned from the letter. As a result of the troubles, conflict has entered the churches, and they have splintered into fighting factions. Moreover, some have fallen into a worldly lifestyle and have failed to put their faith into practice, with the result that they have become "double-minded," wavering between God and the world.

Outline

- I. Greeting ([1:1](#))
- II. The Testing of Faith ([1:2-18](#))
- III. Hearing and Doing the Word ([1:19-27](#))
- IV. The Sin of Favoritism ([2:1-13](#))
- V. Faith without Works Is Dead ([2:14-26](#))
- VI. The Sin of Dissension in the Community ([3:1-4:12](#))
- VII. The Sins of the Wealthy ([4:13-5:12](#))
- VIII. The Prayer of Faith ([5:13-18](#))
- IX. Concluding Admonition ([5:19-20](#))

- Excerpted from *ESV Study Bible*



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Week 1: James 1:1-18

TRIAL AND TEMPTATION

Observation

James identifies himself as “a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ.” Knowing that James would have grown up with Jesus— known him as a child, a teenager, a young adult— does it seem remarkable to you that James would now call his brother “Lord” and “Christ”?

According to James 1:2 and the following verses, how should we react when times get tough? Why? What is the result of this “testing”?

What are the difference between trials and temptation?

Why is it important that we not blame our temptation on God?

Does “evil desires” always bring forth “death”? How does this happen? And what is the best way to deal with our “evil desires”?

Why does he call God “*the Father of lights*”? What does that have to do with giving gifts?

What is the “*word of truth*”? If we are brought forth “by the word of truth,” do you think it’s possible for a person to be saved apart from the gospel?

Application

Some of us complain a lot. What if we followed James and started considering our troubles “pure joy”?

Look for others you can share your struggles with. Can you arrange to meet with them and let them know how you’re doing?

Prayer

Think of people who are going through difficulties. Ask God to help them grow.



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Week 2: James 1:19-27

HEARER AND DOER

Observation

James tells us to be “quick to hear, slow to speak”. Have you had situations where you did the opposite – slow to hear, quick to speak? What’s the problem with that?

What kind of mindset does it take to receive the word of God?

What “word” is James talking about in verse 21? How is it “*implanted*” in us?

Moving on to James 1:22, how do we “deceive ourselves” by just listening to God’s Word?

What kinds of things characterize a person who would look in a mirror and then immediately forget what he sees (e.g., impatience, refusal to focus, etc.)?

Verses 26-27 focus on “religion”. How would you define “religion”?

James gives three examples in these verses of what it means to do the Word. What are they? (Hint: there is one in verse 26 and two in verse 27.)

Application

Do you need to develop the ability to be “quick to hear, slow to speak”? Is there a particular person in your life with whom you should do more listening? Work on this. You might even think of some questions to ask in your next conversation. Focus on them, not on your own responses.

Prayer

Pray specifically about two things this week: 1) your anger (even if you’re not hot-tempered, do you “stuff” your anger and let it turn into bitterness?) 2) soul pollution. Ask God to show you ways you might be getting “polluted” by the world.



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Week 3: James 2:1-13

JUDGMENT AND MERCY

Observation

Suppose the scene described in verses 2-3 were to happen this week in our church. What do you think would happen? How would we treat the two people differently?

In James 2:5-7, what does it say about the poor and the rich?

How does this connect with the previous point about favoritism?

Do you think James is promoting a “reverse favoritism?” In which we welcome and honor the poor more than the rich?

What is the “royal law” James mentions in verse 8?

In James 2:12, James speaks again of the “law of liberty”. But his previous comments seem to be more restrictive, forcing us to keep every point in the law. How does the law give us freedom?

Two key words appear in verse 13. Let us define them. What is judgment? What is mercy?

How does the idea of mercy bring us back to the matter of showing favoritism?

Application

Is it difficult for you to love those who are different than you—whether it’s their race, background, denomination, or even their political views? In the next few weeks, make a point to be friendly to someone with whom you normally wouldn’t socialize. Make a sincere effort to listen and understand who they really are.

Prayer

Consider offering a prayer of confession, individually or with others. Ask for forgiveness if you have shown favoritism to the rich, disregarded the poor, or worshiped money.

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Week 4: James 2:14-26

FAITH AND WORKS

Observation

What's the answer to the questions in verse 16? What good is it to offer good wishes but no practical help?

In verse 18, we see two kinds of faith. How are they described?

So then, verse 19 is referring to the "without works" kind of faith. What does it say about that kind of faith?

In James 2:20-24, there's reference to Abraham as proof of the point. What is the argument here? How does Abraham prove that "faith without works is useless"? How do these actions demonstrate Abraham's faith?

James quotes a verse from Genesis (15:6). What does that say about *Abraham's faith*? What does it say about his works?

How did Abraham's actions in Genesis 22 "fulfill" the statement of Genesis 15:6?

Take a look at verse 25. Why would James go on to talk about Rahab? *What do you know about Rahab*? What was her occupation? How did she get herself mentioned in the Bible?

Application

Read John 14:15, 1 John 4:19, and Matthew 22:37-39

What do these verses say about the correlation between loving God and loving others? Why is it so important to first receive God's love?

Prayer

Talk with God about your own faith. Do you have "faith with works" or "faith without works"? Ask him to give you the power you need to put your faith into action.

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Week 5: James 3:1-12

CURSING AND BLESSING

Observation

Who is being “called out” by James in verse 1? Why do you think teachers will be judged with greater strictness?

Read verse 2. What does James think would be the hardest area of life in which to avoid stumbling?

In verses 3–5 James uses three examples to explain the power of the tongue, despite its physical smallness. What are the three examples? Explain James’s point in your own words.

What phrases does James use in verse 6 to describe the tongue’s evil?

What is the contrast James draws in verses 7–8? *What is James communicating about the tongue?*

What three examples does James use in verses 11 and 12 to show the absurdity and sinfulness of using the same tongue to bless God and curse people?

Application

Our words literally have the power to hurt or heal, to build up or destroy. Are you speaking words of life about yourself and others? Discuss a time when something you said—whether positive or negative—has impacted a situation or one of your relationships.

Prayer

Don’t stop at trying not to speak negative and harmful things. Discipline yourself to regularly speak positive and powerful things. Ask God to give you the power you need to discipline yourself to use words to build up others and give them confidence.



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Week 6: James 3:13-18

FALSE WISDOM AND TRUE WISDOM

Observation

Verse 13 starts off with a question, so let's answer it. Who is the wisest person you know, or have known?

We started off today by talking about our best subjects in school. Were these wise people in your life also the smartest people you've known? Or is wisdom something different from intelligence?

What do verses 13–15 tell us about what wisdom is and isn't?

Verse 13 talks about a "good conduct". How would you define that? What kind of "good conduct" does a wise person exhibit?

Read verses 17–18 and notice all the words James uses to describe a person marked by wisdom from above. How are those things opposed to bitter jealousy and selfish ambition?

What does it mean for wisdom to be "pure"? How can wisdom be "open to reason"?

Application

Discuss a time when using wisdom has helped you "keep the peace" or say something to help improve a situation. How have you grown in wisdom? Are there situations you handle differently today than in years past?

Prayer

James 1:5 invites us to ask God for wisdom. Pray this prayer, "God, I've been pursuing success, I've been pursuing riches, I've been pursuing knowledge but I see in Scripture now wisdom is what you value and it should be what I value...Give me the wisdom I need to navigate through this life in a way that honors you."



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Week 7: James 4:1-12

WORLDLINESS AND GODLINESS

Observation

According to verse 1, where do fights and quarrels come from?

In verse 2, is James accusing members of the church of actually, physically killing each other? (Hint: read Matthew 5: 21– 22 before you answer.)

Is every desire a good desire? How do you tell the difference between a good desire and a bad one?

In verses 2–4 there are three words that are also found in the Ten Commandments. Why would James want to tell his readers how they were breaking the Ten Commandments?

In verse 6, what does James say is the antidote to the prideful desires that cause quarrels?

How can we “cleanse our hands” and “purify our hearts”? (v.8)

To paraphrase James’s last question in verse 12, what right do you have to violate the heart of the royal law by judging your brother instead of loving him?

Application

It’s easy to point the finger at others; however, judgment and criticism don’t get us anywhere. Are you quick to judge others? How does focusing on others’ faults prevent us from seeing the truth about ourselves?

Prayer

In biblical times, they wore rough sackcloth and sprinkled ashes on themselves to come humbly before God. What could you do to show God (and remind yourself of) your humility? Kneel? Wear a dirty shirt? Put soil on your face? The specifics don’t matter as much as your attitude. Take a good long time to listen to God. Ask about the things He cares about. Ask what He wants for you. Confess your sins and receive His forgiveness. Ask again for wisdom.



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Week 8: James 4:13-17

ARROGANCE AND HUMILITY

Observation

Do you think the people addressed in verses 13-17 are *professing Christians*? What clues in the text lead you to that conclusion? (Hint: look carefully at v. 15.)

What mistake are these businesspeople making in their assumptions (vv. 13–14)? What sins underlie these mistaken assumptions?

What does James say ought to be a Christian's frame of mind when thinking about the future? Is James saying that planning or investing for the future is wrong? If not, what then is he saying is wrong?

Do you think it is arrogant to declare your plans without first actually saying the words, "If the Lord wills?"

What value do we get from reminding ourselves that our plans ultimately depend on God? Does that change what we do, or how we do it?

How does it make you feel to be compared to "a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes"? Does it make you feel insignificant, or does it encourage you to live in the now, or something else? Why do you think James uses that image?

Application

James 1:22 tells us to be "doers of the Word...not merely listeners." Describe an instance when God's Word has challenged you to "come up higher," presenting you with a new level of responsibility. How did you respond?

Prayer

What plans do you have for your life, your family, your home, your business, your church? Talk with God about these, and then listen. What does He think about all this? If your plans involve others, get them in on the praying, too.



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Week 9: James 5:1-6

OPPRESSED AND LABORER

Observation

If the paragraph in 4: 13- 17 is addressed to Christians, to whom is the paragraph in 5: 1- 6 addressed? What clues in the text help you describe these people?

How would you describe the tone of this passage? What is he predicting for them? Why will this happen?

In what ways were these rich landowners oppressing the church? Give specific examples from the text.

James says that instead of being proud and reveling in their riches and power, they should be doing what? Why?

In what areas of your life do you have a certain degree of power? How do you use it?

How can you rightly take comfort— as believers do throughout the Bible— at the thought of God's final judgment of evil, and yet not violate Romans 12: 19?

Application

How can we use the resources we have, such as they are, to help the poor?

What can we do to make sure that poor workers are not exploited, that they get a fair wage for their work?

Where are we storing our treasure? How can we break free from the idolatry of money and all the things it buys? How can we seek first God's kingdom?

Prayer

Talk with God honestly and humbly about the role of money and possessions in your life.

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Week 10: James 5:7-12

SUFFERING AND COMFORT

Observation

What is the main exhortation that James gives to his readers in this paragraph? Why do they need that exhortation?

What illustration does James use to show his readers the meaning of patience? How would that illustration help them understand what he is exhorting them to do?

Are there circumstances in your life under which you need to be patient? What are they? What truths help you to be patient under those trials?

What function is verse 9 playing? Why does James warn about grumbling? How could a heart that is not “established” lead a person to grumble? What lies at the root of most grumbling, and how could having an established heart cut that root?

Why does James point to examples of patience? How do examples from the Bible help us to see what God wants from us, and the importance of those things?

How does being reminded of the steadfastness of Job encourage you to stand fast as well? How does being reminded of the “purpose of the Lord,” that is, “*how the Lord is compassionate and merciful*,” encourage you to stand fast?

Application

Patience isn't just the process of waiting, but it is how you act while you wait. Are you currently dealing with a situation that requires endurance and perseverance? What do your words and attitude say about how well you are waiting?

Prayer

Sometimes when you're suffering, praying can be difficult—especially if you're trying to mind your manners with God and pray correctly. Remember that prayer is open and honest communication with God. Take Job's example and let God know just how miserable you are, just how angry, sad, scared, or confused you may be. Tell Him exactly how you feel. You aren't fooling Him by trying to keep a secret from Him.



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Week 11: James 5:13-20

FAITHLESS AND FAITHFUL

Observation

How would you *define prayer*? What is it?

James 5:13–14 seems to give us a menu: For different situations, here’s what to do. Let’s parse that out. What situations are mentioned? What course of action is recommended for each one?

Let’s say that all three courses of action are some form of prayer. How would these types of prayer differ from one another?

In verse 16, James connects sickness and sin. Can each and every sickness be traced back to a particular sin? (Hint: read John 9: 2– 3.) Can sickness sometimes be traced back to a particular sin? (Hint: read John 5: 14 and 1 Cor. 11: 29– 30.) Given that, what do you think James is saying in verse 16?

What does James mean by saying that “the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick?” What is the prayer of faith? Read 2 Corinthians 12: 7– 9. Was Paul’s prayer there not very faithful? Read Philippians 2: 25– 27. Were Paul’s prayers for Epaphroditus not faithful enough until Epaphroditus was almost dead? Read 2 Timothy 4: 20. Did Paul not pray hard enough and faithfully enough before he left Miletus?

Verses 19– 20 form a conclusion to the whole book of James. How do they connect to the rest of this chapter? What does James exhort us as Christians to do for each other? What is the benefit of our caring for one another in that way?

Application

READ THIS: Hebrews 4:6; 2 Corinthians 5:21 Through Jesus Christ, we have been made righteous and can freely come to the Father with all of our needs—big or small. Do you pray with boldness, expecting God to do something great in response? If not, what do you believe hinders you from praying with more confidence?

Prayer

Pray your way through the day. If you are blessed, praise God! If you are sick, ask for healing!



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AS WE COME TO THE END...

Excerpted from Greg Gilbert's James: A 12-Week Study

The Big Picture of James

James is sometimes accused of having written a book that really has no internal organization— no structure and no driving point, but is rather a hodgepodge of unrelated issues thrown together haphazardly. Studying the book carefully, however, it's easy to see how false that charge is. James does have a driving point, and it is this: now that God has given us new life (1: 18), we should live in such a way that this new life is reflected in our actions. We are to be doers of the word and not just hearers of it. Our faith is to be a living faith, which produces good works, not dead faith, which is really no faith at all.

James drives this point home throughout his book, holding up issue after issue for consideration in light of that main point. In chapter 1, he talks about how a follower of Jesus will handle trials and temptations. In chapter 2, he tells followers of Jesus how they should act in the presence of powerful people and weak people. In chapter 3, he tells them how a Christian should control his or her tongue, and in chapter 4 he discusses how Christians should handle conflict with other people. Finally, in chapter 5, he reminds us to live as Christians in the eager anticipation and certainty of Christ's imminent return.

Gospel Glimpses

James has often been accused of not having a deep understanding of the gospel. It is sometimes argued that his is a sub-biblical understanding of Christianity, that it is a purely ethical or even moralistic conception of what it means to be a Christian. That could not be further from the truth!

Throughout our study of James, we have seen how deeply he understands the truth of the gospel. He affirms strongly that being a Christian is about being born again, not just doing good things (1: 18). He agrees with the rest of the New Testament that a living faith saves (2: 14), and that it was in fact faith that was credited to Abraham as righteousness (2: 23). He looks forward to the second coming of Jesus Christ (5: 7– 8).

The desire of James's heart is simply to help believers think more clearly about how to live in light of all those things. If he doesn't give as full an explanation of the gospel as some other books of the New Testament, it is not because he doesn't believe it or understand it. It is because he understands it and believes it deeply and is focusing on the life of obedience that should flow from it.

Whole-Bible Connections

James has been called the Proverbs of the New Testament, and it's easy to see why. As a Jewish man who came to faith in Jesus, James is steeped in the imagery and wisdom of the Old Testament. He also obviously learned deeply from the teaching of Jesus, his brother and his Savior. Therefore, his letter is filled with themes from and allusions to both the Old Testament and the teaching of the Lord Jesus. His warnings to the unbelieving rich and powerful about the coming judgment are deeply reminiscent of both the Old Testament and Jesus. His teaching about wisdom draws heavily on Old Testament Wisdom Literature, as do his exhortations about the tongue. And his teaching about prayer and oaths, among other things, show how much he learned from Jesus.

James is also quick to use Old Testament examples to make his points. He uses Abraham and Rahab in chapter 2, the prophets and Job in 5: 10– 11, and Elijah in 5: 17. James's mind is filled with the Word of God, and when he needs an illustration for his points, his mind naturally goes to the Scriptures to fill that need.



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Theological Soundings

James contributes a great deal to Christian theology, especially regarding how to practically work out the teachings of Jesus. Doctrines that are reinforced and clarified in James include regeneration, the doctrine of the Word of God, wisdom, divine sovereignty, prayer, and the relationship between justification, faith, and works.

RESOURCES

Excerpted from Greg Gilbert's James: A 12-Week Study

- 1) **FATHER OF LIGHTS.** James traces God's goodness— his desire to give good gifts— all the way back to creation. At every stage in his creating of the universe, God declares that his work is good. That reveals something to us not only about the universe that God made but also about the character of God himself. He is good, and therefore he does good! Throughout the Bible, believers confess this to be true. Joseph affirms it even in the midst of his trials (Gen. 50: 20), the Israelites confessed it as they looked into the Promised Land (Deut. 26: 11), and the psalmists said it over and over (Ps. 73: 1 and 84: 11, for example). We do not serve a grudging, stingy God, but a good and generous one!
- 2) **THE WORD OF TRUTH.** James is very clear that salvation comes through the message of the gospel, that is, the word of truth about Jesus and his work on our behalf. Paul uses the same phrase in Ephesians 1: 13 when he says that those believers were sealed with the Holy Spirit when they heard “the word of truth.” He even explains what he means by “word of truth,” calling it “the gospel of your salvation.” Salvation comes when a person hears the message about Jesus and responds to it with faith and repentance.
- 3) **THE IMPLANTED WORD.** One of the great promises God made to his people regarding the new covenant is that his word would no longer be written on stone tablets, but rather would take up residence in their hearts. In Jeremiah 31: 33 he says, “For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts.” God also declares in Ezekiel 11: 19– 20: “I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in my statutes and keep my rules and obey them.” With his reference to “the implanted word,” James is picking up on one of God's most exhilarating promises to renew and save his people!
- 4) **THE ROYAL LAW.** In Matthew 5, Jesus claimed to have the right to interpret God's law— that is, to say what it meant. The symbolism there is striking. Just as Moses went up on a mountain to receive the law that God would give, so Jesus stands on a mountain to deliver his Sermon on the Mount. He is the divine Lawgiver, and he alone has the right to interpret the law. James recognizes this in his phrase “the royal law.” He is not referring to the Old Testament law as such, but rather to that law as interpreted and fulfilled by King Jesus.
- 5) **THE LAW OF LIBERTY.** One of the main blessings of being a Christian is that it brings freedom from the law. That does not mean that Christians do not live under a law at all. On the contrary, as James affirms, we live under the royal law of King Jesus. But there is something fascinating about that law: it is a law of liberty, not of slavery. As Paul says in Galatians 5: 1, “Christ has set us free!” What he means is that we no longer relate to the law as slaves, obeying it out of fear of punishment. Rather, we relate to our King's royal law as heirs and sons, obeying it out of love for the King himself and a desire to live lives that will honor him. Our obedience is not one of slavery, but one of freedom!
- 6) **ABRAHAM'S FAITH TESTED.** In Genesis 22, God tells Abraham to take Isaac, his son (and the fulfillment of God's promise to make him a great nation!) and sacrifice him on a high mountain. Abraham, because he trusts God, obeys, though God stays his hand at the last moment. James draws on that moment of testing to show that Abraham's faith in God was



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not a dead faith. On the contrary, it was a living faith. He genuinely trusted God, and that trust naturally gave rise to a life of obedience.

- 7) **RAHAB'S FAITH SHOWN BY HER OBEDIENCE.** In Joshua 2: 8– 11, Rahab tells the Israelite spies that she has heard the stories of how their God rescued them from Egypt, dried up the Red Sea before them, and defeated their enemies. Moreover, she believed that those stories were true, trusting in the God about whom they were told. Her belief, however, did not just stop at an intellectual assent. It worked itself out in action— in the protection of the messengers. The story of Rahab thus makes James's point quite powerfully. Faith is not just mental assent, nor is it just an intellectual profession. Faith, if it is alive, will result in works. And faith by itself, if it does not result in works, is dead— that is, it is no real faith at all.
- 8) **THE TONGUE AND WISDOM.** How we use our tongue is an important theme in Old Testament Wisdom Literature, and James draws from that wealth of knowledge in this section. In Psalm 120: 2– 4, the psalmist prays, "Deliver me, O LORD, from lying lips, from a deceitful tongue. What shall be given to you, and what more shall be done to you, you deceitful tongue? A warrior's sharp arrows, with glowing coals of the broom tree!" (see also Prov. 16: 27). Our tendency to use our tongue for evil is one of the most important pieces of evidence the Bible uses to show us our sinfulness and our need for a Savior. In his Sermon on the Mount Jesus says, "But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire" (Matt. 5: 22). In his famous collection of Old Testament verses showing our sinfulness, Paul also uses the tongue as evidence of our sinfulness: "Their throat is an open grave; they use their tongues to deceive." "The venom of asps is under their lips." "Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness" (Rom. 3: 13– 14).
- 9) **A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CHRISTIANS AND NON-CHRISTIANS.** One interesting pattern in James's letter is how he treats Christians and non-Christians differently. In these paragraphs, for example, notice the way James addresses his audience in 4: 13– 17. In verse 15, for example, he corrects their thinking in an effort to make them more Christian in the way they think and talk about their lives. That is not true of his audience in 5: 1– 6. In that passage, there is no exhortation to the oppressors to change. Rather, there is simply the promise of judgment— a judgment that for believers has already fallen on Christ at the cross.
- 10) **THE COMPASSION AND MERCY OF THE LORD.** James reminds us again in 5: 11 how the Lord is compassionate and merciful. Those truths lie at the very heart of the good news of Christianity. It is God's love for sinners— his mercy and compassion— which led him not simply to leave them in their sin, but rather to act in Jesus Christ so that they might be saved. As Paul said, "God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5: 8).
- 11) **PRAYER.** "Let him pray" (James 5: 13). Prayer lies at the heart of this closing passage of James and is a recurrent theme throughout the entire Bible. Adam and Eve walked with God in Eden and therefore had full access to God. Yet after the fall this fellowship broke, and Genesis tells of the time when "people began to call upon the name of the LORD," not having previously done so (Gen. 4: 26). The Old Testament goes on to describe the complex system of sacrifices and offerings that were God-given ways for prayerful sinners to be in contact with God once more. When Christ came, he too taught his disciples to pray (Matt. 6: 5– 13). And at the end of history, when Christ returns, once more full fellowship with God will be restored (Rev. 21: 1– 4). Our faith will become sight (2 Cor. 5: 7).

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