

James

Be Doers

By Timothy Sparks

TimothySparks.com

Be Doers

- Be Doers of the Word (1:22)
- Be Doers of the Work (1:25)
- Be Doers of the Law of Liberty/Freedom (2:12)
 - “Through the law of freedom being about to be judged” (literal translation)—Jn. 12:48
- Be Doers of Peace (3:18)
 - “Blessed are the peacemakers (peace-doers)” (Mt. 5:9)
- Be Doers of Good (4:17)
 - Acts 10:38

Outline

- Be Doers in Testing (Ch. 1)
 - Trials on the outside (1:1-12)
 - Temptations on the inside (1:13-27)
- Be Doers of the Faith (Ch. 2)
 - Faith and love (2:1-13)
 - Faith and works (2:14-26)
- Be Doers in Words (Ch. 3)
 - The tongue (3:1-12)
 - Words from wisdom (3:13-18)

Outline

- Be Doers of God's Will (Ch. 4)
 - Source of wars—our will (desires/pleasure) (4:1-4)
 - Submit to God's will (4:5-17)
- Be Doers in Times of Trouble (Ch. 5)
 - Oppression by the rich (5:1-6)
 - Patience in oppression (5:7-12)
 - Patient endurance will prevent profanity (5:12)
 - Praise and prayer in suffering, weakness and sin (5:13-18)
 - When a brother strays (5:19-20)

Men Named “James”

“James, a slave of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ” (1:1)

- A popular name—a form of the OT name “Jacob” [Greek: Ἰάκωβος (*lakōbos*)]
 - James, the son of Zebedee and brother of John
 - A fisherman called by Christ (Mt. 4:17-22)
 - Later became an apostle (Mt. 10:2)
 - James and John were called “Sons of Thunder” because of their impulsiveness (Mk 3:17; Lk. 9:51-56)
 - Killed by Herod ~AD 44 (Acts 12:1-2)

Men Named “James”

- James, the son of Alphaeus
 - Another apostle (Mt. 10:3; Acts 1:13)
 - Little is known about him
 - Possibly the brother of Matthew (Levi)—also identified as “the son of Alphaeus” (Mk. 2:14)
 - He may be “James the younger,” whose mother, Mary, was among the women at Jesus' crucifixion and tomb (Mt. 27:56; Mk. 15:40; 16:1; Lk. 24:10)
- James, the father of Judas the apostle, not Iscariot (Lk. 6:16; Jn. 14:22)

Men Named “James”

- James, the half-brother of the Lord (Mk. 6:3)
 - Did not believe in Jesus at first (Jn. 7:5)
 - Became a disciple after the resurrection (Acts 1:14; 1 Cor. 15:7) and well-known in the congregation at Jerusalem (Gal. 2:9)
 - Peter sent him a message after his release from prison (Acts 12:17)
 - A leader at the conference in Jerusalem (Acts 15:13-33)
 - Paul greeted him upon arriving at Jerusalem (Acts 21:18-19)

Human Author

- “James, the Lord's brother” (Gal. 1:19) is likely the penman of this letter
 - A tradition describes James as a prayerful man, as emphasized in the Book of James
 - It was said that he prayed so much, his knees were as hard as a camel's knees
 - He was martyred ~AD 62, by being thrown down from the temple and then beaten to death with clubs
 - As he died, he prayed as Jesus did, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do”

Recipients

- “To the 12 tribes in the dispersion” (1:1)
 - Some believe James addresses Jewish Christians living outside Palestine
 - Due to the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities many Jews were scattered throughout different nations (Acts 2:5, 9-11)
 - “12 tribes” clearly refers to Jews (Acts 26:6-7)
 - 19 times James uses “brother/brothers” in reference to their relationship in Christ (2:1)
 - The intended recipients appears to have included Gentile Christians as well

Recipients

- “12 tribes” is used symbolically of all God's people, not just those of Jewish background
 - Mt. 19:28; Lk. 22:30
- “The holy city” (Rev. 11:2; 21:2, 10) which is the church, also described as “the bride, the Lamb's wife” (Rev. 21:9) is symbolically pictured with the names of “the 12 tribes of the sons of Israel” on its 12 gates (Rev. 21:12)
 - “The wall of the city had 12 foundations, and on them were the 12 names of the 12 apostles of the Lamb” (Rev. 21:14)
 - The church is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets (Eph. 2:19-22)

Recipients

- Similarly, “144,000” is to be understood symbolically of all God's redeemed people, not literally of Jewish male virgins (Rev. 14:1-4)
 - Just as “the Lamb” (Rev. 14:1) is to be understood not as a literal animal but symbolically of Christ, “144,000” is not literally referring to Jewish male virgins who literally have the name of the Lamb and his Father's name written on their foreheads (Rev. 7:3-4; 14:4) but symbolically of God's redeemed
 - If “144,000” is taken literally, then there would be literally 12,000 from each of the literal 12 tribes (Rev. 7:5-8)

Recipients

- “For they are not all Israel who are of Israel, nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham. That is, those who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted as the seed” (Rom. 9:6-8)
 - Meaning: They are not all *spiritual* Israel who are of *physical* Israel, nor are they all *God's* children because they are *physically* the seed of Abraham
- “The Israel of God” (Gal. 6:16) is not meant to be taken literally, but figuratively includes both Jewish and Gentile believers

Purpose

- Written to Christians facing various trials (1:2)
- He commands them to put God's Word into practice in every situation (1:22), whether in trial (1:12) or in temptation (1:13-16) and in the following ways:
 - Bridling the tongue (1:26; 3:1-12)
 - Taking care of the orphans and widows (1:27)
 - Showing no partiality (2:1-13)
 - Putting faith into action (2:14-26)
 - Seeking wisdom from above (3:13-18)
 - Resisting quarrels and submitting to God (4:1-17)

Purpose

- Persevering in oppression (5:1-12)
- Praying (5:13-18)
- Restoring the wayward (5:19-20)

Key Words & Phrases

- **Brother/brothers** (19 times)
 - 1:2, 9, 16, 19; 2:1, 5, 14-15; 3:1, 10, 12; 4:11; 5:7, 9-10, 12, 19
- **Faith** (16 times)
 - 1:3, 6 (Heb. 11:2-3); 2:1, 5, 14, 17-18, 20, 22, 24, 26; 5:15
- **Work/works/working** (16 times)
 - 1:3 (Phil. 2:12), 4, 20, 25; 2:9, 14, 17-18, 20-22, 24-26; 3:13
- **To judge, judgment, a judge** (κρίνω, κρίσις, κριτής)
 - 14 times
 - 2:4, 12-13; 3:1 (κρίμα); 4:11-12; 5:9, 12

Imperatives (Commands)

- James uses 54 imperatives (not counting hypotheticals)
 - 1) 1:2—“consider”
 - 2) 1:4—“let have”
 - 3) 1:5—“let him ask”
 - 4) 1:6—“let him ask”
 - 5) 1:7—“let suppose/think” (negated/prohibition)
 - 6) 1:9—“let boast”
 - 7) 1:13—“let say” (negated/prohibition)
 - 8) 1:16—“be deceived” (negated/prohibition)

Imperatives (Commands)

9) 1:19—“let be”

10) 1:21—“receive”

11) 1:22—“be/become”

12) 2:1—“hold” (negated/prohibition)

[2:3—“sit”/“stand”/“sit” (hypotheticals; w/subjunctive)]

13) 2:5—“listen”

14) 2:12—“speak”

15) 2:12—“act”

[2:16—“go”/“be warmed”/“be filled” (hypoth.; w/subjunc.)]

Imperatives (Commands)

16) 2:18—“show”

17) 3:1—“let be” (negated/prohibition)

18) 3:4—“behold/look”

19) 3:5—“behold/look”

20) 3:13—“let him show”

21) 3:14—“boast” (negated/prohibition; “triumphs,” 2:13)

22) 3:14—“lie” (negated/prohibition)

23) 4:7—“submit/subject yourselves”

24) 4:7—“resist” (cf. 1 Pet. 5:9)

Imperatives (Commands)

25) 4:8—“draw near”

26) 4:8—“cleanses” (to free/strip: Mt. 8:2-3; 1 Jn. 1:7, 9)

27) 4:8—“sanctify/purify” (cf. Jn. 11:55; 1 Pet. 1:22)

28) 4:9—“lament/be grieved”

29) 4:9—“mourn” (cf. Mt. 5:4)

30) 4:9—“weep”

31) 4:9—“let be turned”

32) 4:10—“humble yourselves”

33) 4:11—“speak against” (negated/prohibition)

Imperatives (Commands)

- 34) 4:13—“come now” (cf. “see now,” Mt. 26:65)
- 35) 5:1—“come now” (purpose is to reprove; 4:13)
- 36) 5:1—“weep” (w/“howling”—repentance; 4:9)
- 37) 5:4—“behold/look”
- 38) 5:7—“be patient” (cf. 2 Pet. 3:9)
- 39) 5:7—“behold/look”
- 40) 5:8—“be patient”
- 41) 5:8—“strengthen”
- 42) 5:9—“grumble” (negated/prohibition)

Imperatives (Commands)

43) 5:9—“behold/look”

44) 5:10—“take”

45) 5:11—“behold/look”

46) 5:12—“swear” (negated/prohibition)

47) 5:12—“let be”

48) 5:13—“let him pray”

49) 5:13—“let him sing praise”

50) 5:14—“let him call”

51) 5:14—“let them pray”

Imperatives (Commands)

52) 5:16—“confess”

53) 5:16—“pray”

54) 5:20—“let him know”

The Wisdom of Jesus in the Book of James

- Jas. 1:2—“Consider it all joy, my brothers, when you fall into various trials”
 - Mt. 5:10-12—Joy in trials
- Jas. 1:4—“that you may be perfect”
 - Mt. 5:48—Goal of perfection
- Jas. 1:5—“Ask from God . . . and it will be given”
 - Mt. 7:7—“Ask and it will be given to you”
- Jas. 1:6—“let him ask in faith, nothing doubting”
 - Mk. 11:24—“whatever things you ask when you pray, believe . . .”

The Wisdom of Jesus in the Book of James

- Jas. 1:20—“the anger of man”
 - Mt. 5:22—Against anger
- Jas. 1:22—“Be doers of the word”
 - Mt. 7:24-27—Hearers and doers of the word
- Jas. 1:26; 3:2—Bridling the tongue
 - Mt. 12:36-37—Justified or condemned by words
- Jas. 1:27—“Pure religion”
 - Mt. 5:8—“Blessed are the pure in heart”

The Wisdom of Jesus in the Book of James

- Jas. 2:8—“Love your neighbor as yourself” (Lev. 19:18)
 - Mt. 19:19; 22:39 —“Love your neighbor as yourself”
- Jas. 2:13—“For judgment will be without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy”
 - Mt. 5:7—“Blessed are the merciful”
- Jas. 3:18—“the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace”
 - Mt. 5:9—“Blessed are the peacemakers”

The Wisdom of Jesus in the Book of James

- Jas. 4:4—“friendship with the world is hostility toward God”
 - Mt. 6:24—“No one can serve two masters”
- Jas. 4:9—“Lament and mourn and weep”
 - Mt. 5:4—“Blessed are those who mourn”
- Jas. 4:10—“Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he will lift you up”
 - Mt. 23:12—“whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted”

The Wisdom of Jesus in the Book of James

- Jas. 4:11—“Do not speak against one another, brothers. He who speaks against a brother and judges his brother, speaks against the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge”
 - Mt. 7:1-5—Against judging others
- Jas. 5:2-3—“Your riches are corrupted and your garments are moth-eaten. . . . You have stored up treasure in the last days”
 - Mt. 6:19-21—“Do not store up for yourselves treasures upon the earth”

The Wisdom of Jesus in the Book of James

- Jas. 5:10—“take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience”
 - Mt. 5:12—“in this way they persecuted the prophets who were before you”
- Jas. 5:12—“do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath”
 - Mt. 5:33-37—“do not swear at all”

Memory Verse Review ***(1 Timothy—Hebrews)***

- 1 Tim. 3:14-15—“These things...”
- 2 Tim. 2:15—“Do your best...”
- Titus 2:11-12—“For the grace...”
- Philemon 20—“Yes, brother...”
- Heb. 3:12—“Beware, brothers...”

Memory Verse for James

1:22

“But be doers of the word, and not hearers
only, deceiving yourselves”