

Connecting Through the Word Patient, Peaceful and Prayerful James

James 3:13-18

Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth.

This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

One of the very first verses I memorized as a brand new believer was the very first verse in a memory book my dad wrote called Treasure Path to Soul Winning.

James 4:14

Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.

After I memorized the 180 verses in that book I was lead to memorize the first chapter of James.

In my first year of being a pastor I encounter my first major challenge to ministry and I was lead to memorize the rest of the Book of James!

Over the years by God's grace I've internalized the Book of James into my life!

The Book of James is the "Proverbs" book of the New Testament. The Book of Wisdom. "If you lack wisdom" James 1:5

Whenever there is strife or division between believers the underlying issue is lack of spiritual maturity. Remember the book of 1 Corinthians.

Some Background to the Book of James

The human writer of this epistle is not easily identified because there are at least **three** persons called James in the New Testament.

James, brother of **John**, son of Zebedee. (Mark 1:19); Killed by Herod (Acts 12:1-2)

James, son of **Alphaeus** (Mark 3:18) Called "James the Less"

James, "the Lord's **brother**" (Mark 6:3; Galatians 1:19)

Mark 6:3

Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?" And they were offended at Him.

Galatians 1:18-19

Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days. But I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother.

James, the brother of our Lord”, is the most likely candidate and is mentioned many other times in Scripture.

1 Corinthians 15:7 indicates that **Jesus** appeared to James after His resurrection!

1 Corinthians 15:7

After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles.

James became the leader of the church in Jerusalem.

When Peter was miraculously delivered from prison and went to house where they were praying for him he said:

Acts 12:17

But motioning to them with his hand to keep silent, he declared to them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, "Go, tell these things to James and to the brethren." And he departed and went to another place.

Paul called him “a **pillar**,” of the church.

Galatians 2:9

And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised.

It was James who moderated the church **conference** described in Acts 15.

Acts 15:13

And after they had become silent, James answered, saying, "Men and brethren, listen to me:

When Paul visited Jerusalem, it was to James that he brought greetings and the special “**love offering**” from the Gentiles.

Acts 21:18

On the following day Paul went in with us to James, and all the elders were present.

Jude mentions him in his epistle as “his brother”.

Jude 1:1

Jude, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, To those who are called, sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ:

Paul suggested that he was a **married** man.

1 Corinthians 9:5

Do we have no right to take along a believing wife, as do also the other apostles, the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas?

Tradition tells us that James was martyred in A.D. 62.

The story is that the Pharisees in Jerusalem so hated James’ testimony for Christ that they had him cast down from the temple and then beaten to death with clubs. Again, tradition tells us that he was a man of **prayer**, and this explains the emphasis on prayer in his letter. It was said that he prayed so much, his knees were as hard as a camel’s!

The theme is an extremely practical one, dealing with truth applied and heavenly wisdom resulting in a holy walk.

James is the first of the seven **general** Epistles.
The others are: 1 & 2 Peter, 1,2 & 3 John, and Jude.

James sent his letter to *Christian Jews*.

At least nineteen times he addressed them as “brethren,” indicating not only “brothers in the flesh” (fellow Jews), but also “brothers in the Lord.”

James 1:1-2

James, a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad: Greetings. My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials,

These Jewish Christians were having some **problems** in their personal lives and in their church fellowship.

They were going through difficult **testings**. (1:2-4)

James 1:2

Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds,

They were also facing **temptations** to sin. (1:12)

James 1:12-13

Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will

receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him. Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God,” for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one.

Some of the believers were catering to the **rich**. (2:1-5)

James 2:3

And you pay attention to the one wearing the fine clothes and say to him, “You sit here in a good place,” and say to the poor man, “You stand there,” or, “Sit here at my footstool,”

While others were being robbed by the rich. (5:1-6)

James 5:1-3

Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon you!

Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have heaped up treasure in the last days.

Church members were competing for offices in the church, particularly **teaching** offices. (3:1)

James 3:1

My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment.

The **tongue** was a serious problem, even to the point of creating wars and divisions in the assembly.

James 3:6

And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell.

Worldliness was another problem. (4&5)

James 4:1-4

Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures. Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

Some of the members were disobeying God's Word and were sick physically because of it; and some were straying away from the Lord and the church.

All of these problems had a common cause: *spiritual immaturity*.

These Christians simply were not growing up.

This gives us a hint as to the basic theme of this letter: *the marks of maturity in the Christian life*. James used the word *perfect* several times, a word that means "mature, complete" (see James 1:4, 17, 25; 2:22; 3:2). By "a perfect man" (James 3:2) James did not mean a sinless man, but rather one who is mature, balanced, grown-up.

Just look at the problems James dealt with and you can see that each of them is characteristic of little children:

Impatience in difficulties—1:1-4

Talking but not living the truth—2:14

No control of the **tongue**—3:1

Fighting and coveting—4:1

Collecting **material** "toys"—5:1

God's answer to spiritual immaturity!

The real issue is pride

James 4:5-10

Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, "The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously"? But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble."

Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify

your hearts, you double-minded. Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.

You need God's Grace to grow spiritually and daily exercise your faith!

Three Words to Remember the Book of James by:

Patient – Steadfastness

Peaceable

Prayerful

Patient

Hebrews 10:36

For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.

The book of James begins and ends with the mention of patience.

James 5:11

Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.

Patience – Steadfastness comes when you **by faith** know God is in control and you can properly respond to any challenge or situation with His wisdom.

James 1:1-5

Humble yourself and by faith ask for His wisdom that comes from His Word!

James 1:19-21

Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God. Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

Your faith will be practical! This is called “pure religion”.

James 1:27

Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

Chapter 2 – You can't just say that you believe!

If your faith is genuine it will be evidenced by your works!

You are totally justified by faith before God.

(Romans 5:1)

But you prove your faith to the world and others around you by your works!

James 2:17-20

So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, “You have faith and I have works.” Show me your faith apart from your works, and

I will show you my faith by my works. You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder! Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless?

Peaceable

Chapter 3 – How do we know we have the wisdom from above?

James 3:13-18

Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth.

This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

There will be the fruit of right living in the midst of peace!

Chapter 4 - The opposite of peace is war and a spirit of worldliness

Prayerful

If you want to grow into spiritual maturity you must know how and what to ask!

James 1:5 – *“If you lack wisdom...ask of God”*

James 4:2a-3

You do not have, because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.

Remember the Patience of Job.... What happened?
He Prayed!

Job 42:10

And the LORD restored Job's losses when he prayed for his friends. Indeed the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before.

James 5:13-18

Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms.

Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.

And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.

Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months.

And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.

Prayer is simply admitting our weakness and frailty before God.

Prayer is asking and receiving!

The End Result!

The lives of people around you will be rescued!

James 5:19-20

Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.