

The Epistle of James

- Author – four men named James to consider
 - Father of the apostle Judas (Thaddeus)
 - Luke 6:16; Mark 3:18; Matthew 10:13
 - James the apostle, son of Zebedee, the brother of John
 - Matthew 4:21
 - Acts 12:1-2 – martyr (approximately 44AD)
 - James the apostle who was the son of Alphaeus
 - Matthew 10:3
 - The brother of Jesus
 - Matthew 13:55



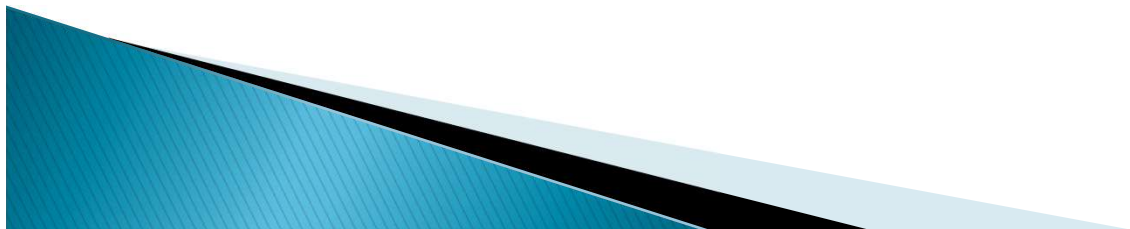
The Epistle of James

- James, the Lord's brother
 - Not a believer during the life of Jesus in John 7:5
 - But a witness of Jesus' resurrection – 1 Corinthians 15:7
 - A believer now; with the apostles in Acts 1:14
 - Visited by Paul in Jerusalem after Paul had spent three years in Damascus and Arabia
 - Galatians 1:18-19
 - Became a prominent man in the church at Jerusalem
 - Galatians 2:9
 - Spoke in the Jerusalem meeting regarding the issue of circumcision in order to be saved
 - Acts 15:13-21; Galatians 2:1-10
 - Present with the elders upon Paul's return to Jerusalem with the offering from Gentiles for needy saints
 - Acts 21:18-25



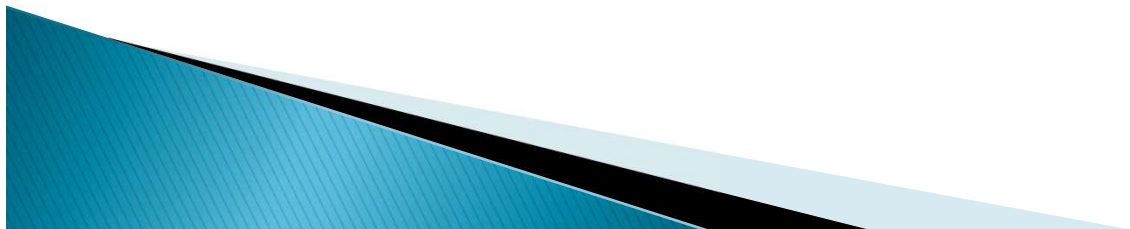
The Epistle of James

- “The book bears the mark of one thoroughly versed in all phases of Jewish law, culture, and life” (Gene Taylor)
 - Uses Old Testament characters in illustrations – Abraham, Isaac, Rahab, Job, and Elijah
 - Similarities between the book of James and Jesus’ sermon on the mount
 - Mere profession not enough to enter the kingdom of heaven – 2:14-16; Matthew 7:21-23
 - Must not only hear but also do – 1:22; Matthew 7:24-27
 - Character of a person is evident by his actions – 3:11-12; Matthew 7:16-20
 - Warnings against judging – 4:11-12; Matthew 7:1
 - Wrong use of wealth – 5:1-6; Matthew 6:19-24
 - Swearing – 5:12; Matthew 5:34-37



The Epistle of James

- Recipients
 - “twelve tribes which are scattered abroad”
 - “twelve tribes which are of the dispersion” (ASV)
 - Compare to 1 Peter 1:1
- Cases of Jewish Christians being dispersed
 - Acts 2:9-11, 41, 47
 - Acts 8:1-4; 11:19
- Remember that the church is called “the Israel of God” – spiritual Israel



The Epistle of James

- The scheme we will take in this study
 - Generally follow Gene Taylor's material, "Living One's Faith: A Study of the Books of James and Jude," but excluding the study on Jude
 - At home, review the material for the following week, including reading the Biblical text and answering the questions



The Epistle of James: Living One's Faith

- Living One's Faith is an excellent approach to the letter
- This includes:
 - Living my faith in the midst of trials from without and temptations from within
 - Living my faith in relation to the word of God
 - Living my faith in relation to our fellow man
 - Living my faith by understanding that pleasing faith works obedience
 - Living my faith in relation to the use of our tongues
 - Living my faith in relation to the world
 - Living my faith in prayer and compassion



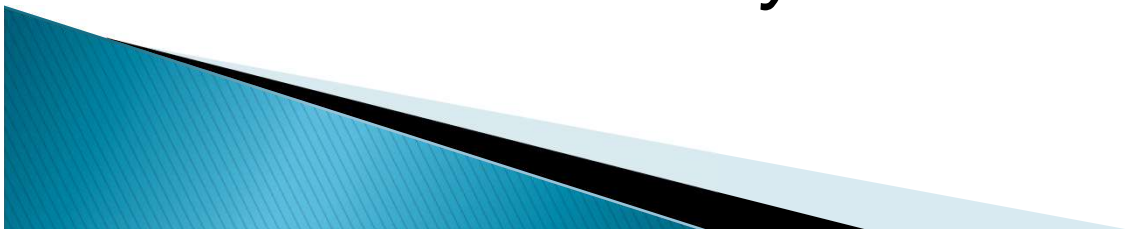
The Epistle of James: Living One's Faith

- Living my faith starts with
 - The right relationship with God which is only through Jesus Christ
 - The righteousness of God which is by faith
- Living my faith requires
 - The right attitudes
- Living my faith is seen in
 - My words
 - My deeds
- As we go through this letter, take intermittent attitude checks



Living my faith in the midst of trials

- Falling into various trials
 - Trials from without
 - Come in various forms
 - May be sudden, may be unexpected
 - Joy can be had not in the hardship itself but in knowing...
 - Proving of our faith produces fruit: patience = endurance or perseverance
 - Involves steadfastness and unwavering constancy
 - For our benefit
 - Let patience accomplish its purpose and achieve its end
 - That you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing
 - *Check: How is your attitude toward trials?*



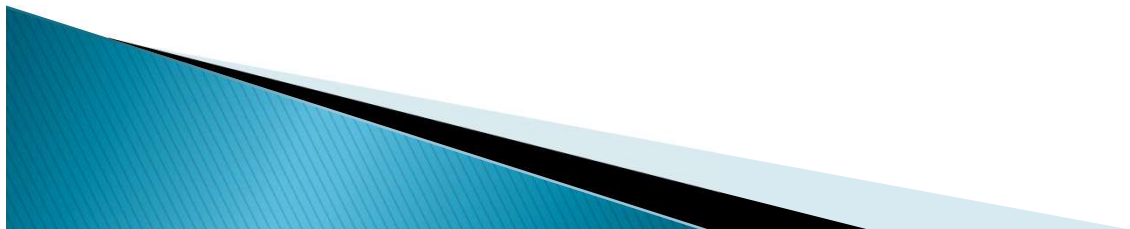
Living my faith in the midst of trials

- How can I see blessing and have joy in the midst of trial? I know I can, but I need wisdom!
 - Ask God for wisdom
 - Knowledge = possession of facts and truth
 - Wisdom = the ability of judging soundly with those facts
 - God is the giver of wisdom
 - Consider the wisdom He has given us in His word!
- How does God give?
 - Liberally, generously
 - Without reproach – i.e. not like we may say, “why are you asking for this from Me again?”
 - Matthew 7:7



Living my faith in the midst of trials

- Faith includes belief and trust coupled with obedience
- I need to believe with full assurance that...
 - God hears my prayer
 - God is able to bless me
 - God wants to bless me
 - God answers the prayers of the righteous
- Must not
 - Doubt
 - Have some inner debate thinking one moment that God will keep His promise and at another moment that He will not
 - Be double-minded
 - Matthew 6:24
 - Result of these?
 - Will not receive anything from the Lord
- *Check: How is your attitude God and His wisdom?*



Living my faith in the midst of trials

- Circumstances of life present a trial
- “Lowly brother”
 - “one of humble position, one, who, because of external circumstances, has been brought low”
 - “Glory in his high estate”
- The rich made low
 - Proverbs 23:5
 - Luke 12:15
 - 1 Timothy 6:16
 - Romans 8:38-39
 - 1 Peter 1:22-25
- Psalm 90:10; Job 14:1-2
- *Check: How is your attitude toward these kinds of trials?*



Living my faith in the midst of trials

- The blessedness of enduring
 - Blessed not exactly like the English word “happy” in the sense that happiness is often associated with external circumstances
 - Blessedness is a spiritual condition of the heart resulting from state of inner peace not subject to external circumstance
 - Trial...Endure...Proven...Receive crown of life
 - Revelation 2:10
 - Thus: Ecclesiastes 7:1; 2 Timothy 4:7-8



Take-aways

- Having the right attitude toward trials has great benefit
 - Growth in endurance
 - Reliance upon the strength of the Lord
 - Strengthened faith
 - Example for others
 - Ability to help others
- Pray in the midst of trials
 - 2 Kings 19:14
 - Philippians 4:6-7
 - 2 Corinthians 12:7-10



Take-aways

- God is not a reluctant, less-than-liberal Giver
- God wants His children to be settled, firmly persuaded, definitely convicted,
 - Not undecided, skeptical, doubting
 - These will affect God's response to our prayers
- In the midst of financial trials – whether from little to abundance or from abundance to little – remember who you are and what you have in Christ Jesus
- The crown of life is for those who love the Lord, who have endured trials and been proven

