

A STUDY OF THE EPISTLE OF JAMES

by
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INTRODUCTION

The Epistle (Letter) of James is known for the phrase, "Faith without deeds is dead" (2:26; also 2:17). A common misunderstanding of faith is that it is merely knowing about God and believing that he exists. Actually, this type of faith is misinformed about the true nature of God. God is love and gave his Son Jesus to do what we could not do--obey the law perfectly and pay the punishment of sin on the cross. Because Jesus fulfilled all justice in our place, God can accept and forgive us on the basis of our faith in Jesus, no matter how bad we have been. But God is also perfectly good, holy, and just. Anyone who accepts Jesus by faith will also want to imitate God in love, goodness, holiness and justice. Thus an integral part of faith is repentance, a turning from sin and a submission to God in obedience to his law. Just as God acted to help us, so also we are to act to help others even though they have not earned it. James spells out how God wants obedient action on our part.

INSTRUCTIONS

The way to profit from this study is to read a chapter first, than answer the questions. The reference from James, Chapter and Verse, are identified with parenthesis "(1:1)." Often the answer to the question can be found in this passage, but not always. The answer to many questions is found in other parts of the Bible that explain the passage in James. These passages are identified in italics "[See Matthew 13:55 and Mark 6:3]," like in the very first question. You should read these passages before answering the question.

A side benefit of doing a study in this way will show how the various parts of the Bible are interconnected and how the various books of the Bible form a unified whole.

Instructions: Read the whole chapter first and then answer the questions. The answer can be found in the reference behind each question.

CHAPTER 1

1. James, the one who wrote this letter, was the _____ of Jesus.
[See *Matthew 13:55 and Mark 6:3*]
2. Did he always believe in Jesus? _____ [See *John 7:3-5 for answer*]
3. When did he become a believer? [See *Acts 1:12-14*]
___ Before Jesus' death and resurrection.
___ After Jesus' death and resurrection.
4. James was the leader of the church in the city of _____
[Read *Acts 15:1-3, 12-19 and Galatians 2:9-12 for answer*]
5. How does James describe himself in relation to Jesus? (1:1)
___ As an apostle.
___ As a servant.
___ As a brother.
6. To whom did James write? (1:1)
___ To the Jewish Christians who lived in Jerusalem.
___ To Jewish Christians who lived outside of Israel.
___ To Gentile Christians like Romans and Greeks.
7. Why were the Christian Jews scattered? Why did they leave Jerusalem and Judea? [See *Acts 8:1-4; 12:1-2 for answer*]
___ To flee from persecution.
___ To find more prosperous jobs elsewhere.
8. Suffering that comes because of persecution should be cause for _____ (1:2)
9. What is being tested when we are tried through suffering?
_____ (1:3)
10. What is the effect of being tested? _____ (1:3-4)
11. What is the reward of the person who remains faithful even under trial? _____ (1:12)
12. What does the crown represent? (1:12)
___ Eternal life, victory over death and hell.
___ Earthly power and glory.
[See *1 Corinthians 9:24-25; 1 Timothy 4:8; and Revelation 2:10*]
13. What should we pray for? _____ (1:5)

14. Is it wise to pray for more earthly wealth and pleasure? _____ (4:3-4)
15. Should we pray for the sick? _____ (5:14, 16)
16. We should pray with _____ (1:6).
17. What is the opposite of faith? _____ (1:6).
[Read Hebrews 11 to learn more about faith].
18. Do faith and prayer always save a believer from persecution and suffering? _____ (1:2) *[See question 7]*
19. Will an unfaithful, unstable and double-minded person receive a positive answer to his prayer? _____ (1:6-8)
20. What does "brother" (1:9) mean?
 ___ A blood relative.
 ___ A fellow believer
21. In 1:9-11 James is giving counsel to rich and poor believers. The poor ought to rejoice in
 ___ Their lack of material possessions.
 ___ Their spiritual riches
 ___ That they have eternal life and are children of God.
[2 correct answers. See Colossians 3:1-4; Luke 16:19-23]
22. What should the rich believer be proud of? _____ (1:10)
23. To rejoice in our low position is
 ___ To be timid and not volunteer for work in the church.
 ___ To realize that we have nothing with which to buy God's favor.
24. Does financial success have any saving merit in God's eyes? _____
[Before answering read all of Psalm 49]
25. Can a rich person also be spiritually rich? _____
[See 1 Timothy 6:17-18]
26. *Fill the blanks from the text of 1 Timothy 6:17-18.*
 Wealthy believers should not be _____, nor put their _____ in wealth, which is so uncertain, but they are to put their hope in _____, who richly provides us with everything for our _____. They should do good, be rich in _____, be _____ and willing to _____.
27. By doing this they will be lay up a treasure in _____.
[1 Timothy 6:19 and Luke 12:33-34]

28. Is the poor person also spiritually poor when he envies the rich and covets material things? _____ [*Matthew 6:19-21*]
29. What does Jesus call a person whose aim in life is to get rich and who thinks money can make him happy and safe? _____
[*Read Luke 12:13-21. The answer is found in Luke 12:20*]
30. God is all-powerful and has all things under his control, even the actions of evil men. Can we blame him for our actions? _____ (1:13).
31. Temptation comes from various places. What ultimately causes a person to yield to temptation and commit sin? (1:14).
 ___ Other people, peer pressure.
 ___ His own evil desire.
 ___ The circumstances and hardships of life.
32. What is the fruit or consequence of sin? _____ (1:15)
[*See also Romans 6:23 and Galations 6:7,8*]
33. Who is the deceiver? _____ (1:16)
[*See Genesis 3:2-5 and Revelation 20:10*]
34. What can we expect from Satan? [*See John 8:44; Genesis 3:2-5*]
 ___ He will fight everything that comes from God.
 ___ He will feed us lies and half-truths from "wise" and reasonable people.
 ___ He will want us to get to know Jesus and accept him.
[*2 correct answers*]
35. What comes from God? _____ (1:17).
36. Since God is the origin of all good, he cannot be the origin of _____ (1:13).
37. What is the greatest good that anyone can receive from God?
 ___ Good health and a loving family.
 ___ To be "born again" in order to become part of God's family.
[*See John 1:12-13; 3:3-5; Romans 8:13-17*]
38. We are "born again" into God's family by believing the _____ (1:18). [*See 1 Peter 1:23*]

39. Why would God chose anyone to become part of his family? (1:18)
 ___ Because of a person's good deeds.
 ___ Because of God's great love and mercy.
[See Ephesians 2:1-5]
40. The firstfruits were the first part of the harvest. What did the people of Israel do with the firstfruits? *[See Exodus 23:19]*
 ___ They offered it to God for the support of the temple ministry.
 ___ They kept it as part of their profit.
41. If we are a "kind of firstfruits of all" of God's creation (1:18),
 ___ We are better than other people.
 ___ We are the ones who have offered ourselves to serve God.
[See Romans 12:1,2]
42. A Christian should be quick to _____ (1:19).
43. He should be slow to _____ (1:19).
44. How do you come to understand another person?
 ___ By listening.
 ___ By talking.
45. If uncontrolled, what can lead to murder? _____ (1:20)
[See Matthew 5:21-26]
46. *Fill in the blank from 1 John 3:15.*
 "Anyone who hates his brother is a _____."
47. Is the word of God implanted in everyone who hears it? _____
[Read Matthew 13:3-9, 19-23]
48. What is proof that the word has been planted in our heart?
 ___ Having a Bible in our house.
 ___ Listening to sermons in church.
 ___ Understanding God's will from the Bible and obeying it.
49. Conversion can be defined as putting off one life style and adopting another. What does the believer put off? _____
 _____ (1:21).
 What does he accept? _____ (1:21).
50. What is the purpose of hearing the word of God? _____
 _____ (1:22).

51. What are we to do with God's law? (1:23-25)
- Listen to it only in church.
 - Keep it in mind and practice it in our daily life.
 - Compare our lives with God's will and make changes where we are in the wrong.
- [2 correct answers]*
52. In this chapter there are two beatitudes: 1) "Blessed is the man who perseveres _____." (1:12) and 2) The man who does not forget what he has heard from God's law, but does it will be _____ in what he does." (1:25)
- [For the beatitudes of Jesus, see Matthew 5:3-12]*
53. If the law gives freedom, what brings slavery? _____ (Romans 7:14).
54. The practice of our religion is worthless if we do not _____ (1:26).
55. How can we gain the self-control needed to use our mouth wisely? *[See 1:5 and Galations 5:22-26]*
- By avoiding all difficult people and situations.
 - By asking God for power from the Spirit of Christ.
56. God wants our practice of Christianity to be pure and faultless. What are two things that he is especially looking for? (1;27).
- Powerful preaching and eloquent prayer.
 - Care of the poor and needy.
 - Obedience to the rules of the church.
 - Avoidance of moral unfaithfulness, greed and addictions.

CHAPTER 2

1. The church is wrong if it is impressed with someone who is _____ (2:2).
2. God is looking for someone who is rich in _____ (2:5).
3. Man's tendency is to judge a person by his outward appearance, but the "Lord looks at the _____." *[Quote is from 1 Samuel 16:7].*
- 6.
4. The rich are tempted to (2:6,7)
- Take advantage of the poor and weak.
 - Spend their money unwisely in weak business ventures.
5. Does God show favoritism? _____ (2:9; Romans 2:5-11).

6. Whoever breaks just one point of the law is guilty of breaking the whole law because disobedience is a personal offense against _____ who gave all of the commandments (2:10-11).
7. God will judge us by _____ (2:12).
8. Obedience to God's law to love him above all else and to love our neighbor as our self (2:12)
 ___ Makes us slaves and unhappy.
 ___ Gives us joy and freedom.
9. For whom will there be no mercy in the Day of Judgment? (2:13)

 [See Matthew 6:12; 7:1-5; 18:21-35]
10. What triumphs over judgment? _____(2:13; Ephesians 2:4-5)
11. How did God's mercy triumph over our sins? _____
 "is the atoning sacrifice for our sins." [Find answer in 1 John 2:1-2]
12. Can we counsel, teach, rebuke, correct, and discipline others (2 Timothy 3:16-17) while at the same time being merciful and forgiving? _____
13. Faith that does not express itself with good deeds is _____ (2:17, 26).
14. Does faith without action (good deeds) proclaim the gospel? _____; feed the hungry? _____; clothe the naked? _____; benefit our neighbor? _____; visit the sick? _____; care for the aged? _____
15. Galations 5:6 says, "The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through _____."
16. How can we show that we have faith? _____(2:18)
17. The demons believe in God. Why are they still afraid of God?
 ___ Because they don't love and obey him.
 ___ Because God will punish all who do not submit to him and cast them into hell.
 ___ Because they are spirits.
 [2 correct answers]
18. Name two people who had true faith? _____(2:21-24). and _____ (2:25).

19. Paul writes in Romans 3:28, "For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law." Is he contradicting James 2:26?
_____ [Before answering read Romans 4 and 6]

20. Salvation is given to the sinner by faith alone (Ephesians 2:8-10). When Paul writes this way, he is thinking of
___ A faith that leads to love and obedience to God.
___ A faith that is nothing more than knowing about God.

CHAPTER 3

1. A Teacher or leader will be judged _____ because he will carry others into condemnation with him if he goes wrong. (3:1).

2. No one should try to become a teacher or leader if he cannot control his _____ (3:2).

3. The tongue is a _____ instrument that can do _____ harm (3:5).

4. When our tongue speaks evil (gossip, slander, lies, boasting, swearing), it _____ the whole person (3:6).

5. In 3:5 the tongue is compared to a small spark that ignites a fire that roars out of control and destroys a large forest. What happens when we say something evil or rash?

- ___ Our words can hurt people.
- ___ We can take our words back and keep them from spreading.
- ___ We may be committed to things we do not love.

[2 correct answers]

6. Obscene language, foolish talk, coarse joking, empty words, swearing and stories about immoral things [See Ephesians 5:4-6, 12]

- ___ Get their inspiration from hell.
- ___ Corrupt the whole person.
- ___ Are nothing to be concerned about. We have free speech in this this country. They don't hurt anyone.

[2 correct answers]

7. If the tongue corrupts the whole person (3:6), can we by ourselves, in our own power control our tongue? _____

8. God can help us use our tongue in the proper way. What do we do to have him help us? _____ [Ephesians 6:18-20]

9. According to Philippians 4:8 what should occupy our thoughts?

10. In order to know how to use our tongue, we should be asking God for _____ [See 1:5].

11. Where does wisdom come from? _____ (3:17)

12. Proverbs 1:7 says, "The _____ of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline."

13. True wisdom (3:17) can be summed up in the one word _____
[To find the answer read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 and Romans 13:8-10].

14. If we praise God, we also ought to be speaking well of _____
who are created in God's likeness (3:9).

15. Compare what James has to say in 3:10-12 with what Jesus says in Mark 7:21-23. Jesus is saying that corrupt speech, among other evils, comes from an evil _____. James implies that if the believer receives a new heart or a new nature, he will be given a new language of praise to God and encouragement to his fellow man.

16. Wisdom is revealed by _____ (3:13)

17. Where does bitter envy and selfish ambition come from _____ (3:14-15).

18. True leadership reveals the qualities listed in 3:17. Such a leader has wisdom that comes from _____ (from God). He is a peacemaker who will reap a harvest of _____ (3:18).

CHAPTER 4

1. There were _____ and _____ among the people because they sought their own interest, comfort and desires above the needs of others (4:1).

2. Against whom do our selfish desires battle

___ The Holy Spirit of God (Ephesians 4:30-32).

___ Our inner self that loves the Lord and desires to please him (Romans 7:14-20).

___ Satan.

[2 correct answers]

3. In 4:2 what does "you kill" mean? [See 1 John 3:15]
___ To murder someone.
___ To hate someone.
4. The people were not blessed because they did not _____ (4:2).
5. When they prayed, God did not answer because they asked with _____ (4:3).
6. To pray with right motives means that
___ We want God's will to be obeyed.
___ We may always be spared trouble and suffering.
___ We may be freed from the power of sin.
[2 correct answers]
7. In 4:4 "adulterous" means that the Jewish Christians
___ Were sexually impure.
___ Were unfaithful to God, the spiritual husband of the church.
8. To love the things of this world is to _____ God (4:4; Matthew 6:24)
9. If God were to answer the prayers of proud, selfish and stubborn people the way they want him to,
___ God would be showing his love to them.
___ God would be fighting against himself.
___ God would be helping the people around them.
10. God gives grace and blessing to the _____, who trust him and submit to his will. (4:6).
11. The proud person resists _____ (4:6). The humble person resists the _____ (4:7).
12. Because the humble person is God's friend, he will be victorious over temptation from the _____ (4:7; See also Romans 8:31).
13. What is James recommending in 4:8-9?
___ To repent and turn from sin.
___ To take a shower at least once a day.
14. Admission of sin and guilt (4:9)
___ Is a painful experience.
___ Is something funny to be laughed at.
15. To "speak against" our fellow man or "judge" him means (4:11)
___ To slander him by spreading bad news about him.
___ To correct, rebuke and admonish a person to leave evil.

16. To judge, that is, to condemn and punish is the sole right of _____ (4:12). *[Read also Romans 12:17-21]*
17. On this earth God has given the right to judge to _____ who acts with God's authority and should follow the principle of justice. *[For the answer read Romans 13:1,3-4]*
18. The church is also given the authority to judge. Jesus gave specific rules on how this should be done (Matthew 18:15-18). In this case punishment is
 ___ A financial penalty.
 ___ Exclusion from church fellowship.
19. Parents also _____ when they discipline their children following the principles of the Bible. *[Ephesians 6:1-4, for example]*
20. Government, church and parental authority must be submissive to _____ in order to be valid.
21. No human institution is perfect. The believer is called to _____ God rather than man. *[See Acts 4:19-20; 5:29]*
22. Read Matthew 7:1-5. In order to correct the errors of others, we must first correct our own _____.
23. Can we guarantee what we will do in the future? _____ (4:14).
24. When we plan for the future, we ought to say, " _____ ." (4:15).
25. In what situation does a person sin even though he doesn't do anything?
 _____ (4:17)

CHAPTER 5

1. Who ought to weep and wail? (5:1) _____ --
2. What happens to earthly wealth? (5:2-3)
 ___ It can be stolen, rot, corrode, break down and waste away.
 ___ It can go with us to heaven and make our life better there.
 ___ It will go to others when we die.
 ___ It can make us truly satisfied and happy.
[2 correct answers]

3. Wealth that is given away to help the poor is like making a deposit in _____.
[See Luke 12:33-34 for answer]
4. On Judgment Day the accumulation of earthly wealth will (5:2-5)
___ Be to our advantage. [See Luke 16:19-24]
___ Be held against us.
5. What should the wealthy do? (5:4-6)
___ Pay fair wages promptly and give to the poor.
___ Live in luxury and self-indulgence.
6. Justice is often perverted because the _____ do not have the means to defend themselves in court (5:6 and 2:6).
7. Who is the "Lord" in 5:7-8? _____
8. Jesus is the Savior. Is he also Judge? _____
[See John 5:26-29; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Revelation 6:16-17]
9. When will Christ be the Judge? _____
10. In verses 7, 8, and 10 what word means to "remain committed to Christ even in suffering?" _____
11. Who was the man who lost everything and went through terrible suffering but in the end he received twice as much as he had before _____ (4:11).
[Read Job 1-2; 42:12-17 for the story about this man].
12. Compare 5:12 with Matthew 5:33-37. Does 5:12 sound like Jesus Own words? _____
13. In times of difficulty and sickness we should _____ (5:13-14).
14. Who should we ask to pray with and for us _____ (5:14).
15. Anointing with oil (5:14)
___ Is a symbol of the healing power of the Holy Spirit and dedication to God. (Luke 4:18-19).
___ Was used as medicine (Isaiah 1:6; Mark 6:13; Luke 10:34).
___ Has magical power that doctors do not have.
[2 correct answers]
16. What ultimately makes the sick person well
___ The anointing oil or medical treatment.
___ The power of God in answer to the prayer of faith (1:6-8).

17. Many forms of physical sickness are caused by guilt, stress, worry, anger, and self-pity. Prayer and the _____ of sin (5:16) gets at the heart of the problem and brings true _____.
18. If there is a spirit of slander and grumbling in the church, will the sick person be motivated to confess his sin? _____
19. The prayer of what kind of person is powerful and effective? (5:16)
___ A righteous person. *[See Psalm 66:18]*
___ A sinful person.
20. A righteous person will pray according to the _____ of God.
[See 1 John 5:14]
21. Luke 15:11-32 is a parable of Jesus that describes two ways of receiving a sinner who has repented. What attitude does Jesus want the church to have? ___ The attitude of the father.
___ The attitude of the older brother.
22. The goal of preaching the gospel is to (5:19-20)
___ Have people attend church.
___ Lead people to turn from sin and believe in Jesus Christ.
23. To "cover a multitude of sins" means that
___ All of our sins will be pardoned for Jesus' sake.
___ We will receive power to stop sinning.
___ No one will ever know about our sins.
[2 correct answers. See 1 John 1:9-2:6]

