

YOUR FAITH

(A BIBLE STUDY ON JAMES)

(This resource is a companion of Chapter Ten "Faith Celebrated In The Bible" in the book *Life & Faith: from "This is it?" to "This is it!"*)

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Casey Ross". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

written by Casey Ross ©2022
caseyross.net

Table of Contents

Introduction To James' Letter

James 1:1 – 1:18 / When Life is Difficult

James 1:19 – 1:27 / Listening, Talking, and Doing

James 2:1 – 2:13 / Show Mercy, Not Favoritism

James 2:14 – 2:26 / Faith That Saves Us

James 3:1 – 3:12 / Your Words Are Powerful

James 3:13 – 3:18 / Wisdom From God

James 4:1 – 4:12 / Submitting To God

James 4:13 – 4:17 / Life Is Short

James 5:1 – 5:6 / Warnings About Wealth

James 5:7 – 5:12 / Patience Proves Trust

James 5:13 – 5:19 / Praying With Faith

All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright ©1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide. www.zondervan.com The "NIV" and "New International Version" are trademarks registered in the United States Patent and Trademark Office by Biblica, Inc.™

This Bible Study of the book James is not meant to be an exhaustive study of his letter. It is intended to guide conversations between you and your friends and help you take unique next steps that cause you to trust Jesus more.

The Bible Study is not separated into the number of times you should meet. It is divided into the natural sections of James' letter.

The first section below is an introduction to his letter. This section will give you context for the rest of the Bible Study.

Introduction To James' Letter

James had multiple brothers. One of them was named Jesus. Yes, that Jesus. That may sound awesome, but having Jesus as your brother was difficult. Most people did not accept Jesus or his teachings. His own family did not accept him. In Mark 3:21, we read, *"When his family heard about this, they went to take charge of him, for they said, 'He is out of his mind.'"* And in John 7:5, we read, *"For even his own brothers did not believe in him."* When your brother says he is God's Son and the Savior of the world, your life is complicated.

Then we read in 1 Corinthians 15:4-7 where Paul wrote this about Jesus, *"that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles,"*

James knew his brother had died. Then James saw his dead brother was not dead. Jesus was alive. That might be the only way I'd believe my brother was the Son of God and the Savior of the world too. James did not believe Jesus was whom he said he was until after his death and resurrection. And it changed his life. We read in Galatians 1:19, Galatians 2:9, Acts 12:17, and Acts 15:13-21 James became a visible and vocal leader of his brother's movement and church.

James went from rejecting his brother's claims to putting his faith in his brother. And he became a leader in his brother's movement. In addition to the numerous times he was present in critical moments in the church, he also wrote a letter to fellow believers in Jesus, specifically Jewish Christians.

Maybe James knew Jesus better than anyone else. He certainly knew him longer than most people. He said some unique things about faith and being a Christian. The early church listened to James. So should we.

James 1:1 – 1:18 / When Life is Difficult

As you read James' letter, make notes in your Bible, notebook, and/or app. Here are some questions to help you process and apply what you're reading:

- What stands out?
- What questions come to mind?
- What makes you aware of something you need to do differently?
- How can you apply what you are learning in a way that causes you to trust Jesus more?

Read this section of James' letter, then answer the questions below.

When have you experienced pure joy? How did you feel in these times?

When life is difficult, it can feel like you're in deep water and your feet cannot touch the bottom. These times can test our faith (trust) in Jesus. When has your faith in Jesus been tested?

In the times your faith in Jesus has been tested, how did your trust in Jesus help you persevere? How did your trust in Jesus grow in those times?

God has a long-term, eternal perspective. Life is more than here and now. How does God's perspective affect your perspective and how you handle difficult times?

Have you ever experienced a difficult time because you were tempted into it? We create our temptations. Our desire leads to sin, which leads to death. How can you avoid desiring things that lead to death?

What step will you take today that will cause you to trust Jesus more?

James 1:19 – 1:27 / Listening, Talking, and Doing

As you read James' letter, make notes in your Bible, notebook, and/or app. Here are some questions to help you process and apply what you're reading:

- What stands out?
- What questions come to mind?
- What makes you aware of something you need to do differently?
- How can you apply what you are learning in a way that causes you to trust Jesus more?

Read this section of James' letter, then answer the questions below.

Are you slow or quick to listen?

Are you slow or quick to speak?

Are you slow or quick to respond in anger?

Do how you listen, speak, and respond to others show the righteousness God desires? "Righteous" does not mean perfect. It means you have put your faith in Jesus and are living like someone who has put their trust in Jesus.

Listening, learning, and studying the Bible are all good. But if you only do these things, you're deceiving yourself. To get faith right, you must consistently apply the Bible in your life. Do you have a habit of listening to, learning from, studying, and living out the Bible? What should be the result of these habits?

Do you control your words well, or do you deceive yourself?

God expects to see you live an active faith of showing love to others and being influenced more by the Holy Spirit in you than the world around you. How does this describe your faith? How do you fall short of this?

What step will you take today that will cause you to trust Jesus more?

James 2:1 – 2:13 / Show Mercy, Not Favoritism

As you read James' letter, make notes in your Bible, notebook, and/or app. Here are some questions to help you process and apply what you're reading:

- What stands out?
- What questions come to mind?
- What makes you aware of something you need to do differently?
- How can you apply what you are learning in a way that causes you to trust Jesus more?

Read this section of James' letter, then answer the questions below.

What is favoritism? Showing favoritism means you show more love to some people than you do to other people. Showing favoritism is a sin. Who do you show favoritism to? How do you show favoritism?

God makes it clear that the right thing to do is love everyone. What will you do to treat all people the way God says to treat people?

How does God's view of people differ from how you often view people?

Sinners one time makes us a sinner. A sinner is not worthy of showing favoritism or judging others because they are not better than anyone else. You should live and love like a person who deserves to be judged. Although you deserve to be judged, God shows you mercy. He does not give you what you deserve. Do you show others mercy?

What step will you take today that will cause you to trust Jesus more?

James 2:14 – 2:26 / Faith That Saves Us

As you read James' letter, make notes in your Bible, notebook, and/or app. Here are some questions to help you process and apply what you're reading:

- What stands out?
- What questions come to mind?
- What makes you aware of something you need to do differently?
- How can you apply what you are learning in a way that causes you to trust Jesus more?

Read this section of James' letter, then answer the questions below.

Faith saves us from our sin. Faith gives us a new life to live and a home with God forever after we die. But a faith made up of only correct beliefs is not the kind of faith that saves us. Faith without actions is not the kind of faith that saves us. Do your actions show proof of your faith in Jesus?

How is Abraham an excellent example of faith that is not dead? What is the difference between believing in God versus believing God?

Is your faith alive or dead?

How do your actions show others you trust Jesus?

What step will you take today that will cause you to trust Jesus more?

James 3:1 – 3:12 / Your Words Are Powerful

As you read James' letter, make notes in your Bible, notebook, and/or app. Here are some questions to help you process and apply what you're reading:

- What stands out?
- What questions come to mind?
- What makes you aware of something you need to do differently?
- How can you apply what you are learning in a way that causes you to trust Jesus more?

Read this section of James' letter, then answer the questions below.

When have your words affected someone negatively? When have your words affected someone positively?

No one is capable of always controlling their words. When is it most difficult for you to control the words you speak? When are you guilty of using your words to praise God and to hurt others?

How do your words make it obvious to others you trust Jesus?

How do your words back up your actions that show others you trust Jesus?

What step will you take today that will cause you to trust Jesus more?

James 3:13 – 3:18 / Wisdom From God

As you read James' letter, make notes in your Bible, notebook, and/or app. Here are some questions to help you process and apply what you're reading:

- What stands out?
- What questions come to mind?
- What makes you aware of something you need to do differently?
- How can you apply what you are learning in a way that causes you to trust Jesus more?

Read this section of James' letter, then answer the questions below.

A wise person can be identified by their actions done in humility and not selfishness. That means your actions that prove your faith in Jesus always benefit others. Would those around you call you wise based on your actions done in humility and not selfishness? Who needs to benefit from your actions?

Wisdom from God is described as...

- pure
- peace-loving
- thoughtful and kind
- humble
- not giving others what they deserve
- resulting in good things
- showing no favoritism
- meaningful

In James 1:5, James wrote that we could ask God for wisdom when we lack wisdom. What characteristics of wisdom from God do you need to be more evident in your life?

What step will you take today that will cause you to trust Jesus more?

James 4:1 – 4:12 / Submitting To God

As you read James' letter, make notes in your Bible, notebook, and/or app. Here are some questions to help you process and apply what you're reading:

- What stands out?
- What questions come to mind?
- What makes you aware of something you need to do differently?
- How can you apply what you are learning in a way that causes you to trust Jesus more?

Read this section of James' letter, then answer the questions below.

How aware are you of the things you do not have but want? How does your desire for these things affect you, your thinking, and your heart? How does it affect your relationships?

When you start your faith in Jesus, God deposits the Holy Spirit inside you. You have God's Spirit in you! This is His bond with you. But we also desire a bond with the world. You cannot have a bond with the world and with God. When do you feel this tension between having a bond with God and wanting a bond with the world?

Even though we can desire the world more than God, He shows us grace. He gives us what we do not deserve. How have you experienced God's grace?

When we want to break our bond with God and bond with the world, there is something we can do. We can submit to God. Submitting to God means we get in line behind Him and follow Him. Submitting to God is not passive; it is active. We...

- pull away from the devil.
- move towards God.
- clean away anything that we're doing that God does not want us to do.
- grieve anything we've done or anyone we've hurt.
- constantly acknowledge God is wiser than us.

What is the result of actively submitting to God? He will lift you up. God will pick you up, put you on your feet, and lead you to have a faith that is fulfilling and influential. How have you experienced being lifted up by God?

What step will you take today that will cause you to trust Jesus more?

James 4:13 – 4:17 / Life Is Short

As you read James' letter, make notes in your Bible, notebook, and/or app. Here are some questions to help you process and apply what you're reading:

- What stands out?
- What questions come to mind?
- What makes you aware of something you need to do differently?
- How can you apply what you are learning in a way that causes you to trust Jesus more?

Read this section of James' letter, then answer the questions below.

Your life is short regardless of how many years you live. And while you may think you can control your life, you cannot. It's arrogant to believe you can plan your life. What areas of your life do you try to control?

The best way to live your life is to trust your life to God. He gives you life. Do you trust God with your life? Where do you struggle to trust God with your life?

We sin when we do not do the good we know we should do. How can we always know the good we should do? See James 2:8. Do you have a habit of doing the good God wants you to do?

What step will you take today that will cause you to trust Jesus more?

James 5:1 – 5:6 / Warnings About Wealth

As you read James' letter, make notes in your Bible, notebook, and/or app. Here are some questions to help you process and apply what you're reading:

- What stands out?
- What questions come to mind?
- What makes you aware of something you need to do differently?
- How can you apply what you are learning in a way that causes you to trust Jesus more?

Read this section of James' letter, then answer the questions below.

Accumulating money and possessions is a waste. It is like choosing the world instead of choosing God. See James 4:4-10. How are you holding tight to money and possessions?

James 2:8 tells you how you should live your life. How can you apply this to your money and possessions? Do you use your wealth to show love to others?

What step will you take today that will cause you to trust Jesus more?

James 5:7 – 5:12 / Patience Proves Trust

As you read James' letter, make notes in your Bible, notebook, and/or app. Here are some questions to help you process and apply what you're reading:

- What stands out?
- What questions come to mind?
- What makes you aware of something you need to do differently?
- How can you apply what you are learning in a way that causes you to trust Jesus more?

Read this section of James' letter, then answer the questions below.

Patience proves trust. Patience in Jesus is fully following Jesus. Are you patiently waiting on Jesus to do his work in and around you? Why or why not? How does your patience sum up your faith in Jesus?

Do you set a good example with your patience? How could others perceive your faith in Jesus based on your patience in all situations?

There is no place for insincerity in faith. When do you exaggerate your words? When are you not clear and sincere in your words?

What step will you take today that will cause you to trust Jesus more?

James 5:13 – 5:19 / Praying With Faith

As you read James' letter, make notes in your Bible, notebook, and/or app. Here are some questions to help you process and apply what you're reading:

- What stands out?
- What questions come to mind?
- What makes you aware of something you need to do differently?
- How can you apply what you are learning in a way that causes you to trust Jesus more?

Read this section of James' letter, then answer the questions below.

Your prayers matter. James wrote about how you should approach God in James 1:6-8. When you are in trouble, pray. When you know someone in need, pray. When you need forgiveness for your sins, pray. When do you pray? When do you not pray?

When you pray, do you pray like James said to pray? When you pray fully trusting God, what are you trusting Him for?

Whom do you need to help start their faith in Jesus or help bring back to their faith in Jesus?

What step will you take today that will cause you to trust Jesus more?