



THE LETTER OF JAMES

A 28 Day Study Guide

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INTRODUCTION TO JAMES

The book of James is highly popular among Christians today due to its teaching being practical, concise, and easy to understand and remember. The book opens, “James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes in the Dispersion: Greetings” (James 1:1). The consensus throughout history is that the author is the Lord’s brother; since no additional information is given to identify James, perhaps the author assumed that his readers would know him and recognize his authority.

James the Lord’s brother is well enough known and respected within the Christian community not to need additional explanation besides his name. James the brother of Jesus is mentioned throughout the New Testament. Within the Gospels, it appears that his only connection to Jesus was the family connection (Mark 6:3; Matt. 13:55). It is not until after the resurrection that we see James acknowledge Jesus as Lord (Acts 1:13-14; 1 Cor. 15:7; John 7:3-5). James became a leader in the early church, especially in Jerusalem (Acts 12:17; Gal. 2:9). There is no record of James referring to himself as the brother of Jesus, but in addition to the Gospel writers, Paul also identifies him as such. While the exact date of composition is unknown, James’ death is reported in the 60s. Since the letter predated his death, its composition date ranges between 40-60 A.D.

James is considered as one of the “general” epistles. The letters within this group share the characteristic of being addressed to the church at large, instead of a single congregation or individual. The book of James differs slightly from some other New Testament letters in that the vast majority of its content is not as focused on doctrine, but with Christians living out their conviction. Because James addresses common areas of needed growth (i.e., suffering, faith with works, partiality, speech, wisdom, and prayer), it has a way of connecting, encouraging, and challenging new and mature Christians alike.

¹ James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes in the Dispersion: Greetings.

² Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, ³ for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. ⁴ And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

⁵ If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.

⁶ But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. ⁷ For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; ⁸ he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

⁹ Let the lowly brother boast in his exaltation, ¹⁰ and the rich in his humiliation, because like a flower of the grass he will pass away. ¹¹ For the sun rises with its scorching heat and withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beauty perishes. So also will the rich man fade away in the midst of his pursuits.

¹² 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. ¹³ 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.

¹⁴ But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire.

¹⁵ Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

¹⁶ Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers. ¹⁷ Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. ¹⁸ Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures.

¹⁹ Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; ²⁰ for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God. ²¹ Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

²² But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. ²³ For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. ²⁴ For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. ²⁵ But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.

²⁶ If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless. ²⁷ Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.

JAMES 1:1-18

1. In James 1:1-18, what attitudes should the Christian pursue and avoid when experiencing the different trials of life? What benefit, for the Christian, are the trials of life?

2. According to James 1:1-18, what attitude hinders the Christian's prayer life? What can a Christian expect from this kind of prayer?

3. In James 1:1-18, how does the inspired writer characterize God? Does this inspired characterization match your understanding of God?

4. In James 1:1-18, mark every action Christians are called to perform. What areas of personal growth need to be focused on this week?

5. In James 1:1-18, which verse did you find most challenging and most motivating?

LIFE IS NOT FAIR

Life is not, nor will it ever be, fair. There will always be periods of hurting, suffering, heartache, and temptation (Jas. 1:2-4, 12-16). However, hurt and heartache are made more tolerable when we, as Christians, understand their divine purpose and respond appropriately. For example, James encourages Christians to react to trials in these ways:

To respond to life's hurts and challenges with "joy" (1:2; cf. 1 Pet. 1:6-9; 4:12-13). Jesus, during his ministry, reinforced this response when he taught his disciples to "rejoice and be exceedingly glad" in the face of persecution (Mt. 5:10-12; cf. Phil. 3:1; 4:4). Jesus also modeled this attitude as he endured the horror of Calvary (Heb. 12:1-2).

To realize the purpose of our "various trials" (1:3-4, 12). The Bible reminds us that life's hurts and heartaches validate our faith by testing (literally, "proving") its "genuineness" (cf. 1 Pet. 1:6-7). Also, they help develop patience or endurance (1:3-4; cf. Heb. 10:32-39; 12:1-2), thereby maturing our character and rendering us more spiritually complete.

To utilize the resources provided to help us effectively deal with our troubles (1:5-8). God has never required anything of man without providing him the adequate resources needed to fulfill the task, and this includes successfully enduring life's trials. Consequently, we are given wisdom as a resource to assist us with life's trials (1:5). Wisdom is defined as the ability to judge soundly and deal graciously with the realities and events of life (Jas. 3:13-17; cf. Psa. 111:10; 19:7). Also, we can utilize the blessing and power of prayer (i.e. believing prayer) when navigating life's "various trials" (1:5-6; e.g. 2 Cor. 12:7-10; 1 Sam. 1:4-18).

To rejoice in our victory over life's tests (1:12). God is faithful, and as a result of our victory over life's tests, heaven provides blessings that can be enjoyed both now and in eternity (1:12). Initially, our text promises happiness to the faithful Christian in this present world: "Blessed is the man who endures" (1:12). The word blessed describes a happiness that is not affected by outward circumstances (cf. Mt. 5:3-11; Jas. 5:11). Even more, the faithful Christian is promised "the crown of life" (1:12) in the world to come, yea, the blessing of living forever with God and the redeemed of all ages (1:12; cf. 2 Tim. 4:7-8; Rev. 2:10).

Trials are guaranteed. Suffering is painful. Heartache is real. However, with God's help, we can and will be conquerors (Rom. 8:28).

JAMES 1:19-27

1. What is the reason for the command to “be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger”?
2. What is a Christian to lay aside? Give examples of such things.
3. Can a person “receive with meekness” while he or she fails to “put away” the things mentioned above? Why or why not?
4. What is the significance of the “implanted word”?
5. How can one deceive himself or herself?
6. List the traits of vain religion and of pure religion.
7. Who is the ultimate judge of religion’s purity?

Key words in the Greek:

orgé (wrath) – Swelling up or rising up from an ongoing or fixed opposition. It is not a suddenness of emotion, but rather an abiding condition of the mind, frequently with a view of it being more lasting in its nature.

apothemenoi (put away) – Used in the sense of removing one’s clothing (cf. Acts 7:58), like a snake shedding its skin and leaving it behind.

rhuparia (filthiness) – Moral filth that soils or desecrates the soul. Medical term used to describe the waxy build up in the ear that hinders hearing.

kakia (wickedness) – A vicious disposition; seeking to harm others; malice or spite.

emphutos (implanted) – Bring into living union like with a successfully engrafted shoot; to spring up and grow.

INSIDE OUT

James has set forth three commands to follow in order to gain spiritual maturity: be swift to hear, be slow to speak, and be slow to anger (don't have defensive disposition toward the teaching). Certainly, one cannot follow these commands without it being evidenced by his actions. James says that a fake Christian will look into the mirror, God's word, and say, "Yes, that's me. That's what I look like to others," only to walk away, forgetting what he has seen. Just as the mirror was of no benefit to him, the word of God also has no benefit to one who does not practice what he has learned. HIS religion is worthless.

The line between real religion and pretend religion is sometimes hard to distinguish, but God knows which side of the line a person is on. Outward appearances of pure religion are only illusions of faithfulness when they are not practiced from the heart. This type of religion tells the person that he is fine in his slowness to hear, his quickness to speak, and his defensive habit. His profession of faith is betrayed by not comprehending true religion, and he will be inconsistent in all his ways.

How does God know that pure religion is being practiced? James says to look no further than the heart, as it exhibits compassion. True widows and orphans are among the most vulnerable of society. It is impossible to care truly for such individuals and not practice what James has demanded. Can one be quick to speak when observing the sorrows of an orphan? Can one be slow in listening to their call of distress? Can one ever have a cause to be defensive while attending to the cries of a widow's loss?

James then shows the close connection between compassion for others and keeping oneself unspotted from the world: when we focus on others, there comes a realization of our own need and frailty. It motivates us to draw ever closer to God while moving further away from the dirt and filth that can pollute our souls. Religion in its purest sense is experienced and seized through Jesus' example of compassion and remaining clean from the contamination of the world. It is then that one can accurately see the reflection of Christ in his or her life.

¹ My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory.

² For if a man wearing a gold ring and fine clothing comes into your assembly, and a poor man in shabby clothing also comes in, ³and if you pay attention to the one who wears the fine clothing and say, “You sit here in a good place,” while you say to the poor man, “You stand over there,” or, “Sit down at my feet,” ⁴have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?

⁵ Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him? ⁶ But you have dishonored the poor man. Are not the rich the ones who oppress you, and the ones who drag you into court? ⁷ Are they not the ones who blaspheme the honorable name by which you were called?

⁸ If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing well. ⁹ But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors.

¹⁰ For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it. ¹¹ For he who said, “Do not commit adultery,” also said, “Do not murder.” If you do not commit adultery but do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. ¹² So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty. ¹³ For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

¹⁴ What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? ¹⁵ If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, ¹⁶ and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and filled,” without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? ¹⁷ So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

¹⁸ 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. ¹⁹ You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder! ²⁰ Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless?

²¹ Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? ²² You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works; ²³ and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness” — and he was called a friend of God. ²⁴ You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone. ²⁵ And in the same way was not also Rahab the prostitute justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way? ²⁶ For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.

JAMES 2:1-13

1. In James 2:1-13, the inspired penman's instructions regarding partiality are specifically addressed to whom? From a practical standpoint, what can we, as individuals, do to guard against being prejudiced and showing partiality toward others?

2. In James 2:1-13, James contrasts how we often treat the poor and the "rich." Yet, what does the text say God has chosen the "poor" to be? How do the "rich" often respond to our faith?

3. In James 2:1-13, what one word does James use to describe partiality and prejudice? Can you think of a New Testament example of a Christian who was confronted for his sin of prejudice and partiality?

4. In the context of James 2:1-13, how should one speak to and act toward others, especially those who are different from us? Why?

5. As an action item, make a list of what you can do and say to those who are different from you. Then, develop a plan of how you will implement these actions and ideas.

MERCY

"Do you want to play Mercy?" This was a common question many individuals in my elementary school (and sometimes high school) would ask each other when I was young. If the person being approached agreed, the two would quickly link their hands together and begin trying to twist the other's arms and wrists in a variety of uncomfortable directions. Once a person began to feel pain, he would cry out "Mercy!" to keep the other from continuing to twist his arm in a painful direction. By calling out mercy, he admitted his defeat, and the person with the upper hand would grant him exactly what he asked for: mercy. Did I ever play this game? Yes. Was it smart? Probably not.

In James 2:1-13, James writes about how we as Christians need to extend mercy toward those who are hurting and weak. When we see someone in pain and have the ability to help him or her, whether physically or spiritually, we need to act! Jesus alludes to this idea in Matthew 25 when He says,

*"Truly, I say to you,
as you did not do
it to one of the
least of these,
you did not
do it to me."*

Matthew 25:45

"I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' Then they also will answer, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?' Then he will answer them, saying, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of

the least of these, you did not do it to me.'" (v.42-45). Christ goes on to say that those who help the hungry, hurt, and needy will go on to inherit eternal life. In the game of Mercy, the one who granted the mercy was ultimately the winner. In the game of life, the same is true. Jesus sums it up best during the Sermon on the Mount: "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy" (Matt. 5:7).

JAMES 2:14-26

1. In your own words, what is faith?

2. James' teaching on faith and works has, by some, been set in opposition to Paul's instruction in Romans 4. Take a moment to read both texts. Are they addressing the same thing?

Harmony between the two is found when the context of each is considered. Paul is addressing the justification of an individual in the situation of God bringing someone into a relationship with him. James is addressing people who already are Christians. Consider a few examples of where Paul connects faith and works in a Christian's life: 1 Thess. 1:3 and Gal. 5:6. In addition, Paul closes his letter to the Romans with two chapters that describe how Christians should live faithfully. Therefore, in Romans 4, Paul is referring to the idea that individuals cannot earn their salvation. James is saying that the essence of what faith requires a response.

3. What are the two questions James asks in verse 14? What are the correct answers and why?

4. Verses 15 and 16 lay out a need and a reaction by an unfocused Christian. The need is someone without _____ and _____. The "friendly" phrase wishes them the exact thing they need—to get warm and be fed—but what good is accomplished? What are some common phrases that we say or things that we do when we feel obligated to engage in someone's struggle but are unwilling to give them anything?

JAMES 2:14-26

5. Describe how your life would look if you had faith but were absent of good works.

6. (V. 18) Not in a spirit of self-praise, but in humility, write out a list of works in your life so far in 2018. Does the compilation of your list accurately describe the faith you believe to have or want to have?

7. Verse 19 (and Matthew 8:28-34) has always stood out to me. Compare your definition of faith from question one to the demons' faith. What role does obedience play in differentiating the faith of demons, who know Christ as the Messiah, from the faith described in James 2?

8. Considering the lives of Abraham and Rahab, compile a list of words that accurately describes the faith and relationships that they had with God.

ABRAHAM

“He [Abraham] considered that God was able to raise him [Isaac] from the dead” (Heb. 11:19). For Abraham to speak these words, the mere knowledge that God existed meant very little in this moment. If Abraham were seeking to please the idols of Canaan, Isaac would have died (Psalms 106: 37–38). However, Abraham’s faith was not just built upon the knowledge of the existence of the one true God, but that his God, our God, is faithful to His promises (Heb. 10:23)! So, when God promised Abraham in Genesis that a great nation would come through Isaac, Abraham knew that not even death was greater than God.

The clearest analogy for us to understand true faith is love. Love is not an idea or an emotion. It is easy for us to understand that love assumes action. Read 1 Corinthians 13. This same principle is applied to faith—faith assumes action. Consider these phrases again from James 2:14–26: “faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead”; “I will show you my faith by my works”; “faith was active along with his works”; “faith was completed by his works”; and “faith apart from works is dead.”

For us to have the same faith as Abraham—a faith that consists of trust, obedience, and dependence, and compels us to action—we must answer four questions:

1. What has God promised us? List the promises and the corresponding text below.

Promises:

Text:

2. What can hinder the fulfillment of God’s promise?

3. Are you content living in submission to God?

4. Do you trust God? If so, with what and how?

***“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering,
for he who promised is faithful.”
Hebrews 10:23***

RAHAB

Consider some individuals in the Old Testament who are great examples of having faith in God. My assumption is that you thought of individuals like Abraham, David, Moses, Daniel, Noah, and Elijah. Why, then, is Rahab one of the two examples given in James to illustrate faith? Joshua 2: 1–24 and 6: 22–25 record the narrative of Rahab and her interaction with the two spies that were sent by Joshua into Jericho. She is also mentioned in the genealogy of Christ (Matt. 1:5) and the “hall of faith” (Heb. 11:31).

In Jericho, the spies sought refuge with Rahab, a Canaanite prostitute. As it turned out, she had heard of what God had done for Israel when he delivered them from the Egyptians. So, at personal risk, she chose God over her people because she knew God was greater than any fortified city, even Jericho. Because of her faith, she hid the spies and helped them to escape. Jericho was an important battle for Israel’s conquest, and in this crucial moment, we find God’s deliverance being connected to the least expected hero—a Gentile prostitute.

There are three takeaways from the narrative of Rahab that will hopefully challenge and encourage you. First, we cannot assume obedience or unfaithfulness with anyone. Does faith have boundaries or limitations on who may grab hold of it? Did Rahab’s past disqualify her from obedience and commitment to God? If she were living today, would you have shared the Gospel with her? Second, we should be reminded that God is awesome. Rahab had only heard of two things that God had done, yet she believed. How much more powerful is the story of crossing over the Red Sea or of God’s deliverance from sin and eternal death over physical captivity? We get the joy and privilege of hearing thousands of years of God’s faithfulness, power, love, patience, and justice. Third, we should be challenged that Rahab’s culture and environment had little effect on her choice.

If she were alive today, would you have shared the Gospel with her?

She was a Canaanite whose “country” was about to go to war, yet she was able to say, “for the Lord your God, he is God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath” (Joshua 2:11) about the enemy’s God. The influence of society on our faithfulness will decrease when our faith consists of commitment, trust, and obedience.

¹ Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment.

² For we all stumble in many ways. If anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body as well. ³ Now if we put the bits into the horses' mouths so that they will obey us, we direct their entire body as well. ⁴ Look at the ships also, though they are so great and are driven by strong winds, are still directed by a very small rudder wherever the inclination of the pilot desires. ⁵ So also the tongue is a small part of the body, and yet it boasts of great things.

See how great a forest is set aflame by such a small fire! ⁶ And the tongue is a fire, the very world of iniquity; the tongue is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body, and sets on fire the course of our life, and is set on fire by hell. ⁷ For every species of beasts and birds, of reptiles and creatures of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by the human race. ⁸ But no one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison. ⁹ With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God; ¹⁰ from the same mouth come both blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be this way. ¹¹ Does a fountain send out from the same opening both fresh and bitter water? ¹² Can a fig tree, my brethren, produce olives, or a vine produce figs? Nor can salt water produce fresh.

¹³ Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom. ¹⁴ But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth. ¹⁵ This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic. ¹⁶ For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing. ¹⁷ But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy. ¹⁸ And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

JAMES 3:1-12

1. In the early church, many began to see being a teacher as a position of great authority and honor. Children were often brought up being told they should all strive to become teachers because being a teacher in the church would allow them to be powerful within the Christian community. Do you think some in the church today also struggle with this mindset? Knowing this, why do you think James gave a warning to teachers in James 3:1?

2. At first glance, James 3:2-12 seems very disconnected from James 3:1. However, James, knowing that the early church was suffering with _____, says that “we ALL stumble in many ways” (3:2) and goes on to discuss the taming of the tongue. Do you see the connection now? (Hint: Proverbs 16:18)

3. List the various analogies James uses to describe the tongue in James 3:1-12.

4. James 3:8 tells us that “no man can tame the tongue.” Does this mean it is an impossible task? If so, why even try to work on our speech? Read the discussion Jesus has with the Rich Young Ruler in Matthew 19:16-26. How does Jesus’ statement in Matthew 19:26 come into play when considering James 3:8?

5. Read James 3:9-12. Is God pleased when we speak purely in one area of our lives and spitefully in another? Notice in verses 11 and 12 James mentions a spring with an opening and a tree with a vine. The opening and the vine are used to describe the tongue. What do you think the spring and the tree describe? What is at the source of our speech? (Hint: Proverbs 4:23)

STICKS AND STONES

“Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me.” Were you taught this phrase when you were growing up? I was! And I tried my best to believe it as well. However, no matter how many times I uttered it quietly to myself, it was never able to fix the heartache, pain, and sorrow that came along with hurtful words. Was I not tough enough? Was I overeating? Was I just a wimp? These thoughts constantly ran through my head!

James spends a significant portion of his book discussing the power of words. In chapter 3, he writes, “From the same mouth come blessing and cursing, my brothers, these things ought not to be so” (v.10). If you believe the book of James is inspired as I do, you understand that these aren’t simply James’ words, they are God’s words. So what? We know God cares about our words, but what does that mean? God is huge. God is tough! God can’t be hurt by words can he?

In Genesis 6, we see mankind in a corrupted state. Most of mankind no longer cared for God because “every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually” (v.5). Man had a sin problem. And what was God’s reaction? “The Lord regretted that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart” (v.6). God was grieved because of sin. God was hurt because of sin.

So God, The God, The Creator, the I AM can be hurt? Yes. God grieves over our sin (Gen. 6:6; Psalms 78:40; Eph. 4:30). When we choose to speak in an unkind way, we choose to hurt God, and if God can be hurt by words, I certainly can as well. The tongue can be a terrible power. However, God designed the tongue not to cause pain, but to cause joy! With our tongue we may be able to cause pain, but we can also praise (Eph. 1:5), sing (Ezr. 3:11), comfort (Gen. 50:21), and cause joy to all around us, including God. As we study the power of words, may we all pray the prayer of David in Psalms 19:14. “Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart Be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my rock and my Redeemer.”

JAMES 3:13-18

1. According to verse 13, how does a wise person conduct himself? How does that contrast with verse 14?

2. Read verse 17. Write out the list of character traits that are "from above." Beside each trait, rate yourself using a scale of 1-10 (1 being very poor and 10 being excellent) on how well you think you exhibit each character trait.

3. If any of those traits were below a 7, write down some thoughts on what it is that you think is preventing you from displaying that kind of character. Spend some time in prayer over each item in the list. Ask God to help you improve your Christian character and to grow in "the meekness of wisdom."

4. Read verse 18 and Matthew 5:9. How can you be a peacemaker in your family, in your work environment, and in the Church? Take a moment to brainstorm some ways that you can attempt to be a better peacemaker. Write down your thoughts and then ask God to bless your efforts.

EXAMINING OUR HEARTS & MOTIVES

“Say you’re sorry,” she instructed. “Sorry,” I mumbled. “Now, say it like you meant it!” Begrudgingly, I mustered up just enough sincerity to pass the ear test, “I’m sorry.” This was a scenario that played out in my house all throughout my childhood. I would do something antagonistic or mean and immediately get caught and have to apologize for my words and actions. My immediate response was usually one of remorse for being caught, which is why my mom would say, “Say it like you mean it.”

Often, we find ourselves in similar situations. We say or do something that is technically the right thing, but there’s not a trace of sincerity to be found in

**Say it
like you
mean it!**

our hearts. When speaking with the scribes and Pharisees in Matthew 15:8, Jesus quotes the prophet Isaiah: “These people draw near to me with their mouth, and honor me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me.” In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus uses the contrasting phrase “You have heard that it was said . . . but I tell you . . .” to draw His audience to the intentions of the Law. It was meant to appeal to their hearts, not give them a line to tightrope next to. The Pharisees were notorious for their academic knowledge of the Law, but Christ cast a bright light on the darkness of their hearts.

The same is true for us today. The Psalmist declared in Psalm 51:16-17, “For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it; you will not be pleased with a burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.” If our motives are not pure, if our hearts are not genuine, then the actions that we take will be hollow. Spend some time today with the words of David: “Create in me a clean heart, oh God and renew a right spirit within me” (Psalm 51:10). Ask God for the strength to change your heart and to conform to the image of Christ.

¹ What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members? ² You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask.

³ You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures. ⁴ You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. ⁵ Or do you think that the Scripture speaks to no purpose: “He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us”?

⁶ But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, “God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble.” ⁷ Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. ⁸ Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

⁹ Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy to gloom. ¹⁰ Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.

¹¹ Do not speak against one another, brethren. He who speaks against a brother or 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 of it. ¹² There is only one Law-giver and Judge, the One who is able to save and to destroy; but who are you who judge your neighbor?

¹³ Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit.” ¹⁴ Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. ¹

⁵ Instead, you ought to say, “If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that.” ¹⁶ But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil. ¹⁷ Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin.

JAMES 4:1-5

1. In James 4:1, there is no doubt that the newly committed Christians of this time had conflict, and often those conflicts brought out the worst in everyone. James uses the phrase “war within” to describe “battling passions” as the driving force of their personal conflict. How does his imagery here compare to Paul’s confession in Romans 7:21-23?

2. God is the Giver of all good and perfect gifts (1:17). However, some of these new Christians were frustrated at the absence of God’s provision. What reasons are given for this in verses 2-3?

3. Considering verse 3, why would James call these Christians “adulterers”?

4. According to verse 4, how does James illustrate God’s desire for our total devotion? What statement does he make?

5. What character trait of God is repeated here in verse 5 (see Exodus 20:5 also) when describing how God feels about our friendship with the world?

JAMES 4:1-5

If there's anything that Jesus taught us both in principle and in practice, it is that the follower of God is to let his inner desires fade in the background of his heart so that the interests and mission of God can prevail in all that he says and does. Jesus left heaven. He took on the form of man, became a servant, and became obedient to death on the cross to pay the penalty for our rebellion against God (Philippians 2:5-8). He did this so we could stand justified before God, freed from our sins and sanctified in His sight.

His example compels us to respond in kind as God transforms us in the renewing of our minds (Romans 12:1-2). The book of James carries with it a common thread of desiring wisdom from above and putting our trust in God above all other things. Here, in James 4, the message is crystal clear.

***“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind...”
Rom. 12:2***

Don't allow the passions of this world or the selfish ambition of our unspiritual motives to be used in conjunction with our allegiance to God. It simply won't work. God tells us that a choice that pursues anything but God's will is in direct opposition to our spiritual development and makes us a part of the problem. The reality is that the devil has always used our selfishness to weaken our confidence in God. Think about Adam and Eve (Gen. 3). Think

about Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5). The choices that these individuals made compelled God to act. He will NOT share our devotion. The beauty of this section of scripture is that God reaffirms His desire to have us in His corner. Consider the reality of Romans 8:31: “If God is for us, who can be against us?”

A CALL TO ACTION

Identify one internal passion that you know is counterproductive to your full devotion to God. Pray for God's help in turning your heart away from this passion in exchange for God's powerful working in your life. Commit to God. Resist the devil's false promises.

JAMES 4:6-12

1. Sinning often makes us feel good in the moment, but what should sin do to us if we are followers of God? Below, list the reactions to sin James mentions we should have.

2. Many times in church services we try to put on our best face and make sure we look like we are doing very well, even if we are broken inside. Do these verses command us to put on our best face? What actions should an individual who is broken take? Why do you think God wants these?

3. We have no part in adding to the law or statutes God has provided for us. James is addressing those who are adding to God's law and speaking evil against others based off of their own stipulations. Do you ever judge or speak evil of others because they disagree with you on something outside of God's law?

JAMES 4:6-12

Are you ashamed when you sin? As humans, we can sin so often that we forget the significance of what sin really does. Sometimes, we don't even bat an eye. In 2 Samuel 11, we see David committing a variety of sins caused by his lust for Bathsheba. In fact, David even seems pleased with his sin following Joab's report that Uriah had been killed. He even commands Joab to not let the sin trouble him (11:25)!

However, in the very next chapter, we read about Nathan confronting David over his sin and the ensuing punishments. David breaks down. Certainly, David felt sorry for the wrongs he committed against many people and was saddened about the punishments he would receive, but ultimately, he realizes and admits, "I have sinned against the Lord" (2 Sam. 12:13). Why is this revelation so important? David knew about all that the Lord had done for him. He realized that God had created him, made him king, and stuck by his side. He knew from many prior experiences that his Lord is mighty and his Lord is love, but he also knew his sin had set him apart from this God. He had bit the hand that had fed him for so long and was ashamed of it. However, his shame led to his repentance, and his repentance led to his forgiveness.

By forgiving and continuing with David after this moment, God showed just how great His love for David was. Challenge yourself not to view your sin as something small but as something exceptionally terrible. Sin is something that should make you feel ashamed, wretched, and heartbroken. Why? Sin separates you from the love of God. Sin is a betrayal of God. However, God is willing to forgive you regardless.

The less significance we place on our sin, the less significance we place on our need for forgiveness. It is only when we truly understand the amount of pain we cause God when we sin that we begin to understand the amount of love He has shown us.

JAMES 4:13-17

1. Note that the man in verse 13 had prepared and planned his trip, even expecting to make a profit. What does this reveal about the businessman?
2. What had he forgotten in his life?
3. What made this type of boasting sinful?
4. Is James condemning the desire to gain wealth?
5. What is indicated by the phrase "If the Lord wills"?
6. How does one know the "right things"?
7. What responsibility comes with increasing one's knowledge of God's "right things"?
8. How do you define sins of omission?

Key words in the Greek:

eniautos (year) - A known cycle of time, translated as year.

aurion (tomorrow) - The morning air; tomorrow.

Kauchaomai (boasting) - Boasting from a particular vantage point by having the full knowledge to deal successfully with a matter.

alazoneía (arrogance) - Making empty boasts about having "cures" to rid people of all their ills.

hamartia (sin) - The brand of sin that emphasizes its self-originated (self-empowered) practice; not originated or empowered by God (i.e. not of faith).

A LIFE WELL SPENT

There are several ways by which life is measured, such as being useful and active, having adventure and excitement, and gaining wealth and fame. Once, a man whose success was off the charts in these areas confessed that his life was spent in vanity. He summed it up by saying, "Here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole of man" (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

James presents the same conclusion but in the negative: "So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin." He had just described a man who thought he had it all figured out: his travel, destination, place to sell, and time it would take make a profit. His plan was predicated on his arrogant assumption that he would have a year to "do well" though he did not know whether he would live to breathe the morning air.

Time spent well is told only by the hands of God, not by a clock on the wall. We do not know how much time we have to do what we know is right. Therefore, we should not omit doing what is right when we know it needs to be done. There is always a danger of wasting time in the pursuit of worldly pleasures of life and neglecting to do what we know to be the right things of God. It is sinful to avoid doing right, just as it is sinful to pursue what is evil.

In Matthew 25:31-46, Jesus sent away those who saw others hungry, thirsty, naked, sick, and imprisoned but did nothing to comfort. There was no wrongdoing against these needy people; they were not intentionally starved or deprived of their clothing, but when those who knew to do right chose not to, Jesus called them workers of lawlessness. James calls it sin.

Galatians 6:9 reads, "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." When we do the will of God (Matthew 12:50), we avoid sins of omission and live a well-spent life (Romans 12:1-2; John 15:1-11).

It is always right to do right, never right to do wrong, and always wrong not to do what is right.

¹ Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon you! ² Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. ³ 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. ⁴ Indeed the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out; and the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.

⁵ You have lived on the earth in pleasure and luxury; you have fattened your hearts as in a day of slaughter. ⁶ You have condemned, you have murdered the just; he does not resist you.

⁷ Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain. ⁸ You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.

⁹ Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door! ¹⁰ My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience. ¹¹ Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.

¹² But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath. But let your “Yes” be “Yes,” and your “No,” “No,” lest you fall into judgment.

¹³ Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms. ¹⁴ 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.

¹⁵ 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. ¹⁶ 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.

¹⁷ 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. ¹⁸ And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.

¹⁹ Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, ²⁰ 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.

JAMES 5:1-6

1. In James 5:1-6, how does James define riches? What one word would you choose to characterize wealth?
2. In James 5:1-6, how does James characterize a Christian's wealth that is gained through inappropriate means? What does James say this "ill-gotten" gain will do to the Christian?
3. In James 5:1-6, how does the inspired writer characterize God? Is this your understanding of God?
4. In James 5:1-6, underscore the consequences suggested by James for inappropriate attitudes toward wealth and for the mistreatment of others.
5. In James 5:1-6, which verse did you find most challenging? Most motivating?

“COME NOW, YOU RICH”

Money, or having wealth, is not wrong. Rather, it is our attitude toward and use of our physical blessings that determine their appropriateness. James, in his short epistle (James 5:1-6), challenges Christians to honestly and perpetually evaluate our hearts to guard against any ungodly attitude towards our physical blessings.

- **Attitude #1** – Work to stay focused on what is eternally important rather than on the temporary nature of earthly riches. James referred to the temporal nature of this world, affirming that life is “just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away” (Jas. 4:13-16). Then, for added emphasis, he declared that our riches are rotting, our clothes are being moth-eaten, and our gold and silver are rusting (v. 2-3). These inspired truths simply echo what Jesus plainly taught in his parable of The Rich Fool (Lk. 12:13-21) and illustrated in the story of The Rich Man and Lazarus (Lk. 16:19-31).

- **Attitude #2** – Resolve to live selflessly and sacrificially for others. Since the Garden of Eden, man’s focus has been on himself (Gen. 3:1-6). This truth is underscored by James in his epistle by highlighting man’s unjust treatment of others for one’s personal gain or advantage (v. 4-6). Rather than focusing on ourselves, Christians are encouraged to focus on and serve others (1 Cor. 10:24; Gal. 6:10; cf. Mk. 10:45 plus 2 Cor. 8:9). Paul challenged “those who are rich in this present world . . . not to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches . . . [but] to do good and be rich in good works and be generous and ready to share” (1 Tim. 6:17-19).

- **Attitude #3** – Live every day with a sobering awareness of our personal accountability. James, affirming the truth of accountability, said, “It is in the last days that you have stored up your treasure!” (v. 3-4). Personal accountability is a theme repeated throughout the Bible (2 Cor. 5:10; cf. Rom. 14:10, 12). We can choose to ignore this divine truth or decide to live life where personal accountability is not feared. The choice is one we each must make and be ready to live with (Mt. 16:26-27).

We live in a time of great affluence. It is so easy to lose focus on what is important and get distracted by the “glitter” that accompanies wealth. Instead, let’s each determine to stay focused on heaven and resolve to serve others selflessly with the manifold blessings we enjoy from God.

JAMES 5:7-12

Read James 5:7-8. Is there a reason why James is asking us to be patient?

Read James 5:9. If I don't have patience, how can I even hope to reflect that to others? How will others see me if I don't have patience?

Read James 5:11. Look up online what the name "Job" means. Will you still follow God if you are being persecuted, or even when your patience is being tested daily?

Why is Job is a good example of patience?

Read James 5:11. Why is our Lord "full of compassion and mercy" (NIV) with us? Read Luke 22:34 also.

Read James 5:11. Why does James call us to "behold" these people of verses 10 and 11?

Read James 5: 10-11. Are the prophets Job and Jesus good examples to "behold"? Why?

Read James 5:12. "Let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation." Do you know some people with this character?

Look back at James 5:7-12. What can you do to add patience to your life?

What are some benefits to being patient?

James wants us to be patient, to build our character, to have our hearts firm in God and in His promises, to be happy (James 5:10-11), and to manifest integrity (James 5:12).

List five areas of your life, situations, or interactions in which you need to be patient today:

WHEN THE WAIT IS LONG

Is it possible to wait just a little bit longer?

That is the question we asked doctors when we were making preparations to go to Lima to see our very sick mother in her final days. So, then, we had to wait a few more days, an eternity for us. We searched for plane tickets with our money ready, but at the moment of purchasing them, we discovered that our passports had just expired. We had to wait even longer. We waited, but our patience passed through a very difficult test. We didn't arrive on time. We didn't see our mother while she was still alive, but if we hadn't learned to wait in that time of waiting, how could we expect now, today, to be waiting patiently for the moment when we will be with our mother in Heaven?

No matter who we are, our patience is going to be tested. What do we have to do to avoid losing our patience?

James talks to us about Job. His patience was tested during these events:

- when he lost his material possessions (Job 1:13-17)
- when he started to have health problems (Job 2:7-8)
- when his marriage passed through a difficult test (Job 2:9-10)
- when he lost his reputation (Job 1:6-12)
- when his spirit was tested (Job 40)

If you were passing through similar problems, you would be exhausted and asking how long you would continue passing through such difficulties. Job was passing through many tests, but he never turned against God. He was patient, and God helped him.

If I start thinking about the things that Job lost, I arrive at the conclusion that even though my patience has been tested many times, I have never lost as many things as Job lost.

When I go back to reading about Job, and I read about how God gave him back everything that he had lost, I start thinking about God's promises, especially His promise for eternal life. When will I see that promise be fulfilled? When will I be in heaven with God? I don't know when. It could be soon, or maybe I need to wait a little bit longer. What we do know is that God, regardless of the time, is going to fulfill His promises, just as He did with Job. Sometimes we simply have to wait patiently a little bit longer.

JAMES 5:13-20

1. James encourages us in the first few verses of this section to engage in specific spiritual exercises for several life circumstances. In each of the following situations, what does God (through James) encourage us to do...

a. *when we are suffering hardship?*

b. *when we are happy or cheerful?*

c. *when we are sick?*

d. *when we have sinned?*

2. How does the latter part of verse 16 instill confidence in your own personal petitions to God?

3. After reading the illustration regarding Elijah in verses 17-18, jot down three things that can be learned about Elijah and prayer.

4. James concludes his epistle by talking about the reconciliation of a brother who has fallen away. What happens when a person brings that person back to God for restoration? (v.19-20)

5. How do verses 19 and 20 compare to Galatians 6:1-2?

CALL TO ACTION

Look over Madison's prayer list in our weekly bulletin. Take special note of those who are sick or dealing with physical struggles. Offer up fervent prayers for each of them that God will continue to provide for their needs. Finally, think about a person that you've not seen in some time at our Bible studies or in worship and call him or her. Express your love for the individual and encourage him or her to come back. Consider what this may do for the person's future!

GO DEEPER

When things happen in our lives and it is apparent that our circumstances are truly out of our control, it's good to know that God provides spiritual guidance on how Christians should respond. When we are enduring hardships, struggling with a long-term illness, or wrestling with the various trials of life, our best resort is to call out to God in prayer. This passage is filled with confidence in God and His care for His people: "If anyone is suffering. . . or sick let him pray." How is this comforting? Well, the God of all creation is listening to your heart and feels what you are feeling. Remember, Philippians 4:6-7 resounds with God's desire to take on our struggles: "Be anxious for nothing, but by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God." He doesn't finish there, though. He doubles down with this promise: ". . . and the peace of God, which surpasses all knowledge will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus!" We pray to God because, even in His powerful purpose, our prayers touch His heart! Remember, "Cast ALL your cares upon Him, for He cares for YOU!" (1 Peter 5:7).

It is also of special note that God wants us to have a song in our souls as we experience His blessing of joy: "if anyone is cheerful, let him sing praise." People who hum a spiritual tune as they go almost always have a little "pep in their step." This kind of joy is infectious, and God can use it for His glory.

The anointing oils of James' day were believed to have medicinal qualities and to help purify and cleanse a person who may be suffering from bacteria and infection. These "essential" oils were God-given as well, but the emphasis is on the spiritual exercise of the elders going to God in prayer on a sick person's behalf. God's spiritual leaders within the church were held in special honor, and their prayers lightened the burden of the sick while placing the care of that person in the very hands of God. The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man does indeed avail much!

Finally, our prayers and spiritual readiness are what prepare us to do the most fulfilling ministry. James reminds us that the most noble of causes is that of bringing back to God those who have fallen away. In doing so, we save a soul from spiritual death and hide a multitude of sins in the process. God still forgives! This passage reminds us of the need to share our struggles with each other and to pray for each other so that we, too, can be healed of our sinful behaviors and hold each other accountable along the way. May God perpetuate a deeper love for prayer and personal ministry in all of us!

ELIJAH, A MAN JUST LIKE US

Jesus' brother James gives a quick cameo to Elijah when sharing God's thoughts about prayer. The words are quick, the illustration strong, but if you stop long enough to take it all in, you may find yourself in disbelief when James refers to him in passing as a man "just like us." I mean, who does James think he's referring to here?! THE Elijah? Fire from heaven Elijah?! The prophet of God who humiliated the prophets of Baal? This same guy? Transfiguration Elijah? The one who stood by Moses as a representation of the Old Law? Moses' law. Elijah as Super Prophet? That Elijah. The one that people confused with Jesus? No, my friend. You can't mean whirlwind and chariot Elijah.

Perhaps James was on to something. Think about it. James was simply trying to say that God can take the average person and do amazing things with him through His almighty power. We know this is the case at times. Moses had limitations, yet God used him in unimaginable ways to lead the Israelites out of Egyptian bondage. God used a young boy's lunch to feed thousands. God took down a giant using a shepherd boy and one smooth stone just because that young man, the future King David, had enough trust in God's power, not his own. God took an army of 300 men under Gideon's leadership and wiped out 135,000 Midianites. It was God. All of these stories were God at work. Jericho? God. Red Sea? God. The salvation of mankind through one family? That was God, too.

The bottom line is this: Elijah was just a man. He was a righteous man who trusted in God fully and completely gave himself to God's power. Elijah may have set the stage for the showdown on Mount Carmel, but it was God who brought down that fire to consume the water-saturated sacrifice and the stones of the altar. As strong as Elijah was, he had his weaknesses. For a man with such courage in the face of the 450 prophets of Baal, he was especially "chicken" when it came to King Ahab's wife, Jezebel. He fled for 40 days and hid himself in a cave out of fear. Oh, and he was also known to have pity parties. He repeatedly spoke to God about how he was the only one who had remained faithful to God and not given himself to idols. Yes, he was also an exaggerator. Yes, that Elijah.

James' passing remark about Elijah ought to have an enormous impact on our own faith. There's no knock on Elijah, just a reminder that it is God who works through us for His good. Isn't Paul just verifying what James is saying when he writes, "for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure" (Phil 2:13)? God does indeed use His created beings to perform His will. That is the truth behind the story of Elijah and all the other amazing biblical examples we read about. James is right; Elijah is just like us.

REFLECTION ON JAMES

How has this study of James impacted your understanding of the Old Testament?

Write down three passages in James that uniquely impacted you. What is it about those verses that stand out to you?

If someone were to randomly ask you what the letter of James was about, how would you answer them? Use the remainder of this page to briefly outline the chapters of James. Extra space is also provided at the back of the study guide.

THE EPISTLE OF JAMES & THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

When studying Scripture, it is important to use the rest of the Bible as a guide for interpretation. There are several themes that are discussed in James that correspond with Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7). For today, read Matthew 5-7 and note every topic that overlaps with James, or use the chart below by first reading the passages in James and Matthew and then recording the common teaching.

James	Teaching	Matthew
1:2		5:10-12
1:4		5:48
1:5		7:7-11
1:17		7:11
1:20		5:22
1:22		7:24-27
2:5		5:3,5
2:10		5:19
2:13		5:7
3:12		7:16
3:18		5:9
4:2-3		7:7-8
4:4		6:24
4:9-10		5:4
4:11-12		7:1-5
4:13-14		6:34
5:12		5:33-37

Prayer:

Pick one of the themes from above to be your focus for today. Use the space below to write down a prayer that is focused on your spiritual growth regarding your chosen topic.

MEMORY VERSES

CHAPTER ONE

v.12 - "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."

v.27 - "Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world."

CHAPTER TWO

v.13 - "For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment."

v.18-19 - "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!"

CHAPTER THREE

v. 10 - "From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not be so."

vv.17-18 - "But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace."

CHAPTER FOUR

v.4 - "You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God."

v.17 - "So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin."

CHAPTER FIVE

vv.19-20 - "My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins."

NOTES

