

# Note

## James – Part 1 of 1

### Summary

The book of James expounds on the general principles of living a Perfect Christian life – living a completely integrated life in which your actions are consistent and aligned to the values and teachings that you have received from Christ.

God has revealed His steadfast love for us through the perfect sacrifice of His Son, Jesus. His believers are called to lead a life of faith that yields work that ultimately glorifies God. Notwithstanding life is hard in this sinful world, trials and sufferings can be paradoxical gifts that produce endurance and shape our character. God can work in our lives and make us become perfect and complete, like His Son.

# Transcript

## James – Part 1 of 1

This is one of the easiest epistles to understand, yet it is possibly the hardest epistle to accept. It's not a doctrinal book, which is often hard to understand, but it is a practical book, which is easy to understand, but difficult to put into practice.

So far, most of the books (the epistles) have been, largely in the first part, doctrinal; and at the end, a practical application is added to the doctrines. But this book is almost totally practical. That makes sense, because we've had so much doctrine all the way.

God knows that we are far more inclined to sit in the comfort of a classroom and be a student or a spectator, rather than to go out of the comfort of the classroom, and be a laborer, and do. The time spent in a classroom may be an hour, but life is 24/7.

So, this practical part affects every part of our life: our speech, our way of thinking, whether we're in the office, at home... And so, it's an easy book, but it takes a lifetime to figure it out.

There's almost no doctrine in this book. There's nothing about Christ's death, Christ's resurrection, Christ's ascension, the Holy Spirit coming, nothing of that sort. In fact, some people wonder whether this should even be in the Bible. Many "scholars" (the really scholarly type) will find this book totally distasteful.

Frankly, this is my favorite book in the New Testament. I like this book, because it's so practical. Basically, I'm not a scholarly type, I'm one of the ones who like to do something.

So, here we are, with this book. It is called a letter, but, in a very real sense, when you look at it, even though it begins like a letter, it doesn't seem to be a letter at all, but just a whole bunch of advice from James.

Number 1, there are no greetings to people here and there, nor any ending to this letter. So, it doesn't even look like an epistle.

Number two, there's no structure. There's just a whole bunch of musings, of thinking. It's like, old James sharing what he feels are the crystallized wisdom that God has taught him. So, it's almost impossible to structure it.

We see that James took a lot of it from Proverbs, which is the practical book in the Old Testament. This is the practical book in the New Testament. Truths are truths. Humans are still the same. Sinners are still the same.

He also took a lot from the Sermon on the Mount. So, if you will see, carefully, it's almost like a mixture of Proverbs and the Sermon on the Mount, which is also in Jesus' practical teachings.

Who is James?

Firstly, the name "James" is very strange. His real name, in Hebrew, is Jacob. Or strictly, in Hebrew, it would be pronounced "Ya'akov". But, —I don't know why— in English, "Jacob" has become "James".

If you are Chinese-speaking, you'll realize that the Chinese do not call this the Book of James. They call this the Book of "Yage" which is "Jacob".

And so, who is this man? Who is Ya'akov? Who is James?

He is the half-brother of Jesus. He is really the child of Joseph and Mary. Half-brother, because Jesus is not the son of Joseph. And, he did not believe in Jesus in the early part of his life. We can see that in John 7:5, it says, very clearly, "His brethren did not believe Him". But two of Jesus' half-brothers became epistle writers, James and Jude.

What happened to James?

After the resurrection, he became a very firm believer. He was one of the stalwarts, one of the pillars of the Church in Jerusalem.

In fact, after Peter started to move around outside of Jerusalem, (to help others, to reach out to others) James became the "President" —I would use the word "president", in today's terminology— of the Church Council in Jerusalem.

That's very evident, in Acts 15, when Apostle Paul had to go back and settle whether Gentiles needed to be circumcised, and we see James presiding

at the Council. It was James who made this wise decision that Gentiles don't need to be circumcised. Because of that wise decision, today, the Church is a universal Church, not a Jewish cult.

Please remember, almost all religions still keep to their origins. If it comes from a certain country where they all wear yellow robes there, until today, they still have to wear yellow robes, to be the “real deal”. If they wear white robes, they all now have to wear white robes. If their language was a certain language, then the “holy language” is in that language.

Christianity, on the other hand, because of James’ decision, it is a universal religion. Gentiles don't need to behave like Jews, though the religion originated in Israel. Other religions, originated from a place and still have the smell of that place very strongly. None of us have the “smell” of being Jewish, at this point of time, whether by dress, or culture, or music, or the way we eat.

In Acts 15, we will find that James knew the Scripture very well. He probably learned the Old Testament very well, probably because of Mary. Mary probably was a godly mom. We see in Acts 15:13-15, he quotes the Old Testament verbally. So, obviously, he knew the Old Testament very well.

James was called “James the Just”, church history tells us that, because he was a very just man, a very good man.

The Church in Jerusalem was heavily persecuted. And so, James had a tough life, being persecuted literally daily, by the Jewish establishment who rejected Jesus as the Messiah. He was killed, he died a martyr.

During the time, when there was a break between two Roman governors. Jerusalem was under a Roman governor, and when one governor died, they had to replace that governor. During that gap, the Jewish establishment persecuted the church. They brought James to the top of the pinnacle of the temple (the same place where Satan wanted to bring Jesus) and told him, “If you deny Jesus, we won't throw you down. If you don't deny, we will throw you down.”

This is what church history says, “James said, ‘I see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of glory.’” Of course, they threw him down from the pinnacle. But he didn't die, he was just badly wounded. They started to throw rocks at him, as he was lying on the floor. His bones were being broken. He just

lay there, and he said, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” One of the men there, felt so sorry for him, he took a big, wooden club and whacked him on the head, and he died.

Then, when the disciples decided to take his body, for burial, as they lifted up his robes (to wash him ceremonially before they buried him) they found his knees were looking like camel’s knees. In other words, there were so many calluses on his knees because he had spent literally more time on his knees than on his feet. He was a man of prayer. “Camel knees” they called him. So, that's the kind of man we are going to read - his wisdom. Let's see who he wrote to.

He wrote to the twelve tribes that were scattered. In other words, he wrote to the Jewish diaspora. At this time, most of the Jews, because of the bad conditions under the Romans, had migrated and covered most of the “known” Roman world.

So, there were more Jews outside Israel than inside. It’s the same situation today. This time, it’s not forced exile, it was —we may call it—economic exile. They moved everywhere. As you know, today, the Jews are still successful, wherever they go. They became tradesmen, carpenters, tailors, jewelers. And, of course, they were money-lenders too. Until today, the Jews are the bankers of the world. Part of their history is that, the Christian world at one time, looked down on money-lenders who made money on usury, and the Jews filled that gap. Up to today, most big bankers have Jewish backgrounds. So, they were very rich.

One problem was when they were rich, they had the problems of the rich people. Secondly, they were also assimilated into the liberal cultures they lived in, pagan cultures.

James, being concerned for them, wrote this letter, to whoever would read this letter (that was circulated around) to warn the Jews because he looked at it from a different perspective. He was in Jerusalem, seeing how liberal and how far they had gone from their roots.

Let's begin straight away, by seeing the teachings in James. There’s no real structure.

James 1 seems like an Introduction (the entire chapter). Gems of wisdom about life. Then, from chapter 2 to chapter 5, you will find twelve lessons that James wants each of these people to know.

While we see that this is a letter to the Jews... this is a very practical letter to most of us because most of the listeners that I'm talking to are also successful people.

We are very much like the Jews in the diaspora.

We have succeeded in life, we are materialistic.

We are very much influenced by the world around us.

So, this is not a Jewish matter, this is very practical.

In fact, anybody could read this letter and appreciate it, whether middle class or not

## Chapter 1 ESV

[1a] James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,

Note, he never takes advantage of the fact that he is a brother. He didn't say that, because he realizes Jesus is really the Son of God and the Son of Man, not just the Son of Joseph and Mary.

[1b] To the twelve tribes in the Dispersion: Greetings.

That's the only part that looks like a letter, the rest doesn't.

Verse 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. (We shall also use the word "endurance")

[4] And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

Number one, he begins by saying that, because he's going through trials, he counts it all joy, because it teaches him something very important in life, it's called endurance.

If anybody wants to succeed in life —whether you're a Christian or a non-Christian— you need "endurance", to finish what you begin, however difficult it is. So, count it a joy that you're going through this, because it's training you. Stamina training for life.

I want you to note another word there. It says, in verse 4, “that you may be perfect and complete” The word “perfect” here is the word “wholesome” that means you are “completed”.

You can be brilliant, you can be articulate, but if you don't have endurance, you're not a completed guy. You will never amount to anything in life.

You'll find the word “perfect” seven times. It's very interesting, the word “perfect”... Seven is the number of perfection.

Let's look at James 1: 5 - 8,

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

[6a] But let him ask in faith, with no doubting...

Secondly, if you want to succeed in life, you need wisdom.

How do you get wisdom?

Ask! Never be ashamed to ask. Ask in faith, without doubting. Because God wants all of us to be wise.

There are some things that you ask for, wondering whether God will hear you. “God, make me the most popular guy, the most handsome guy.” God may not even listen to that.

“God, make me wise.” Of course, God will hear that.

So, number 2 lesson in life, learn to ask for wisdom.

Ask in confidence, it's very available.

Look at James 1: 9 - 10,

[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.

Number three lesson: God is more equal than you think. The poor guy, he looks poor, but God has exalted him.

What do you mean “God has exalted him”?

He's got the same future as the rich guy, eternally. He's got the same Father. He's got everything, he has less in his wallet, but, actually, he's

exalted. The rich guy looks super rich, because he's loaded with money, but don't get too impressed, because that money can disappear, his health can disappear, in a second.

But the poor guy has an eternal reward, and, also the rich guy.

The real, the substantial facts are not different. It's the "show" that looks different, one seems to have more. But, the truth is, in real, solid things, both have the same. God is more equal than you think.

James 1: 12 - 14

[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 one is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire.

I want you to know the difference between being "tested" and "tempted".

God tests us, to show us our weaknesses, so that we'll work harder and get better. That's what a test is for. That's why all schools have tests. You always think you know a lot, until the test comes. So, God puts us through a test.

You think "you have a lot of faith." Then, when God puts you through a test, "Oh, you don't have faith."

You think "you have a lot of love." Then, when God puts you through a test, you realize "your love is very little."

So, God *tests* us.

The

goal of testing is for your *improvement*.

The devil tempts us, he may put the same thing there, but his goal is different, his goal is not for you to improve, but for you to fall.

Whenever you face something.....Is it a test to make you stronger? Or a temptation to make you fall? So, different motivations.

But, it tells us, very interestingly, in verse 14, "you are tempted, not by Satan, but by your own lust".

What do you mean by that?



Let's say, Satan were to tempt me with something, like a beautiful watch. A watch, that people think "makes them look like James Bond" or something like that. If he were to tempt me with a watch, it won't work. I couldn't care less what watch I wear.

Why doesn't it work on me?

That temptation cannot work, unless I have the lust in me to look rich. Then, that temptation will work.

Basically, when Satan tempts you, you didn't fall because of Satan's temptation, you fell because you have lust inside you. So, don't blame Satan, whenever you fall, you have your own problem inside.

We go on discovering these "gems of truths", I call it.

James 1: 19 - 21,

[19] Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger,

Another truth. Quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger.

Isn't that a problem for all of us? Rich people, successful people, they don't like to listen. They think they know it all. It's very hard to be rich and not feel "you know everything". When you're rich, you think "you're smart". When you're smart, "Why should I listen to anyone? I should be giving advice."

You'll find less successful people tend to be more quiet. But those who are successful just love to talk. So, just be careful.

And, successful people are very quick to anger. Because anything that doesn't work their way, they think "the person is stupid and didn't do it the right way". So, be careful.

All these are things that are very practical for us.

Let's look at James 1: 22 - 25,

[22] But be doers of the Word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

Some of you say, "No, no. I'm actually a hearer, I don't talk that much." But, it says here,

[Verse 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.

Many people say, "I'm a hearer." But, actually, they're not. They're just polite. They don't really listen, they pretend to listen. When they go away, they forgot what they heard. Just like a guy, looking in a mirror, he saw his hair was not in place. Then, after a while, he forgot to comb it because he forgot that his hair was not in place.

So, when you're a hearer, be a listener. There's a world of difference. You hear with the ear. You listen with what is between the ears, that's called your brain.

Then, finally, in James 1: 26 - 27, he says,

[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.

So, he says, here, "If a man says, 'he's religious', but he keeps talking and talking, he is not religious." There's a lot of people, who seem very religious in the world, but according to James, they are not religious. It's a very high standard.

And, number two, he tells us what is real religion. How do you know whether a guy is religious? Whether he can keep talking, and teaching you, and arguing, and telling you all the latest doctrines? Or he is a guy that spends time visiting the poor and needy? If he spends time visiting the poor and needy, then, he is religious.

From chapter 2 to chapter 5, there are twelve lessons.  
I want you to mark them, one by one.

Lesson number 1 - James 2: 1 - 13.

It tells us that we tend to favor the rich, we look up to the rich.

[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,

[3a] and if you pay attention to the one who wears the fine clothing...

In other words, giving favor to the rich. Now, I think, every church in Singapore—including my church—consciously or subconsciously, is committing this sin. We always favor the rich. You find, the poor are neglected, the poor are ignored. The rich are always welcome and brought to the nice seats.

Then, it goes on to say, in verse 5, “Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith...”

Remember, this is a good lesson. If you want your ministry to be really prosperous, focus on the poor, because they are rich in faith. One reason why churches grow very, very slowly, is because we focus on the wealthy, because your offerings grow fast, but your church grows slowly.

Then, look at James 2: 8 - 9,

[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.

When you show partiality, it's a sin in the eyes of the Lord Jesus Christ, Who said, “Love your neighbor as yourself.”

Who is your neighbor? The Samaritan? Yes. Whoever.

Lesson 1 - it's a sin to show partiality.

#1  
lesson

• **Be careful about being partial.**

Lesson two: James 2:14 - 26, this is the controversial part of James.

Some people say, “James teaches that we are saved by works.” These people do not know how to read the Bible. They don't understand, they don't even read.

James teaches, in chapter 2,

[Verse 14] What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith, but does not have works? Can that faith save him?

Can you underline the words “that faith”? The faith that he says he has, is not faith. It’s “that” type of faith. Please underline that.

[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.

So, he's saying “that” kind of faith. If a man says, “I’ve got faith!” But he doesn't do anything to help anyone, that guy is saying “he has faith,” but he doesn't.

I want you to also note, in verse 14, “if someone ”says”, “he says he has faith”. He doesn't have faith, he “says”.

[Verse 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.”

I want you to underline the words “Show me”, “I will show you”.

James is saying, “I cannot see your faith. I'm sorry, I cannot peek into your heart and see whether you really believe. You have to show me your faith. I don't have X-ray eyes, show me by your works. Then I will show you my faith, by my works.”

So, James is not saying that “we are saved by works”. James is still saying that “we are saved by faith”. Except, we cannot see your faith. We can only see the evidence of your faith, which is works. Because the real faith that we have produces works.

Also, Paul keeps saying that “we are God's workmanship, created unto good works.” (Ephesians 2:10)

We are not saved by works,

**We are saved *for* works.**

Our salvation, our true faith in Christ, produces Christlikeness. Christlikeness is doing good works.

If you ever read the Gospels, you will understand what I am saying. I'm very angry with people who say, "James teaches that we are not saved by faith, we are saved by works." They don't understand English. This is "someone says, "I have faith.""

Can "that" kind of faith save you? What kind of faith?

Faith with no works. That's not faith!

So, please understand why I'm so angry. Because, up to today, people cannot even explain this.

And then, he goes on to say, about Abraham, in verse 21...

So, I hope you understand, it's too simple.

Can you see my faith? Can I see your faith? "Oh, you have faith!" How do I know? You have to show me. But God can see!

If I'm on the cross. I'm nailed. I have no chance to do anything. God can see whether I have faith or not. God doesn't say, "Come down from the cross, let Me see your works." God can see your heart! I can't! So, James is saying, "Show me! I'm an ordinary man!"

[Verse 21] Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar?

How do you know Abraham had faith? You —I'm not talking about God— how do you know? He offered his son.

What about Rahab? How do you know Rahab had faith?

[Verse 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?

She risked her life to protect the Jewish spies.

How do you know she had faith? She risked her life.

So, what is James saying?

[Verse 26] For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.

If I see a person lying on the bed, how do I know he's alive?

He must have breath. If he's not breathing, I say, "He's dead."

You say, "That man is alive. He looks alive."

I say, "How do you know?"

"He looks alive. My friend told me, he's alive."

I say, "Are you stupid? See whether he's breathing. If there's no breath in him, he's dead."

How do you know that man has faith?

I don't know, but if I don't see works, I don't believe he has faith.

Faith without works is dead. A body, without breath is dead. This is something so simple, and yet, it seems to be a controversy with umpteen Christians, up to now.

Just read words like "he says", "that faith", "show me", "I will show you". It has nothing to do with God, and how God sees whether we have faith. If God sees we have faith, it's good enough, but I can't see that.

So, that's the second lesson. If you thought you have faith, please check your faith, whether it's real or not. Just by going to Sunday School every week, going to church every week, doesn't mean you have faith.

#2  
lesson {  • **Check your faith.**

Chapter 3, lesson number three, on the tongue.

[James 3: 1a] "Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that..."

So, it tells us "we like to talk". "Be careful of the tongue."

James 3: 4 - 5,

[4] Look at the ships also: though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs.

[5] So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things. How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire!

Watch your tongue, it can cause huge problems in life.

Many problems in life are caused by one careless, unnecessary word. People aren't happy with you, because you said something that you didn't even realize.

James 3: 7 - 8,

[7] For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind,

[8] but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.

Be careful of your tongue. What must you do?

Ask God for grace to control your tongue. That's lesson number three.

#3  
lesson



- Be careful of your tongue. Ask God for grace to control your tongue.

Lesson number four... James 3: 13 - 18,

[13] Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom.

[14] But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth.

[15a] This is not the wisdom that comes down from above...

There are two kinds of wisdom.

1) There is an "earthly wisdom" that says, "Grab! Get more!"

That kind is full of ambition and causes lots of problems.

2) And, there is a "wisdom from above" that causes great peace.

[Verse 16] For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice.

So, wisdom from this world causes you to grab, causes jealousy, etc.

[Verse 17a] But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, etc...

So, there's another kind of wisdom that gives you great peace. Wisdom that tells you, "You don't need to grab everything, just trust God. God will provide." You have peace, you sleep well every night.

There are two kinds of wisdom. In other words, there is a false wisdom (or worldly wisdom) and there is a godly wisdom. That's lesson number four.

#4  
lesson { **• There are two kinds of wisdom:  
false (or worldly) and godly.**

Lesson number five, go to chapter 4.

James 4: 1 - 10 tells us about worldliness and godliness.

[Verse 1] What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you?

[2a] You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel...

So, it tells us, there's one kind of behavior, the worldly behavior, that is "Grab! Conquer! Be number one!"

And, there's another kind of attitude in life, that gives you so much more peace.

[Verse 8] Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

Don't try to live half-worldly and half-Godly. Don't be double-minded.

You really want peace? You really want success? You want to have the full life God wants for you? Draw near to God. Move away from the worldly way of thinking, the worldly mindset.

James is writing to the Jews who had become very worldly, very materialistic. He's also writing to us, who think very much like them.

Our thinking is like the world, that's the truth.

Once a week, we go to church and we get a little bit of a knock.


The rest of the week, six days a week, we become worldly.

And then, we get a little bit of adjustment on Sunday.

Who wins? Of course, the world will win, but he says, "Draw near to God."



Fill your mind with godly things, you will find real peace in that. That's lesson number five.

#5  
lesson {  • **Fill your mind with godly things, you will find real peace in that.**

Lesson number 6 - James 4: 11 – 12,  
[11a] Do not speak evil against one another, brothers...

Don't slander. One of the ways the world moves up is to push others down. Everybody in the world wants to get up, either financially or popularity. What happens is, he slanders others. That's a faster way, they try to move up, which is to push someone down. So, be careful of that. That's lesson number six.

#6  
lesson {  • **Don't slander.**

Lesson number seven. Very common-James 4: 13 - 17-boasting.

[13] Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town, and spend a year there and trade and make a profit"—

This is how successful people talk, —"I'll open my next branch. My next business is sure to succeed. You know, I've already got the experience." We forget, that is arrogance. Because God could pull it right down. One pandemic, one COVID, and all the riches in the world can be brought to nothing. That's lesson number seven.

#7  
lesson {  • **Do not boast.**

Lesson number 8 - James 5: 1 - 6.

[1] Come now, you rich, weep and howl for the miseries that are coming upon you.

[2] Your riches have rotted and your garments are moth-eaten.

It sounds very much like the pandemic we are in now. All the rich people who “live it up”, who think that “everything is made, I’m secure.” Suddenly, the whole world collapsed. All the aeroplanes you own are worthless. All the hotels you own are worthless, totally worthless. In fact, there is a millstone around your neck now.

And, it says here, not only are you proud, but, it says here, that you live at the expense of the poor.

[Verse 4a] Behold, the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, are crying out against you...

Oftentimes, we become rich by exploiting the poor.

[Verse 5a] You have lived on the earth in luxury and in self-indulgence...

Does it sound familiar?

A lot of the Christians in our churches are like that, living really luxurious lives. Can that bring you real satisfaction?” Ask the popstars and the celebrities, stars who hang themselves, take pills, and take alcohol... “Does it ever bring real satisfaction?”

#8  
lesson

• **Riches cannot bring *real* satisfaction.**

Lesson number 9 - James 5: 7 - 11.

[7a] Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it...

Successful people lack one thing called patience. They are very impatient, unlike the farmer. The farmer knows that “to grow a crop, you just have to wait, before it comes out”. For a durian tree to grow, you have to wait 5 to 7 years. A businessman wants it very fast, and he thinks that the Lord’s coming also must come at his time, according to his “business plan”. Be patient. Learn patience, rich men. Learn patience, successful men. That's a tough lesson.

#9  
lesson

• **Be patient. Learn patience.**

Lesson number 10 - James 5: 12, just one verse.

[12a] But above all, my brothers, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or by any other oath, but let your “yes” be yes and your “no” be no...

Don't swear. For a lot of people, their language is swearing. Swearing is a mark, that you don't know how to be honest. Because, if you're an honest man, you'll say, “Yes, I'll do it.” That's good enough, people would believe you. When you're not honest, you have to say, “I swear, I will really do it.” Because, normally, your “yes” is not real, you have to “swear”. Then, people would believe you. The more you have to swear, it is simply a result of you having a dishonest reputation. So, that's lesson number ten.

#10  
lesson

• **Do not swear.**

Lesson number eleven. James 5: 13 – 18,

[13a] Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray...

What happens in wealthy people?

They always believe “they can do it”. Even when they're suffering, they figure out, “I can pull myself out of this. I'm a self-made man.” No. The first thing is, “pray”. It's not, “look to yourself”. Learn to pray.

verse 14...a controversial part

[Verse 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 one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up.

This is used by religious hucksters to sell oil. They make little bottles of oil. The oil in it is worth about five cents. And then, they put their hand over it and get it on video and they pray over the oil. Then, they sell the oil. The five cents becomes 500 times more in value, because of their hands, and some words, in the name of God. This has got nothing to do with oil. Please, look carefully. Again, please look carefully.

“Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church.” What does that mean? If you have to “call for the elders of the church”? The guy can't go to church, obviously. He can't go to where the elders are. So, the elders have to come to him. Basically, he's a bedridden man.

You might say, “Is that really so?”

“Yeah. Because, it says, ‘let them pray over him’. He's lying down.”

Normally, if a guy is well, he stands before you. “Come, let's pray.” You hold hands. You pray. It's finished. You don't pray over him.

So, he's lying on the bed and the elders are there. They have to visit this man and they pray over him. And then, it says, “anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord”. Ah, magic oil. A chance to sell magic oil. You know, profiteers always like to find an opportunity. So, is this about magic oil that will heal him? Please read on.

[14b] and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.

[15a] And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up.

So, what is the thing that works?

The oil? Or is it the prayer... that then moves God to raise him up?

Please look carefully.

Did he say “and the oil will raise him up”?

And “the oil will make the prayer effective”?

Or is it prayer... that moves the hands of God?

Then, you say, “What's the oil for?”

As elders... Please remember this. We, as elders of the church, are not just so spiritual, that when we see someone lying on the bed...

When —I'm an elder, I'm a doctor— I go there... I see someone on the bed, what do I do? Do I just say a prayer and walk away?

No, the Book of James is practical. Do something that you can.

When I go there, before I even pray [over him], I give advice. I would tell this man, “This is how you massage his leg, this is what you should do, this is the position...” I do what I can, with my wisdom, with my hands. And then, I pray [over him].

Do your best, and let God do the rest. So, the oil is not some “magic” oil.

In those days, of course, they don't have injections, they don't have all kinds of pills to take. 90% of illnesses were healed with oil, by rubbing with oil. Like, today, in tribal societies, if you're sick, what do they do? They find something to rub you with.

Basically, the elders were not to just go there, and be so spiritual, by just praying, and then, walk off. No, they did what they could. So, the elders went there, and they brought some oil, they massaged this man. He's been lying in bed, he's bedridden.

Secondly, we see that they didn't call for faith healers. They didn't bring this man, to the stadium, to be healed. They called for the elders of the church, not “magic men” from somewhere, flown in for some show. No.

So, God's means, when you're really sick, call for the elders of the church. He didn't say just “call for the elders with magic means, elders with great gifts of healing”. Just “call for the elders”.

Lesson number eleven, let me just add, with one more verse, [Verse 16a] Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed.

This is used, by some people, to say we “teach confession”. “You come and confess to the priest.” —I'm sorry, I can't even find that in this verse— It says “confess to one another”. It's not “confess to one man”. And then, that man never confesses to you. No, it's got nothing to do with confession. This has got to do with us getting right with one another.

#11 lesson { **• When you're really sick:  
call for the elders of the church  
and confess to one another.**

And then lesson number 12, the last one.

James 5: 19 - 20,

[19] My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back,

[20] 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.

What's our job?

If someone's fallen away, restore the guy. Don't say, "He should help himself. What's wrong with him?" Go, and help him to be restored.

#12  
lesson { **• If someone's fallen away,  
restore the guy.**

So, we see, twelve very practical lessons. I hope this will bless you.

I hope your Christianity is not about doctrines only, but is about doctrines that works.

We are saved for good works.

Don't tell me "you're a man of faith" if I don't see good work. Because looking smart is not a mark of Christianity. Trying to look smart is definitely not a mark.

But being humble, going out, and helping the helpless, is a clear mark of Christianity.

So, James is not a light book. It is a book ignored by most churches. But I hope you will focus on this book, because it shows you "your God works"; your Christ Who serves the poor, went out day by day, doing all these things, restoring, helping people with every means available. What a wonderful God.

What a wonderful world this would be, if we all reflected this God.

May God bless your reading of the Book of James.