

## The Epistle of James



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Presentation to Pastors' Breakfast  
with group of twelve men  
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*Contextual assumptions: Written by James, the Lord's brother and leader of the Jerusalem church, to the Jewish-Christian churches spread throughout Palestine sometime prior to A.D. 50.*

### Salutation, 1.1

A figurative use of "the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad"

#### A. Faith in Private, 1.2-25

The testing of our faith in our everyday personal life

##### 1. Growing in character, 1.2-4

Rejoice, knowing that the various testings of your faith are used by God to fill out your Christian character.

##### 2. Searching for wisdom, 1.5-11

Ask for wisdom from God in a single-minded way, and recognize it when it begins to change your perspective—with regard to eternal values.

##### 3. Battling with sin, 1.12-18

Be faithful in your devotion to God, who is good, and has chosen us for a special purpose, "a kind of firstfruits among His creatures."

##### 4. Applying the word, 1.19-25

Open your heart to the word in humility, and prove to be truly doers of it.

#### B. Faith in Public, 1.26–5.12

The testing of our faith in our everyday public life

##### Transition: Governing theme, 1.26-27

The distinction between worthless religious works and pure ones

##### 1. The church gathered, 2.1–3.18

It is all about treating people with love.

###### a. Greeting newcomers, 2.1-13

Show mercy without partiality—if anything, show a preference for the unimpressive.

###### b. Supporting the brethren, 2.14-17

Be sure to meet pressing needs.

##### Parenthesis: on faith and works, 2.18-26

Works are explained as spontaneous actions toward others out of a love for God.

###### c. Speaking and teaching with wisdom, 3.1-18

Let the community conversation be about blessing, not cursing.

##### 2. The church scattered, 4.1–5.12

It is all about patience without complaining.

###### a. Attitude: Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, 4.1-12

Avoid worldly attitudes when dealing with others.

###### b. Activities: Seeking the Lord's will, 4.13–5.6

Avoid worldly aims of seeking monetary advantage at the expense of others.

###### c. Demeanor: Fixing your hopes on the coming of the Lord, 5.7-12

Be patient—those who endure will be blessed.

### Conclusion, 5.13-20

The power of prayer