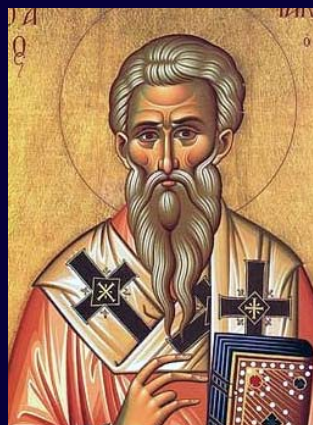


Who was James “the Just”?

- Natural son of Joseph and Mary; the legal brother of Jesus (Mathew 12:46-50, Mark 3:31-35 and Mark 6:3).
- An unbeliever before resurrection (John 7:5), Jesus appeared to James afterwards.
- With Peter and John, a prominent leader in the Jerusalem *ekklesia* (Acts 15, Paul’s epistles, etc.).
- Wrote an epistle, possibly between AD 40-50, to Jewish believers scattered throughout the world.
- Executed in AD 62 (Josephus, Eusebius, Hegesippus).



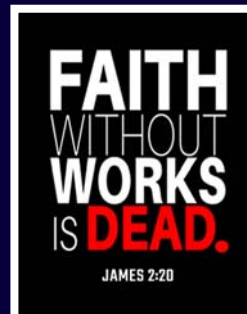
JAMES THE JUST

Focus

The epistle of **James**
focuses on
**practical Christian
ethics,**
not on doctrine.

The epistle of James

- Considered the New Testament's "proverbs" wisdom literature.
- Emphasizes that actions naturally flow from faith as the *fruits* of that faith. A living faith is evidenced by righteous living and godly behavior.
- Salvation is not the climax of a Christian walk, but the beginning!
- Closer connection with the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) than any other New Testament letter.
- More imperatives (directives) than any other New Testament book (60 in 108 verses).
- Be swift to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger.



Structure

- Chapter 1: Victorious faith
- Chapter 2: **Be swift to hear**
(manifested faith)
- Chapter 3: **Be slow to speak**
(controlling and energizing faith)
- Chapter 4: **Be slow to anger**
(submissive faith)
- Chapter 5: Patient & expectant faith



Proverbs

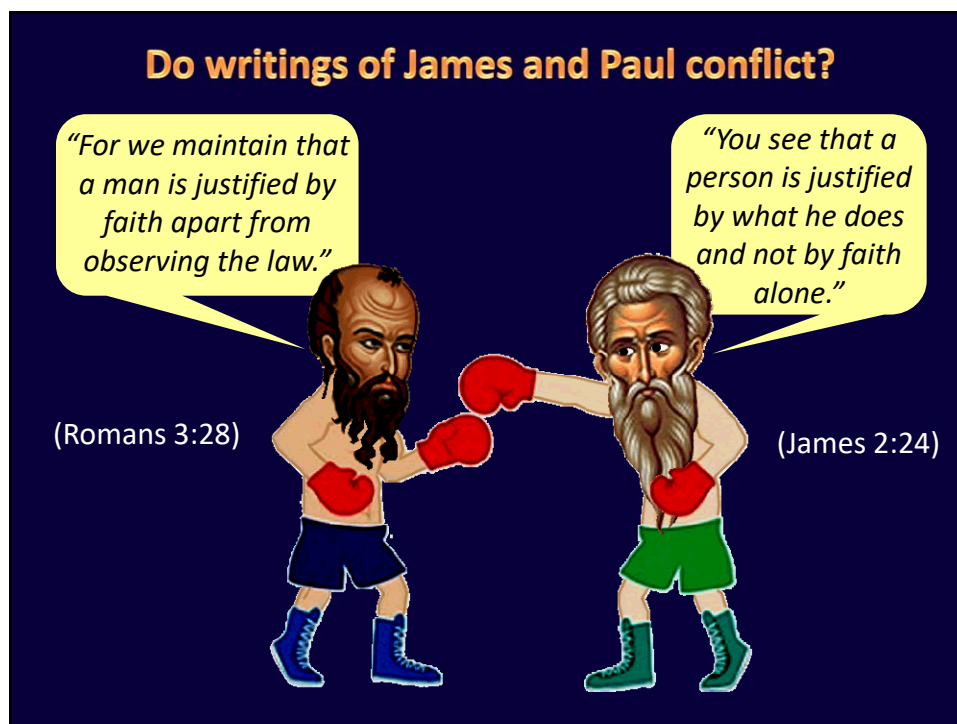
OF THE
NEW
TESTAMENT

Three digressions

- Judgment - *“Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.”* (Rev. 3:11; 2 Cor 5:10)

Condemned	Saved		
<p>“For the wages of sin is death...” (Romans 6:23a)</p> 	<p>⁸ For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: ⁹ Not of works, lest any man should boast.” (Eph. 28-9)</p>	 <p>Victor στέφανος (<i>stephanos</i>) Many; 5 specified</p>	 <p>Royalty διάδημα (<i>diadēma</i>) Jesus Christ</p>

- Christ versus “religion” / “religious”
- Salvation
 - Justification (past) ✚ *I have been saved*
 - Sanctification (present) ✚ *I am being saved*
 - Glorification (future) ✚ *I will be saved*



μη γένοιτο! May it never be!

- Both taught that real faith results in real works, but addressed different issues for different audiences:
 - Paul taught **justification** by faith to **Gentiles** confused that they would have to follow the **works of the Jewish law** in order to become a Christian. It's not about following Law.
 - James taught **converted Jews** about practical outworking of faith (i.e., **sanctification**) through moral behaviour and a life set apart for God. One's **works of faith** prove one's faith in God; it's not about following Law.
- The works of the Jewish law condemned by Paul are NOT the works of faith advocated by James.
- Both knew justification is (through God's grace) by faith alone and that a living faith will be reflected through one's works.

Faith

When stretched, it doesn't break!
When pressed, it doesn't fail!
When expressed, it doesn't explode!
When distressed, it doesn't panic!

James 1 (Victorious Faith)

Greeting to the Twelve Tribes

¹ James, a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad: Greetings.

Profiting from Trials

² My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, ³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. ⁴ But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

⁵ If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. ⁶ But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. ⁷ For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; ⁸ *he is* a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

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

⁶ But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind.

⁷ For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; ⁸ *he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.*

YOU WERE CREATED
**TO SOLVE
PROBLEMS**
NOT CAUSE THEM!

IF ANYONE LACKS
WISDOM!
YOU SHOULD ASK GOD

J A M E S 1 : 5

¹³ Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone.

¹⁴ But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. ¹⁵ Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.



No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it. (1 Corinthians 10:13)

¹⁶ Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. ¹⁷ Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. ¹⁸ Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.

Qualities Needed in Trials

¹⁹ So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; ²⁰ for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

HELP ME BE QUICK
 TO LISTEN
 SLOW TO SPEAK
 AND SLOW
 TO ANGER

Doers—Not Hearers Only

²¹ Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of 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 observing his natural face in a mirror; ²⁴ for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. ²⁵ But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues *in it*, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.

²⁶ If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless. ²⁷ Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

**“We know
nothing
of religion here:
we think only of
Christ.”**

C.S. Lewis (1946). *The Great Divorce*.

James 2 (Manifested Faith)

Beware of Personal Favouritism

¹My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, *the Lord* of glory, with partiality.

²For if there should come into your assembly a man with gold rings, in fine apparel, and there should also come in a poor man in filthy clothes, ³and you pay attention to the one wearing the fine clothes and say to him, “You sit here in a good place,” and say to the poor man, “You stand there,” or, “Sit here at my footstool,” ⁴have you not shown partiality among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?

⁵Listen, my beloved brethren: Has God not chosen the poor of this world *to be* rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him? ⁶But you have dishonoured the poor man. Do not the rich oppress you and drag you into the courts? ⁷Do they not blaspheme that noble name by which you are called?

**GOD
IS
IMPARTIAL.**

Romans 2:11; James 2:1-4

⁸ If you really fulfil *the* royal law according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbour as yourself;” you do well; ⁹ but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors. ¹⁰ For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one *point*, he is guilty of all.

¹¹ For He who said, “Do not commit adultery,” also said, “Do not murder.” Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law.

¹² So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty.

¹³ For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy.

Mercy triumphs over judgment.

**JUDGE NOT LEST
YE BE JUDGED!**

— Matthew 7:1-2; James 2:12-13 —

**WARNS AGAINST
HYPROCRISY,**

NOT JUDGEMENT

Faith Without Works Is Dead

¹⁴ What *does it* profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him?

¹⁵ If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, ¹⁶ and one of you says to them, “Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,” but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what *does it* profit?

¹⁷ Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

Faith Without Works is Dead

James 2:17, 20, 26

¹⁸ But someone will say, “You have faith, and I have works.” Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. ¹⁹ You believe that there is one God. You do well. **Even the demons believe**—and tremble! ²⁰ But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?

²¹ Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? ²² Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? ²³ And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And he was called the friend of God.

²⁴ You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.

²⁵ Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent *them* out another way?

²⁶ For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

Faith Without Works is Dead

James 2:26

James 3 (Controlling & Energizing Faith)

¹ My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment.

² For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he *is* a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body.

³ Indeed, we put bits in horses' mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body.

⁴ Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires.

⁵ Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things.

**NO MAN CAN TAME
THE TONGUE.
IT IS A RESTLESS EVIL,
FULL OF
DEADLY POISON.**

-JAMES 3:8-

See how great a forest a little fire kindles! ⁶ And the tongue *is* a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell.

⁷ For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. ⁸ But no man can tame the tongue. *It is* an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.

⁹ With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God. ¹⁰ Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing.

My brethren, these things ought not to be so. ¹¹ Does a spring send forth fresh *water* and bitter from the same opening? ¹² Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Thus no spring yields both salt water and fresh.

James' central message

Heavenly Versus Demonic Wisdom

¹³ Who *is* wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct *that* his works *are done* in the meekness of wisdom.

¹⁴ But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. ¹⁵ This wisdom does not descend from above, but *is* earthly, sensual, demonic. ¹⁶ For where envy and self-seeking *exist*, confusion and every evil thing *are* there.

¹⁷ But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.

¹⁸ Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

James 4 (Submissive Faith)

Pride Promotes Strife

¹Where do wars and fights *come* from among you? Do *they* not *come* from your *desires* for pleasure that war in your members?

²You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war.

Yet you do not have because you do not ask.

³You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend *it* on your pleasures.

⁴Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. ⁵Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, “The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously”?

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⁶ But He gives more grace. Therefore He says:

“God resists the proud,
But gives grace to the humble.”

Humility Cures Worldliness

⁷ Therefore submit 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 Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and *your* joy to gloom.

¹⁰ Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.

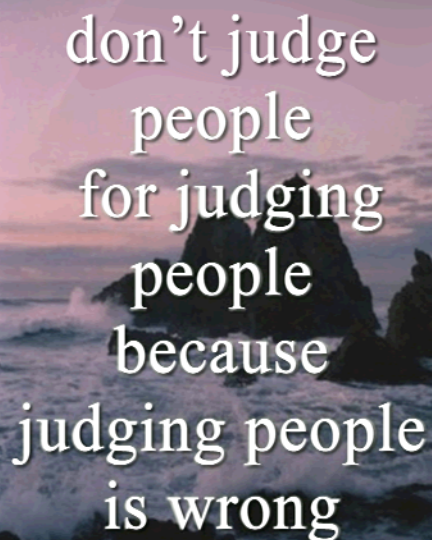
Do Not Judge a Brother

¹¹ Do not speak evil of one another, brethren. He who speaks evil of a brother and judges his brother, speaks evil of the law and judges the law.

But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge.

¹² There is one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy.

Who are you to judge another?



don't judge
people
for judging
people
because
judging people
is wrong

Do Not Boast About Tomorrow

¹³ Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit"; ¹⁴ whereas you do not know what *will happen* tomorrow.

For what *is* your life? It is even a vapour that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.

[Ecclesiastes: "All is vanity; there is nothing new under the sun."]

¹⁵ Instead you *ought* to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that." ¹⁶ But now you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil.

¹⁷ Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do *it*, to him it is sin.

James 5 (Patient and Expectant Faith)

Rich Oppressors Will Be Judged

¹Come now, *you* rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon *you!* ²Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. ³Your 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. ⁴Indeed the wages of the labourers 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*. [NB: σαβαώθ (צְבָאוֹת) = *armies of Israel*]

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

Be Patient and Persevering

⁷Therefore 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.

⁸You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.

⁹Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door!

¹⁰My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience. ¹¹Indeed 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.

Let your 'Yes' mean 'Yes,' and
your 'No' mean 'No.' Anything
more is from the evil one.

Matthew 5:37

Meeting Specific Needs

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.

Bring Back the Erring One

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.

Above all,
LOVE 1 Peter 4:8
 each other deeply,
because love covers over
a multitude of sins.

Big ideas in the epistle of James

Receive trials with joy because they can produce maturity in the believer.



God will answer the prayers of the faithful.



False wisdom produces envy and selfish ambition, but genuine wisdom results in moral conduct.

Those with genuine faith will bear the fruit of the faith in their lives.



Faith that is not rooted in trust in God or fails to result in a transformed life is no faith at all.



12 Kingdom Teachings about Life

James 2:1-13	Favouritism versus love (Matthew 5:46-48)
James 2:11-26	Genuine faith (Matthew 7:21-27)
James 3:1-12	The tongue (Matthew 6:43-45)
James 3:13-18	True versus false wisdom (Matthew 5:3-11)
James 4:1-10	A divided heart (Matthew 6:24)
James 4:11-12	Condemning others (Matthew 12:36-37)
James 4:13-17	The arrogance of wealth (Matthew 6:28-34)
James 5:1-6	The danger of wealth (Matthew 6:19-21)
James 5:7-11	Patience and endurance (Matthew 24:13)
James 5:12	Let your "yes" mean "yes" (Matthew 5:37)
James 5:13-18	Faith-filled prayer (Matthew 21:21-22)
James 5:19-20	Restoring others (Matthew 16:15)

