

Seeing Is Believing

Studies in James

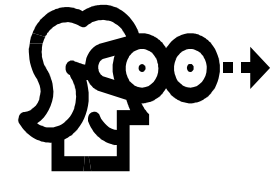


When It's All Said and Done

Introduction to James I

As the saying goes, "when it's all said and done, there's a lot more said than done". This describes the way life operates in general, but especially the way many Christians live. It's much easier to talk a good game than it is to actually do what one says. The study of the book of James begins this week and the overall thrust of this letter is that we must see faith lived out if it is to be believed as genuine. Seeing is believing when it comes to assessing faith—it must make its way out into the light of day to be regarded as real. James, who was the half-brother of Jesus and the leader of the church at Jerusalem, began his letter to Jewish Christians very aggressively, confronting them with three of the big issues Christians face daily. He

first talked with them about overcoming problems. They had to view these trials as friends, rather than intruders, because the endurance of them offered the opportunity to experience the full life that God has for mature believers. To do this they had access to God's wisdom, which had to be received by faith and applied without doubts about its effectiveness. Furthermore, when they encountered adversity, like poverty, they needed to glory in the effect that total dependence on God offered. They would be approved by Him and rewarded with the crown of life when they persevered to the end. James then addressed the issue of personal sin. Temptation had to be understood and overcome; anger had to be abandoned as a way to "do life",



Genuine faith will be seen by all that we say and do.

and all personal sin needed to be put away. Finally, James exhorted them to overcome religious pretense. Rather than merely hearing the Word, they had to do the Word of God to be genuine and effective in their service to Him. As examples of this, James told them to control their tongues, minister to orphans and widows, and to remain pure in relation to worldly things. If they did this there would be a lot more done than usual "when it was all said than done".

The 5 Purposes of the Purpose Driven Life

- **Worship**—You were planned for God's pleasure
- **Fellowship**—You were formed for God's family
- **Discipleship**—You were created to become like Christ
- **Ministry**—You were shaped for serving God
- **Evangelism**—You were made for a mission

Daily Study Questions for James I

(For answers to questions attend an ABF or go to www.celebrationnet.com/resources/leader resources)

1. Looking at James 1:1 who was this letter written to? Who was this "James" who wrote the letter (Acts 12:17, 15:13, Gal 1:19, 2:9)?	
2. Read 1:2-4. How should we feel about problems (v2), and why (v3)? What should we then do when we encounter problems (v4)?	
3. From 1:5-8 how do we obtain wisdom to go through problems (v5). What should be our attitude when we ask (v5-6) and what will result if we distrust the wisdom He gives (v7-8)?	

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James I Daily Study Questions (cont)

4. Using 1:9-11 how should the poor feel about being poor and why (v9), and how should the rich feel when they become poor and why (v10-11)? Apply to your life.

5. In 1:12 who is promised God's blessing (v12a, b), and what is this blessing (v12b)? When does he receive it? What does this mean?

6. Read 1:13-15. Where does temptation originate—with God or man (v14)? Explain the progression of sin in verses 14-15.

7. Looking at 1:16-18 what only comes from God (v17)? How is God described (v17b) and what has He done for us (v18)? How does this guarantee that God will only give us good gifts?

8. From 1:19-21 how should we deal with anger (v19) and why (v20), and how should we deal with sin in general (v21a)? How do we do this (v21b)?

9. According to 1:22-25 what danger must we avoid (v22), and what is this like (v23-24)? What should we do (v25) and why (v25)?

10. In 1:26-27 what 3 actions distinguish "pure" religion (v26, 27)? Why do you think these are so important to God?

11. Sum up what James 1 says about overcoming problems (1-12), personal sin (13-21) and pretense in religion (22-27). Identify any changes you need to make in these areas.

Scripture to Remember

"But prove yourselves to be doers of the Word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves."

James 1:22 (NAS)

Celebration Fellowship

Help—Hope—Healing

We're on the web

www.thehospitalchurch.com

Life Group Questions—Life—Taking Responsibility

(Using questions based on today's message, Life Groups meet in homes to build supportive relationships with others at Celebration Fellowship that enable us to grow in Christ.)

1. What pops into your mind when someone says the word "responsibility"? How would you define it?
2. Which of the enemies of responsibility—the rights, the victim or the entitlement mentality—do you struggle with most often? Why do you think you do?
3. Read Rom 14:12. How does this show us that God expects us to be responsible? Why do you think God built that into man's nature?
4. Let someone summarize the "pile principle". How does this illustrate the impact that taking or not taking personal responsibility has on those around us?
5. Each one share which of the 4 areas of responsibility—your money, mouth, ministry, or mistakes—your group can help you be accountable for right now.
6. Bring up anything else important to you from the message today if you have time.