

Temptations—James 1

I. Additional Scriptures/Notes...

Introduction:

- 1) The Book of James is a book with which every Christian ought to become thoroughly familiar.
- 2) It is a short book which can be read slowly and with understanding in less than 15 minutes.
- 3) It is a book which deals in a practical way with the day-to-day living of the Christian life.
- 4) It has been called “The Gospel of Common Sense.”
- 5) James applies the principles of God’s Word to the everyday life of the man who wishes to please God.
- 6) If we want to be with God in eternity, we must walk with God on earth—this book helps us to do so.

1. 1:1... James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting...

1. Various ideas have developed over the years as to who this James is who wrote the Book of James.
2. The name JAMES is found 42 times in the New Testament. These can be divided up among four men:
 - 1) James the Son of Zebedee is mentioned more times than any other James.
 - 1- He was one of the 12 Apostles and was the first apostle to be martyred (Acts 12:2).
 - 2- There is no evidence that by the time of his death he had attained any special position of leadership which would lead to the writing of this epistle.
 - 3- Most people discount the possibility him being the author.
 - 2) James the Father of Judas (Luke 6:16; Acts 1:13, ASV). So little is known of this James that few would credit the writing of this letter to him.
 - 3) James the Son of Alphaeus (Mt 10:3; Mk 3:18; Luke 6:15; Acts 1:13) was also one of the 12 apostles.
 - 1- He was also the one known as “James the Less” (Mk 15:40).
 - 2- There is very little support for him as the writer.
 - 4) James the Lord’s Brother.
 - 1- This is the most widely held view today.
 - 2- Because he is listed first in the lists of Jesus’ brothers (Mt 13:55; Mk 6:3), it is likely that he was the eldest of Jesus’ four brothers.
 - 3- It can be seen from John 7:2-8 that James did not accept Jesus as the Son of God during His earthly ministry.
 - 4- However, after Jesus appeared to James following His resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:7), it is obvious that James then became a devoted disciple and was with the Apostles as they waited the coming of the Comforter (Acts 1:13-14).

- 5- James played a very prominent role in the development of the first century church.
 - 6- He was referred to by Paul as one of the PILLARS of the Jerusalem church.
 - 7- When Paul brought the collection for the Judean Christians, he reported to James concerning the success of his efforts (Acts 21:17-26).
 - 8- It was James who made one of the statements during the meeting in Jerusalem to discuss the relationship of the Gentiles to the Law (Acts 15:12-29).
 - 9- It seems that James spent most of his time in Jerusalem working among Jewish Christians.
 - 10- From the writings of Hegesippus we learn that James spent much time in prayer—his knees were hard as camel's.
3. In this letter, James reveals himself as a vigorous personality.
 4. In the 108 verses of the letter we find 60 imperatives or commands.
 5. The writer is obviously an admirer of nature—he uses many illustrations from nature.
 6. James has been compared to the OT prophet Amos because of the way he speaks out against social injustice (esp., 5:4-6).
 7. The date of writing is not easy to pinpoint—most say either between A.D. 40 and 50 or else sometime in A.D. 62.
 8. James does not specifically mention the place from which he writes, but clues indicate it was likely from Palestine...
 - 1) Early and latter rain (5:7).
 - 2) Springs producing sweet water and salt water (3:11).
 - 3) Products of the land—wine, figs, and oil (3:12).
 - 4) The nearby sea (1:6; 3:4).
 - 5) The hot winds (1:11).
 9. The letter is addressed to: **the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad...**
 - 1) The easiest interpretation of that phrase is that James intended to be writing to Christians of a Jewish background who had scattered away from Jerusalem.
 - 2) Of course, the message from the Holy Spirit would be a message valuable to all men everywhere, but James may have especially sought to encourage his Jewish brethren with this epistle.
 10. As far as PURPOSE of Writing is concerned, it seems that James, through his contact with Jewish Christians visiting Jerusalem, became aware of a need to strengthen and correct his Jewish brethren.
 - 1) They were facing many trials and temptations, and were evidently allowing these trials to affect their service to God, to His Son, and to His church.
 - 2) James loved these brethren and wanted them to mature and be strong and faithful servants of the Lord.
 - 1- Perfect faith is born out of trials (1:1-18).
 - 2- How the Word enters the heart (1:19-27).
 - 3- Condemns Respect of Persons (2:1-13).
 - 4- Faith Must be Accompanied by Works (2:14-26).

- 5- Evidence of Maturity Can Be Shown by Controlling the Tongue (3:1-12).
- 6- False Wisdom Brings Confusion; True Wisdom Brings Peaceableness (3:13-28).
- 7- Temporal-mindedness, Pride, and Quarrelsomeness Condemned (4:1-12).
- 8- Leaving God out of Your Plans is Wrong (4:13-17).
- 9- Encouraging Words for the Oppressed (5:1-11).
- 10- The Value of Prayer and Concern for Erring Brethren (5:12-20)

2. **1:2-4... Consider it all joy...** “Just as with physical muscles, spiritual growth comes through various types of exercise: study, prayers, self-examination, and reaching out to others in a sharing of the gospel. But these verses penned by James teach us that another area of exercise is necessary for a Christian to develop to maturity. Patience is the key. James says that when the seeds of patience have germinated and grown to the point of bearing fruit, the fruit is named maturity and completeness, so the Christian from that point lacks nothing. Therefore, James encourages us to LET patience have its perfect work. LET indicates a submissiveness, a willingness to be molded by patience. But backing up a little, what produces patience? The TESTING of our faith. No one knows his own strength until he has faced situations which challenge his faith. What form does the challenge take? Various trials (v. 2). None of us volunteer to undergo trials. In fact, we pray to be spared hardship of any kind. We prefer no to be spiritually stressed or hurting. Yet, James' wording is, COUNT IT ALL JOY WHEN YOU FALL INTO VARIOUS TRIALS. The person of the world views negative experiences as disastrous blows. The Christian feels the pain of the blows, certainly, but his perspective—even in the midst of pain—is to look for the areas of growth and strength which those hurts will bring to his life. These words are not just flourishes in semantics. The two perspectives in viewing trials, as experienced by the Christian and the non-Christian, are so real that they are in actuality the heads of two divergent roads. The point of origin is TRIAL, but the road of the unbeliever passes through disheartenment to end in frustration and spiritual death, while the road the Christian follows, learning from hardship metered by God, wends its way through patience to end at the destination of maturity and completeness. God help us to have strength always to look to the end of the road in thankfulness” [*World Evangelism*, Oct-Dec/1990, p. 6].

II. Chronology.

BIBLE PERIOD: Period of the Church.

“Determining the date of the writing of this epistle is difficult, as is the case with most of the other books of the Bible. We may rest assured that were it vitally important for us to know the precise occasion of the writing, God would have seen to it that we have access to that information. But as it stands, the date is not a crucial element for our understanding. Consequently, we must not place any real stock in attempts to determine the timing of the letter; nor should we feel deprived in that we lack certain knowledge on this matter. ... Thus, it seems safe to guess that James was written between A.D. 45 and 49. Most students of the Bible would place the date at A.D. 48 or 49. If that theory be correct, then the epistle of James may have been the first New Testament book written” [Garrell Forehand, “James—An Introduction,” in *Studies in James*, edited by Dub McClish, pp. 22-23].

III. Summary.

This chapter, is filled with practical instruction on living the Christian life.

IV. Outline.

1. The need for trials (James 1:1-12).
2. The source of temptations (13-17).
3. The work of the word (18-25).
4. Religion: Vain/True (26-27).

V. Questions.**True or False**

01. _____ The DOUBLE MINDED MAN is commended by James as being a generous Christian.
02. _____ James teaches that we should be slow to speak.
03. _____ God is the Source of every good gift.
04. _____ The one who wavers will be granted wisdom.
05. _____ God does not tempt man.

Multiple Choice (Select the BEST Answer)

06. _____ Specifically, to whom was the Book of James written: (a) Twelve tribes scattered abroad; (b) Gentiles; (c) Romans.
07. _____ Whenever sin is finished it brings forth: (a) pleasure; (b) death; (c) corruption.
08. _____ James compares the rich man and his ways with: (a) a dark pool; (b) a bright light; (c) a withering plant.
09. _____ The hearer who is not a doer is like a: (a) fool; (b) forgetter; (c) fault-finder.
10. _____ Not to bridle the tongue causes one's religion to be: (a) known; (b) wish-washy; (c) vain.

Fill in the Blanks

11. The wrath of man does NOT work the _____ of _____.
12. James refers to himself in this letter as, "a _____ of God and of the _____ Jesus Christ..."
13. We are told to lay this apart: "...all _____ and _____ of naughtiness..."
14. "_____ is the man that _____ temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the _____ of _____."
15. "But be ye _____ of the word, and not _____ only, deceiving your own selves."

Each Question is worth 7 Points

My Score is: _____

Answers will be found on next week's handout

ANSWERS to Acts 28 Questions... [(1) True, Acts 28:30; (2) False, Acts 28:2; (3) False, Acts 28:21; (4) False, Acts 28:11; (5) True, Acts 28:15; (6) b, Acts 28:2; (7) b, Acts 28:28; (8) c, Acts 28:10; (9) a, Acts 28:13-14; (10) c, Acts 28:14; (11) murderer, god, Acts 28:4, 6; (12) With, all, confidence, Acts 28:31; (13) Fetched, a, compass, Acts 28:13; (14) hope, Israel, Acts 28:20; (15) centurion, captain, guard, dwell, soldier, kept, Acts 28:16.]

VI. Lessons & Applications.

1. **James points out that the recipients of this letter, are having their faith tested—**
 - 01) It is tested by their attitude toward trials (1:2, 12-14).
 - 02) It is tested by their attitude toward prayer (1:5-9; 4:3; 5:15-20).
 - 03) It is tested by their attitude toward God (1:13-17).

- 04) It is tested by their attitude toward the word (1:19-27).
- 05) It is tested by their conduct in social relationships or practices (2:1-13).
- 06) It is tested by their good works (2:14-16).
- 07) It is tested by self-control (3:1-18).
- 08) It is tested by their reaction to the world (4:1-5, 12).
- 09) It is tested by their attitude toward the rich (5:1-7).
- 10) It is tested by their patience (5:8-12).
2. **...receive with meekness the implanted word** (Js 1:21). "Implanted Error," by David Lemmons. Find this article online at:
<http://www.thebible.net/modules.php?name=Read&itemid=125&cat=11>
3. **...be ye doers of the word and not hearers only** (Js 1:22). HOW TO BE A PROFITABLE LISTENER, by J.J. Turner. How much do you remember of what you read in the newspaper two days ago? Do you remember 90 %, 75%, 50%, 25%? How much do you remember of a TV program you saw two days ago? How much do you remember from the Bible class you were in two weeks ago? How about from a sermon you heard a week ago? If you are an average attender in the church, you probably don't remember very much. Most of us are auditors. James commanded, "Be ye doers of the word and not hearers only" (James 1:22). This demands recall. You have to work on being a good listener; and especially on learning from your listening. Every teaching/preaching situation you are exposed to requires attentive work for maximum benefits. Here are some positive suggestions on how to get more out of sermons, classes, lectures, seminars, workshops, etc.
- FIRST, be present. I mean present with mental alertness and an attitude that is willing to learn. Some people are present in body but miles away in their minds.
- SECOND, come prepared to learn. Bring your Bible, pen, paper, notebook, and other materials that will assist you in taking good notes.
- THIRD, be interested. I know it's the responsibility of the speaker to create interest, but it's also your responsibility to develop an interest in the subject. Any biblical subject should be of interest to you.
- FOURTH, concentrate on what is being said. Ask yourself: What is he saying? What does it mean to me? What difference does it make? Don't let your mind drift (Col 3:1-3).
- FIFTH, try to associate what you are hearing with something you know, or to a need or concern in your life.
- SIXTH, make a specific application during the presentation. "Here is how I will/can use this point" is a must for maximum results.
- SEVENTH, during the same day, take time to review what you learned in the session. Add more notes from your recall of additional facts learned in the class.
- EIGHTH, pray for wisdom. Ask God to help you translate the message into your daily lifestyle and actions. Be a positive doer of the word.
- NINTH, after three days evaluate your notes. Give yourself a personal testing over the material. Take time to check on how your application has been going.
- TENTH, share what you have learned with others. You learn most what you have prepared to teach others. Because of your excitement about what you are learning, others will want to come and learn, too.
- These ten suggestions provide a positive framework for maximizing the benefits from listening to God's word being taught. The only place success is found before work is in the dictionary; in all other places work comes before success.
4. **...beholding his natural face in a glass** (James 1:23).

THE MIRROR OF GOD by G.K. Wallace--The word of God is a mirror (James 1:23).

If we wish to see ourselves as God sees us, we must look into His word. A day seldom passes that we do not look into a mirror to see what we look like. As we look, we often see deformities--spots and wrinkles we would like to remove.

Cosmetics will help the physical form, but no amount of "makeup" can cleanse the soul. When we look into the word of God, we see ourselves as God will see us. It is no wonder that we read the Bible so little that we forget what manner of men we are, rule out the necessity of repentance, and thus deceive our souls.

We need to "look into the perfect law of liberty" and continue therein and not be a "forgetful hearer but a doer that works; this man shall be blessed in his deed" (James 1:25).

A little boy took the Bible off of the table in his home and said, "Daddy, is this God's book?"

"Yes," replied the father. "That is God's book."

The boy said, "Daddy, I think we better send it back to God, because we never read it."

The Bible is not just a book in which to keep the family record and old letters. It is designed to make us wise unto salvation (2 Tim 3:15). By the word of God, we are sanctified (Jn 17:17). It is God's begetting power (1 Pet 1:23). It is "a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our pathway" (Ps 119:105). Have we looked into God's mirror today? If not, why not?

5. ...the perfect law of liberty (James 1:21-25). The word of God is PERFECT.

1. In this passage are four references to God's revealed word...
 - 1) "engrafted word."
 - 2) "doer of the word"
 - 3) "hearer of the word"
 - 4) "perfect law of liberty"
2. This implanted or engrafted word is able to save the souls of men when the soil is suitable for the seed (Lk 8:9-15).
3. However, in order to be saved we must continue to look into the perfect law of liberty.
4. This perfect law of liberty is the gospel of Christ (Jas 2:8 + Mt 7:12).
5. The Greek word for PERFECT in this passage means "fully accomplished or developed."
6. If the gospel is complete and able to save the souls of men, what need is there for any further revelation?
7. We have no need for a new weapon to replace the sword of the Spirit, our need is to use that sword in the saving of lost souls and defending the faith.

VII. Seek-A-Word Puzzle.

W S X C F R O M A B O V E C D E R F V B
 B N G T Y H N J U I M K I O P L K I U J
 N H O Y T G B V F R E D C V X S W Q A Z
 C D E V T G F I R S T F R U I T S G B N
 C V F R A B G T Y F Y H N M J U E Q A Z
 C O V F R R T G I B G T Y H N J R U I K
 B G M Q A Z I G C D E R F V B G U B G T
 H Y U E B G T A Q A Z X S W E D T C D E
 V F R N T C V B B B G T Y H N R A Q A Z
 X S W C E H H D E L R F V B G T E Y H W
 N O U F Y H T G U B E H U E D Q R A O X
 D C R V B Z U C O V B N R E W Q C D F A
 Z E X S W E R D C O V F E R T G A B T N
 P N H Y U J T R F C D V F S V H B G U T
 B G T Y H N F Q A Z X G S W S C D E R V
 B G T Y H N O A Z M N B I V C X Z A N Q
 W S X C D E D R F V B G T F Y H N M I Q
 A Z X S W E R R F V B G T Y T N H Y N N
 Z B E G A T O X T H E F A T H E R Z G C
 C D E R F V W B G T Y H N M J U I D R L

[The highlighted words can be found above. They may be backwards, diagonal, upside down, etc. See if you can find them all. The more you use the words of the Bible, the greater blessed you will be! You might be surprised at how much this little exercise will help you retain important truths. THANK YOU for the good effort you are putting forth in Bible study. DRL]

James 1:17-18...¹⁷Every GOOD GIFT and every PERFECT GIFT is FROM ABOVE, and COMETH DOWN from THE FATHER of lights, with whom is NO VARIABleness, neither SHADOW OF TURNING.¹⁸Of his own will BEGAT he us with the WORD OF TRUTH, that we should be a kind of FIRSTFRUITS of his CREATURES.