

The Epistle of James

Introduction to the Book of James

- Questions

1. What can be learned from the following verse about the author of this book: 1:1?

2. What can be learned from the following verses about the recipients of this book?

Their nationality and location (1:1; in 2:2 the word “synagogue” is used in the Greek):

Their relationship to Christ (1:2, 16, 19; 2:1, 5, 14; 3:1, 10, 12; 4:11; 5:7, 9, 10, 12, 19):

3. What can be learned from the following verses about the problems facing the readers?

External problems (1:2, 12):

Internal problems (1:22; 2:1-12; 2:14; 3:10; 3:14; 4:1-4; 4:8; 5:1-6; 5:9; 5:13-16, 19):

4. What can be learned from the following verses about the author’s style of writing?

His negative and positive admonitions (1:15-16; 1:19-20; 2:4-5; 3:9-10):

His use of questions (2:5; 2:14-15, 20-25; 3:11-13; 4:4-5, 14; 5:13):

His use of figures of speech (1:15, 23; 2:5; 3:3-12, 14, 18; 4:1-4, 14; 5:3):

His use of the OT (2:8-11, 21- 25; 4:5-6; 5:4, 11, 17):

5. What can be learned from the following verses about the author's main purpose in writing (1:22-25; 2:12; 2:14-26; 3:13; 4:11; 4:17; 5:19-20)?

- Applications for Today

1. Brethren need reminders to live right no matter where they may be scattered throughout the world (1:1; 1 Pet. 1:1).
2. Brethren need to live faithfully so that they can remain saved (1:21; 2:14; 4:12; 5:15, 20; Heb. 10:19; Lk. 7:50).
3. Christians need to be hearers and doers of God's word (1:22-25; Mt. 7:24-27; 1 Jn. 3:17-18).
4. Christians are under the Law of Christ, "the perfect law, the law of liberty" (1:25; 2:12; 1 Cor. 9:21; Gal. 6:2).
5. Faith that saves is a faith that is "perfect" (complete), alive, active, working, productive (2:14-26; 3:13; Gal. 5:6; 1 Thess. 1:3; 2 Thess. 1:11).
6. Being a Christian is not something limited to what you do in the church building a few times a week. Being a Christian is a practical, day-to-day way of life that involves faithful living each day: daily trials (1:2, 12), daily temptations (1:14-16), daily doing (1:22-25), daily religion (1:26-27), daily benevolence (1:27; 2:15-16), daily tongue control (1:26; 3:1-12), daily drawing near to God (4:8), daily patience (5:7), daily prayer (1:5; 5:13-18), etc.
7. The book of James can be summarized using James 1:27: a Christian's duty to God ("pure religion"); a Christian's duty to others ("visit"); and, a Christian's duty to self ("keep oneself unspotted").