

James

(1) Introduction

Christian Maturity

James 1:1-4

James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes scattered among the nations:

Greetings.

2 Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, 3 because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. 4 Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. NIV

The background of James...

What's the story of James, Jesus' (half) brother? Mt.13:55-56; Jn.7:5; Acts 1:14,12:17; Gal.2:9

Initially an unbeliever but later saved and became a 'pillar' in the early church/Jerusalem

What do you learn about James' belief in Christ from James 1:1a? see Acts 2:36

He sees Jesus, not as his older brother, but as God, the Lord Jesus Christ! Amazing!

When do we believe this book was written? (Note: Likely the first NT book!)

Probably AD44-49. Before Paul's ministry blossomed. Before Jerusalem Council, AD49.

The character of the book...

If this book was written *prior* to Paul's great epistles, did James know of *faith*? Acts.3:16, etc.

Of course! Salvation has always been by faith. James knew it and taught it.

What is the writing *style* of James? What is this book patterned after? Prov.10; see IITim.2:15

It's a wisdom style book, like Proverbs. A string of pearls. Individual unlinked topics.

As such, is James, like Proverbs, *mainly* a book of *doctrine*? see IITim.3:16

Not so much. It's a book about how to live. Extremely practical. Tests of real salvation.

To whom is the book addressed? James 1:1 What insight does this give?

To the 12 tribes (aka, Jews), scattered among the gentiles. Early in church, before Paul.

Why would James be 'limiting' this letter to the Jews? Why no reference to gentiles? Acts 9:15

This letter was written when the church was virtually all Jews! No Gospel to gentiles, yet.

What was (is) true in general about the Jews? Jn.8:31-39

They have "faith", but it's in their lineage. They're Abraham's descendants.

But what does Jesus emphasize over and over to these Jews? Jn.8:39

IF you are Abraham's children, do the deeds of Abraham. Live a life of faith.

How does James capture that exact same message? James 2:14-18

If your faith is genuine, it will be accompanied by good works! Test yourself on this!

What is the general topic, focus, of the book of James? Eph.4:11-13; Heb.5:11-13

It's about growing up, maturity, in Christ. Getting of the milk and onto the meat!