

James: Lesson 1

Learning to Walk in Genuine Faith

James 1:1-8

Genuine Faith: Knows, Considers, and Asks Without Doubting

This first lesson we will begin by looking at who wrote the book of James and to whom he is writing to.

Next, we will concentrate on our own salvation before we begin to dig deep into this book.

Why will we look at ourselves first before moving into the truths of this book?

I am glad you asked! James is direct with the commands of God. He gives commands one right after another almost without taking a breath. God requires faith and obedience from His beloved.

Are you ready to count the cost of being a disciple of Christ?
Even though James gets straight to the point in this letter, we will see he has a love for his brothers and sisters in Christ.

He refers to them/us often as beloved brethren. Remember these words from
1 John 5:3-4:

“For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome. For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.” (NASB)

1. Who wrote the book of James according to James 1:1?
2. How does James describe himself according to this same verse?
3. To whom was the book of James written?
4. Before we move into studying the rest of James, I believe we need to set up the foundation on which to study out the rest of the book. James refers to himself as a bondservant of God and of Christ Jesus. Look up the definition of bondservant in your word study tools and record its meaning.

Servant / Bond-servant: Strong's reference #1401-

5. Is the attitude of your heart the same as James? Look up the following scripture verses and record how these men of God are described.

Moses : Deuteronomy 34:5, Psalm 105:26-

Joshua : Joshua 24:29-

David : 2 Samuel 3:18, Psalm 78:70-

Paul : Romans 1:1, Philippians 1:1, Titus 1:1

Jude : Jude 1:1-

Prophets : Amos 3:7, Jeremiah 7:25-

6. Look at the following verses that give us an idea of what a Christian is.

Acts 2:18-

Ephesians 6:6-

Colossians 4:2-

2 Timothy 2:24-

7. Question number 6 is only a few verses that touch on the idea of the servanthood of a Christian. The book of James is paragraph after paragraph, verse after verse, of the attitudes and characteristics that accompany the bondservant of Christ Jesus. The majority of us Christians have no problem saying, "I am a Christian!" But, can we say with full conviction, "I am a bondservant of Christ Jesus?" This book will challenge and call us to action! Before we move on, let's read what Luke wrote in Luke 14:25-33.

Record what Jesus is saying concerning us being His followers.

Very sobering convicting words! Are you ready to move into the study of this book? Have you counted the cost of following hard after Christ?

8. Before we dissect James 1:2-4, I want us to pull out two words that James is drawing our attention to. With these two words he sums up the walk of a believer. God's word in James also squashes the false doctrine that runs rampant in our churches today. We will not have our best lives today. Everything will not be roses and rainbows! Read James 1:2 and record what the believer will encounter.

9. James gives three commands to set us on the right track as we encounter the various trials that come upon us. Read James 1:2-4 and record these commands.

1.

2.

3.

10. Boy, James hits the floor running, doesn't he? Bam, we're hit with the fact we are going to encounter various, many-colored trials. Good thing we have already considered and know what is going on in our Christian walk and can meet it with great joy! Or have

we? Do we consider that God has a purpose and a plan for every trial we encounter? What does it mean to consider something? In this case, what does it mean to “consider it all joy” when we encounter various trials?

11. How can there be joy in a trial? Read James 1:3 and answer the question, “How can there be joy in my trial?”

12. Read James 1:3 again. Now, why do we consider every trial we encounter a joy?

13. Yay! Now we know that the testing of our faith produces endurance! Or do we? What trial are you encountering right now? Please write it here so you have a written record of it. We will use this one to learn what God is teaching.

14. Do you know that this trial did not catch God by surprise? Do you KNOW that it is doing something? The various trials we encounter are used by God, in this context, to produce endurance or patience. What is the command given in James 1:4?

15. According to James 1:4, why do we let endurance have its perfect result?

16. What does the phrase, “Let endurance” mean in this context? Look up the phrase and record its meaning.

Patience/Let Endurance: Strong’s reference #5281-

17. Trials are testing our faith. Trials teach us patience and trust in the sanctifying work of God. Paul had a confidence in God that he expressed in Philippians 1:4. Read the verse

and explain what Paul is teaching. How does it apply to what James is teaching in James 1:1-4?

18. Various trials are used by God to accomplish the sanctifying work He began in us. Humbling ourselves under the mighty hand of God and letting endurance have its perfect work accomplishes what God designed to do in us. James says in verse 4 that endurance through testing makes us complete, perfect. Take the time to look up these two words, and record what you learn.

Perfect: Strong's reference #5046-

Entire/Complete: Strong's reference #3648-

19. Now that you know what the words mean, explain what James is teaching in verses 1-4.

20. Earlier we learned that letting, or submitting, our lives under that hand of God was recognizing and submitting to a God we know has our greatest interest in mind. He promised blessings and blessings He supplies. However, they do not always come in a way we expect! Some of our greatest blessings come through the trials He sends our way. According to James 1:4, (fill in the blanks) He has a plan for us to be perfect, complete,

21. Now, we have been working through these first four verses and James is teaching us that God's children are going to encounter various trials. We understand why we have trials. The answer is given in James 1:3-4. Go ahead and write it down again. I know this is a repeat, but review and reminders are good for us both.

22. Okay, we've answered the question of why—why do we encounter various trials—but what about the question how? How are you and I going to get through these various trials? James answers that question in verse 5. Read the verse and record what we are to ask for and whom do we ask.

What did you learn about God from this same verse? Once you have written down what this verse teaches you about God, I would like for you to sit and ponder the character of God. Now, do you believe what God says about Himself or are you still doubting?

23. James tells us to ask God for wisdom. But how are we to ask according to James 1:6?

24. How does James 1:6 and 1:8 describe a doubter?

25. Will a doubter receive anything from God? Yes_____ No_____. Let's think about this for a second! When we doubt, according to the context of these verses, who are we doubting? We may think we are doubting the trial or fiery ordeal that came upon us. I know what my mind says, "Is this really doing anything? How could this situation possibly be teaching me anything?" But in reality, what we are really saying, acting, and doing is doubting God. Is that not what this all really boils down to? If He tells us our faith is going to be tested, and then proceeds to tell us why, should we not listen? Sisters, let's not be bad hearers!

Ladies, this lesson came face to face with the truths of God's word!
We have laid the foundation for the rest of this study. We've begun to look at ourselves in God's mirror to know where we are in our faith.
Are we doubters? Are we forgetful doers?
Remember, God instructs us to ask. End this lesson on your knees asking God to show you how to live this life of genuine faith!
Bless you, my dear sisters!