

Love in Action

Under Pressure

James 1

Welcome

Have you ever attempted some form of self-improvement?
What was the outcome?

[Grace That Will Lead Us Home - Elim Sound - Lyric Video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OMJj5-TekHE)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OMJj5-TekHE>

Word

The Bible Project outline of James can be found here and provides an overview on the book and some key themes.

<https://bibleproject.com/videos/james/>

It is a practical book and deals a lot with relationships. Some of the themes mentioned in the first chapter are developed later on. In this first chapter it is more about the individual and developing/guarding our individual walk with the Lord.

Q. Why do you think this is? cf Acts 20:28, Luke 6:39,40

Read James 1:1-2

Q. Many think that the author was the brother of Jesus. How does his greeting set an example to his readers?

Read James 1:3 – 18

Q. In verse 2 James tells us to consider it joy..... . What is he trying to get his readers to understand? What isn't he saying?

Q. v2-4 trials of many kinds – can you suggest some? How does it develop perseverance and what is its ultimate purpose? And reward v12?

Q. What does James suggest is needed in these situations? How do we get it and what is the prerequisite?

Q. How do verses 9-11 provide an application of this?

Q. What do v12-18 teach us about:

- God: his nature and character?

- Ourselves?

Q. What does it teach us about the source of temptation and potential consequences?

Read v 19-27

Having called us to walk in the way of wisdom and in knowledge, how does James practically develop and apply these? You might find it helpful to identify the do's and the consequences of following/not following them.

Witness

There is much for the individual to reflect on in this chapter. Use this time to pray for each other and for our church that we might grow in wisdom and knowledge and practise pure and faultless religion.

Love in Action

No favouritism

Welcome

What were your favourite and least favourite subjects at school? Why? Did it affect how much effort you put into them?

Worship

[Man of Sorrows | Reawaken Hymns | Official Lyric Video](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NmRqYietSQ8&t=15s>

Word

Read James 2:1-13

Q. What is the main message in this section?

Q. Look back at James 1:27. Why do you think James follows with this section on favouritism?

Q. In v2-4 James uses an example. Is this example relevant today? What other examples can you give?

Q. What do you consider some of the root causes of favouritism?

Q. What reasons does James give as to why we shouldn't show favouritism?

James 2

Q. What does James give as the remedy for favouritism?

Q. In what ways might we show favouritism within the church?

Q. Outside the church?

Q. What can we do about it?

Read James 2:14-26

James seeks to clarify the relationship between faith and deeds by using four examples: v15-17, v18,19 v20-24 v25,26

The first two sections describe what true faith isn't. The latter two, what true faith is.

Q. Why do you think James chose Abraham and Rahab as his examples?

Q. What is the challenge for those who say that they believe in God, have a degree in theology, go to church etc. etc?

Q. What challenge is there for those who do lots of good deeds? (believing faith comes before the deeds) Ephesians 2:8,9 might help here.

Witness

Take time to reflect – is there a gap between what we believe and the way we act? What steps do we need to take to change this?

Love in Action

Watch Your Words

James 3

Welcome

What words or phrases do you use to greet people? For the linguists this might include other languages.

Worship

[Across the Lands \(Official Lyric Video\) - Keith & Kristyn Getty](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mVpkR4gYTlg)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mVpkR4gYTlg>

Give thanks to Jesus – our Living Word who became flesh and who now intercedes for us at the right hand of God.

Word

Read James 3:1-12

Q. List some reasons why people may want to become teachers in the church?

Q. Why does James caution us against this?

Q. Read v2 – are you encouraged? Is James saying this is how we become perfect? Now read v8. How does this change your thinking?

Q. What challenges does this passage present to those who are recognised as teachers in the church?

Q. We might not be called to be teachers but we are all called to share the gospel. What warnings are here that we should heed? How can we guard against them when sharing the gospel?

Q. How does Luke 6:45 help us to understand why the tongue is evil?

Q. Would it be better to cut our tongues out and say nothing at all?

Read James 3:13-16

Q. How will we know whether the wisdom we have is from heaven or from earth?

Q. What advice does James give to those have earthly wisdom?

Read vs 17 and 18

Q. What does true wisdom look like? Can you see any link between these qualities and the concerns James has addressed throughout his book?

Witness

Much here that challenges the individual – give space for reflection. Pray for those within our church and our mission partners (eg Jan Rossington) who have teaching responsibilities.

Love in Action

Loves Motivation

James 4

Welcome

What is the silliest argument you've ever had and what was the outcome?

Worship

This song builds on the end of our last study and moves us into this one. It will be unfamiliar to most but we can meditate on the words that can lead us into a time of praise and worship.

[The Way of Wisdom - Michael Card - Lyrics](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fBqIWx80U9U>

Word

Read James 4:1-10

Q. These verses speak of relationship breakdown between Christians (v1-2a) and between God and believers (2b-4). In both cases what is the root cause (v1b, 3b)?

Q. What reasons are given in v2b and 3 as to why we might not have what we want? How does this square with Ps.37v4?

Q. What does James mean when he says that friendship with the world is hatred towards God (v4)? Why (v5)?

Q. What doesn't it mean? Clue (Matthew 11:19)

Q. What hope does James give us (v6)?

Q. What steps does James call those in this situation to take?

Q. What are the rewards?

Read v11-17

Q. Why do you think James returns to talking about slander (v11) and then about boasting (13-16)?

Q. Is James saying we should not make plans? If not, what is he getting at?

Q. What is the warning and challenge in v17?

Witness

This passage like the others bring a number of challenges.

It could be that we need to ask for repentance in our relationships with others in the church, with God or for a wrong relationship with the world. If you choose this route then encourage each other with the reminder from 1John1:9.

Pray for your mission partners and the organisations they work with. Pray that their relationships with each other will be godly. Pray also that as they make plans for the future that they are God-centred and for his glory first and foremost.

Love in Action

The Power of Mercy

James 5

Welcome

Is it better to have a job you love or one that pays well?

Worship

Matt Redman - Blessed Be Your Name (Lyrics And Chords)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tTpTQ4kBLxA&list=RDtTpTQ4kBLxA&index=2>

Word

Read James 5:1-6

Although this could apply to all who are rich it is likely that this was addressed to those in the church given that the letter was written to Christians.

Q. How would you define someone who is rich?

Q. What does James accuse them of?

Q. What warnings does he give them?

Q. How may might we misuse our wealth today?

Q. James doesn't offer any solutions. Can you think of steps to ensure you use your wealth wisely?

Read James 5:7-12

Q. How does this section build on James 1:2-4?

Q. What should we do v7

Q. Why? And how do we do this?

Q. Why do you think James adds a verse about grumbling (v7) and swearing oaths (v12) to this section?

Read James 5:13-20

Q. In v13,14 James gives three instructions. What are they?

Q. Why is it easy to forget to do the first and hard to do the second of these?

Q. In the light of James's teaching earlier in the book why might the directions given in v14-16 be difficult for his readers to follow? What would they need to get right first?

Q. Do you see this happening in the church today? Why/why not? What are the obstacles?

Q. Does the church have a responsibility to help those who wander from the truth? How should this be done?

Witness

In this book James has called us in practical ways to get our relationships right. This may be our speech, our care for one another, our attitudes etc. He firstly calls us in chapter 1 to ensure we are right with God, that we become mature and seek wisdom from God.

Q How have you been challenged? What is the next step. How can those in the group help and support you make this step?