

## James

### Lesson #3, Chapter 1:1-8

Go to the Lord and ask Him for insight, understanding, and a teachable heart from this passage. Read through Chapter 1 before beginning this lesson.

1. What clues can you gain about the one who wrote the book from verse 1? Now look up the following verses and summarize what you learn about him: Matthew 13:55; Acts 12:17; 15:13; 21:18; Galatians 1:18-19; 2:9, 12; Jude 1.
2. What do you learn about the author's spiritual journey from Mark 3:20-21; 6:1-6; John 7:2-5; Acts 1:14; 1 Corinthians 15:3-7?
3. James identifies himself as a *bond-servant* of God and of Christ. Describe what he means when he uses that word, especially as it relates to the Lord [Strong's<sup>1</sup> #1401 (ESV, NIV *servant*)].
4. What attitudes are necessary to be a faithful servant? Now, don't be overwhelmed at the list of verses that follow. What's amazing to consider is that we could have looked at more! *Choose any 5* of these verse references (or all of them) and see what you glean about the attitudes every servant of God must possess. See Psalm 116:16; Matthew 8:9; 10:24-25; 20:28; 24:45-46; Luke 1:38; John 12:24-26; 2 Corinthians 4:5; Galatians 1:10; Ephesians 2:10; Philippians 1:6; 2:5-8.

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<sup>1</sup> Created in 1890 by James Strong, Strong's Concordance indexes every word in the Bible and gives it a number, which then allows the Bible student to look up the Hebrew or Greek word attached to that number and discover the word's meaning. You can even use that number with online Bible study helps to discover the word's definition. If you've never used these helps, I also have a step-by-step guide on using word study resources.

5. What attitudes that you discovered from the preceding question are the most challenging for you right now? What do you think would help and encourage you to have a more consistent response? Are there any specific things you need to do to ensure that takes place?
  
6. Who is James writing to and what is unique about them according to verse 1?
  
7. What are we to *consider* according to verse 2? In what manner is all that “consideration” to take place (also from verse 2)?
  
8. Let’s look further at the word *consider* so we can more faithfully obey this admonition. What does the word mean [Strong’s #2233 (ESV *count*)]? Also see the following verses to gain a better sense of the word’s meaning: Philippians 3:8; Hebrews 11:11, 26.
  
9. Now define *encounter* [Strong’s #4045 (ESV *meet*; NKJV *fall*; NIV *face*)].
  
10. What do you learn about the word *trials* used here [Strong’s #3986]? Look up the following texts to see a similar treatment of the word: Luke 22:28; Acts 20:19; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:6.
  
11. How can encountering different kinds of trials bring joy? See verse 4.

12. What challenges do you face when you seek to find joy in your trials? What core attitudes must be in your heart for you to obey this command? See also Romans 8:28 as an encouragement.
  
13. What do you learn about the meaning of the word *testing* [Strong's #1383]? Also, see 1 Peter 1:7, the only other place this word is used in the New Testament.
  
14. Define *endurance* [Strong's #5281 (ESV *steadfastness*; NKJV *patience*; NIV *perseverance*)]. Also see James 1:4; 5:11; as well as 2 Thessalonians 1:4 and 2 Peter 1:6.
  
15. What are we supposed to do with *endurance* according to verse 4? See also Galatians 6:9; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 12:1-2.
  
16. How is it possible to put verse 4 into practice? See 1 Peter 5:6-7.
  
17. What is the goal of letting our trials do God's intended work in our souls? See verse 4; Hebrews 12:10-11; 13:20-21; 1 Peter 5:10.

On accepting adversity in our lives: Always it is initiated by an act of will on our part; we set ourselves to believe in the overruling goodness, providence, and sovereignty of God and refuse to turn aside no matter what may come, no matter how we may feel. (Margaret Clarkson, *Grace Grows Best in Winter*)<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Margaret Clarkson, *Grace Grows Best in Winter* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1984), 40-41.

18. What situation does James address in verse 5?
  
19. Explain how verse 5 fits in with the previous context of verses 2-4. How does that understanding help you apply verse 5 in your life?
  
20. What do we learn about God's response to our lack of wisdom in verse 5? How does that encourage you to apply this verse? What further encouragements and insight do you gain from Psalm 25:4-5, 8-9; 32:8-10; Proverbs 3:5-7; James 3:13-18.
  
21. What attitude should underscore our request for wisdom in our trials, according to verses 6-8? Why?
  
22. Why is this attitude important to the Lord? See also Hebrews 11:6; Psalm 62:5-8; 147:10-11; Proverbs 1:7; 29:25.
  
23. What do the presence of those soul-sanctifying trials reveal about God's care for you? See also Hebrews 12:5-8. Now from James 1:1-8 and Hebrews 12:5-8 make a list of observations about God's intended good for you when you encounter those various trials.

God does not delight in our suffering. He brings only that which is necessary, but He does not shrink from that which will help us grow. (Jerry Bridges, *Trusting God*)<sup>3</sup>

We can be sure that the development of a beautiful Christlike character will not occur in our lives without adversity.... Love, joy, peace, and patience—can only be developed in the womb by adversity. (Jerry Bridges, *Trusting God*)<sup>4</sup>

The trials which come from God are sent to prove and strengthen our graces, and so at once to illustrate the power of divine grace, to test the genuineness of our virtues, and to add to their energy. Our Lord in his infinite wisdom and superabundant love, sets so high a value upon his people's faith that he will not screen them from those trials by which faith is strengthened. You would never have possessed the precious faith which now supports you if the trial of your faith had not been like unto fire. You are a tree that never would have rooted so well if the wind had not rocked you to and fro, and made you take firm hold upon the precious truths of the covenant grace. (Charles Spurgeon, *Morning and Evening: Daily Readings, Sept. 3*)<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Jerry Bridges, *Trusting God* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1988), 177.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, 174.

<sup>5</sup> Charles H. Spurgeon, *Morning and Evening: Daily Readings, Complete and unabridged; New modern edition*. (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2006), Sept. 3 Evening.