

DEVELOPING GOOD CHARACTER

Vacation Bible Study Lesson focusing on the Letter of James

Zion Baptist Church, Pastor Samuel Duren

BUILDING A BETTER COMMUNITY



ZION
BAPTIST CHURCH

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LESSON 1 DEALING WITH TEMPTATION

Memory verses: James 1:12

Jas 1:12 ¶ Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him. NIV

Lesson James 1:1-18

1. What are trials and tribulation? Where do they come from? What's the difference?
2. Why are the people receiving this letter being tested?
3. What does perseverance mean to you?
4. Where does temptation come from?
5. What does James says comes from God vv. 17-18?
 - a. What does that mean in your world view?
 - b. How can this improve your world view?
6. How can you overcome temptation? Share how these verses can help?
 - a. Matthew 6:13
 - b. Romans 6:11
 - c. Ephesians 6:10-11
 - d. 1 Thessalonians 4:1-7

Close in prayer and with commitment.

Take the time to reflect how God has given you the Holy Spirit and additional blessings in your life to keep you. He has provided his only Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, to die for your sins. Jesus defeated death and rose from the grave on the third day and is now seated at the right hand of the Father. Knowing Jesus overcame so that we can be free in Christ. Fight the temptation and ask God for forgiveness. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9 NIV-G/K)

LESSON 2 DEMONSTRATING MY FAITH

Memory verse: James 2:18

“But someone will say, “You have faith; I have deeds.” Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do.” (Jas 2:18 NIV-G/K)

Lesson James 2:14-26

1. What is faith? (see Hebrews 11:1,6)
2. How can one demonstrate their faith?
3. What is meant in verses 15-17?
4. How are you showing your faith everyday?
 1. When you pray do you act out your prayer?
 2. Do you look to see how you can do God’s will?
5. What can you learn from Abraham? (vv. 21-23)
 1. See also Hebrews 11:8. How did Abraham show faith?
 2. How did Abraham show faith with his son, Isaac, and following God?
6. What does James teach about faithfulness of Rahab?
7. How can you show your faith to God in serving?
8. Find a ministry within the church to help meet needs.
9. When you pray seek how you can meet that need.
10. God wants to use you make yourself available.

Application: Find ways you can daily serve God and act out your faith. Do not just say it, but live out your faith. Peter asked to walk on water then he got out the boat to walk on the water. It is time now to follow up.

LESSON 3 – DISCIPLINING THE TONGUE & MIND

James 3:1-18

Memory Verse: “But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.” (Jas 3:17 NIV-G/K)

Lesson Part 1: Tong Tied James 3:1-12

1. What is the problem with the tongue? (vv. 7-8)
2. What is the tongue being compared too?
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
3. What should not be coming out of the mouth? (vv. 9-10) Why?
4. How can the words one says build up and destroy?

Lesson Part 2: Heavenly Wisdom James 3:13-18

1. In verse 13 how can you live wise or show you are wise?
2. What is unwise looking at verses 14-16? Where does this come from?
3. Where does true wisdom come from and what does it look like? (v. 17)

Application:

1. What are ways you can improve that what you say matches what you do?
2. How does being wise in God’s eyes shape your world view and your speech?
3. How does God want you to speak and live? What changes do you need to make?

Close in Prayer and commitment.

Let God guide your heart and tongue by you living wise. “My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, Jas. 1:20 for man’s anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires(Jas 1:19-20 NIV-G/K).” Allowing God to guide you through his Holy Spirit will improve your life. Pray now and confess and commit to God to live wise and watch your tongue so that you may honor Him.

LESSON 4 –DEVELOPING HUMILITY

James 4:1-10

Memory Verse: “But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”” (Jas. 4:6 NIV-G/K)

Developing Humility James 4:1-10

1. What cause fights and quarrels among you? (vv. 1-3)
2. How should you pray?
3. What makes one an enemy of God? (v.4)
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
4. Why asking for things of the world may have wrong motives?
5. What is grace? What does it mean that God give grace to the humble?
6. What does the Devil represent and what does God represent? (vv. 6-7)
7. List the commands and the results James gives:
 - a. V. 7 _____
 - b. V. 8 _____
 - c. V. 9 _____
 - d. V. 10. _____
8. Lets look closer at what James says in v.6
 - a. What does Proverbs 3:34 say?
 - b. How does God show grace to the humble?
9. How does the world show successful living?
10. Who does the press cover more the humble or the proud?
11. Why is being humble a key quality for Christians?

Application: Humble yourself before the Lord and do not look to satisfy you world desires but resist the devil and submit to God. See how God’s plans for your life and see how God can lift you up. Try God’s way in your life.

REVIEW

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Review Questions

1. What is faith?
2. What is the difference between trials and temptation?
3. How does God feel about the Proud?
4. What are ways to you're your faith daily?
5. How should prayers be made to God?
6. Describe God's view and how it is different from the world's view.
7. Who is the Author of James?
8. What have you learned knew and how will you apply this?

LEADER'S NOTES

"Building a Better Community"

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Goal of Lesson

The goal of this lesson is to understand that the effective church is made up of active participants of Christians. James wrote this letter with teachings, lessons and applications of how the Christian should behave. He impresses that effective believers submit to God's will and endure the troubles and trials that come their way and know the difference of heavenly wisdom and earthly wisdom. Service in the Kingdom of God is more than lip-service or attending Sunday's service but daily looking to help and assist one another living out God's word daily.

Study Help

Author: James, the brother of Jesus the Lord's brother" ¹ (Galatians 1:19 also Matthew 13:55 & Mark 6:3).

Time: estimated 40-67 C.E – Giving James the brother of Jesus authorship during his lifetime and leadership of the Jerusalem council (Acts 15:13-21).

Audience: Primarily Jewish Diaspora and possibly Gentile readers depending on date of letter written taken. I suggest both audiences intended in this writing.

Additional helps and suggested resources:

Words to study are grace, faith, humble. Anchor Bible Dictionary, Easton Bible Dictionary by Thomas Nelson Publishing. Read and review the actions found in Acts 15 and note James involvement in the early church. Reading of Total Truth and understating how Nancy Pearcey describes the paradigm of biblical history as dealing with Creation, Fall and Redemption in forming a Biblical World View.²

¹David Noel Freedman, The Anchor Bible Dictionary (New York: Doubleday, 1996, c1992), 3:622.

² Nancy Pearcey, *Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from Its Cultural Captivity Study Guide Edition* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books 2005), 45.