



JAMES

TRUE RELIGION
BRAND *Jesus*

James – the man

- Half-brother of Jesus (Mt 13:55)
- Unbeliever initially (Jn 7:3–5)
- Jesus post-resurrection appearance to James (1 Cor 15:7).
- The Lord's brother (Gal 1:19)
- Pillar (leader) in Jerusalem church. (Gal 2:9, Acts 12:17 – Peter left, 15:13–22, 21:18–26)
- Presided over Jerusalem council (Acts 15)
- Author of the epistle of James (James

James – Historical

- Hegesippus : After the apostles, James the brother of the Lord surnamed the Just was made head of the Church at Jerusalem.“
- Josephus, Jerome : James died in 62 AD
- Hegesippus, Clement, Eusebius : James died in 69 AD. By stoning on Ananias the High Priest’s orders.
- Jerome: prayed in behalf of the people, insomuch that his knees were reputed to have acquired the hardness

Basic Info

- **Theme:** Genuine Faith.
- **Author:** James – brother of Jesus (1:1)
- **Amanuensis:** all his own work.
- **Recipients:** Jewish Christians – Twelve tribes scattered among the nations (i.e. Gentiles). Perhaps scattering of Acts 8.
- **Date:** 48 AD. First book in NT. (alt 60s)
- **Place of writing:** Jerusalem? (early and late rains – Jas 5:7)
- **Flavour:** more ethics than theology. Very Jewish.

The Times

- No gospels in existence yet.
- Church in Jerusalem predominantly Jewish.
- Could be earliest NT book, along with Galatians – pre Jerusalem council... putting it before 49AD.
- Early church –
- Poor and the wealthy an issue.
- Rich unbeliever landlords oppressing poor Christian workers on their farms Jas 5.

Themes

- **Genuine Faith / True Religion**
 - Stands the test of trials. (1:2–8, 5:7–11)
 - Pure speech (1:26)
 - Look after orphans and widows. (1:27)
 - Deeds backing up profession of faith (2:14)
 - Submissive (3:17–4:12)
 - Not susceptible to greed (1:9–11, 5:1–6)

What kind of writing is this?

- Very authoritative.. You must...”But loving also... “my brothers”
- Various suggestions
 - Greek diatribe
 - Parenesis form – loosely organised series of exhortations, but no theme or line of thought.
 - Sermon abstracts.
 - Sermon expansions on sayings of Jesus.
 - “Stringing of pearls”

	James 1	James 2	James 3	James 4	James 5
Area of Behaviour	Trials	Prejudice	Speech	Conflicts	Money
God's Goal	Personal Maturity	Love for Others	Blessing of Others	Peace with Others	Service to Others
God's Method	Acceptance from God	Faith in God	Wisdom in God	Submission to God	Patience with/Prayer

Outline in a nutshell

- Trial and Temptations – see it God’s way!
- Listeners and doers of the word.
- Pure religion.
- No Favoritism.
- Faith and Deeds.
- Taming the tongue.
- Submit to God.
- Warnings to the rich.

Faith and Works

For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law (Rom 3:28)

We know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ (Gal 2:16)

You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone (Jas 2:24)

In Paul's Writings

**Justification before God
– by faith**

Justification – an eternal position.

Justification – believing in Christ.

Attacking Legalists

In James' Epistle

**Justification before men
– by works**

Justification – a daily proof.

Justification – behaving like Christ.

Attacking Libertines.

Fun stuff

- Martin Luther : “A right strawy epistle” emerging from heavy-duty Catholic works theology couldn’t get it. “Faith alone” mantra contradicted by “Not by faith alone” Jas 2:24)
- Modern-day theological cage fight between James (works) and Paul (faith) – artificial construct.
- ...Comes into your synagogue (meeting) (2:2)
- Many parallels to Sermon on the Mount

Practical Application

- Gods perspective on facing trials (1:2–8)
- How temptation works (1:13f)
- Listening and doing (1:22)
- Religious talk! (1:26)
- Faith without deeds is dead (2:17)
- Even the demons believe in God! (2:19)
- Friendship with the world = hatred of God (4:4)
- Resist the devil and he will flee (4:7)
- Know the good and doesn't do it sins (4:17)
- Let your Yes be yes, No be no (5:12)
- Confess you sins (5:16)
- Bring back the wanderer (5:19–20)