

Lesson 1

James 1

As we talked about in the Introduction, we are going to focus on approaching the Word of God with our heart, soul, mind, and strength as we seek to love the Lord with our whole selves. Each week of homework will look very similar. My hope is that these lessons will serve as a guide for your own study of James as we approach the Bible not only for understanding but also with the hope and expectation of encountering God Himself on the pages of His Word.

Before you begin your study this week, spend a moment preparing yourself and fixing your attention on Jesus as you invite Him into your time today.

1. What is on your mind today? Maybe it's something that's distracting you or worrying you. Maybe it's something you're looking forward to. Maybe it's something you need to do today. Whatever it is, tell the Lord about it.
2. Now spend a moment intentionally turning your attention to Jesus, inviting Him to speak to you by His Spirit and through His Word during this time that you have set aside to seek Him.

Mind

Read James 1. You've read the whole thing through several times last week, so take some time now to read James 1 more slowly.

3. What immediate questions do you have about the text?

As we go through this study, we'll talk about some resources to use to help us seek answers to our questions. For now, I want us to remember that we have access to the Source of all information—God Himself. Take these questions to the Lord in conversation with Him. Keep your eyes peeled for the way He will answer or the way you will encounter Him in your wondering.

4. Spend some time outlining the chapter in the chart on page 10. This can be brief! *I filled out the first section for you to give you an idea of what this might look like.*
 - How is the chapter divided for you? What are the subtitles? Or how would you divide the chapter? **(Column 1)**
 - Summarize the main point of each division in its original context. What was the author saying to the original audience? Write it in one sentence or a couple of bullet points. **(Column 2)**
5. Now pull the divisions into your context. What is the truth presented in each section? How do you see that applying generally in our current context? (This may not be a specific application for your own life yet. Or it may be!) **(Column 3)**
6. Do any of these passages remind you of something else in Scripture? Can you locate it? Skip this if it stresses you out!

Depending on your familiarity with Scripture, these recognized connections will increase as you continue to study. Since I'm one resource you're choosing to use, for this week, I'm going to give you a couple of other passages that might add to your understanding of this section of James.

7. Read about James, the brother of Jesus, in these other passages of Scripture. What do you learn about James in these passages, and how does it add to your understanding of who James is and/or of what he has written in this letter?
 - John 7:1-5
 - 1 Corinthians 15:1-8 (especially verse 7)
 - Galatians 2:9-10 (How is James recognized?)

Heart and Soul

As we seek to engage our heart and soul in our study of Scripture, you may not answer all of these questions but hopefully one or two of them will apply.

8. How (if at all) does this passage encourage you in your present season?

9. How (if at all) does this passage convict you in your present season? Is there something you sense the Lord is correcting in you? When the Lord corrects us, it is always to draw us back to Himself. If you sense His correction or conviction, simply tell Him you are sorry and ask Him for the help of His Spirit as you seek to walk the way He is leading.

10. Is there any place in this passage that answers a question you've been asking God or that seems like His response to a specific prayer?

11. Is there something in this passage that prompts you to pray in response to God's Word about a specific circumstance in your own life?

Strength

When we think of approaching Jesus in His Word with our strength, we must find a balance. Our walks with the Lord do require us to apply some of our own effort, some intentionality and discipline, but we also have to acknowledge that we are reliant on the power of His Holy Spirit within us to walk according to His ways.

12. How do you sense the Lord is inviting you to respond to His Word? (This may be related to a small, specific part of the passage or to the passage as a whole.)

13. What is your next step in responding to that invitation?

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| Section Title and Verses | Main Point (Summary) | Application (General) |
|------------------------------|---|--|
| <i>James 1:1 - Greeting</i> | <i>James is writing to Jewish believers in Jesus who live outside Israel.</i> | N/A |
| <i>James 1:2-18 - Trials</i> | <i>The Lord can use the trials we face to accomplish His purposes in us.</i> | <i>When we face trials, we should engage the Lord in the midst of them and ask Him for what we need, thanking Him for the work He is doing in the midst of them.</i> |
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