

The Letters to the Churches- Real Religion....James

James is another book that is addressed to our Hebrew brothers but written to all. James writes to the **"...twelve tribes which are scattered abroad..."**

James very quickly points out that he is a, **"Servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ..."** This is a great statement when we consider who James was. James was the son of Joseph and Mary and the half brother of ours and his Lord. **Mark 6:3** tells us Mary and Joseph had at least six children. His brothers did not believe on Him however until after the resurrection. **John 7:2-5** James was one of these.

We find him presiding over the council of Jerusalem recorded in **Acts 15:13. 1 Cor 15:7** tells us that after His resurrection Jesus appeared to James. Now he refers to himself as a servant not a brother of Christ.

James has been a source of controversy by some who feel that he is teaching something contrary to salvation by grace. Rightly understood he is not teaching that at all.

James wanted the brethren to grow and be mature in the faith. He said that we can look at the results of someone's life and see if their faith is real or not. This book should make us look in the window of our soul and take stock at what we see.

I will offer the following outline for this study. I call this, *The Products of Real Religion*.

OUTLINE:

The Products of Real Religion:

I- Real Religion Produces Godly Wisdom: 1:1-8; 3:13-18

**II- Real Religion Produces Humility:
1:9-11**

III- Real Religion Produces

Understanding of Sin: 1:12-15

**IV- Real Religion Produces Doers of
the Word: 1:16-27**

**V- Real Religion Produces
Impartiality: 2:1-13**

**VI- Real Religion Produces Fruit:
2:14-26**

**VII- Real Religion Produces a Bridled
Tongue: 3:1-12**

**VIII- Real Religion Produces
Submission to God: 4:1-10**

**IX- Real Religion Produces Right
Relationships to Brothers: 4:11-12**

**X- Real Religion Produces Urgency:
4:13-17**

**XI- Real Religion Produces Right
Relationships to the World and It's
Goods. 5:1-6**

**XII- Real Religion Produce Patience:
5:7-19**

**I- Real Religion Produces Godly
Wisdom: 1:1-8; 3:13-18**

There are two kinds of wisdom, godly and worldly **3:13-18**. We should strive to obtain the godly wisdom. How do we do this? Ask! **1:5**. We need wisdom to run the race of the Christian faith.

**II- Real Religion Produces Humility:
1:9-11**

Pride has been many a people's downfall. **Proverbs 16:18-19** says, **"Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall."** ¹⁹ **Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud."**

The Proverbs also tell us, "***These six things doth the hate...***" and one of these is "***a proud look...***" ***Prov 6:16-17***

III- Real Religion Produces Understanding of Sin: 1:12-15

Sin easily besets us in our daily walk. We have sins that we commit by doing and some by not doing. ***Jam 4:17***. We however need to understand that temptation is not sin. It is the way we react to temptation that makes it sin. James gives us the progression of sin in these verses; lust, action and death.

IV- Real Religion Produces Doers of the Word: 1:16-27

Many men and women hear the Word of God with their ears and it never penetrates their lives. James says that we should be doers of the Word and not just hearers. He gives us a great illustration of a man who is only a hearer as someone who looks in the mirror and when he turns from the mirror the image is gone.

V- Real Religion Produces Impartiality: 2:1-13

Tell me that God's word does not speak to today. We are guilty at times of favoring the rich at the neglect of the poor. God sees them all the same. Someone has put it well when they said that the ground is flat at the foot of the cross.

James warns us to not have respect of persons ***2:9***. He states that if we do we are sinning.

VI- Real Religion Produces Fruit: 2:14-26

Now to the verses that have caused so much ink to be used on

James. Does he teach salvation is works and not only by grace? Read it carefully now and you will see he is saying that works are the product of salvation by grace. The events recorded in which he says Abraham was justified by works occurred several years ***AFTER*** his faith was counted to him for righteousness.

VII- Real Religion Produces a Bridled Tongue: 3:1-12

Probably the second most infamous thing James is known for is his treatment of the tongue in his writing. He used some powerful illustrations to show how a little thing can cause great things to occur. He says the tongue is, "***a fire, a world of iniquity...***"

3:2 tells us this is a supreme test of our religion. Can we harness the tongue?

VIII- Real Religion Produces Submission to God: 4:1-10

The source of our conflict is seen in ***4:1-3***. We must realize that our relationship to God, often called the vertical, affects our relationship with those around us, often called the horizontal relationships. You will notice again that humility is the rule with which we should approach Almighty God. Not with a haughty spirit ***4:8-10***.

IX- Real Religion Produces Right Relationships to Brothers: 4:11-12

Notice that speaking evil of someone else is not wise. Our relationships to others are a good indication of how we stand with God after we are saved. ***Eph 4:31-32*** and ***1 Pet 2:1***, as well as other places in scripture, teach us about this.

**X- Real Religion Produces Urgency:
4:13-17**

It has been said that Napoleon took his finger and traced a line around China on a map and said let's not wake the sleeping giant. My friends the true sleeping giant is the church. We have lost the urgency to see others come to Christ.

James makes it plain that we do not hold tomorrow in our hands and cannot take it by force. Tomorrow is only in the hands of God. **John 9:4** records that Christ said, "... **the night cometh, when no man can work.**" We need to recommit to and urgent work.

XI- Real Religion Produces Right Relationships to the World and It's Goods. 5:1-6

Lust of the eye is a failure of mankind. James is critical of those who would hire a poor man and then cheat him out of his wages. The gold and silver is cankered. How can he say this because gold and silver do not rust? He is stating that in the eyes of God it is not pure because it was ill gotten gain.

The lust to have more and more and work longer and longer to have it affects our culture today in almost every social class. We want better for our children than we had. Nothing is wrong with this in and by itself. It is only wrong when we allow it to drive a wedge in between God and us.

**XII- Real Religion Produce Patience:
5:7-19**

I want patience and I want it right now, is a joke we may often hear. James says we should be patient until the coming of the Lord. Remember James is writing to the twelve tribes scattered. Why were they scattered?

Persecution was the reason. James is trying to encourage them by letting them know their hope is not in this world but the next. **James 5:8** says, "**Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.**"

Application to Life's Steps

- 1- Our faith, or lack of it, will work its way into our actions.
- 2- God is interested in our relationship being right with Him, others and the things of the world.
- 3- There are many ways that James gives us that we should use to check up on our stewardship of our salvation.
- 4- We should be quick about work of God.

Retracing Our Steps

- 1- Who wrote the book of James?

- 2- What relation was he to Jesus?

- 3- What does he call himself? _____

- 4- Which of these twelve things in the outline do you need to work on in your life the most and what will you do to work on it? _____

