

# James

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Author: James, the brother of Jesus · Written: c. AD 45-49 · Category: General Epistles

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## Introduction

The Epistle of James confronts a Christianity that has become comfortable with the dichotomy between profession and practice, between creed and conduct. **Faith without works is dead**—this is James's uncompromising thesis. Writing to Jewish Christians scattered throughout the Roman world, James addresses the gap between hearing the Word and doing it, between claiming faith and demonstrating it through righteous living. His letter reads like the Proverbs of the New Testament—practical, direct, and intensely concerned with how genuine faith manifests in daily life.

James challenges believers on multiple fronts. He confronts **partiality toward the rich and contempt for the poor**, exposing how economic bias contradicts the royal law of love. He addresses **the untamed tongue**—that small member capable of immense destruction, which blesses God yet curses those made in His image. He warns against **worldliness**—friendship with the world that makes one an enemy of God—and calls for single-minded devotion rather than double-minded wavering. He tackles **presumption about the future**, the **oppression by the wealthy**, and the need for **patient endurance** awaiting the Lord's return.

The letter's relationship to Paul has been debated since the Reformation. Luther famously called James a "strawy epistle" because he saw it contradicting Paul's teaching on justification by faith alone. Yet careful reading reveals no contradiction. **Paul and James address different problems:** Paul opposed the legalism that sought to earn salvation through works; James opposed the antinomianism that claimed faith while living in sin. Paul says we are justified by faith apart from works of law; James says the faith that justifies is the faith that works. Both apostles would agree that genuine, saving faith inevitably produces righteous living—faith active through love.

James echoes Jesus' teaching extensively, particularly the Sermon on the Mount. The blessed poor, the merciful who obtain mercy, the peacemakers, the persecuted righteous, warnings against oaths, against judging others, against hypocrisy—all reflect Jesus' words. This suggests James knew Jesus' teaching intimately, as we would expect from the Lord's brother who led the Jerusalem church. The letter provides **a window into earliest Jewish Christianity**, where following Jesus meant living out His kingdom ethics in every aspect of life.

## Book Outline

- **Trials and Temptations** (1:1-18) — Joy in trials, wisdom, endurance
- **Hearing and Doing** (1:19-27) — Be doers, not just hearers
- **Partiality Condemned** (2:1-13) — The royal law of love
- **Faith and Works** (2:14-26) — Faith without works is dead
- **The Tongue** (3:1-12) — The power and danger of speech
- **True Wisdom** (3:13-18) — Heavenly versus earthly wisdom
- **Worldliness and Pride** (4) — Friendship with the world, judging others
- **Various Instructions** (5) — Patience, oaths, prayer, restoration

## Key Themes

- **Faith That Produces Works:** James's central thesis is that **genuine faith inevitably produces righteous action**. Faith that remains merely intellectual assent or emotional experience without transforming behavior is not saving faith—it is dead, useless, demonic. Abraham's faith was demonstrated by his willingness to sacrifice Isaac; Rahab's faith by her protection of the spies. Works do not earn salvation but they validate the reality of faith. This challenges nominal Christianity that confesses Christ but lives indistinguishably from the world.
- **Trials, Testing, and Perseverance:** James opens with a paradoxical command: **count it all joy when you fall into various trials**. This is not masochism but mature understanding that testing produces endurance, and endurance leads to spiritual maturity and completeness. Trials are not arbitrary suffering but divine pedagogy, refining faith as fire refines gold. Those who endure receive the crown of life. This perspective transforms suffering from meaningless hardship into purposeful sanctification.
- **The Deadly Power of the Tongue:** James devotes extensive attention to **the tongue—a small member with enormous destructive potential**. Like a bit that directs a horse or a rudder that steers a ship, the tongue guides the whole person. Like a spark that ignites a forest, it can set the entire course of life ablaze. The tongue blesses God yet curses men made in His image—this inconsistency reveals spiritual duplicity. Taming the tongue is essential to pure religion and requires divine wisdom.
- **Worldliness and Spiritual Adultery:** James warns that **friendship with the world is enmity with God**. The 'world' here is the value system opposed to God—its pride, materialism, and self-centeredness. Believers who accommodate worldly values commit spiritual adultery, betraying their covenant relationship with God. The solution is humility before God, resistance to the devil, and drawing near to the Lord. Double-mindedness—attempting to serve both God and worldly interests—must give way to single-minded devotion.
- **Economic Justice and Impartiality:** James confronts **economic bias in the church with prophetic intensity**. Showing partiality to the wealthy while despising the poor violates the royal law of love and insults God's choice to make the poor rich in faith. The wealthy oppressors who exploit workers and live in luxury face terrible judgment. Believers must not grant preferential treatment based on economic status but must honor the image of God in every person, especially the poor whom God has chosen.

- **Wisdom from Above:** James distinguishes between **earthly, demonic wisdom and wisdom from above**. Earthly wisdom is characterized by bitter jealousy, selfish ambition, disorder, and evil practices. Heavenly wisdom is pure, peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. Those who lack wisdom should ask God, who gives generously without reproach. True wisdom manifests in good conduct with the gentleness of wisdom.
- **Prayer and the Life of Faith:** James teaches that **prayer is not a last resort but the expression of faith-filled dependence on God**. The prayer of faith heals the sick; the effectual fervent prayer of the righteous accomplishes much. Elijah prayed and drought came, then prayed again and rain returned—demonstrating prayer's power. Yet prayer must be offered in faith without doubting, and with right motives. Prayer expresses our complete dependence on God's wisdom, provision, and power.
- **Patient Endurance Until the Lord's Coming:** James calls believers to **patient endurance in light of the Lord's imminent return**. Like farmers waiting for precious fruit, believers await Christ's appearing. The prophets and Job model steadfast endurance through suffering. God's compassion and mercy sustain His people through trials. The nearness of the Lord's coming provides perspective on present suffering and motivation for faithfulness. The Judge stands at the door—both warning and comfort for believers.

## Key Verses

My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

— James 1:2-4 (James's opening counsel is radically countercultural: **view trials as joyful opportunities rather than meaningless hardships**. This is not naive optimism but theological realism—trials test and strengthen faith, producing endurance that leads to spiritual maturity. The goal is completeness, lacking nothing necessary for godliness. This perspective transforms suffering from obstacle into instrument of God's sanctifying work.)

But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

— James 1:22 (This verse encapsulates James's concern: **the fatal gap between hearing and doing**. Those who hear without obeying engage in self-deception, imagining they possess what they lack. True faith responds to God's Word with obedience. The Word must not merely inform the mind or stir emotions but transform behavior. This emphasis on doing complements Paul's emphasis on believing, presenting the full picture of authentic Christianity.)

Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

— James 2:17 (James's most controversial statement asserts that **faith without works is dead**—not sick, not weak, but dead, non-existent as saving faith. This does not contradict Paul's teaching on justification by faith; rather, it insists that the faith that justifies is the faith that works. Abraham believed God, and it was counted as righteousness—but that faith expressed itself in willingness to sacrifice Isaac. Works do not earn salvation; they evidence its reality.)

Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.

— James 3:5-6 (James uses vivid imagery to describe **the tongue's disproportionate destructive power**. Like a small spark igniting a forest fire, the tongue—though tiny—can cause immense damage. It defiles the whole person and is itself ignited by hell, suggesting demonic influence. The tongue reveals the heart; what comes out of the mouth indicates what fills the soul. Controlling speech is essential to godliness and requires divine wisdom.)

Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

— James 4:4 (James employs startling language—**spiritual adultery**—to describe accommodation to worldly values. Believers are betrothed to Christ; courting the world's favor is unfaithfulness. The world's value system opposes God; attempting friendship with both is impossible. This demands a choice: either enemy of God or stranger to the world. Neutrality is not an option. Single-minded devotion to God requires rejecting worldly priorities.)

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.

— James 4:7-8 (James provides **the antidote to worldliness and spiritual compromise**: submit to God, resist the devil, draw near to God. Submission precedes resistance—those who yield to God gain authority to rebuff Satan. Drawing near to God is met with His drawing near to us—divine-human intimacy is reciprocal. The call to cleanse hands (actions) and purify hearts (motives) addresses both external conduct and internal devotion, rejecting double-mindedness.)

Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

— James 5:16 (James prescribes **confession and prayer as means of spiritual healing**. Confession to one another creates accountability and community; mutual prayer expresses dependence on God. The 'effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man' is powerful—not because of the pray-er's merit but because of God's faithfulness. Elijah's example shows that ordinary believers (Elijah 'was a man subject to like passions') can pray with extraordinary effect when they pray in faith.)

Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

— James 5:7-8 (James calls for **patient endurance in light of Christ's imminent return**. Like farmers who wait through seasons for harvest, believers await the Lord's appearing. This eschatological perspective transforms present suffering—it is temporary, purposeful, and soon to be eclipsed by Christ's glory. The nearness of the Lord's coming provides both motivation for faithfulness and comfort in trials. The Judge stands at the door.)

## Historical Context

James was likely the first New Testament book written, around AD 45-49, before the Jerusalem Council. The author is James, Jesus' half-brother, who became a leader of the Jerusalem church. He writes to Jewish Christians scattered throughout the Roman Empire (the 'twelve tribes in the Dispersion'). The practical, ethical focus reflects Jewish wisdom tradition and shows strong echoes of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount.

## Literary Style

James resembles Jewish wisdom literature more than typical letters. It is a collection of teachings on various topics, loosely connected by keywords and themes. The style is direct, even blunt, with vivid illustrations (mirror, bridle, rudder, fire, spring, fig tree). James asks rhetorical questions and anticipates objections. The teaching echoes Jesus' words frequently, suggesting firsthand familiarity.

## Theological Significance

The Epistle of James makes significant theological contributions, particularly in **practical ecclesiology** and the relationship between faith and works. James presents a Christianity that cannot be compartmentalized—faith must penetrate every area of life. His teaching on **justification** (2:14-26) complements rather than contradicts Paul. While Paul emphasizes that we are justified by faith apart from works of law (opposing legalism), James insists that the faith that justifies is the faith that works (opposing antinomianism). Both would agree that **genuine saving faith inevitably produces righteous living**.

James's **anthropology** recognizes human duplicity and internal conflict. The tongue blesses and curses; we are double-minded, unstable. This realism about human sinfulness undergirds his call for integrity. James also emphasizes **human responsibility**—we are accountable for our words, our treatment of others, our response to trials. While God provides wisdom and grace, believers must choose to draw near, resist the devil, and do the Word.

In **soteriology**, James's emphasis on works must be understood within the framework of covenant faithfulness. The 'works' that validate faith are not meritorious deeds earning salvation but covenant responses demonstrating the reality of saving faith. Abraham's offering of Isaac and Rahab's protection of the spies were acts of faith-filled obedience that vindicated their justification. **Faith and works are inseparable**—not as root and fruit merely, but as soul and body: faith without works is dead.

James's **economic theology** is prophetic and uncompromising. God has chosen the poor to be rich in faith; showing partiality to the wealthy violates the royal law of love. The rich who oppress workers face divine judgment. This challenges both ancient patronage systems and modern capitalism's tendency to value people by economic productivity. **Economic justice is not optional for Christians** but essential to loving neighbor as self.

Regarding **wisdom**, James presents a sapiential theology where heavenly wisdom produces peaceable, gentle, merciful conduct. This wisdom comes from God through prayer, not human cleverness. **Wisdom and ethics are inseparable**—true wisdom manifests in righteous living. This counters Gnostic tendencies to separate knowledge from morality.



## Christ in James

Though James mentions Jesus explicitly only twice (1:1; 2:1), **Christ's teaching and example permeate the letter**. The extensive echoes of the Sermon on the Mount suggest James knew Jesus' words intimately—as we would expect from the Lord's brother. The blessed poor (1:9-10; cf. Matt 5:3), the call to be perfect/complete (1:4; cf. Matt 5:48), warnings against oaths (5:12; cf. Matt 5:33-37), the command not to judge (4:11-12; cf. Matt 7:1-5), and many other parallels show James had absorbed and was transmitting Jesus' kingdom ethics.

Jesus is identified as **'the Lord of glory'** (2:1), a title affirming His divine majesty. The 'glorious Lord Jesus Christ' whom believers confess is not a mere teacher but the exalted Son of God. The 'royal law' to love neighbor (2:8) fulfills Christ's summary of the law. **The wisdom James commends reflects the wisdom Jesus embodied**—pure, peaceable, gentle, full of mercy.

The **coming of the Lord** (5:7-8) frames James's exhortations to patient endurance. Christ will return as Judge; this eschatological reality motivates present faithfulness and warns against sin. The Judge stands at the door—both comfort for the oppressed and warning for the unjust. James's eschatology is not speculative but practical, shaping how believers live now in light of Christ's certain return.

James's emphasis on **doing rather than merely hearing** (1:22) reflects Jesus' parable of the wise and foolish builders (Matt 7:24-27). Those who hear Jesus' words and do them build on rock; those who hear but do not do build on sand. **Authentic discipleship requires obedience, not merely intellectual assent**. The faith James commends is faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, expressed through obedience to His teaching and imitation of His character.

## Relationship to the New Testament

James occupies a unique position in the New Testament canon. As **likely the earliest New Testament book** (c. AD 45-49), it provides a window into the Jerusalem church before the Gentile mission had fully developed. James wrote to 'the twelve tribes in the Dispersion' (1:1)—Jewish Christians scattered throughout the Roman world, probably as a result of persecution following Stephen's martyrdom (Acts 8:1-4). The letter reflects Jewish Christianity's continuity with Old Testament faith and life.

The relationship between **James and Paul** has been debated since the Reformation. Luther's concern that James contradicted Paul's teaching on justification led him to call it an 'epistle of straw.' Yet careful reading reveals complementarity rather than contradiction. **Paul and James address different errors**: Paul opposed the Judaizers who taught that Gentiles must obey the law to be saved (Galatians, Romans); James opposed those who claimed faith while living in sin. Paul says we are justified by faith apart from works of law (Rom 3:28); James says faith without works is dead (Jas 2:17). Both are true: **faith alone justifies, but the faith that justifies is never alone.**

James's use of Abraham as an example (2:21-24) complements Paul's in Romans 4 and Galatians 3. Paul emphasizes that Abraham was justified by faith before circumcision, showing that faith precedes and grounds works. James emphasizes that Abraham's faith was demonstrated and completed by his willingness to sacrifice Isaac, showing that faith produces works. **Both are essential aspects of biblical faith**—trusting God (Paul's emphasis) and obeying God (James's emphasis) are not contradictory but complementary.

The letter's resonance with **Jesus' teaching**, particularly the Sermon on the Mount, surpasses any other New Testament book except the Gospels. This suggests James had heard Jesus teach and faithfully preserved His words. The **Acts 15** account of the Jerusalem Council shows James exercising leadership and wisdom, traits evident throughout his epistle. His ruling at that council balanced law and grace, continuity and innovation—the same balance his letter maintains.

James's teaching on **the tongue** (3:1-12) complements Paul's teaching on spiritual gifts and church order (1 Cor 12-14). Both recognize the power of words and the need for speech that edifies. James's call to **confession and prayer** for healing (5:13-16) informs the pastoral epistles' instructions on elders and church discipline. His warning against **worldliness** (4:4) echoes John's 'love not the world' (1 John 2:15-17) and Paul's 'be not conformed to this world' (Rom 12:2).

The letter's **eschatological urgency**—'the coming of the Lord draweth nigh' (5:8), 'the judge standeth before the door' (5:9)—reflects the New Testament's consistent

teaching on Christ's imminent return and motivates holy living throughout the apostolic writings.

## Practical Application

The Epistle of James refuses to allow comfortable separation between belief and behavior, between Sunday faith and Monday practice. It confronts contemporary Christianity with penetrating questions: **Does my faith produce action?** If not, it is dead faith—the kind even demons possess (2:19). The letter challenges nominal Christianity that confesses orthodox doctrine while living indistinguishably from the world. Authentic faith transforms conduct.

**Trials and suffering** receive radical reframing in James. Rather than evidence of God's displeasure or absence, trials are opportunities for spiritual growth. They test faith, produce endurance, and lead to maturity. This perspective does not minimize suffering's pain but recognizes its pedagogical purpose. When facing difficulty, believers should ask not 'Why is this happening?' but 'What is God teaching me through this?' and 'How can I remain faithful?' This transforms suffering from meaningless hardship into purposeful sanctification.

James's teaching on **the tongue** remains urgently relevant. In an age of social media, where thoughtless words spread instantly to vast audiences, the warning that the tongue is 'set on fire of hell' (3:6) should sober us. The inconsistency of blessing God in worship yet cursing those made in His image reveals spiritual duplicity. Believers must guard their speech, recognizing that words reveal the heart and that no one can tame the tongue apart from divine grace.

**Economic bias** in the church is confronted directly. Showing preferential treatment to the wealthy while neglecting the poor violates the royal law of love and insults God's choice to make the poor rich in faith. This challenges churches that cater to donors, businesses that exploit workers, and individuals who measure worth by wealth. James calls for economic justice, fair treatment of employees, and generosity toward the poor—not as optional charity but as obedience to God.

The call to **draw near to God** (4:8) with the promise that He will draw near to us addresses spiritual dryness. Intimacy with God is not passive longing but active pursuit. Submit to God, resist the devil, cleanse your hands, purify your heart—these are concrete actions believers can take. God's nearness is not achieved through mystical techniques but through repentance, obedience, and faith. **Single-minded devotion replaces double-minded instability** when we choose God over the world.

**Prayer** in James is not a last resort but the expression of faith-filled dependence. Lacking wisdom? Ask God, who gives generously. Suffering? Pray. Sick? Call for the elders to pray. The effectual fervent prayer of the righteous accomplishes much—not because of human merit but divine faithfulness. Yet prayer must be offered in faith

without doubting, and with right motives. Prayer is not manipulating God but aligning ourselves with His will.

The letter's **eschatological perspective**—the Lord's coming is near, the Judge stands at the door—provides both urgency and comfort. It motivates faithfulness: how we live now matters eternally. It offers comfort: present suffering is temporary; vindication is coming. This eternal perspective transforms how we handle injustice, endure trials, and resist worldly temptations. **We live as those who will give account to the Judge** and who await the appearing of our Savior.

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# Chapter 1

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## Greeting

- 1 James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting.
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## Testing and Temptation

- 2 My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;
- 3 Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.
- 4 But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.
- 5 If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.
- 6 But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.
- 7 For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.
- 8 A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.
- 9 Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted:
- 10 But the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away.
- 11 For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways.
- 12 Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.
- 13 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:
- 14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.
- 15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.
- 16 Do not err, my beloved brethren.
- 17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

- 18 Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.
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### **Hearing and Doing the Word**

- 19 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:
- 20 For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.
- 21 Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.
- 22 But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.
- 23 For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass:
- 24 For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.
- 25 But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.
- 26 If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.
- 27 Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.
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## Chapter 2

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### Warning Against Favoritism

- 1 My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons.
- 2 For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment;
- 3 And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool:
- 4 Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?
- 5 Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?
- 6 But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats?
- 7 Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called?
- 8 If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well:
- 9 But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.
- 10 For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.
- 11 For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.
- 12 So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.
- 13 For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.

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### Faith Without Works Is Dead

- 14 What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?
- 15 If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food,

- 16 And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?
- 17 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.
- 18 Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.
- 19 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.
- 20 But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?
- 21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?
- 22 Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?
- 23 And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.
- 24 Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.
- 25 Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way?
- 26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.
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# Chapter 3

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## Taming the Tongue

- 1 My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation.
- 2 For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.
- 3 Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body.
- 4 Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth.
- 5 Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!
- 6 And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.
- 7 For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind:
- 8 But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.
- 9 Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God.
- 10 Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.
- 11 Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?
- 12 Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.

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## Wisdom from Above

- 13 Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.
- 14 But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.
- 15 This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish.

- 16 For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.
- 17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.
- 18 And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.
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## Chapter 4

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### Warning Against Worldliness

- 1 From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?
  - 2 Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not.
  - 3 Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.
  - 4 Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.
  - 5 Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?
  - 6 But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.
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### Submit to God

- 7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.
  - 8 Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.
  - 9 Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness.
  - 10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.
  - 11 Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge.
  - 12 There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?
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### Boasting About Tomorrow

- 13 Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain:
- 14 Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.

- 15 For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.
- 16 But now ye rejoyce in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil.
- 17 Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.
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# Chapter 5

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## Warning to the Rich

- 1 Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you.
  - 2 Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten.
  - 3 Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.
  - 4 Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth.
  - 5 Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter.
  - 6 Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you.
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## Patience and Prayer

- 7 Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.
- 8 Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.
- 9 Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door.
- 10 Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience.
- 11 Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.
- 12 But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation.
- 13 Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.
- 14 Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:

- 15 And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.
- 16 Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.
- 17 Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.
- 18 And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.
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### **Restoring the Wanderer**

- 19 Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him;
- 20 Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.

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