

Session 1: Introduction & James 1:1-8

Begin your time together with a prayer for the Holy Spirit's presence and guidance.

Questions for this study of James will follow the “Inductive Method for Bible Study.” The Inductive Method has three parts: Observation, Interpretation, and Application. When we encounter scripture in this order and with the aid of the Holy Spirit, we can faithfully discover the meaning of scripture and be pointed toward truth.

Although there will be more specific questions, you'll see a common order and rhythm to our study questions:

1. What is the passage about? (observe)
2. What do you learn? (interpret)
3. How will you apply it? (apply)

Using the questions below, discuss the context and authorship for the book of James. If possible, view The Bible Project's video as a group or individually (send out the link before meeting). Video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qn-hLHWwRYY>

1. Who was the author of James? – *James (or Jacob in Hebrew) the brother of Jesus. James was an important leader in the church of Jerusalem.*
 - a. Read James 1:1 – How does James introduce himself? Also, consider how he (as the brother of Jesus) does not introduce himself.
2. When and to whom was the letter written? – *Most likely, it was written in the mid first century and was a general letter to Jewish Christian churches.*
 - a. From 1:1, to whom exactly does James address the letter? Why might he write to the Jews dispersed among the Gentile nations?
3. From what you've seen in the video from The Bible Project, how would you describe the general purpose of the book of James?
4. In what ways do you think that studying James may be challenging for your group? How about as an individual?
5. What promises will you look for or be hoping to hear in this letter?
6. Read 1:2-4 – *Note: “trials” and “testing” are from the Greek word peiramos which refers to challenging circumstances, not temptations.*
 - a. What should Christians expect?
 - b. What does James want for his fellow Christians?
 - c. How do you respond to trials? What would it look like to respond with joy? How do we see steadfastness play out in faith?
7. Read 1:5-8
 - a. What should Christians ask for? Whom should they ask?
 - b. What can we learn about God's character from His response?
 - c. Consider James' simile of the one who doubts and waves of the sea. How can doubt make a person “double-minded” and “unstable”?
 - d. When or where have you seen doubt in your own life?

Home Group Discussion Guide – The Book of James

8. Considering James 1:1-8, what truth about God can you hold on to and take into your week? Is there a specific promise that you find comforting or a truth you find challenging?

Conclude your time with a prayer of thanks for God's Word and any individual prayer requests shared with the group.

For additional information, consult your study Bible or http://www.executableoutlines.com/ja2/ja2_00.htm