



**VITALS**

**JAMES**

TERM 4  
2009

# James

## Term 4 2009

Week	Passage	Title
1	1:1-18	Thickening the Blood
2	1:19-27	Listen and Live
3	2:1-13	Beware the Stumbling Stone
4	2:14-26	Resuscitate Your Faith
5	3:1-18	Mouth To Mouth
6	4:1-12	Low Life
7	4:13-5:6	Warning!
8	5:7-12	Admit Patients Here
9	5:13-20	Pray Like Rain

**We want to encourage each other to be on mission to our non-Christian friends, family and contacts.**

Who are you on mission to?

Make a list and start praying for them (and yourself).

Pray for 3 friends, once a week, for 1 minute (3-1-1).

List the names of your family/friends here.

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# James guide

*How to use this book*

## 1. Personal Reading

- Use this guide to help you read your bible everyday.
- Scribble down your thoughts and questions each day and remember to pray and ask God to speak to you by His Spirit, through His word.

## 2. Growth Groups

- Take this guide with you to your growth group each week so you can write down prayer points that come from the study that week and prayer requests from the members of your group.
- Let your group know who you are on mission to.

## 3. Church

- Keep this guide with your bible and bring it with you to church.
- Scribble down sermon notes in the space provided.

## Introduction to the Book

The book of James plays a similar role in the New Testament that Proverbs does in the Old Testament. There are clear similarities between the two in the way James encourages Christians to gain true wisdom.

The letter tells us nothing about the author other than the title. It is most likely that the James who wrote this letter is the brother of Jesus. Although early on he misunderstood Jesus mission (Jn 7:2-5), it wasn't long before John became one of Jesus key followers. Peter referred to him as a 'pillar' of the church (Gal 2:9), and is clear that he became the leader of the Jerusalem church. The few early external references we have to the letter refer to the author as James the brother of Jesus.

There are some curiosities with James including the fact that there is no explicit reference to the gospel, and only a few references to Jesus. The passages about Jesus in the letter however show that it is written with a very strong Christ focused, gospel centred framework (1:1, 2:1, 5:7-8, 5:14-15). There have also been times in the history of the church when the place of this letter in the Bible has been questioned. The fact that James focuses on the place of works in the faith of the Christian, has been seen by some to be in tension with Paul's writings of the place of faith and works in the Christian life. James, like the wisdom writings in the Old Testament, may make few obvious references to God's saving acts but clearly assumes them as fact. The letter is unmistakably all about how Christians should live in response to their faith in Jesus.

The book was written in the mid 40's AD to a group of Christian Jews who had been scattered due to the persecution of the early church. It is written to a church under pressure. Acts tells us of Christians from Jerusalem who as they fled proclaimed the gospel firstly to Jews (Acts 11:19). James wanted his readers to unite together and help each other and not take the world's path and break into splinter groups.

James fills his letter with the teaching of Jesus. There is no better example in the New Testament of a church leader taking the Lord's teaching and applying it to church problems. James, it seems, is writing to these scattered Christians to encourage, rebuke and train them in Godliness.

The letter becomes a model for us in the modern church facing many similar issues on how we apply the teaching of Jesus.

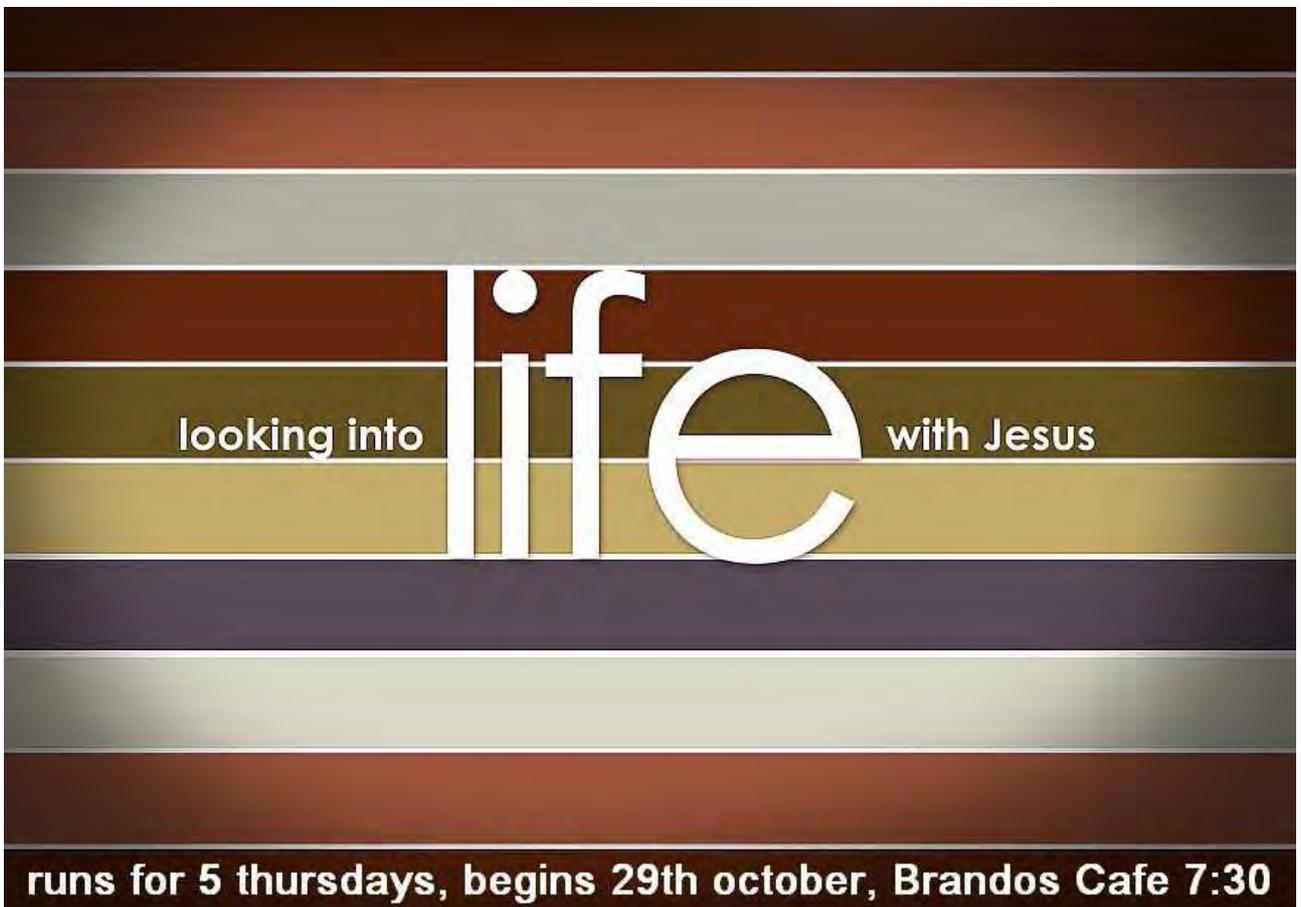




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**GOD'S BOOK, GOD'S PLAN**  
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5 mondays starting october 26th 7:30 - 9:30pm  
terrigan surf club



looking into **life** with Jesus

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## **WEEK 1 THICKENING THE BLOOD**

**James 1:1-18**

### **Day 1**

Read James 1:1-18

In the introductory notes we've already suggested the likely identity of James as a younger brother of the Lord Jesus. It is most likely his readers are mainly Jewish Christians who may well have been former members of James' congregation. They were scattered throughout the empire by the persecution that continually accompanied the gospel (Acts 8:1, 11:19). As a matter of care for these brothers and sisters James writes this letter.

1. What is happening in the lives of these believers?
2. 14 times in this letter James refers to his readers as 'my brothers'. It demonstrates his affection and warm pastoral concern. What does this passage indicate are God's goals for the believers in the midst of this great turmoil?
3. Do you pray for these goals to be part of the life of our church and for the Christians you know? Take time to pray for that now.

### **Day 2**

Read James 1:2-18.

Lots of people believe that when you become a Christian you reach a new part of life, where you are in tune with God and bad things won't happen to you any more. Should Christians ever suffer?

1. What do these verses teach Christians about suffering?

2. The right response to suffering requires wisdom, which God gives to those who ask. What kind of understanding will make us wise?(v's 13-18 esp).
3. Are you working at this indispensable wisdom? How?

**Pray** without doubting! Verse 6 has encouraged some to think that, for God to ever answer their prayers they must work themselves up into a special state of positive thinking. That's a misunderstanding of James' point. The doubting man in v 6 is described in v 8 as 'double-minded', this is a man who prays to God to be on the safe side-like he is hedging his bets. James point is that we can trust God wholeheartedly, and should do so especially here in times of trial. Pray for this wisdom trusting that God can and does provide for his people.

### Day 3

Read James 1:2-18

The Scriptures are clear that the wise man or woman is one who knows and fears the Lord (Job 28:28).

1. As a caring pastor, what does James teach his readers about God in this passage?
2. How are we tempted to respond to trials? How would the knowledge of God given here better strengthen you to face such a situation again?

**Pray** For God's strength to trust him and his goodness in the trials you are currently facing, and/or those that are coming.

## Day 4

Read James 1:12-15

Trials in the Christian life present an enormous opportunity to grow in maturity. That is why they are a cause for joy (v 2). This passage plays on a relationship between 'trials' and 'temptations'. The word 'trials' in v's 2 and 12 is the same word 'temptations' in v's 13 and 14. Trials may include situations of external hardship, even persecution which God allows for the purpose of refining his people (Pet 1:6, 4:12).

1. What seems to be the difference between trials and temptations in these verses?
2. How does this passage demonstrate the importance of the choices we make during times of hardship?
3. Are there choices you are making at the moment that need godly wisdom if you are to choose maturity over sin?

**Pray** That in the choices you are making at this time, that that you will actively seek God's wisdom and that he will provide it. Pray that the decisions you make will be pleasing to him.

## Day 5

Read James 1:16-18

Lack of wisdom in the middle of hardship can cause us to blame God and doubt his goodness. James wants us to know the seriousness of this mistake so he warns us against the danger of being deceived.

1. How does James' description of God provide comfort and courage for all Christians?

2. What birth does James have in mind in v 18?  
(The following may help- check out Rom 8:19-23)

**Pray** Give thanks that God is good. Praise him that he has chosen us to be the firstfruits of the eternal life to come.

## Prayer Points and Notes

## WEEK 2 LISTEN AND LIVE

### JAMES 1:19-27

One of the challenges in reading James is the apparently random way ideas are presented. You may have noticed during last week's reading however, that there is a central idea around which others fit. Today's reading begins with the phrase 'My dear brothers' which is often a signal in this letter of the transition to a new topic. Immediately before, he has spoken of the 'new birth'. James now shows that this experience should show itself in conduct. Central to this section is the exhortation to be 'doers of the word' not merely listeners (V22).

### Day 1

Read James 1:19-27

1. What does James tell them to do? (Are there linking words or common themes that tie these 3 paragraphs together?)
2. What obstacles are there to the word taking root in our lives which are suggested here?

**Pray** Ask God to keep you alert to act against these things which can stop his word impacting our lives.

### Day 2

Read James 1:19-21

The way in which we live our lives is strongly shaped by our view of God and our attitude to Him. In authentic Christianity our attitude to God is directly related to the manner in which we treat the Bible. Consider God's words in Isaiah 66:2 "This is the one I esteem: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word".

1. In v's 18-21, what has God done to bring about our salvation? What attitudes are contrasted in v's 19-21?
  
2. V 21 commands our right response to God's saving work:
  - a) What will humble acceptance look like in practice both generally and for you?
  
  - b) What activities will this attitude prevent?

**Pray** That by Gods strength you will accept his word and rid yourself of anger and moral filth in your life.

## Day 3

Read James 1:21-25

1. What warning is contained in these verses?
  
2. What encouragement?

James' Jewish background is never far from his thinking. Notice in v 25 his description of the gospel word as the perfect law that gives freedom. As a Jew who followed the Old Testament law, there is great joy for him in the fulfilment of the OT Law in the 'perfect law' of the gospel.

3. The words 'look intently into' translate a Greek word which means to 'look bent over'. What is implied by this? What changes do you need to make in your bible reading habits?

**Pray** Commit yourself before the Lord to be a believer who loves to know more and more about the word of God and who lives it more and more.

## Day 4

Read James 1:26-27

The words translated 'religion' in v 26 and 27 mean 'the outward expression of faith'. These were words used widely in Greek religion. James' point is that the true test of our claim to be a Christian is not in the outward rituals of worship but in obedience.

1. What tests of true religion does James give in these verses? How do you need to work at these areas? How can you practically put them in place in your life over the next month?

James is deeply concerned by the issue of the uncontrolled tongue. It will come up again at length in Chapter 3 and in 4:11-12. Likewise the problem of worldliness among his readers is one that matters greatly.

2. In what ways are you aware of the effects of the world negatively affecting your life as a Christian? What action can you take?

**Pray** Pray that God will strengthen you in your determination to live a life which honours him in action.

## Day 5

Read James 1:26-27 and Isaiah 1:10-17

In the Old Testament, care for orphans and widows was commanded in imitation of God's own concern for them. In Psalm 68:5 he is described as 'the Father of the fatherless and protector of widows'. The orphan and widow in the Old Testament are key examples of all those who are needy, helpless and vulnerable in the world.

1. What kinds of worship are contrasted in these verses?

2. What further advice does the New Testament give in this matter?  
1Tim 5:3-8, Gal 6:9,10.
  
3. Consider those 'helpless' or needy ones among and around us. How can you help them? (Be concrete...consider joining the various groups in our church that help in this area, e.g. Helping Hand, Meals Ministry)

**Pray** Pray that we will be a church that is pleasing to God in the way we care for those in need. Pray that your life will be a living example of someone who looks those in need.

## Prayer Points and Notes

## WEEK 3      BEWARE THE STUMBLING STONE

### JAMES 2:1-13

The passage for this week is tightly linked to last week's. Last week James reminded us of the foolishness of hearing the Word and not doing it. The key point with which that chapter finished is the subject of this week's reading:- that genuine Christianity is demonstrated by its works.

### Day 1

Read James 2:1-13

James is a very practical letter, full of simple commands. Its important to realise though that this is not legalism but the impact the gospel should have on our lives as God's children. See how James' other commands (e.g. prayer) spring from the character and purposes of God.

1. The key command here is easy: "...don't show favouritism."  
What reasons are given for this command in -
  - a) v's 5-7
  
  - b) v's 8-13.

The fact that some Christians were acting as 'judges' with evil thoughts (v 4) is at one level an example of listening to the word but not doing what it says. At a deeper level however, it reveals a more profound problem!

2. Why do you show favouritism? Why is it so offensive to God?

**Pray** for forgiveness for the times you have shown undue favouritism at the expense of the poor in the eyes of the world'. Ask God to give you a loving heart for the unloved.

## Day 2

Read James 2:5-7

Should Christians ever judge anything? Of course! (Matt 7:1-6). Our problem is that by nature our judgements tend to be based on the wrong criteria.

1. How is this point made in v 5? Also check out 1 Cor. 1:26-29. What is wrong with the criteria we normally choose to judge people by?
2. What judgement or choices have you been making - (especially those concerned with people)? Are they based on godly or worldly thinking? How would church be different if we followed James' command?

**Pray** for Godly wisdom and insight for the choices and judgements you make. Pray that our church will be full of godly people living together in this way.

## Day 3

Read James 2:1-7

1. What is it about wealth and poverty that mean we can create distinctions in our mind and attitude between people?
2. James here refers to the situation where a person is judged according to externals. What is the reality of the internal situation of the poor and rich in his example?

3. Does the financial situation, social background etc of someone affect the way you treat them?

**Pray** for a heart that sees all people the way God does.

## Day 4

Read James 2: 8-13

In this section James is making an important point about sin.

1. What is the 'royal law' he is referring to here? (see also Lev 19:18; Matt 22:37-39)
2. How can breaking the law at one point mean you have broken it all? (v 10). How is that the case in what James is talking about here?
3. How does this help us understand the impact of our sin?

**Pray** that you will recognise the prevalence of your sin and God's response to it.

## Day 5

Read James 12-13

God's gracious acceptance of us in Christ does not end our obligation to obey him. Now we are free to serve, we are freed from sin and given the power to serve him.

1. What then does it mean to be judged by the law that gives perfect freedom?

2. What is the link between God's mercy and the mercy we show to others? (see also Matt 25:31-46)

**Pray** Give thanks for mercy in Christ and pray for a similar heart of mercy.

## **MISSION PARTNERS at SATURDAY EV**

EV is committed to the proclamation of the gospel all over the world. For your and your group's prayers, here are SaturdayEV's Mission Partners.

### **Chris and Sharon Ekins (Coast Evangelical Church, Forster)**



Chris and Sharon moved up to Forster to begin a church there in early 2009. They were convicted of the great need up there for more Bible teaching churches, especially ones that are accessible to those with little or no church background.

Praise God, their launch at Easter this year was successful, and they've now got about 25 adults and 10 kids who call Coast EC home; and 6 boys coming to the youth group. Pray that God would continue to grow His church and save many, as they pray, invest in relationships, share the gospel, and teach the Bible. Check out [www.coastec.net.au/category/prayer/](http://www.coastec.net.au/category/prayer/) for more.

## Prayer Points and Notes

## Week 4 RESUSCITATE THE FAITH

James 2:14-26

### Day 1

Read 2: 14-19

1. What is the main point James is making in 14-19?
2. How does it work that our deeds are evidence of our faith?
3. Is it obvious to others that you have a faith in God which impacts your actions?

**Pray** for opportunities to express your faith in the things you do for people at home, work etc.

### Day 2

Read James 2:14-26.

This passage is the climax of his argument about genuine Christianity. At stake here is the nature of true faith. The passage may surprise you. It has important things to say about the place of works in the Christian life but things that at first glance seem to differ with the apostle Paul. Do they differ? Let's see!

1. How would you sum up James' main point in these verses? Is there a key verse?

2. James writes this part of the letter in a style that introduces an imaginary objector. Try to describe the viewpoint of this opponent about faith and works?

Note: This issue is very important! Is the view you have described above the view of the apostle Paul? (see Eph 2:8-10).

**Pray** praising God that faith in Jesus is not dry and theoretical, but a truth which results in action.

## Day 3

Read Romans 3:1, 19-30

Have you ever had the experience of a Jehovah's Witness showing up at your door? Young Christians often comment on how well those from the cults know the Bible and how persuasive their arguments are. Or again, have you heard the common non-Christian complaint that the Bible contradicts itself? Don't be fooled on either account. These are both examples of the problem that arises when a Bible verse is not read in context. That is largely the problem people have with James Chapter 2.

1. Compare James 2:24 and Rom 3:28. Describe the apparent contradiction.

Remember James has been concerned with the issue of genuine Christianity, so he talks about genuine faith. His 'imaginary opponent' seems to be the person who has intellectual belief but nothing else (2:19).

2. a) What seems to be the problem with Paul's imaginary opponent in Romans 3?

b) What does Paul seem to mean by works (v's 19-21; 27-28).

**Pray** giving thanks and praise to God that we are saved through Christ alone, that it is only by his incredible grace that we can be saved.

## Day 4

Read James 2:18-26; Joshua 2:1-13

‘We are saved by faith (in Christ) alone, but saving faith is never alone’. That is, genuine God-given faith always shows itself in works. Eph 2:8-10; Rom 6:15ff; Titus 2:11-14. That in essence has been James’ argument.

1. What examples of imitation and genuine faith are given in James 2:18-26?
2. In Joshua 2:1-13 what prompts Rahab to hide the spies?
3. How does James’ argument concerning genuine faith challenge you?

**Pray** that your faith will be obvious in the way you live as a child of God.

## Day 5

It is not accurate to speak of a tension between the teaching of Paul and James, there is just a difference in approach. Paul’s teaching can be misinterpreted to suggest that salvation has no impact on the actions of a Christian (see Rom 6:1,15 where he refutes this).

Re-read James 2:14-26

1. How has this section shaped the way you think about your faith and your actions?
2. What do we learn about God from this section?
3. What practical action have you resolved to take in response to the challenge of this passage?

**Pray** giving thanks for the faith we have in Christ, that it shapes and moulds us to be more like him in every way.

## Prayer Points and Notes

## WEEK 5                      MOUTH TO MOUTH

### JAMES 3:1-18

The emphasis of James' letter suggests that he is deeply concerned with the impact of worldly living on the life of the Christian community. There is a lack of godly wisdom among them which has led to arrogance, rather than humble acceptance of the word planted in them (1:21) The symptoms of this problem are evident throughout the letter :

Joyless complaining in the midst of their trials (Ch 1),  
disregard of the needy (Ch 2)  
favouritism (Ch 2)  
bitter criticising speech (Ch 3)  
quarrelling (Ch 4 )  
and oppression of their brothers by the wealthy (Ch 5).

### Day 1

Read James 3:1-12

The overall message is clear. Be careful how you use your tongue.

1. Try to summarise the point of the illustrations in v's 3-6.
2. What is the point of v's 9-12?
3. Read proverbs 11 for some wisdom on how to use your tongue.

**Pray** that you may use your tongue to build not destroy others.

## Day 2

Read James 3:1-2

1. Why will teachers be judged more strictly? See also Luke 12:48; Mark 12:40.
2. How is v 2 ("if anyone is never at fault...") both an encouragement and a warning?

**Pray** for those in various leadership roles in EV that they remain faithful to the word of God. Give thanks that forgiveness is found in Jesus when we stumble.

## Day 3

Read James 3:3-6

In verses 3 & 4, the illustrations focus on, how a small part can control a very much larger object. A similar point is made in v 6.

1. How can it be that the tongue corrupts the whole person (v 6)?

James doesn't spell out the ways in which the tongue can wreak its destructive effects but it was a frequent theme of the Proverb writer.

2. What sins of speech are described by the following?:

Prov. 10:18;  
Prov. 12:18;  
Prov. 12:19;  
Prov. 18:20-21

3. In what area(s) of speech do you need to take more care?

**Pray** that the words that come out of your mouth will be pleasing and honouring to our Lord.

## Day 4

Read James 3:7-12

1. What point is James making with the illustrations in v's 11 & 12?
2. As we'd expect, James often demonstrates great familiarity with the teachings of Jesus. How do the following words from Jesus help to clarify what is being taught by James? (Matt 12:33-35; Mark 7:17-23.)
3. How do the teachings of James and Jesus offer hope (and reality!) to those who have been given new birth through the word of truth? (James 1:18).

**Pray** praising God with your words now, for everything he gives us.

## Day 5

Read James 3:1-18

The difficulty of Christian life is that we are renewed men and women who retain sinful hearts and habits of life that die hard. The wider context of Chapter 3 should help us see that there is hope, however, for Christians who need not be the miserable slaves of our tongues.

1. For you, what heart attitudes often give rise to harmful speech?

2. What wisdom have you learned from James this week that will help guard your mouth against destructive speech? (Consider also James 1:19-20; Prov 4:23).

**Pray** For wisdom and godliness in your thoughts and wisdom.

## Prayer Points and Notes

## WEEK 6    LOW LIFE

### JAMES 4:1-12

#### Day 1

Read James 3:13 - 4:12

1.    What words seem to be repeated throughout this passage?
  
2.    What is the connection between these things in the passage?

**Pray** for heavenly wisdom in the way you think, the decisions you make and things you do.

#### Day 2

Read James 3:13 - 4:12

1.    What is wisdom? What is the key to becoming wise?
  
2.    There are two kinds of wisdom described in the passage. What are the marks and results of each.
  - i)
  
  - ii)
  
3.    Consider the qualities of heavenly wisdom in v's 17-18. Which do you most need to pray for and work at?

**Pray** that you will have the wisdom and desire to live out these things.

## **Day 3**

Read James 4:1-6

There are battles here, within and without (v's 1-2).

1. How does James describe the real battle in this passage?
2. Why does he call them 'adulterous people'?
3. Yesterday we considered the marks of worldly wisdom. Today see if you can find the attitudes in v's 1-3 that are point to worldliness. Are you worldly?

**Pray** that God will enable you to turn away from this.

## **Day 4**

Read James 4:4-10

These people have been worldly, earthly, unspiritual, and of the devil (v's 3:15). Their "wisdom" is completely opposite to the wisdom which comes from God. In Old Testament style language James reveals their sin and now calls them back to repentance.

1. How is God pictured in v's 4-6?
2. What solution does James offer these people? See also Prov. 3:34; Luke 6:24-26; Matt 5:4.

3. What will it mean for you to humble yourself before the Lord? (v 10).

**Pray** asking God to change you, that you might turn away from what the world offers and trust completely in him.

## Day 5

Read James 4:11-12

These verses are a reminder of earlier themes (2:8-13; 3:1ff). What a warning this is to us of the danger of allowing worldly thinking to poison the community of God's people. Jealous, critical speech is a temptation to everyone but especially in the Christian community (see Rom 14:1-13) since we expect more of one another.

1. Answer the following "yes" or "no"!  
Is your speech often-

slanderous?  
generous?  
wise?  
constructive?

2. What steps can you put in place to help you to change to be generous, big hearted, kind and merciful in your speech?

**Pray** that God would help you to change to be generous, big hearted, kind and merciful in your speech!

## Prayer Points and Notes

## **WEEK 7                      WARNING!**

### **JAMES 4:13-5:6**

The Christian world-view is unique. It brings an urgency to all of life. God is present and always at work. He is overseeing history and more to the point in the arrival of Jesus, history has been brought to THE end. How then should we live?

### **Day 1**

Read James 4:13-5:6

1. In 5:1-6 what parts of this passage suggest a sudden and imminent change on the horizon?
2. What attitudes does James seem to charge the unwise with in 4:13-5:6?
3. We are living in the last days. We have been since the arrival of Jesus (Heb 1:1-2). What impact has this truth made on you? What impact should it make?

**Pray** for a generous heart that seeks treasure in heaven. Ask for forgiveness for the times you have been more like the rich people in this section.

### **Day 2**

Read James 4:13-17

1. What assumptions seem to underlie the thinking of those pictured in v's 13-17?
2. In essence, what does James say needs to change about their attitude?
3. How does the continual recognition of God's sovereignty and our lack of control affect your approach to life?

**Pray** thanking God that you can trust him with his plans for your life. Pray that he will enable you to trust him in areas that you may be struggling with at the moment.

## Day 3

Read James 5:1-6

James begins with a sharp command 'Now listen'. Has he got your attention? Today's reading begins with the same note of urgency. Arrogance is the underlying theme and since by the world's standards many of us are astonishingly wealthy, such arrogance is a danger for us. Wealth of course is not evil in and of itself, indeed all of the gold and silver belongs to God (Hag 2:8) and the cattle on a thousand hills are His (Psalm 50:10). The problem is with our sinful nature.

1. With what crimes are the wealthy charged in these verses?
2. What examples do you see of the arrogance that is prompted by wealth?

3. 'You have hoarded wealth in the last days' (5:13). It is a frightening charge. How can you make plans to ensure that this is not true of you?

**Pray** that the Holy Spirit will continually convict you of the lurking dangers of wealth. Ask him for a generous heart that delights in being generous.

## Day 4

Read Amos 9

James charged the wealthy to whom he was writing with hoarding "wealth in the last days". James wasn't, as some believe, simply deluded into thinking that Jesus return would certainly occur in a matter of weeks- a conviction which he was forced to modify as the first-century wore on. Instead he shared with the other N.T. writers a common conviction about the impact of the appearance of Jesus on history.

The "last days" or sometimes the "day of the Lord" or simply "that day" is a key concept in the scriptures. In the O.T. it was the long awaited and distant day that would signal Yahweh's personal and glorious intervention at the end of history to establish His rule over all humanity. However with the coming of Jesus something extra-ordinary has taken place.

1. In Amos 9 what events take place "..in that day" (9:11)
2. Where do the N.T. writers see these events fulfilled? see Acts 15:12-19

**Pray** We live in an incredible stage in history, having seen the arrival of the Messiah, and now we await his return. Give thanks for the privilege of being his people at this time, as we long for his return.

## Day 5

1. What do the following passages suggest about the last days?

see 1 Peter 1:5,20, Matt 12:28; Luke 17:20,21; John 1:14; John 12:31; Heb 9:26

2. How do these statements about the last days shape your thinking about the life you lead now?

**Pray** That you may live a life that is different because we live in the end times.

## Prayer Points and Notes

## **WEEK 8                    ADMIT PATIENTS HERE**

**James 5:7-12**

### **Day 1**

Read James 5:7-11

1. What expressions suggest a sudden and imminent change on the horizon?
2. What are we encouraged to do in this time and what are we encouraged not to do (vs 7-8)?
3. How is the call to be patient a helpful reminder to you? How is the fact that the Lord's return is near a comfort for you?

**Pray** for patience as we wait his return and wisdom to live godly lives with one another as we wait.

### **Day 2**

Read James 5:4-11

1. Who do you imagine is addressed in Vs 7ff? How are they to respond to their circumstances?
2. Why do you think grumbling against each other may have been an issue as they waited for the Lord to come?

3. What pressures as we wait for the Lords return might cause us to grumble against each other as Christians and what can you do to stop them?

**Pray** that God will give us everything we need to cope with the pressures of Christian life as we await his return.

## **Day 3**

Read Psalm 37:1-24

1. What are the key struggles for the person of God?
2. What are the great encouragements?
3. What is most encouraging to you in your situation?

**Pray** giving thanks for the faithfulness of God to his people throughout the ages.

## **Day 4**

Read James 5:10-11

1. Why is it often hard to give thanks to God in the time of suffering?
2. Why is Job held up as an example of someone who persevered (see Job 1:20-22 especially)?

3. Do you have a godly, Job like perspective of the suffering you might be going through at the moment?

**Pray** that you may trust God at the difficult and painful time in your life, as Job did.

## **Day 5**

Read Hebrews 11

1. What did the people remembered in this chapter do that was so commendable?
2. What did they look forward to in their times of suffering and hardship?
3. How are we included in the blessings they will receive? (see v40)

**Pray** Thank God for the witness of those faithful men and women who have come before us and by their witness shown God to be trustworthy in trials.

## Prayer Points and Notes

## WEEK 9                      PRAY LIKE RAIN

### JAMES 5:12-20

How would you conclude a letter to believers such as these? Pounded by trials from the outside and conflicts within; tempted by the pleasures and values of the world, exploited by the wealthy among them and tempted through it all to blame God! Listen to James who ends this letter as he begun.

### Day 1

Read James 5:7-20

1. The same Greek word for suffering actually occurs in v's 10 & 13  
What does James encourage in those who are suffering?
2. What response does he encourage in those who are happy?
3. Many of us struggle with prayer –even though we know we shouldn't. Why do you find prayer difficult?
4. What practical steps could you put in place to make prayer more a part of your day?

**Pray** for the desire to pray, especially when we are suffering and don't feel like it.

## Day 2

Read James 5: 12

The instruction in v 12 continues the theme of the misuse of the tongue. To swear in this verse is not bad language but the use of oaths

1. Does it look like v 12 is stuck out on its own? How do you think it might fit into the context?
2. Let your Yes be yes, and your No, no. Faithfulness is a essential character of God. As a child of God are you reliable in your speech? Can you be trusted to do what you say?

**Pray** for opportunities to be faithful in your speech.

## Day 3

Read James 5:13-20

What is your usual response to sickness? Sometimes it depends on whether or not you're the one who is sick!

1. In what ways are we called to help others?
2. In the passage what things suggest a connection between sin and sickness?

3. James reminds us that healing comes from God. While believers should be bold in praying for healing, the prayer of faith submits to the will of God. (4.15, Matt 6.10)  
Is prayer to God your first response to sickness? Why / why not?

**Pray** For those you know who are suffering sickness at the moment that God may choose to heal them.

## Day 4

Read James 5:13-17 and 1 Cor. 11:20-33

1. Sickness exists in the world as a result of Adam's sin; it affects us all. Can sickness ever be caused however, directly and specifically by sin? (See John 5:14; 1 Cor. 11:27-30).

The ministry of Elijah was one of calling a nation who have deserted God, back to Him. As an act of direct judgement for their sins, Israel suffered three years of drought.

2. What sin existed among the congregation James was addressing?
3. What is the godly response to sickness?

**Pray** – repent of the sin in your life that God is making obvious to you at the moment, knowing that those who trust in Jesus for their forgiveness will be forgiven.

## Day 5

Read James 5:17-20

It is very typical of James that he closes his letter with a call to loving action. It is the urgent plea of the pastor who cares for the souls of those in his congregation and works that they be saved (compare V's 15,20).

1. How can we be involved in helping bring back those who wander from the truth? What does James say?
2. '...and cover over a multitude of sins'. Whose sins do you think will be covered?
3. Have you friends who are wandering from the truth? What action can you take? List them here and pray for them now.

## Prayer Points and Notes











The New Testament teaches us to give generously, regularly and joyfully – please join with us to reach coastal people for Christ.

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**SATURDAYEV**