

FAITH THAT WORKS

12-WEEK STUDY THROUGH JAMES

RESOLVED MINISTRIES FOUNDATION



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APPENDIX B: FAMILY DEVOTIONALS

Lesson 1: A Faith That Endures

James 1:1–11

Summary:

This week we learned that trials are not punishments—they are God’s tools to grow our faith. When we face hard things with the right heart, God produces endurance in us. We can count it all joy when we go through hardships, because God is working in us. He is making us strong, wise, and faithful.

Scripture Memory Verse

“Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.”
— James 1:2–3 (ESV)

Keach’s Catechism Tie-Ins

Q. 1. Who is the first and chiefest being?

A. God is the first and chiefest being. (Isaiah 44:6; Psalm 97:9)

Q. 11. What are God’s works of providence?

A. God’s works of providence are His most holy, wise, and powerful preserving and governing all His creatures and all their actions. (Psalm 103:19; Matthew 10:29–31)

Q. 39. What shall be done to the righteous at the day of judgment?

A. At the day of judgment, the righteous shall be openly acknowledged and acquitted, and shall be made perfectly blessed both in soul and body in the full enjoying of God to all eternity. (Matthew 10:32; Matthew 25:34; 1 Corinthians 15:42–43)

Discussion Questions:

1. What is one trial you’ve experienced that helped you grow?
2. Why does James tell us to rejoice in hard times?
3. What does it mean that God is producing endurance in us?
4. How can we help each other remember to trust God when it’s hard?

Recommended Reading

John MacArthur

- *James: MacArthur New Testament Commentary* – Chapter 1
- Sermon: “How to Face Trials with Joy” (Grace to You)

Ligonier Ministries

- R.C. Sproul – “Joy in Suffering” (Sermon on James 1:2–4)
- Sinclair Ferguson – “The Christian and Trials” (Devotional excerpt)

Puritan / Reformer

- Thomas Manton, *Exposition of James* – Sermon 2, “Count It All Joy”
- William Perkins – *A Godly and Learned Exposition upon James 1*, esp. on verses 2–3

Lesson 2: Blessed Through the Test

James 1:12–18

Summary:

God never tempts us to sin. Though trials may come, the temptation to do wrong comes from our own sinful desires. God, on the other hand, only gives good and perfect gifts. He is our unchanging Father who gives us life and light. When we fight temptation, we must look to Him for strength and remember the reward that He has promised to those who love Him—the crown of life.

Scripture Memory Verse

“Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him.”

— James 1:12 (ESV)

Keach’s Catechism Tie-Ins

Q. 12. What special act of providence did God exercise toward man in the estate wherein he was created?

A. When God had created man, He entered into a covenant of life with him upon condition of perfect obedience. (Genesis 2:16–17; Romans 5:12–14)

Q. 18. Wherein consists the sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell?

A. The sinfulness of that estate consists in the guilt of Adam’s first sin, the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature. (Romans 3:10–19; Ephesians 2:1–3)

Q. 21. Who is the Redeemer of God’s elect?

A. The only Redeemer of God’s elect is the Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Timothy 2:5–6; Acts 4:12)

Discussion Questions:

1. What is the difference between a trial and a temptation?
2. Why can we trust that God never tempts us to sin?
3. What are some “good and perfect gifts” God gives us?
4. How can we encourage one another to stay faithful during hard times?

Recommended Reading

John MacArthur

- *James: MacArthur New Testament Commentary* – Commentary on James 1:12–18
- Sermon: “God Never Tempts Us to Sin” (Grace to You)

Ligonier Ministries

- R.C. Sproul – “The Source of Temptation”
- Sinclair Ferguson – “Temptation and the Christian Life”

Puritan / Reformer

- Thomas Manton – *Exposition of James* on verses 12–15
- John Owen – *Of Temptation: The Nature and Power of It* (esp. chapters 1–3)

Lesson 3: Doers of the Word

James 1:19–27

Summary:

God’s Word is not just something to listen to—it is something to obey. James tells us that listening without action is like looking in a mirror and forgetting what we saw. Real faith listens carefully and then lives faithfully. God wants us to be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger. And true religion includes loving others and keeping ourselves pure from the world.

Scripture Memory Verse

“But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.”
— James 1:22 (ESV)

Keach’s Catechism Tie-Ins

Q. 45. What is the duty which God requireth of man?

A. The duty which God requireth of man is obedience to His revealed will. (Micah 6:8; 1 Samuel 15:22)

Q. 46. What did God at first reveal to man for the rule of his obedience?

A. The rule revealed to man for his obedience was the moral law. (Romans 2:14–15; Romans 10:5)

Q. 91. What is the duty of man after receiving the Word?

A. It is to receive it with faith and love, lay it up in our hearts, and practice it in our lives. (Psalm 119:11; Luke 8:15; James 1:22)

Discussion Questions:

1. What does James say about how we should listen and speak?
2. Why is hearing without doing a kind of deception?
3. What is “true religion” according to James?
4. How can we put God’s Word into action this week as a family?

Recommended Reading

John MacArthur

- *James: MacArthur New Testament Commentary* – Commentary on James 1:19–27
- Sermon: “True Religion: Hearing and Doing” (Grace to You)

Ligonier Ministries

- R.C. Sproul – “The Power of God’s Word”
- Sinclair Ferguson – “Putting the Word into Practice”

Puritan / Reformer

- Thomas Manton – *Exposition of James* on verses 19–27
- Richard Baxter – *A Christian Directory* (on hearing and obeying the Word)

Lesson 4: No Partiality in the Church

James 2:1–13

Summary:

In the church, there is no place for favoritism. God shows no partiality, and neither should we. James reminds us that rich and poor, young and old—all are to be treated with honor. When we judge by outward appearance, we disobey the second greatest command—to love our neighbor. True love flows from God’s mercy and leads us to show mercy to others.

Scripture Memory Verse

“If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself,’ you are doing well.”
— James 2:8 (ESV)

Keach’s Catechism Tie-Ins

Q. 64. What is required in the sixth commandment?

A. The sixth commandment requires all lawful endeavors to preserve our own life and the life of others. (Ephesians 4:25–32)

Q. 68. What is required in the eighth commandment?

A. The eighth commandment requires the lawful procuring and furthering the wealth and outward estate of ourselves and others. (Ephesians 4:28)

Q. 74. What is required in the tenth commandment?

A. The tenth commandment requires full contentment with our own condition, with a right and charitable frame of spirit toward our neighbor and all that is his. (1 Timothy 6:6; Romans 12:15)

Discussion Questions:

1. What does it mean to show partiality?
2. How does favoritism break God’s law?
3. Why should we treat everyone with dignity in the church?
4. What is one way we can show mercy to someone this week?

Recommended Reading

John MacArthur

- *James: MacArthur New Testament Commentary* – Commentary on James 2:1–13
- Sermon: “The Sin of Partiality” (Grace to You)

Ligonier Ministries

- Robert Godfrey – “The Church Without Favoritism”
- Sinclair Ferguson – “The Royal Law of Love”

Puritan / Reformer

- Thomas Manton – *Exposition of James* on verses 1–13
- John Calvin – *Commentary on James* (on equality in the church)

Lesson 5: Faith Without Works Is Dead

James 2:14–26

Summary:

Real faith shows itself in action. James doesn't say that we are saved by works—but that genuine faith always produces fruit. A faith that never obeys, never acts in love, and never sacrifices is not living faith at all. Just as a body without breath is dead, so is a belief that does not lead to action. Abraham and Rahab are both examples of faith that moved.

Scripture Memory Verse

“For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.”

— James 2:26 (ESV)

Keach's Catechism Tie-Ins

Q. 33. What is justification?

A. Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein He pardoneth all our sins and accepteth us as righteous in His sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us and received by faith alone. (Romans 3:24; 2 Corinthians 5:21)

Q. 36. What is sanctification?

A. Sanctification is the work of God's free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God and are enabled more and more to die unto sin and live unto righteousness. (1 Thessalonians 5:23; Romans 6:4–6)

Q. 91. What is the duty of man after receiving the Word?

A. It is to receive it with faith and love, lay it up in our hearts, and practice it in our lives. (Psalm 119:11; Luke 8:15; James 1:22)

Discussion Questions:

1. What is the difference between being saved by faith and proving faith through works?
2. Why does James use Abraham and Rahab as examples of faith?
3. What are some ways our family can live by faith this week?
4. How can we encourage one another toward obedience?

Recommended Reading

John MacArthur

- *James: MacArthur New Testament Commentary* – Commentary on James 2:14–26
- Sermon: “Living Faith vs. Dead Faith” (Grace to You)

Ligonier Ministries

- R.C. Sproul – “What Is Saving Faith?”
- Derek Thomas – “Faith That Works” (Sermon on James 2)

Puritan / Reformer

- Thomas Manton – *Exposition of James* on verses 14–26
- Jonathan Edwards – *The Nature of True Virtue*

Lesson 6: Taming the Tongue

James 3:1–12

Summary:

Our words are powerful. James says they're like a fire, a rudder, and a spring—all able to shape or destroy. The same tongue can bless and curse, which should not be so for a follower of Christ. God cares deeply about how we speak—to others and about others. Our words reveal what's going on in our hearts. Taming the tongue is part of following Jesus.

Scripture Memory Verse

“From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so.”

—James 3:10 (ESV)

Keach's Catechism Tie-Ins

Q. 75. What is forbidden in the ninth commandment?

A. The ninth commandment forbids whatsoever is prejudicial to truth or injurious to our own or our neighbor's good name. (Leviticus 19:16; Ephesians 4:31)

Q. 68. What is required in the eighth commandment?

A. The eighth commandment requires the lawful procuring and furthering the wealth and outward estate of ourselves and others. (Ephesians 4:28)

Q. 46. What did God at first reveal to man for the rule of his obedience?

A. The rule revealed to man for his obedience was the moral law. (Romans 2:14–15)

Discussion Questions:

1. Why are our words so powerful?
2. What examples does James give for the power of the tongue?
3. How do our words show what's in our hearts?
4. What can we do to speak more like Jesus?

Recommended Reading

John MacArthur

- *James: MacArthur New Testament Commentary* – Commentary on James 3:1–12
- Sermon: “The Destructive Power of the Tongue” (Grace to You)

Ligonier Ministries

- Sinclair Ferguson – “The Tongue and the Heart”
- Robert Godfrey – “Words Matter”

Puritan / Reformer

- Thomas Manton – *Exposition of James* on verses 1–12
- Richard Sibbes – *The Evil Tongue* (sermon series)

Lesson 7: Two Kinds of Wisdom

James 3:13–18

Summary:

There are two kinds of wisdom: worldly wisdom that is full of selfishness and pride, and heavenly wisdom that reflects God's peace and purity. James teaches us that the wisdom from above is gentle, merciful, sincere, and full of good fruit. We can know which kind of wisdom we are following by what it produces. Are we sowing peace or conflict? Are we living for self or for Christ?

Scripture Memory Verse

"But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere."

— James 3:17 (ESV)

Keach's Catechism Tie-Ins

Q. 2. Ought everyone to believe there is a God?

A. Everyone ought to believe there is a God; and it is their great sin and folly who do not. (Psalm 14:1; Hebrews 11:6)

Q. 39. What shall be done to the righteous at the day of judgment?

A. At the day of judgment, the righteous shall be openly acknowledged and acquitted, and shall be made perfectly blessed in the full enjoyment of God forever. (Matthew 25:34; 1 Thessalonians 4:17)

Q. 91. What is the duty of man after receiving the Word?

A. It is to receive it with faith and love, lay it up in our hearts, and practice it in our lives. (Psalm 119:11; Luke 8:15; James 1:22)

Discussion Questions:

1. What is the difference between wisdom from above and wisdom from below?
2. How can you tell which kind of wisdom someone is living by?
3. What fruit does godly wisdom produce in our lives?
4. How can our family grow in godly wisdom?

Recommended Reading

John MacArthur

- *James: MacArthur New Testament Commentary* – Commentary on James 3:13–18
- Sermon: “Wisdom from Above” (Grace to You)

Ligonier Ministries

- Sinclair Ferguson – “Godly Wisdom vs. Worldly Wisdom”
- R.C. Sproul – “True Wisdom” (sermon excerpt)

Puritan / Reformer

- Thomas Manton – *Exposition of James* on verses 13–18
- Jeremiah Burroughs – *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment* (on wisdom and humility)

Lesson 8: Submit Yourselves to God

James 4:1–12

Summary:

Quarrels and fights often come from our sinful desires. James teaches us that friendship with the world makes us enemies of God. But He gives more grace. The way to grow strong in the Lord is not by fighting for our own way—but by submitting to Him, resisting the devil, and drawing near to God in humility. When we humble ourselves, God lifts us up.

Scripture Memory Verse

“Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.”
— James 4:10 (ESV)

Keach’s Catechism Tie-Ins

Q. 13. Did our first parents continue in the estate wherein they were created?

A. No; but fell from that estate by sinning against God. (Genesis 3:6–8, 13; Romans 5:12)

Q. 35. What is adoption?

A. Adoption is an act of God’s free grace whereby we are received into the number and have a right to all the privileges of the sons of God. (John 1:12; Romans 8:17)

Q. 81. What is required in the first commandment?

A. The first commandment requires us to know and acknowledge God to be the only true God and our God, and to worship and glorify Him accordingly. (Deuteronomy 6:4–5; Matthew 4:10)

Discussion Questions:

1. Why does James say we fight and quarrel?
2. What does it mean to be a friend of the world?
3. How can our family draw near to God this week?
4. What is one way each person can humble themselves before God?

Recommended Reading

John MacArthur

- *James: MacArthur New Testament Commentary* – Commentary on James 4:1–12
- Sermon: “Humbling Yourself Before God” (Grace to You)

Ligonier Ministries

- Derek Thomas – “Resisting the Devil”
- R.C. Sproul – “God Resists the Proud”

Puritan / Reformer

- Thomas Manton – *Exposition of James* on verses 1–12
- Thomas Watson – *The Godly Man’s Picture* (chapter on humility)

Lesson 9: Boasting About Tomorrow

James 4:13–17

Summary:

We don't know what tomorrow will bring. James warns us not to boast about our plans, as if we're in control. Instead, we should live each day with humble dependence on the Lord's will. When we know what is right but fail to do it, that too is sin. God calls us to live each day by faith, trusting His providence and obeying His Word.

Scripture Memory Verse

“Instead you ought to say, ‘If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that.’”
— James 4:15 (ESV)

Keach's Catechism Tie-Ins

Q. 11. What are God's works of providence?

A. God's works of providence are His most holy, wise, and powerful preserving and governing all His creatures and all their actions. (Psalm 103:19; Matthew 10:29–31)

Q. 85. What is required in the fourth commandment?

A. The fourth commandment requires the keeping holy to God such set times as He has appointed in His Word; expressly one whole day in seven. (Exodus 20:8–11)

Q. 39. What shall be done to the righteous at the day of judgment?

A. At the day of judgment, the righteous shall be openly acknowledged and acquitted, and made perfectly blessed in the full enjoyment of God forever. (Matthew 25:34; Revelation 21:3–4)

Discussion Questions:

1. Why does James warn against boasting about tomorrow?
2. What does “If the Lord wills” really mean?
3. What does this passage teach us about time and responsibility?
4. How can our family learn to trust God with the future?

Recommended Reading

John MacArthur

- *James: MacArthur New Testament Commentary* – Commentary on James 4:13–17
- Sermon: “The Sin of Presumption” (Grace to You)

Ligonier Ministries

- R.C. Sproul – “If the Lord Wills”
- Sinclair Ferguson – “Living with Eternity in View”

Puritan / Reformer

- Thomas Manton – *Exposition of James* on verses 13–17
- Richard Baxter – *The Saints’ Everlasting Rest* (on preparing for eternity)

Lesson 10: Warning to the Rich

James 5:1–6

Summary:

James speaks directly to the rich who gain their wealth through oppression or hoarding. God sees how we treat others, especially those in need. Riches are not sinful in themselves—but they become dangerous when we trust in them, use them selfishly, or harm others to get them. God calls His people to use money with justice, mercy, and humility.

Scripture Memory Verse

“You have lived on the earth in luxury and in self-indulgence. You have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter.”

— James 5:5 (ESV)

Keach’s Catechism Tie-Ins

Q. 14. What is sin?

A. Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God. (1 John 3:4; Romans 3:23)

Q. 68. What is required in the eighth commandment?

A. The eighth commandment requires the lawful procuring and furthering the wealth and outward estate of ourselves and others. (Ephesians 4:28; Proverbs 13:11)

Q. 75. What is forbidden in the ninth commandment?

A. The ninth commandment forbids whatsoever is prejudicial to truth or injurious to our own or our neighbor’s good name. (Proverbs 6:16–19; Ephesians 4:25)

Discussion Questions:

1. What kind of wealth does James warn against?
2. Why is trusting in riches dangerous to the soul?
3. How can we use what we have to bless others?
4. What does it look like to be generous and just with our money?

Recommended Reading

John MacArthur

- *James: MacArthur New Testament Commentary* – Commentary on James 5:1–6
- Sermon: “God’s Judgment on the Wealthy Wicked” (Grace to You)

Ligonier Ministries

- Robert Godfrey – “The Dangers of Wealth”
- Sinclair Ferguson – “A Theology of Possessions”

Puritan / Reformer

- Thomas Manton – *Exposition of James* on verses 1–6
- William Perkins – *Treatise on the Vocations* (on lawful labor and justice)

Lesson 11: Patience and Prayer in Suffering

James 5:7–12

Summary:

James reminds believers that suffering is not without purpose. Just as a farmer waits for his crop, we are to wait for the Lord's return with patience. We are not to grumble against each other but instead strengthen our hearts. God uses suffering to produce endurance. He is full of compassion and mercy, and His timing is always perfect.

Scripture Memory Verse

"You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand."

— James 5:8 (ESV)

Keach's Catechism Tie-Ins

Q. 36. What is sanctification?

A. Sanctification is the work of God's free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God and are enabled more and more to die unto sin and live unto righteousness. (Romans 6:4–6; 1 Thessalonians 5:23)

Q. 88. What is the second petition in the Lord's Prayer?

A. The second petition is, "Thy kingdom come," which means we pray that Satan's kingdom may be destroyed, and that the kingdom of grace may be advanced. (Matthew 6:10; Revelation 11:15)

Q. 39. What shall be done to the righteous at the day of judgment?

A. At the day of judgment, the righteous shall be openly acknowledged and acquitted, and made perfectly blessed in the full enjoyment of God forever. (Matthew 25:34; 2 Timothy 4:8)

Discussion Questions:

1. Why does James compare waiting for the Lord to a farmer waiting for rain?
2. What can make waiting through suffering so hard?
3. What should we do instead of grumbling when life is hard?
4. How can we remind each other of God's compassion and timing?

Recommended Reading

John MacArthur

- *James: MacArthur New Testament Commentary* – Commentary on James 5:7–12
- Sermon: “Strength for the Suffering” (Grace to You)

Ligonier Ministries

- Derek Thomas – “Enduring Until the End”
- R.C. Sproul – “Patience in Suffering”

Puritan / Reformer

- Thomas Manton – *Exposition of James* on verses 7–12
- John Flavel – *The Mystery of Providence* (on affliction and endurance)

Lesson 12: The Power of Prayer and Restoration

James 5:13–20

Summary:

James ends his letter with a call to prayer and restoration. Whether we are suffering or cheerful, we are to turn to God. The prayers of God's people are powerful because they are offered through faith in Christ. We are also called to confess our sins and help restore those who wander from the truth. God uses His people to encourage, convict, and bring back those who stray.

Scripture Memory Verse

“The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.”
— James 5:16b (ESV)

Keach's Catechism Tie-Ins

Q. 98. What is prayer?

A. Prayer is an offering up of our desires to God, for things agreeable to His will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins and thankful acknowledgment of His mercies. (Philippians 4:6; 1 John 5:14; John 16:23)

Q. 100. What does the preface of the Lord's Prayer teach us?

A. The preface of the Lord's Prayer teaches us to draw near to God with confidence as children to a father, and to pray with reverence and awe. (Matthew 6:9; Romans 8:15)

Q. 91. What is the duty of man after receiving the Word?

A. It is to receive it with faith and love, lay it up in our hearts, and practice it in our lives. (Psalm 119:11; Luke 8:15; James 1:22)

Discussion Questions:

1. Why does James encourage us to pray in every situation?
2. What does it mean to confess our sins to one another?
3. Why is it important to help those who wander from the truth?
4. How can our family grow in prayer this week?

Recommended Reading

John MacArthur

- *James: MacArthur New Testament Commentary* – Commentary on James 5:13–20
- Sermon: “The Power of Righteous Prayer” (Grace to You)

Ligonier Ministries

- Sinclair Ferguson – “Prayer and the Christian Life”
- R.C. Sproul – “Does Prayer Change Things?”

Puritan / Reformer

- Thomas Manton – *Exposition of James* on verses 13–20
- Thomas Brooks – *The Secret Key to Heaven: The Vital Importance of Private Prayer*