



Reasons to Rejoice
BIBLE STUDY

WHERE THE RUBBER MEETS THE ROAD

THE BOOK OF JAMES



Introduction

Welcome to our study through the Book of James! I titled it “Where the Rubber Meets the Road” because I felt it summarized what James was trying to communicate. He believed that real faith produces genuine fruit, which is the theme of his whole book. If we say we have faith, our lives should give evidence of that truth. Our outward acts should reflect our inward truth. Real faith produces real fruit ... that’s where the rubber meets the road!

Before we talk about a few important things to know about The Book of James, I wanted to give you a little insight about the study format. We will be studying one chapter a week and the questions will be structured a bit differently than you may be used to. In the past, the study has been broken down into 5 days, and you were encouraged to do one day at a time. Many of you like that format, while others would rather do all the homework in one sitting. In this study, the questions will all be given to you at one time, and you can do them however and whenever works for you. There are also less questions, which, hopefully, will encourage more participation. I also won’t be including as much commentary as I usually do. I encourage you to dig in deeper as the Holy Spirit leads you. It’s your turn to do the work! 😊

As you do your homework, if you find yourself asking, “What did she mean by question #5”, please focus more on what the Scripture is saying, rather than what I meant. What I mean is irrelevant; the real issue is what the Bible says! Also, good Bible Study should consist of defining the meaning of key words,

looking for themes, finding contrasts and comparisons, cross referencing other Scriptures, and finding correct application. My goal is to help guide and direct you into studying the Scriptures in a productive way. David E. Pratte wrote, “God’s Word is written so souls may please God and have eternal life. Please study it with the respect and devotion it deserves.” Amen to that!

Each week you will be asked to observe the text by answering some of the above questions. In your first lesson, we’ve provided a sheet called “Key Words” for you to write them down from your weekly chapter. It will be fun to see how many of them are repeated throughout the whole book when we conclude our study.

Each week you will have a memory verse that will summarize the main theme or point of the chapter. (Or at least one of them!) I pray that you will take the challenge to memorize them and share them with the group. “Hiding God’s Word in our heart” (Psalm 119:11) is such a great discipline to use as we study. It also helps us retain the main thoughts and points of the book.

As we prepare to begin, please read the entire Book of James through at least once. It’s important to get the “Bird’s Eye” view before we start studying chapter by chapter. As you read, start looking at some of the problems the author may have been addressing. James speaks with a lot of authority, and wow, he is a straight shooter, almost commanding! He uses 54 imperatives in the 108 verses. Yet, he does it with warmth and love. As you read, remind yourself that one of his goals is to spur them on to “spiritual maturity” and I pray we take heed to his challenges. We may be growing old, but it’s time to grow up!! (I didn’t make that up ... but I liked it!)

If you have questions, your leaders are more than happy to assist you in any way they can. As they facilitate the groups, their goal is to create an atmosphere that will allow honest questions, great conversation, and encourage learning and growing together in our understanding of the Word. They might not always have the answers to your questions, but they are excited to search the Scriptures together with you and find answers.

We are looking forward to fellowshiping with you, studying with you, learning with you, and growing with you. One more thing. There is more than one man named “James” in the Bible, so I’ve included an outline below that Charles Swindoll put in his book “Insights on James” that really helps understand who authored this book. It’s important to know who the author is, so take some time and read through it. Our James is #4 on the list!

Five Men Named James

Four (or, perhaps, five) people with the name of James appear in the pages of the New Testament.

Identification	Scripture	Description
1. James, father of Judas (not Iscariot)	Luke 6:16	Nothing is known about this James. He is mentioned in the list of the original twelve disciples as the father of Judas (not Iscariot) to distinguish him from Judas the betrayer. This Judas is also distinguished by the name "Thaddeus."
2. James, son of Zebedee, brother of John	Matt. 4:21; 10:2; 17:1; Mark 1:19, 29; 3:17; 5:37; 9:2; 10:35, 41; 13:3; 14:33; Luke 5:10; 6:14; 8:51; 9:28, 54; Acts 1:13; 12:2	Brother of the apostle John and one of the "Sons of Thunder." He witnessed some of Jesus' private miracles, was present at Christ's transfiguration, and was invited to pray with Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. This James was the first of the twelve disciples to be martyred, put to death by the sword around AD 44.
3a. James, son of Alphaeus	Matt. 10:3; Mark 3:18; Luke 6:15; Acts 1:13	One of the twelve disciples, distinguished as the "son of Alphaeus" to keep him distinct from James #2. Many scholars believe #3a and #3b, "James the Less," are the same person.
3b. James, the Less, son of Mary	Matt. 27:56; Mark 15:40; 16:1; Luke 24:10	The son of one of the women named Mary who witnessed Jesus' burial and resurrection. Many believe "James the Less" is the same as James, the son of Alphaeus (#3a).
4. James, son of Joseph and Mary, half-brother of Jesus	Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3; Acts 1:14; 12:17; 15:13; 21:18; Gal. 1:19; 2:9, 12; 1 Cor. 15:7; Jude 1:1	The natural son of Mary and Joseph after the birth of Jesus. Thought he did not believe in his brother, Jesus, during His earthly ministry (John 7:5), after the risen Lord made a special appearance to him, James became a believer and eventually the leader of the Jewish Christian church in Jerusalem until he was martyred around AD 62.