



#deathtolife- A James Study
WestWay Christian Church

“But don’t just listen to God’s word. You must do what it says.”
James 1:22

James

Background on James- Traditionally, the author of this book is understood to be James, the brother of Jesus. His intended audience was likely Jewish believers (“the twelve tribes of the Dispersion”- 1:1). James is a practical book that calls its readers to action; they must not merely listen to the word, but act upon it. A relationship with the risen Christ demanded a response then, and it demands one now. The Bible is not just their story, but ours. We must know both.

Each lesson has several different elements. You’ll **read the text** for the week, followed by a **brief devotional** to help you process what you’ve read. There’s a suggested **key verse** for memorization, followed by a specific **study method**. You may want to read the text again as you work through the study method.

On Bible Study:

This challenge requires us to be students of scripture. We must spend time with it, interact with it, stomp on the blade of the shovel and force it into the earth.

As you read through this study, you’ll see that there are 4 different Bible study methods used, as well as different versions of Scripture. This is designed to help you view scripture differently and to provide you with a multitude of tools to help you understand what you’re reading. Each of the methods used are designed to prevent you from rushing to apply what you’ve read. Plan on 30-45 minutes per study, possibly longer!

A few reminders about studying the Bible:

- No one, not even God, is keeping score.
- It’s not a race.
- Don’t compare yourself to others, it’s not a contest.
- Just like there’s a way to pray that makes you seem holier than you are (on the street corner with loud voice) there’s a way to be proud and arrogant when you study scripture.

But...

- It’s a relationship. And people in relationships do stupid, crazy things. They get up early to spend time with each other. They stay up late, too late and fall asleep with one another. They tell others where they are, what they’re doing and who they’re doing it with. They talk on the phone, Skype, text and Facebook message one another. In short, they are together. They grow close. They miss one another when they’re not together. They ask questions. They listen. They answer. Studying scripture should be like that.

It’s our desire that the body at WestWay have that kind of relationship with God and his word.

We pray that you will have transformed hearts, renewed minds, and this will enable you to be a blessing to others through the power of the Holy Spirit!

James

This study guide will follow our Spring 2018 message series on James.

April 8 2018-	James 1-5 (series intro and overview)
April 15 2018-	James 1:1-18
April 22 2018-	James 1:19-27
April 29 2018-	James 2
May 6 2018-	James 3:1-12
May 13 2018-	James 3:13-18
May 20 2018-	James 4:1-12
May 27 2018-	James 4:13-17
June 3 2018-	James 5:1-6
June 10 2018-	James 5:7-12
June 17 2018-	James 5:13-20

James

Read James 1-5 (the entire book).

5 P Method

Purpose -Why did the author write this? Why is it important to be in the bible? Write a couple of sentences of what you think the theme or topic is.

Primary Verse -Which verse or verses seem to contain the most important thought in the passage? Which one stands out most? Write out the verse & reference.

Promises -Make a list of promises you find. Sometimes you need to infer promises from the passage if it doesn't state them straight out.

Problems -Find anything you don't understand, even a word, and write it as a question.

Practical Application -Think what the book means to you. What action should you take? What needs to change or be worked on? Application should tell who, what, and when.

James

Read James 1:1-18

Devotional: Persevering

God is ready to give you the wisdom that you need in the face of trials and temptation. He wants for you to recognize that you need His wisdom, and to ask him for it with honesty and in faith. We are blessed when we act on his wisdom and remain steadfast, regardless of our circumstances.

Theme Verse: “If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him”- James 1:5 (NIV).

Newspaper Method

Who? -Make a list of major characters in the passage.

What? -What are the circumstances? What are the characters doing? What can we learn from what they say or their actions?

Where? -Where is the action taking place? Why is it important?

When? -Why is the timing of the passage significant?

Why? -Why did God think this passage was so important that He included it in His Word?

How? -How does this apply to your life? How are you going to live differently today because of what you read? -Be specific– a good application tells who, what, and when.

James

Read James 1:19-27

Devotional: Practical Atheism

We are bombarded with messages every single day; from what foods are healthy (and unhealthy!), what to wear, what to drive, to what phone to use. Often, we decide which messages we'll listen to and which to ignore within seconds. If we're not cautious, we'll do this with God's word, we'll hear it, listen to it, even acknowledge that we've heard it. But...we'll do nothing with it.

Theme Verse: "Do not merely listen to the word and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says"- James 1:22 (NIV).

SPECK Method

Sins to Avoid -Make a list of sins– wrong actions, attitudes, or thoughts– that are mentioned in the passage to avoid in life.

Promises to Claim -Make a list of promises, these will give us confidence when we doubt God/ face difficult times. Take them to heart and believe what they say.

Examples to Follow -What examples do you find? Is there a right way of thinking or acting described in the passage that you should take as an example in your life? Write it down!

Commands to Obey -Write all the commands you find. When a passage encourages you to take action, take it as a command and write it down.

Knowledge of God -What does the passage tell you about God that you can apply to your daily life?

James

Read James 2

Devotional: Who is your favorite?

This week, you're studying an entire chapter. The issues of favoritism, faith, and deeds are closely linked. James warns his readers to not show favoritism. Why? First, the people they usually showed favoritism to were the ones who oppressed them. Second, God did not play favorites with them. We dishonor both man and God when we pick and choose who we'll lift up. It's evidence that what we claim to believe is not affecting our actions- our fruit is false.

Theme Verse: "Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him?"- James 2:5 (ESV).

5 P Method

Purpose -Why did the author write this? Why is it important to be in the bible? Write a couple of sentences of what you think the theme or topic is.

Primary Verse -Which verse or verses seem to contain the most important thought in the passage? Which one stands out most? Write out the verse & reference.

Promises -Make a list of promises you find. Sometimes you need to infer promises from the passage if it doesn't state them straight out.

Problems -Find anything you don't understand, even a word, and write it as a question.

Practical Application -Think what the passage means to you. What action should you take? What needs to change or be worked on? Application should tell who, what, and when.

James

James 3:1-12

Devotional: Taming the Tongue

A bit in the mouth of a horse. A rudder on a ship. A spark from a fire. Like each of these small things, the tongue wields incredible power. In the previous chapter, we saw how the actions (and inactions) of a person reveals their faith. In the same way, it is the tongue that reveals the inner-workings of our hearts.

Theme Verse: “From the same mouth come blessings and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not be so”- James 3:10 (ESV).

Newspaper Method

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Where? -Where is the action taking place? Why is it important?

When? -Why is the timing of the passage significant?

Why? -Why did God think this passage was so important that He included it in His Word?

How? -How does this apply to your life? How are you going to live differently today because of what you read? Be specific— a good application tells who, what, and when.

James

James 3:13-18

Devotional: Spiritual and earthly wisdom

James brings the chapter to a close by stating that our actions show just who and what we are in submission to. When we sow earthly wisdom, we reap disorder. When we sow spiritual wisdom, we find “a harvest of righteousness” (James 3:18). What are your actions sowing?

Theme Verse: “Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom”- James 3:13 (ESV).

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Examples to Follow -What examples do you find? Is there a right way of thinking or acting described in the passage that you should take as an example in your life? Write it down!

Commands to Obey -Write all the commands you find. When a passage encourages you to take action, take it as a command and write it down.

Knowledge of God -What does the passage tell you about God that you can apply to your daily life?

James

James 4:1-12

Devotional: Give in! Give up!

God wants you to stop. He wants you to stop chasing after everything else and only chase after Him. You'll be giving up a lot, maybe everything. But, you'll get God in return.

Theme Verse: "Come near to God and he will come near to you"- James 4:8 (NIV).

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Problems -Find anything you don't understand, even a word, and write it as a question.

Practical Application -Think what the passage means to you. What action should you take? What needs to change or be worked on? Application should tell who, what, and when.

James

James 4:13-17

Devotional: "Tomorrow"

No one knows what will happen 12 months from now. Or 12 weeks from now. How about 12 minutes from now? God is in charge. And God is good.

Theme Verse: "Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes"- James 4:14 (NIV).

OPA Method

Observation -Compile all facts in the passage. Make observations on what the passage says - Make at least 10-30 observations.

Principles -Draw a few principles from observations you made. Write down what God is trying to teach you in the passage.

Application -How will you apply the principles to your life? -Be specific – A good application tells who, what, and when.

James

James 5:1-6

Devotional: “Wealth buys you nothing”

The way we spend our time, treasure (money), and talents (skills and gifts) on earth will have an impact on how we spend our eternity.

Theme Verse: “The very wealth you were counting on will eat away your flesh like fire”- James 5:3 (NLT).

Newspaper Method

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When? -Why is the timing of the passage significant?

Why? -Why did God think this passage was so important that He included it in His Word?

How? -How does this apply to your life? How are you going to live differently today because of what you read? -Be specific— a good application tells who, what, and when.

James

James 5:7-12

Devotional: "Wait"

Patience is a farmer who waits for rain after he has planted his crops. The rain is completely out of his control. He should hope for it, want it, and pray for it.

Theme Verse: "You, too, must be patient. Take courage, for the coming of the Lord is near"- James 5:8 (NLT).

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Commands to Obey -Write all the commands you find. When a passage encourages you to take action, take it as a command and write it down.

Knowledge of God -What does the passage tell you about God that you can apply to your daily life?

James

James 5:13-20

Devotional: “Pray!”

James is telling his readers to pray in all times and all situations. God is with you; talk to him.

Theme Verse: “The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective”- James 5:16 (NIV).

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