

DISCUSSION OF THE OVERVIEW OF JAMES

OPEN

- What is the most recent “how-to” book you’ve read or video you’ve watched?
- What kind of teacher would you want to teach you how to handle your money? To teach you how to cook? To teach you how to raise your children? Why is it important for teachers to “practice what they preach”?

STUDY

The Apostle

- James 1:1. What might this lack of mentioning credentials suggest about the relationship between the writer and the readers?
- How might the familiarity between Jesus and His half-brothers have been a hindrance to their believing in Him as the Christ?
- 1 Corinthians 15:3-4, 7. How do you think James was affected by his personal encounter with the resurrected Jesus?
- How might being the half-brother of Jesus have influenced James as he wrote his book?
- What are some of the “claims to fame” James could have made to legitimately establish his credentials?

The Epistle

- From what you know about the book of James, what are some main themes and what would be the key verse(s) for the epistle?
- From what you know about the book of James, why do you think God made it one of the first New Testament books He inspired?

- What previous impressions, if any, have you had about the book of James in regard to (1) its content, (2) its level of difficulty, and (3) its importance?
- From what you know of this book, how would you define the term “genuine faith”?
- Acts 8:1-4. How did God turn the persecution of the Jerusalem church to a good outcome?
- Describe the thought processes of these severely persecuted believers who chose to proclaim the word boldly in their new home areas?

APPLY

- If faith means “depending on God,” can a person have faith in God and still be an “independent” person? Why or why not?
- What does it take to be a doer of the Word and not only a hearer?
- How should the public testimony of one’s faith relate to that person’s personal walk of faith?

PERSONAL

- On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 = “not at all” and 10 = “very intensely”), how would you rate the *reality* of your faith – how useful and personal and meaningful is it?
- How can you ensure that your study of James is not merely theoretical and intellectual, but is truly practical and relevant?
- Are your prayer requests weighted toward the Lord’s working for the benefit of others or for the benefit of yourself?

DEEPER

- The book of James is sometimes likened to Proverbs, Amos, and the Sermon on the Mount. Scan those to look for themes and teachings that correspond to what you see in James.