

LESSON 30: JAMES 1-2

JULY 26, 2017

OVERVIEW

- . The Book of James
- . Handling Life's trials
- . Matching words with deeds
- . The sin of favoritism
- . Faith and works

THE BOOK OF JAMES

- . Author
 - . James, brother of Jesus
 - . Most biblical scholars believe this is the author
 - . James was well respected as a leader of the early church
 - . Mentioned nine times in other significant NT passages
 - . Rose to importance in the early days of the church
 - . Exercised leadership over the first church council – Acts 15
 - . His special ministry was to the early Jewish Christians
 - . This letter was written in a way meant to address those with a deep understanding of the Jewish faith
 - . James, brother of John
 - . There are some who believe this is the author
 - . This James was martyred around 44 A.D.
 - . The condition of the church, described in this letter reflects a period later than 44 A.D. which is why most don't believe this is the James of this letter
 - . The other significant James of this period was James, son of Alphaeus, who was an apostle
 - . This James was also known as James the Less in contrast to the other James who was Jesus' brother
 - . No other reason than his name to associate him with this letter
- . Controversy surrounding this book
 - . Martin Luther had problems with the Book of James
 - . He did not feel this book had the weight of the Gospel in it
 - . He referenced Paul's teachings in Romans, Galatians and Ephesians where Paul stressed that we are saved by grace through faith, not works

- . This teaching became the central doctrine of the reformation
 - . Justification by grace alone through faith alone, apart from works
- . True believers in Jesus hold to this firmly today, and is emphasized through much of the Evangelistic teaching
- . Because of this history James is not a popular book amongst leaders in the protestant churches and not referenced as often as other NT works
- . The problem with this controversy is it isn't presenting the complete message of James
 - . Core to the message of James is the way in which faith and works should work in harmony to reflect the life of a true believer
 - . When Jesus said I will know you by your fruit he was saying your outward actions are a reflection of your inward faith

HANDLING LIFE'S TRIALS – JAMES 1:2-18

- . Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance – James 1:2-3
 - . Everyday trials can cause doubt, instability, fear, anger, uncertainty
 - . Without the wisdom that comes from our faith in something more powerful than earthly trials and our reaction to it, we can find ourselves rudderless trying to navigate stormy seas
 - . For someone who is grounded in their faith and working to grow in it's understanding of that faith, trials are a chance to examine and lean heavily on the wisdom that comes from that faith
 - . Through our trials we come to learn of the great joy of our faith, it's strength, its underlying love and our ultimate ability to put that trial in perspective with God's ultimate plan and our part of that plan
 - . The peace we find in and through our faith will provide us with the perseverance to weather our trial(s)

MATCHING WORDS WITH DEEDS – JAMES 1:19-27

- . James practical advise here is that our faith goes beyond just heroics we may perform from time to time
 - . He is talking about "doing the word", "living our faith" in everyday life, in everything we do, regardless of how trivial it may seem
- . A controlled tongue – James 1:19-20, 26
 - . A willingness to consider another more important than ourselves manifests itself in one's eagerness to listen first, to what the other person has to say
 - . Words can and do make a lasting impression on ones heart so be slow to speak and choose your words carefully

NEXT LESSON: AUGUST 16, 2017: JAMES 3-5

**** THE STUDY ON ROLAND'S BOOK WILL BE THE NEXT TWO WEEKS, AUGUST 2 AND AUGUST 9. MY STUDY WILL RESUME ON AUGUST 16.**