

LESSONS THIS QUARTER

1) 02 Sept	Galatians 1:1-24	True Gospel
2) 09 Sept	Galatians 2:1-21	True Grace
3) 16 Sept	Galatians 3:1-22	True Life
4) 23 Sept	Galatians 3:23-29; 4:1-7	True Heirs
5) 30 Sept	Galatians 4:8-31	True Freedom
6) 07 Oct	Galatians 5:1-26	True Fruit
7) 14 Oct	Galatians 6:1-18	True Compassion
8) 21 Oct	James 1:1-18	With Perseverance
9) 28 Oct	James 1:19-27	With Obedience
10) 04 Nov	James 2:1-26	With Works
11) 11 Nov	James 3:1-18	With Control
12) 18 Nov	James 4:1-17	With Submission
13) 25 Nov	James 5:1-20	With Anticipation

INTRODUCTION

Martin Luther vehemently opposed the Book of James calling it "*an Epistle of straw, and destitute of an evangelic character*". This was due to his mistaken idea that **James 2:14-26** opposes the doctrine of justification by faith as taught by Paul..... **Eph 2:8-9**

Potential Authors

- James, the Lord's oldest half-brother **Mat 13:55**
- James the Apostle, son of Zebedee, brother of Apostle John (but he was martyred by Herod not long after the Crucifixion)
- James the less (also an Apostle), the son of Alphaeus (a possible cousin to Christ, and could therefore be called a 'brother')

Other Items of Interest

- The Epistle of James is considered the NT Book of Proverbs
- James was stoned by the Sanhedrin then clubbed to death (recorded by Josephus and Hegeippus, a 1st century Christian historian)

Passage	Comments
James 1:1	<p>Who was James?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most probable author was Jesus' half-brother, James • James doesn't even acknowledge he was the half-brother of Jesus. Possibly out of humility, or he didn't need to since his audience knew who he was <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Peter told his friends to "report to James" and tell him of his release from prison Acts 12:17 ♦ James led the Council at Jerusalem..... Acts 15:13 ♦ James was one of the few select individuals Christ appeared to after His resurrection..... 1Cor 15:7 ♦ Paul called James an "apostle" Gal 1:19 ♦ Paul also called him a "pillar of the church" Gal 2:9 ♦ Jude, another probable half-brother of Jesus, identified himself simply as a "brother of James" . Jude 1:1
Who were all the Apostles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 12 hand-picked Apostles of Christ were: 1) Peter and 2) Andrew his brother; 3) James the son of Zebedee and 4) John his brother; 5) Philip and 6) Bartholomew (aka Nathanael); 7) Thomas and 8) Matthew the tax collector (aka Levi); 9) James the son of Alphaeus (aka the less), 10) Thaddaeus (aka Jude); 11) Simon the Zealot, and 12) Judas Iscariot who was replaced by Paul • There were at least 7 other men labeled as apostles of the church, but their ministry was more general in nature ("Sent ones" or "Messengers"). These men included Mathias (Acts 1:26), Barnabas (Acts 14:14), James, the Lord's brother (Gal 1:19), Epaphroditus (Php 2:25), Silas and Timothy (1Thes 1:1; 2:6), and Titus and other unnamed brethren (2Cor 8:23); and some of these men worked the "signs of an Apostle" – Mathias (Acts 4:33) and Barnabas (Acts 14:3) • Only the Twelve, with Paul replacing Judas (Acts 1:25), were ever called the Apostles of Christ, and they have their names inscribed on the 12 foundation stones within the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:14).

Passage	Comments
1:2-4 1:3-4	<p>Count Troubles as Joyous. BUT WHY?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remember the BIG Picture → We need to conform to the image of Christ while living this side of Glory <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ ...and the best way to do this is to endure trials ♦ Even Christ learned obedience from the things which He suffered Heb 5:8 • So, how does a long illness, a job loss, an accident, a broken relationship, or a death, make us complete? • What if we are slow learners? Will we be tested again?
1:5-8	<p>Need Wisdom? Ask God</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God doesn't promise us unlimited health or wealth, but His wisdom is abundantly available just for the asking • The only condition is to ask with confidence or "in faith" • God rewards those who diligently seek Him - the reward is finding Him Heb 11:6
1:9-11	<p>Riches in Life Mean Nothing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • James spent considerable real estate to address life's necessities (3 vvs). This topic must be important. • Us rich Americans can't fully comprehend this that food and clothing are all we need 1Tim 6:8
1:12	<p>CROWN OF LIFE – Motivational Tool to Endure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Crown of Life is a special recognition, honor, or reward given by Jesus to those who withstand trials and temptations cf Rev 2:10 • Other Crowns to be Dispensed <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Incorruptible Crown (self-discipline)..... 1Cor 9:25 2. Crown of Righteousness (2nd Coming) 2Tim 4:8 3. Crown of Rejoicing (evangelism) .. Phl 4:1; 1Ths 2:19 4. Crown of Glory (for church elders) 1Peter 5:4
1:13-16	<p>God Tests Us BUT Does Not Tempt Us</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God knows our hearts and knows whether we will pass each test or not, so why test us? <input type="checkbox"/> For the fun of it? <input type="checkbox"/> For us and others to know what is really in us? • v16. Be not deceived or be misled...BUT from what? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ The context conveys if or when we sin, it is our fault. God is not at fault, Satan is not at fault. God may test us, and Satan may tempt us, but we can only blame ourselves for each and every sin we commit. ♦ God examines us "every morning" and tries us in "every moment" to see if we are for Him Job 7:18
1:17-18	<p>God is the Author of all Good Things</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v17a. Yet, God also allows calamity Amos 3:6 • v17b. The illustration, "the Father of Lights" echoes that God is light (1John 1:5); and unlike our Sun, God's light cannot be diminished or hidden behind a cloud <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ In fact, God had to create darkness Ps 104:20 • v18. These early Jewish converts are seen as the "first fruit" of many more to come, Jews & Gentiles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Are we the last fruit? No. The last fruit actually comes during the Millennial Reign of Christ

CONCLUSION / APPLICATIONS

God provides us with everything we need to be conformed into the image of His Son: Trials, Wisdom for the asking, Motivation through heavenly rewards, with the Ultimate goal → Conforming to Christ

- Recall how Jesus told Peter that Satan had demanded permission from God (the Trial) to sift him like wheat (the Temptation) ... **Lk 22:31**

NEXT WEEK: James 1:19-27. More proverbial tidbits of wisdom on hearing vs speaking and vain religion vs pure religion

