

# James

Faith in Action – Faith with Authenticity

# James 1:1

James, a servant of God and of the  
Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes  
in the dispersion:

**GREETINGS.**

James – who is he?

The Letter – timing, purpose

Who are the recipients –  
the “the twelve tribes in the dispersion”  
Connection to James

# Letter addressed to 12 tribes

- Jacobs 12 sons - Given the land by Joshua
- 1<sup>st</sup> century Jews (all part of the tribes) dispersed - James calls them “Brothers”

James is writing to Jewish Christians

# Old Testament History – disobedience led to captivity

## A people scattered

- Jeremiah 31:7 – 14
  - Vs 8 “I will bring them from the north country and gather them from the fartest parts of the earth
  - Vs 9 “... I will lead them back”
  - Vs 10 “He who scattered Israel will gather him, and will keep him as a shepherd keeps his flock.”
- Ezekiel 37:21 - 22
  - “I will take the people of Israel from the nations among which they have gone, and will gather them from all around, and bring them to their own land.”

## How did these early Christians get dispersed/scattered?

- During Christ's ministry – many listened and believed
- The crucifixion and resurrection of Christ
- Jesus appeared to many – 40 days
- The promise of the Holy Spirit
- Acts 2 – the Holy Spirit given
- Peter and the disciples began – preaching and healing – many come to believe in Christ

Great Growth of the church

# Opposition to the church

- Religious leaders (Sadducees/Pharisees) – challenging believers at every turn
- Disciples were put in prison
- Persecution – Saul “chief among them”
- The stoning of Stephen – Acts 7

- Dispersion/ being scattered had a heavenly purpose
- Pray for and seek opportunities to spread the good news of what Christ has done in your life



# The Letter of James

- Written a.d. 45 – 50
- Written to scattered Jewish Christians
- Purpose

# What can we discover about James?

- He is Jesus brother
- Childhood – early adulthood
- His growth in faith
- As a leader – “pillar”

# What was family life like in the Joseph & Mary House?

- Jesus , James, Joseph, Simon, Judas & sisters
- We know – Jesus grew in wisdom, increased in stature and grew in God’s favor – Luke 2
- Did Joseph and Mary know how to balance family life with perfection in the midst?

# What was family life like in the Joseph & Mary House?

- James & the siblings were not perfect. How did they function – resentment, jealousy, anger, vindictive at times?

Guessing – It wasn't easy!!

## Luke 2:41-52

- Family travels to Jerusalem
- Jesus goes to the temple – discussing and teaching (12 years old)
- Family leaves to go home – travelling with others
- The next day – discover Jesus is not with them
- Return to Jerusalem to search for Jesus

**Early Adulthood – late 20's?** Matt., Mark, & John share this story

Matthew 13: 53 – 58

And when Jesus had finished these parables, he went away from there, and coming to his hometown he taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished, and said, “Where did this man get this wisdom and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenter’s son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? And are not all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?” And they took offense at him. But Jesus said to them, A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and in his own household.” And he did not do many mighty works there, because of their unbelief.

## Mark 3:21

And when his family heard it, they went out to seize him, for they were saying, “He is out of his mind.”

❖ The family, (James) did not know what to do with Jesus.

They did not understand!!

# Growth in Faith

Let's Read – I Cor. 15: 3 – 9

Christ appeared to:

- Peter
- The twelve
- More than 500
- James
- All the apostles
- Paul



## James – a leader in the church

Other New Testament passages where James is mentioned:

- James is called a “pillar” of the church (Gal 2:9)
- Paul, visited James after his dramatic conversion (Gal 1:19)
- During Paul’s last visit to Jerusalem he visited James again (Acts 21:18)
- When Peter was rescued from prison, he told his friends to tell James (Acts 12:17)
- Acts 15:13 – James was a leader in the important Council of Jerusalem

## Growth Progression

Unbelief throughout childhood and early adulthood



Belief around the time of Christ's resurrection



Personal discussion (mission) with the risen Christ



Growth within the church to become a "pillar"

The leader of the church in Jerusalem

# What can we do this week?

- Read the book as a letter written to you
  - as the first thing you have read for 400 years
  - As a personal message to you to live authentically
- As you “scatter”
  - Be a light
  - Be deliberate – spread the good news of what Christ has done in your life
  - Speak into someone’s life
- Consider writing a letter
  - A heartfelt encouragement to someone

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