

NOTES

I. UNIT EIGHT — James: The Apostle to the “Old Jew” — The Letter of James

A. Authorship: Lining Up “The James Gang”

1. James, the father of “Judas-Not-Iscaariot” (Lk 6:12, 16; Jn 14:22).
2. James, the son of Alphaeus; one of the _____ (Lk 6:15; Acts 1:13).
3. James, the son of Zebedee; one of the “sons of thunder,” brother of _____ and one of the Twelve (Mk 3:16-17).
4. James, the son of _____; “the Lord’s (half) brother,” a leader in the Jerusalem Church (Acts 21:17-18; 1 Cor 15:7; Gal 1:18-19).

B. James the Man: A Patchwork Biography

1. Most likely the _____ of Jesus’ four brothers (Mat 13:54-55).
2. Did not accept Jesus’ messianic “_____” at first (cf. Jn 7:3-5 and Mk 3:4).
3. Received a personal, private appearance from his _____ brother (1 Cor 15:7).
4. Was a _____ in the Jerusalem church when Saul made his first visit there (Gal 1:19).
5. Was recognized by _____ as at least a co-leader in the Jerusalem church (Acts 12:7).
6. The leader of the Jerusalem church at the time of the first major church “_____” to discuss Gentile inclusion (Acts 15).
7. The one Paul “reported” the results of his missionary journeys to just prior to his _____ in Jerusalem (Acts 21:17ff).
8. Tried to persuade Paul to be “sensitive” to the Jewish Christians desires to remain _____ while he was visiting (Acts 21:17-26).
9. Died as a martyr at the hands of Ananus, the high priest in AD 62 according to _____ (*Antiquities*, 20.199-203).

C. James the Letter: A _____ Masterpiece

1. The most “_____” book in our “New Testament.”
 - a. A “_____” that’s a *non*-letter (no anecdotes, no closing, etc.).
 - b. His familiarity with his readers is obvious the result of a shared _____, not a shared history.
 - c. Clearly written to Jewish Christians as _____, not “Christians.”
 - d. Reflects an intimacy with the oral teaching of Jesus *and* the Old Testament.
 - (1) There are over 20 unmistakable allusions/citations from his brother’s most famous “_____.” (see pages A14-15)
 - e. Reflects an amazing literary style *and* knowledge of _____:
 - (1) More allusions to _____ than in all Paul’s letters combined (e.g. 1:10; 3:3; 4:14; 5:2).
 - (2) Sixty Greek words that appear nowhere else in the NT; some that he even “_____” (e.g. “favoritism,” *prosopolepsia* in 2:1).

D. James the Letter: A _____ Embarrassment

1. There has been no NT letter that has been avoided, minimized, “_____” and demythologized more than the letter of James:

"Saint John's gospel and St. Paul's epistles, especially that to the Romans, and St. Peter's first epistle are the true pit and marrow of all the books. They should justly be the first books, and every Christian should be advised to read them first and most, and by daily reading to make them as familiar to himself as his daily bread. In them you do not find described many works and miracles of Christ; but you do find depicted in a masterly manner how faith in Christ overcomes sin, death, and hell, and gives life, righteousness, and salvation. This is the real nature of the Gospel ... These books show you Christ and teach you all that is necessary and salutary for you to know even though you were never to see or hear any other book or doctrine. Therefore St. James epistle is really an epistle of straw compared to them, for it lacks this evangelical character." **Martin Luther**

2. This is a tragedy because it reflects “The Story” in its infancy and closest proximity in time to _____ himself.
3. Much of this is due to an _____ contradiction we have created between James and Paul based on similar language:

James	Paul
<p><i>"Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works; and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteous-ness"—and he was called a friend of God. You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone."</i> James 2:21-24</p>	<p><i>"What then shall we say was gained by Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness." Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due."</i> Romans 4:1-4</p>

4. James’ intention was to instruct his Jewish brothers on how to live in “the world” in which they found themselves _____ (Gk - diaspora).

E. James the Letter: A Vital Reassessment

1. This letter exposes an ancient and debilitating tendency among God’s people that is *not* ancient — a “_____ life.”

"Teach me your way, O LORD, and I will walk in your truth; give me an undivided heart, that I may fear your name." Psalms 86:11, NIV

2. Frank Thielman, New Testament scholar entitled the chapter on James in his NT Theology textbook, *James: The Wisdom of the Undivided Life.*
3. For believers of all ages, our perennial temptation is to separate our lives into “compartments” that are insulated and isolated from the one that contains our “_____.”
4. The Letter of James destroys this error forever by showing that faith, if real, is at the heart of every facet of my life, and has no _____ of its own.
5. This is the over-arching purpose and “_____” to this letter:
 - a. “the faith” and my _____ — 1:2-9; 2:1-13; 5:7-18

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- b. “the faith” and my _____ — 1:26-27; 2:14-26
 - c. “the faith” and my _____/possessions — 2:14-16; 5:1-6
 - d. “the faith” and my _____ — 1:21-25
 - e. “the faith” and my _____ — 2:1-10; 4:1-2; 5:19-20
 - f. “the faith” and my _____ — 4:13-17
6. James’ portrait of a life *isolated and insulated* from faith is tragic and frightening:
- a. whining and grumbling (1:2-4)
 - b. agitated and angry (1:19-20; 4:1; 5:4-6)
 - c. inner unrest and anxiety (4:2)
 - d. prayerlessness and/or self-focused prayer (4:2-3)
 - e. envy, lust and hatred (4:2)
 - f. “at home” in the culture (4:4)
 - g. considers obedience “legalism” (4:4,8)
 - h. recreational attitude towards sin (4:9)
 - i. bigoted and unjust (2:1-4; 5:4)
 - j. arrogant (4:6-7)
 - k. hypocritical speech (3:9-10)
 - l. dishonest/unjust in business (5:4)
7. James is a sobering reminder that *our own* “_____” is always waiting in the wings, anxious to become *the* “Story.”
- F. MIXED METAPHORS: “Citizen-Subjects”
1. Throughout the centuries, the orthodox Church has tirelessly hammered out some very significant _____:
 - a. AD 325 - 681: six ecumenical councils forged our current doctrines of the _____ and the nature of Jesus Christ
 - b. 15th century - the “Reformers” forged our current doctrines of revelation and mediation:
 - (1) the authority of _____
 - (2) justification by _____ through faith
 - (3) the _____ of all believers
 2. Our current struggle is to understand “The Story” of kingdom subjects in a covenant community while immersed in a capitalistic democracy.
 3. We lack the same clarity in five key “Story doctrines,” one of which James sheds amazing light:
 - a. *ecclesiology* - the nature and purpose of the _____.
 - b. *argurology* - the nature and purpose of _____.
 - c. *huparchology* - the nature and purpose of _____.
 - d. *ptochology* - the nature of _____ and our responsibility to the _____.
 - e. *ergology* - the nature and place of “_____” in the life of the believer.

G. Exorcizing the “Demon” of _____!

1. Learning the ancient language

a. the word translated “works” or “_____” in our Bible is *ergon*.

b. These two words are *not* synonyms in the minds of Christians; “_____” is dripping with motive, while “_____” is not.

c. Paul separates these modern meanings in his ancient words:

(1) “works of the _____” (*ergōn nomou*; 6x only by Paul in Galatians and Romans)

“For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.” Romans 3:20

“yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified.” Galatians 2:16

(2) “_____ works” (*kala erga/ergōn agathōn*)

“They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share,” 1 Timothy 6:18

“Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us.” Titus 2:7, 8

d. “*Kala erga*” is better translated, “_____ deeds” because “*kala*” carries with it the idea of beauty and virtue.

e. Jesus said our “blessed deeds” are the light that others _____ that causes them to “*glorify our Father in heaven*” (Mt 5:16).

f. Jesus and Paul blasted “works of the law” as a means of being justified before _____ (Lk 18:9-14; Rom 3:20).

g. But, the *entire New Testament* _____ with James that “blessed deeds” are the normal behavior of genuine believers:

“In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”

Matthew 5:16

“They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share,” 1 Timothy 6:18

“The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people.” Titus 3:8

“And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works,”

Hebrews 10:24

“Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.” 1 Peter 2:12

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2. Unlearning the untruths

- a. “_____” is the opposite of faith, *not* “deeds.”
- b. “_____” is the opposite of grace, *not* “deeds.”
- c. The opposite of “blessed deeds” is _____!
- d. In our churches, “_____” has become a euphemism for disobedience!

3. James and the 21st Century

- a. Paul *and* James agree on two vital points:
 - (1) *I* am justified by faith apart from “works of the law,” and...
 - (2) My _____ is justified by “blessed deeds” apart from “works of the law.”

- b. Paul and James each remind us in our day of a sobering truth:

- (1) Paul tells me that my place in “The Story,” the script God has written for me is the very thing the Church has “_____”!

“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”

Ephesians 2:10

- (2) James tells me that my “faith,” if devoid of *kala erga*, is at best, _____!

“But someone will say, “You have faith and I have works.” Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe--and shudder!” James 2:18, 19