



## Week 50 James

On Sunday evenings at [Bible Explorer](#) we will explore the question

***'What does this book from the Bible mean for us today?'***

### Intro:

- Neglected and controversial !
- Nothing about the Holy Spirit, the atoning death and sacrifice of Jesus or the resurrection, and Jesus is mentioned only twice!
- Questioned by Luther as an '*epistle of straw*' it '*mangles Scripture*' over the issue of justification by faith

### Written by Who?

Written by James the brother of Jesus – first Bishop of Jerusalem martyred in AD 62 as a pastoral letter

### Written for Who?

- Those scattered after the stoning of Stephen Acts 11:19
- Written to exhort, encourage, the Jewish congregations of Palestine and Syria who died out during revolts of AD 66 - 70 and 132 - 135.
- Along with 1 and 2 Peter, 1, 2, 3 John and Jude – general , catholic universal for the whole church.
- Written for a 'poor' church caught in social tension - oppressed by wealthy landlords (5:4-6), taken to court (2:6)

### Theological strengths

- **God – his gracious character the good gifts he brings** Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. 1:17
- **Eschatology – a coming judgement** Don't grumble against one another, brothers and sisters, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door! 5:9
- **Faith works and justification** – against a sterile action less orthodoxy 2:14-26
- **The Law - a law of liberty** 2:12
- **The Christian Life** – ethical questions the command to love our neighbours as ourselves is the royal law 2:8
- **Wisdom** – 1:5 and 3:13-18
- **Poverty and Wealth** - Listen, my dear brothers and sisters: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him? 2:5



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### Outline

- 1 Trials and Christian Maturity 1: 1-18
- 2 True Christianity seen in its works 1:19 -2:26
- 3 Dissensions in the community 3:1-4
- 4 A Christian World View and its implications 4:13-5:11
- 5 Concluding exhortations 5:12-20

### What about today?

#### ***Issues addressed***

- Worldliness in the Church 4:4
- Deference to the rich and Indifference to the poor 2:1-4
- Unrestrained critical speech 3:1 – 12,4:11-12,, 5:9
- Earthly wisdom and selfish ambition with quarrels and arguments 3;13-4;3
- Arrogance 4: 13-17
- Double mindedness that short circuits prayer 1:5-8
- Failure to put faith into practice 1:22 – 27. 2:14- 26

#### **Pictures painted**

- Billowing sea
- A withered flower
- A mirror
- A horse
- A ship
- A brush fire
- The taming of animals
- A spring of water
- An arrogant business man
- Corroded metal
- Moth eaten clothes
- A patient farmer