

Overall Message of the book:

Faith works!

Real Christians do not hide their faith, but rather integrate their faith in everyday life

Lessons from the Life of James:

1. We learn about the grace of God extended to James a skeptic turned believer.
2. We see the transforming work of God to save mankind and to change mankind.
3. We see the power of God to use very ordinary people like you and me.
4. We learn that suffering is part of the Christian life.

Summary:

So we can see that James (the brother of Jesus) changed his mind about Jesus, became a devoted follower of Jesus, and the leader of the church in Jerusalem. He wrote a very pastoral letter to the Jewish believers who had been scattered due to persecution, in order to instruct and encourage them to live out their faith in the face of difficulty!

For Further Study:

Acts 15

Foxe's book of Martyrs

Eusebius, Historia Ecclesiastica, 2.23

All The Men of the Bible by Herbert Lockyer

Tyndale Concise Bible Commentary by Carl Laney

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Introduction to James

"Faith Works!"

(James 1:1)

James 1:1 (NIV)

¹ James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes scattered among the nations: Greetings.

Genre:

James is a general epistle, known as an encyclical

It was written and sent to a broad audience addressing common issues of the Christian life

Author:

James the half-brother of Jesus

James was initially a skeptic about Jesus (Jn 7:1-5, and Mark 3:20, 31,32)

James converted to the Christian faith after Jesus' resurrection (1 Cor 15:7)

James became a follower of Christ (Acts 1:4)

James became a leader in the Church of Jerusalem (Acts 15, Gal 1:18, 2:9)

James was known for his prayer and devotion

Audience:

Primarily Jewish Christians scattered due to persecution

(Acts 8:1-3, Acts 11:19)

Date:

Most evangelical scholars date the book around AD 45 making it the first NT book written