

## Book of James (Route 66)

Okay, let's turn in our Bibles, this morning to the Book of James... Having completed our study of '*The Four Gospels*' **AND** '*The Book of Acts*' in recent weeks... We now turn our attention to the New Testament LETTERS, or the EPISTLES...

And the Book of James is considered to be the EARLIEST... I've given this morning's message the title "**FAITH THAT WORKS.**" I think you'll see WHY by the end of this message.

Now, this is not the James who was the brother of John—the "**sons of Zebedee**," or the "**sons of THUNDER**," as Jesus called them... **THAT** James had been BEHEADED in Acts Chapter 12 by the Herod the king...

**THIS** James was the BROTHER—or should I say the "**half brother**"—of Jesus Himself ... He is OFTEN called "James the Just"—sometimes—"James the Righteous"...

Now, we KNOW—from the Gospels—that Jesus had brothers and sisters... Matthew 13:55, when Jesus comes to His home-town of Nazareth, the people are SKEPTICAL, and they say: "**Is this not the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Jose[ph], Simon, and Judas?**"

[By the way, the "**JUDAS**" mentioned here is actually **JUDE**, who wrote one of the Epistles, and opened HIS letter by writing: "**Jude, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, AND BROTHER brother of [THIS] JAMES...**"]

Incidentally, there IS SOME CONTENTION to the idea that Jesus ACTUALLY HAD BROTHERS and SISTERS:

- There is the **HIERONYMIAN VIEW**—That is, that Jesus' "**brothers**" were actually His "**cousins**," the sons of Alphaeus and Mary the SISTER of Jesus' mother...
- The **EPIPHANIAN VIEW**—That Jesus' "**brothers**" were **Joseph's** from a PREVIOUS MARRIAGE... (thus making them His "**step brothers**")...
- And then there is the **HELVIDIAN VIEW**—That is that Jesus' "**brothers**" were ACTUALLY His brothers and sisters... Of course, the SAME MOTHER with a DIFFERENT FATHER [GOD was Jesus' Father, not Joseph]...

Now, we KNOW that—initially—Jesus brothers and sisters DID NOT BELIEVE He was the Messiah... John 7:5 says: "...even His brothers did not believe in Him." – In Mark 3:21, they say: "**He is out of His mind.**"

But JAMES is listed specifically as one of the EYEWITNESSES of Jesus AFTER His resurrection... In 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians Chapter 15, Paul writes: "**Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and... He was buried, and... rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, AND... He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once...**" And "**After that He was seen by James...**"

That ‘JAMES’ refers to the BROTHER of Jesus... David Guzik suggests that: “*This [Personal appearance is likely] the **CAUSE** [of James’] conversion...*” And “*When he did follow Jesus, he followed with great devotion...*”

Acts Chapter 1, Verse 4, sees Jesus’ “**brothers**” among the EARLY DISCIPLES who were gathered together in an upper room WAITING in Jerusalem...

And, the REASON that I MENTION this is because—when James OPENS HIS LETTER—he does not say, “*I, James, the BROTHER of Jesus... PERSONAL RELATIVE to the MESSIAH.*”

No... He calls himself—in Chapter 1, Verse 1—“**a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ...**” – “**Bondservant**” is the Greek word ‘*doulos*,’ and it means a ‘slave,’ but—MORE SPECIFICALLY—it is a slave by CHOICE... a slave out of LOVE.

Chuck Smith writes: “*A [doulos]... lived completely for his master. He had no rights of ownership, could not hold title to anything, everything he had belonged to his master... bereft of ambitions in a personal way, they lived solely to serve the Lord and... please Him.*” – David Guzik adds: “*Jesus was more than James’ brother; more importantly, Jesus was his Lord.*”

And, James went on to become a TREMENDOUS LEADER in the early church... When Peter is let out of PRISON—in Acts Chapter 12—he says: “**Go, tell these things to James...**”

After his conversion, in Galatians Chapter 1, Paul writes: “**...after 3 years I went to Jerusalem to see Peter... I saw none of the other apostles except James, the Lord’s brother.**”

Eusebius—who was an early Church historian—said that Clement of Alexandria [also an early church writer] said: “*James... was the first... to be elected to the episcopal throne of the Jerusalem church.*” – he said: “*Peter and James and John, after the [Lord’s] ascension... did not contend for glory, [they] made James the Just bishop of Jerusalem.*”

In fact, if you were WITH us for our study of the Book of Acts LAST week, you’ll remember that—when the Gentiles are FIRST brought-in to the church [which was a BIG DEAL, by the way]—it led to MUCH DISPUTE within the church...

Up to THAT point, the CHURCH was PRIMARILY JEWISH... And there was a TREMENDOUS AMOUNT of HOSTILITY between the Jews and Gentiles...

In Acts 15, we read that: “**certain men... from Judea [said] ‘Unless you are circumcised... you cannot be saved.’**” – Some of PHARISEES who had believed said: “**It is necessary to circumcise [the Gentiles]... and to command [that they] keep the law of Moses.**”

And, this leads to the ‘JERUSALEM COUNCIL’ of Acts Chapter 15, where they CONSIDER THE MATTER... And—in the MIDDLE of the meeting—it is **JAMES** who stands up and says: “**Men and brethren, listen to me... I judge that we should not trouble those from among the Gentiles who are turning to God, but that we write to them to abstain from things polluted by idols... from sexual immorality... from things strangled... and from blood.**”

And, we read this saying “**pleased the apostles and elders, with the whole church...**” And when the people READ it, “**they rejoiced over its encouragement.**” – David Guzik writes:

*“[Early church history] ... says James was such a man of prayer that his knees had large and thick calluses, making them look like the knees of a camel. It also [records] that James was martyred in Jerusalem by being pushed from a high point of the temple. [But] the fall did not kill him, and on the ground he was beaten to death, even as he prayed for his attackers.”*

Jewish Historian Josephus—who was NOT a Christian—in his ‘*Antiquities of the Jews*,’ refers to the stoning of “*James the brother of Jesus, who was called Christ*” around 62 AD. – Now, **ALL** OF THIS helps us DATE the **WRITING** of this Book...

Note again how James OPENS this letter... in Chapter 1, Verse 1, he writes: “**James, a bondservant of God and... the Lord Jesus Christ, TO... the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad...**”

Now, if you want to let your eyes dart-forward to Chapter 2, Verse 2—he says: “**If there should come into your assembly a man with gold rings...**” – That word “**assembly**”—in the original language—is “*synagogue.*” – Which is a **JEWISH** term...

So, JAMES seems to be WRITING to an EXCLUSIVELY **JEWISH** audience. The phrase “**twelve tribes**” would have NO RELEVANCE—to a wider, GENTILE, audience...

Also, there’s no mention of the JERUSALEM COUNCIL—or the DEBATE—about whether or not the Gentiles should keep the Law in this letter... Chuck Swindoll writes:

*“Such a significant event as the Jerusalem Council [would have] warranted comment from James... But James makes no mention [it, nor] of the Gentile Christians at all...”*

Another author adds: “*Most scholars believe the Book of James was written before the Jerusalem Council... [in] a very early period [of Christianity] before the church was **distinct** from Judaism. The council met in 49 AD... James **likely** wrote his letter between 45-48 AD.”*

Dr. Graham Scroggie says: “*All evidence shows that this [Book] belongs to a primitive stage in the history of the Christian Church... it is the earliest of the New Testament Writings.*”

This Book is an INCREDIBLY **PRACTICAL** BOOK... But, it’s also a very DENSE book... At only 5 CHAPTERS long, It covers topics like:

Persevering in trials, not showing partiality, prayer, how to control our tongue, pride, humility, spiritual adultery, heavenly vs demonic wisdom, true religion, meeting physical needs...

It’s a book that emphasizes **DUTY** over **DOCTRINE**... In just 108 verses, there are 54 CLEAR COMMANDS are given... Again, Chuck Swindoll writes:

*“The book of James is a bit like the Proverbs [of the] New Testament. Its consistent focus on practical action in the life of [the believer] is reminiscent of the Wisdom Literature in the Old*

*Testament, encouraging God's people to ACT like God's people... In the mind of this early church leader, Christians evidence their faith by walking in certain ways and not others."*

Dr. Graham Scroggie writes: "The author wrote to rebuke the shameful neglect of certain Christian duties. Rather than speculating on religious theories, James directs his readers toward godly living. [This] book... speaks, especially, to those who are inclined to talk their way to heaven, instead of walk their way there..." – I LOVE THIS: "In its rugged abruptness, the pregnant brevity of its phrases, the austerity of its demand upon the reader... the Epistle of James stands alone among... New Testament [writings]. It is less a letter than a moral harangue, stamped with the lofty personality of the writer, and a-fire with his burning sincerity."

There's also a TREMENDOUS amount of CONNECTION between the Book of James and the Teachings of Jesus... especially the Sermon on the Mount—with about 15 ALLUSIONS...

A commentator by the name of Joseph B. Mayor—who wrote a VERY DETAILED COMMENTARY on James—said James has preserved "*more of the teaching of our Lord [Jesus] than is contained in all the other New Testament Epistles combined.*"

Another author adds: "*These allusions indicate a close relationship between James & Jesus, giving evidence of the strong influence of the Lord in the author's life.*" – "[This is] A man who knew the teaching of Jesus and took it seriously."

Which is exactly what James seems to have **WANTED** for his readers! – It always BUMS ME OUT when we reach a REALLY PRACTICAL SECTION OF SCRIPTURE... that is FILLED with a lot of "**do's**" and "**don't's**," and people are, like: "*That's legalism!*"

It isn't LEGALISM... No MORE than: "**Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat...**" – That's not LEGALISM... that's PROTECTION... it's WISDOM... and HOLINESS...

Make no mistake: The Bible is NOT just a book that tells us **WHAT TO BELIEVE** (which it DOES... That's called DOCTRINE)... But, it also tells us **HOW TO LIVE**... The one is called ORTHO-DOXY, and the other is called ORTHO-PRAXY...

Again, Chuck Swindoll writes: "*For James, faith was no abstract proposition... [it] had effects in the real world. [James offers] numerous practical examples to illustrate [this]... If those who call themselves God's people truly belong to Him, their lives will produce fruit. In language... similar to [the] Sermon on the Mount, James rails against the hypocritical believer who says one thing but does another. A faith that does not produce real life change is worthless.*" – Just LISTEN to these passages from the Book of James, and see if any of them sound FAMILIAR...

And, I realize—for some—this may seem like the most BORING part of the message... I would SUGGEST this may be the most POWERFUL part of the message... Because all I'm going to do is just READ FROM THE BIBLE... We'll put the references for you on the big screen...

James Chapter 1... “**My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.**”

“**If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind... let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.**”

“**Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.**”

“**Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.**” – For all the FACEBOOK USERS in the room!

“**Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.**”

This is ALL from Chapter 1! – Like, this isn’t a GENEALOGY, or a passage that’s HARD TO UNDERSTAND... This is just straight-forward, practical wisdom... And, this is the **TONE** of the ENTIRE BOOK OF JAMES... I’ll keep reading, in Chapter 2...

“**...if there should come into your assembly a man with gold rings, in fine apparel, and there should also come in a poor man in filthy clothes, and you pay attention to the one wearing the fine clothes... have you not shown partiality among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts? – If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you do well; but if you show partiality, you commit sin...**”

From Chapter 3... [the BIG one]... “**If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body. Indeed, we put bits in horses’ mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body. Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires. Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell. For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the [likeness] of God. Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so.**”

“**Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your**

hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.”

Chapter 4... “Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures. Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.”

“God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.” Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.” – Every single ONE of these could be a SERMON! – In Chapter 5, James asks...

“Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms. Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.” – “If anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.”

And the WHOLE BOOK is ENCAPSULATED WELL [I believe] back in Chapter 2... [Go ahead and look there with me]... Chapter 2, Beginning in Verse 14, James asks:

“What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him?” – Verse 15: “If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,’ but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? Thus also,” he says—in Verse 17—“faith by itself—if it does not have works—is dead.”

Now, James seems to ANTICPATE his readers’ ARGUMENT—in Verse 18—and says: “But someone will say, ‘You have faith, and I have works.’” – And then, he writes: “Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble! But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?” – It’s like a SCREEN DOOR on a SUBMARINE... You ever heard that expression?

Listen to these lyrics from an old Rich Mullins song... He sings: “*Faith comes from God and every Word that He breathes... He lets you take it in your heart so you can give it hands and*

feet... It's gotta be active if it's gonna be alive... You gotta put it into practice... Otherwise... It's about as useless as a screen-door on a submarine... Faith without works... it just ain't happenin'... One is your right hand, one is your left... It's your light, your guide, your life, and your breath... Faith without works is like a song you can't sing... It's about as useless as a screen door on a submarine." – That's what James is SAYING in this book!

Now, IMMEDIATELY... one of the CRITICIMS people bring against this passage is that James is CONTRADICTING what PAUL wrote in passages like Ephesians 2, 8 and 9... "For by grace [we] have been saved through faith... NOT OF WORKS, lest anyone should boast."

Or Romans Chapter 4: "Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt. But to him who DOES NOT WORK... his FAITH is accounted for righteousness..."

SOME SUGGEST that James is even WRITING INTENTIONALLY to UNDERMINE PAUL... The problem with that IS: We've already talked about how EARLY OF A TEXT the Book of James is... NONE OF PAUL'S WRITINGS EVEN EXISTED at this point!

That notwithstanding... WHICH ONE IS IT? – Is it FAITH? – Or is it WORKS? – "Is it *LIVE*, or is it *MEMOREX*?" – But, the answer is YES! – It's like TWO OARS extending from the SAME BOAT... Like Rich Mullins said: "One is your right hand, one is your left."

Jon Courson writes: "As seen in their writings, the Jerusalem believers—James, Peter, and... John—tended to behave a bit more strictly than... Paul, Barnabas, and the Antioch believers who were primarily students... of Grace. Both groups were—and still are—NEEDED in the body of Christ. It's like a trampoline: pressure from both sides is needed if the trampoline is to stay taut. So, too, with discipline and grace—both are essential [in the life of the believer]."

Can we just DISPEL with the misconception that WORKS are somehow a BAD thing... I know this is Calvary Chapel, and we emphasize GRACE a LOT... but, the New Testament is FILLED with passages EXHORTING us to GOOD WORKS...

1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 6:18 says we should be "rich in good works..." – Titus 3:8 says "**those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works...**" – Hebrews 10:24 says we should "**consider one another... [to] stir up... good works...**"

In fact, listen to the ENTIRE Ephesians Chapter 2 passages [which I quoted a moment ago]... Paul says: "...**by grace you have been saved through faith... NOT OF WORKS...**" – But then, THE VERY NEXT VERSE says: "**For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus FOR GOOD WORKS!"**

Is it "**NOT of works?"**" – Or is it "**FOR good works?"**" – I always tell people to think of it THIS way... We have not just been saved **FROM** something (sin, death, and hell)... We have also been saved **FOR** something... We have been "**created in Christ Jesus FOR good works..."**" GRACE and WORKS are not MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE... In fact, ONE LEADS to the OTHER... Listen to this passage from Titus Chapter 2... It says:

“The grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men...” So, we’re talking about GRACE... “teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed”—LISTEN—“and purify for Himself His own special people, **ZEALOUS FOR GOOD WORKS.**”

That word **ZEALOUS**, it means “HOT”... We should be PASSIONATE—not PASSIVE—about GOOD WORKS...

Now, the DIFFERENCE is... How do these two things go HAND-IN-HAND? – PAUL—in HIS writings—addresses works **PRIOR** to SALVATION... And, he’s saying: “*GOOD WORKS do not SAVE US.*” – 100 percent true! We are saved **BY** GRACE, NOT OF WORKS...

But James is addressing WORKS **AFTER** SALVATION... He’s saying: “*If you TRULY ARE SAVED, your life will ISSUE FORTH in GOOD WORKS.*” – In fact, “*Faith WITHOUT works, is dead.*”

That’s why he says: “**Show me your faith without your works... I will show you my faith by my works.**” – He isn’t saying “*Good works SAVE us...*” – He’s saying: “*GOOD WORKS are the EVIDENCE that we truly are redeemed.*”

Jesus would say it SIMILARLY—in the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew Chapter 7—“**Every good tree bears good fruit...**” – In fact: “**A good tree cannot bear bad fruit...**” And then, He says: “**Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.**”

In Luke Chapter 13, Jesus told a Parable, and said: “**A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. Then he said to the keeper of his vineyard, ‘Look, for three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree and find none. Cut it down; why does it use up the ground?’ But [the keeper of the vineyard] answered and said to him, ‘Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and fertilize it. And if it bears fruit, well. But if not, after that you can cut it down.’**”

Do we understand what Jesus is SAYING in this passage? – He is saying that God is **INSPECTING OUR LIVES** for GOOD FRUIT... GOOD WORKS... And if there **IS NONE**, we are—literally—just USING UP THE GROUND... WE’RE TAKING UP SPACE!

I believe James has these words of Jesus in mind when he wrote his EPISTLE... If you want to know what the Christian life “**LOOKS**” like... Read the Book of James...

In his preface to the Book of Romans, Martin Luther wrote: “*It is a living, busy, active, mighty thing, this faith. It is impossible for it not to be doing good things incessantly. It does not ask whether good works are to be done, but before the question is asked, it has already done [them], and is constantly doing them. Whoever does not do such works... is an unbeliever. He gropes and looks around for faith and good works, but knows neither what faith is nor what good works are... He talks and talks with many words about [his] faith... [but there are no] good works.*”

I believe one of the REAL KEYS to what James is TALKING about is BACK in Chapter 1... Look there with me... In James Chapter 1, Verse 21, we're told: "...lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and RECEIVE WITH MEEKNESS the implanted word, which is able to save your souls..."

"BUT," he adds, in Verse 22... "**Be DOERS of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.**" – And then, he EXPOUNDS... He says: "**If anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was.**"

"BUT," Verse 25... "**He who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it—and is not a forgetful hearer but a DOER of the work—this one will be blessed in what he does.**"

We often refer to this passage as being "**DOERS of the WORD.**" – Which is true! – But, by the END of the passage—again, in Verse 25—James says to be a "**DOER of the WORK.**" – To be a DOER of the WORD RESULTS in us being DOERS of the WORK...

See, I believe we live in a time when the church has become POPULATED with "Bible Study Junkies." – People who are always LISTENING to Bible Studies... And, it's like, they CAN'T GET ENOUGH... And yet, it doesn't necessarily result in them DOING anything.

It's like Ezekiel's day, when the Lord TOLD him: "**As for you, son of man, the children of your people are talking about you beside the walls and in the doors of the houses; and they [say] to one another... 'come... hear what the word is that comes from the LORD.' So they come to you as people do, they sit before you as My people, and they hear your words, but they do not do them; for with their mouth they show much love, but their hearts pursue their own gain... You are to them as a very lovely song of one who has a pleasant voice and can play well on an instrument; for they hear your words, but they do not do them.**"

We somehow THINK that sitting in church and saying "**AMEN**" IMMEDIATELY MEANS we are going out and DOING IT... But, it doesn't...

How many weeks have you guys heard me stand up here and say: "*Every single one of us should be SERVING in the Christian life?*" – Just about EVERY WEEK, right?

I have people come up to me after EVERY BIBLE STUDY, and say, "*Pastor Kevin, that was an AMAZING BIBLE STUDY!*" – Praise the Lord! – Now, what are you DOING about it?

We DON'T have more people SERVING... Is your PRAYER LIFE IMPROVING... Are your STUDYING THE BIBLE more diligently... Are you TAKING CARE of those less fortunate?... Are you GIVING FINANCIALLY more INTENTIONALLY... How are we being **DOERS of the WORK...** because we are **PEOPLE OF THE WORD?**

If we're not "**DOING**" anything, we're just **DECIEVING OURSELVES...** And, people say, "*Pastor Kevin, I don't know how!*" – And, THANKFULLY, James TELLS us—AGAIN, in Verse 23... He says:

**“If anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a [person] observing [himself]... in a mirror... [but he] goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of [person] he was.”**

I've KNOWN people like that! Usually from DRIVING BEHIND THEM! ALWAYS checking their reflection! – It HASN'T CHANGED in the last THREE MINUTES!

**“BUT,”** James says, in Verse 25... The person **“who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it—and is not a forgetful hearer but a DOER of the work—this one will be blessed in what he does.”**

Again, to POINT-OUT a COMPARISON to Jesus' OWN words... In Matthew 7, He says: **“Whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock... the rain descended, the floods came, the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand...”**

See, EVEN JESUS KNEW that HEARING HIS WORDS DOES NOT AUTOMATICALLY **MEAN** that we're DOING IT! – It's not LISTENING and LISTENING to MORE and MORE Bible Studies until we HOPE we have RETAINED ENOUGH to DO...

The KEY is to start DOING it—we OBEY it—and **THAT** is what helps us RETAIN it! – Read Verse 25 again... **“not a forgetful hearer but a DOER of the work...”**

In this Book, James is not saying: *“Are you a believer? Then DO this.”* – He's saying: *“Are you a believer? Then your life will LOOK like this.”* – The Book of James is what the Christian life LOOKS like... Faith WITHOUT WORKS is DEAD... And, I encourage you guys to READ this ENTIRE BOOK for yourselves... You'll be BLESSED...

Now, next Sunday... We're gonna go a LITTLE out of order with the chronology, just because I have FOOT SURGERY on Thursday... So, Pastor Mallet is going to teach the small, little ‘Book of Jude’—who, AGAIN, was the BROTHER of the James we're talking about this morning...

But THAT letter is—*literally*—only one “Chapter” long... You have got PLENTY of time to READ it (and then READ IT AGAIN) before next Sunday morning...

So, read ahead, and then come join us Sunday at 10AM... That is where we are headed NEXT, when ‘Route 66’ continues...