

INTRODUCTION TO JAMES

Welcome to another TCT-TV's "School of the Bible" study. That you are joining in this study of James is a great joy. We pray that it will be of significant benefit in your Christian growth and maturity. Rev. Beverly Hills and Dr. Grady Etheridge will share from their years of walking with Jesus Christ to help you gain from the wealth of information stowed within this book of the Holy Bible.

The KEY VERSE of James is 1:4b is clearly having to do with the development of mature believers in Jesus Christ. The key theme is "*...so that you may be (people) perfectly and fully developed (with no defects) lacking in nothing.*"

James claims to be the writer of this book. With five James in the New Testament, there is a question. Most Bible sources agree only two are possible as the writer. They are: James, son of Zebedee (martyred in A.D. 44, Matt. 10:2; Acts 12:2); and, James, the Lord's brother (Matt. 13:55; Acts 1:14; died in 66 A.D.) James, Son of Alphaeus, an apostle; James, the father of the apostle, Judas Lk. 6:16; and, James, the less (younger or smaller) Mk. 15:40 were the other James in the scriptures. James comments in Acts 15, his authority, and the similar writing in the book of James point to the Lord's brother as author.

The letter is written to the Jews living outside the land of Palestine. The twelve tribes were scattered and would be the only group to whom this phrase would apply as pointed out in Acts 26:7. The date of writing traditionally is from the middle forties to early sixties, just before the Lord's brother, James, died.

Christian Jews, scattered throughout the Roman Empire, were having problems just like we do today. Some were poor, some were oppressed by others with means, many had problems in their personal lives, and others experienced discord with "brethren." Trials, temptations and money problems lace this practical teaching on Christian living for the early Jewish believer.

The theme is one of encouragement for becoming the victorious, mature Christian believer showing forth Jesus Christ. It is an exhortation to steadfastness and patience. Many scriptures support this theme: Joshua 23:7,8; Job 11:14-15; I Cor. 15:58; Gal. 5:1; Phil 1:27; I Peter 5:4; 2 Peter 3:17.

We are encouraged to endure and persevere: Job 17:9; John 15:9; Gal 6:9; Heb. 12:1; I Peter 1:13; Rev. 3:11.

We are warned against instability and one cause of it, double mindedness. Prov. 24:21; Jer. 2:36; Hos. 6:4; Eph. 4:14; Heb. 13:9; James 1:6; II Ki. 17:33; Zeph 1:4,5; Luke 16:13; I Cor. 10:21; James 1:8-4:8; Ps. 12:2-3. May you become more decisive during this study! I Ki. 18:21; II Ki. 17:41; Hos. 10:2; Luke 9:62.