



## **RAISING THE STANDARD: AN OVERVIEW OF JAMES**

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### **SUMMARY**

Life is a series of choices. For the believer, God demands more than human wisdom or worldly standards; He calls us to align our lives with THE Standard: Jesus Christ. In his epistle, James provides practical instruction for godly wisdom, challenging the Church to prove the genuineness of their faith through transformed lives. This sermon series will call and equip each of us to raise the standard of every aspect of our lives as we aim to honor Christ.

## **Hypocritical**

Behaving in a way that suggests one has higher standards or more noble beliefs than is the case.

## **WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT JAMES (FROM THE BIBLE)?**

- Brother of Jesus | Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3
- Initially, Denied that Jesus was the Messiah | Mark 3:21
- Saw Jesus Resurrected, Personally | 1 Corinthians 15:7; Acts 1:14
- Leader of the Jerusalem Church/Council | Acts 12:17; 15:13-21; 21:18-26

## **What Do We Know About James (From Church History)**

James the Just

### **Eusebius of Caesaria. (1890). The Church History of Eusebius. (Vol. 1, p. 125) In P. Schaff & H. Wace (Eds.)**

“Leading him into their midst they demanded of him that he should renounce faith in Christ in the presence of all the people. But, contrary to the opinion of all, with a clear voice, and with greater boldness than they had anticipated, he spoke out before the whole multitude and confessed that our Saviour and Lord Jesus is the Son of God. But they were unable to bear longer the testimony of the man who, on account of the excellence of ascetic virtue and of piety which he exhibited in his life, was esteemed by all as the most just of men, and consequently they slew him.”

## **WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT JAMES (FROM CHURCH HISTORY)?**

- James the Just was Martyred ~ 62AD
- Fervent in Faith and Prayer

### **Eusebius of Caesaria. (1890). The Church History of Eusebius. (Vol. 1, p. 125) In P. Schaff & H. Wace (Eds.)**

“And he was in the habit of entering alone into the temple, and was frequently found upon his knees begging forgiveness for the people, so that his knees became hard like those of a camel, in consequence of his constantly bending them in his worship of God, and asking forgiveness for the people.”

## **WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE SETTING?**

- Jewish Believers
- Persecuted, Scattered, & Poor

### **Swindoll, Living Insights: James, 1 & 2 Peter, p. 13**

“More than any others, Jewish believers lived without roots and traveled outside Judea looking for a place to call home. Many of these men and women found themselves in a social and religious limbo... Many of these Jewish believers had begun to grow weary, tempted either to turn their backs on their Jewish roots or to defect from their faith in Christ. Many claimed that they believed the truth of God concerning the Lord Jesus, but because of the pressures of the day, they began to live a lie.”

## WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT THE BOOK?

- Expounds on The Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5-7)
- Contains Over 50 Calls to Action

## WHAT PROBLEM DOES THE BOOK ADDRESS?

- The Danger of Double-Minded Standards (James 1:8; 4:8)

## GOD'S STANDARD

- Perfect Law/Law of Liberty | James 1:25
- Royal Law | James 2:8
- Wisdom from Above | James 3:17

## WORLD'S STANDARD

- Earthly, Unspiritual, and Demonic | James 3:15

### **If a Believer is Double-Minded, then He or She is...**

- Unstable | James 1:8
- Deceived | James 1:16, 22, 26
- Arrogant | James 4:16

## WHAT'S IS THE BOOK'S CENTRAL THEME?

True Faith Lives By God's Standard.

**Together, We Must Rise to the Standard of our Faith.  
Christ, the Lord of Glory, is our Standard**

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In what areas of your life do you need God's wisdom the most?
2. What do we know about James, the brother of Jesus, from the New Testament?
3. What is the setting of the book of James?
4. Read James 1:22. Why do you think many consider this verse to be the book's central theme?
5. According to James 2:14-26, what is the difference between believing the truth (ie, demons believing who God is) and genuine faith?
6. What questions does this raise for you personally?
7. Read Proverbs 9:1-6, 9:13-18, and James 3:13-18. How does God's Word contrast godly wisdom and worldly folly?
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