Welcome to the Wilderness!

Allow us to introduce ourselves as your fellow-travelers. We are the Gallagher family. God has called us into the Wilderness where we have no real alternative but to make His Word a priority.

We want to share some of the secrets of consistent Bible study which the Lord has used in our walk with Him. We certainly have no right to speak from a position of strength, our strength is only in the Lord. Nor do we have any desire to impress you with our limited knowledge of the Bible.

All we can really do is to place some tools in your hands as you travel further into the Wilderness armed with nothing else but your Bible.

The purpose of this guide is to help the reader relate the Bible to real life. It is impossible to communicate to others that which you haven’t experienced yourself. The classic example is the Scopes trial where William Jennings Bryan was publicly humiliated in court as he tried to defend a Bible he hadn’t read. Each one of us is on trial every day:

Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men.  
2 Corinthians 3:2

God is calling us all into the Wilderness where Paul, Moses, Elijah, David, Daniel, John the Baptist and Jesus spent much time. Come into the Wilderness with your Bible and listen while the Lord reveals His Word to you. Some will say, "But isn’t it enough to know that we are saved? Why do we need to dig so deeply into the Bible?"

Answer: But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.  
Hebrews 5:14

God doesn’t use anyone greatly until He has tried them in the Wilderness. Wouldn’t it be a good idea to keep track of what you are hearing there (Heb. 2:1) so that it will never be lost? He will surely hand pick you for assignments which take you out of the Wilderness into the Promised Land!

Many thanks are due to those who have patiently taught and guided us over the years: Dr. Robert Picirilli, Dr. Stanley Outlaw, Pastor Adolfo Robleto, Bryan Moore (the engineer behind GodSpeed), Pastor Joe Lambert, Rev. Bill Gothard, Pastor Woody Proffitt, Missionaries Archie and Sarah Mayhew.

Many others could be mentioned who were patient with us while we "practiced" being in the ministry, not to mention the many pastors and church members who trusted us to deliver the pure Word of God in spite of our weaknesses.

Finally, we pray that you will open your spirit to diligently inquire of the Lord. The answers you have been seeking may be just a couple of verses away. May God add His blessing as you seek to thoroughly understand His Word.

Your Fellow-Travelers, 
The Gallaghers 
Daniel 12:3
The Stop, Look, Listen approach to Bible study

The guide has been prepared to help families discover meaningful time in the Bible together. It was not designed for seminary students, although some students may find this material helpful. To quote from Goodrick's indispensable Do it Yourself: Hebrew and Greek,

The mortality rate for those studying original Bible languages is horrendous! Students spend enormous segments of time and energy memorizing vocabulary lists, declensions and conjugations, only to forget them in a few years through lack of use.

Goodrick says that what is needed is a halfway house for those who are climbing the mountain. This guide is intended to be a halfway house where climbers can find a place to collect their thoughts and prepare themselves to go further up the mountain.

**This guide focuses on leading you to discover daily manna rather than teaching hermeneutics (the art of interpreting words). In any case, students of hermeneutics will be able to use this material as a foundation for their work.**

Here are some more important ideas from Goodrick:

Too often the Bible [he means to some people] is nothing more than a repository of doctrinal propositions supporting the already systematized theology of the student.

Goodrick goes on to say that a well-rounded approach to Scripture grows in an honest reader’s mind as his understanding of the Word grows. He urges us not to only use the Bible to proof-text our favorite doctrines. This doesn’t mean that the reader shouldn’t have denominational distinctives. The problem comes when we don’t think the Bible has anything else to say to us.

1 Cor. 2:14 reveals that Scripture is validated by your spirit. You may have a gifted mind which can research the original meaning but if the result fails to touch your spirit then you have not heard from God (2 Cor. 3:6). When you were saved, God personally convinced you that His Word was true. Is it possible He has more truth to teach you? Will He only teach it to those who read Hebrew and Greek?

We have based our studies on comparisons of the Bible text to specific categories of knowledge and wisdom. Learning to “compare spiritual things with spiritual” (1 Cor. 2:13) is the process of learning to compare one thing with another in order to discover if it has any spiritual application.

Hebrews 5:13 chides us for not being skillful in the Word. It says that understanding doctrine is just the beginning. We need to make a commitment to become intimately familiar with each book of the Bible. This is a different concept from a “read through the Bible in a year” calendar. There are great rewards waiting for anyone who will go through one book of the Bible, word by word (even if it takes months) until they have mastered that book.

Luther was mocked one day for not being a great scholar of the original languages. Luther answered this scorn by saying that there was truth in what his accuser said but that there was not one tree in the entire Bible which he had not shaken to see what would fall from the branches.

May God give us all that kind of determination! It really is a question of whether or not we believe that it is worthwhile to know this Book on such an intimate basis. Our assignment will have been accomplished if you find the things the Lord has hidden specifically for you in the book of James. We pray that the Lord will confirm those things you are about to discover in the mouth of two or three witnesses (passages).*

*for more on confirming truth with Scripture, see rhema in the category list.
Keeping a Record of the Journey

How much would it have meant to you if you had been given a personal notebook of Bible wisdom by your parents or grandparents? That may never have happened but here’s your chance to make it happen for someone else.

This guide is a good way to get your family members started in keeping a record of the spiritual lessons they are learning.

It goes without saying that you (or someone you know) will face at least one major crisis in life. Deut. 8:2 shows us that this can happen to show us what is in our hearts.

You never know when someone is going to need to know something you have learned. It makes sense to have a place to put your notes so that you (or someone you love) can find them when that crisis shows up.

But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and [be] ready always to [give] an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:

1 Peter 3:15

Why another Bible study guide?

The world says that the Bible is not relevant. They don’t see any connection at all between the Bible and their daily lives. Our job is to prove to ourselves first, and then to others, that the Bible is accurate scientifically, historically, medically, etc.

You can use this knowledge to prepare an answer for people who are brought across your path. You will find that you have something to say that makes sense and causes people to take Christianity seriously.
Master Category List

Knowledge Categories

We have found it helpful to look for the following categories when attempting to understand any passage of Scripture. The first group we call the Knowledge Categories. These are the kinds of things that we all studied in school. Keep in mind that the world has been taught that these subjects can be used to disprove the Bible (see 1 Cor. 8:1).

Our goal is to prove the truth of these things for ourselves and to be ready to give an answer to skeptics that these categories validate the Bible, regardless of what they have been taught!

We have inserted some of these icons into the Bible text to get you started. You may want to draw some of your own in the margin in order to record an insight which we have overlooked.

Of course, there are other categories which could be listed, such as classic literature, biographies, character qualities, commands, etc. -add your own to the list!

As you are reading, ask yourself, “Are there any inscriptions, carvings, tablets or other evidence which provide background for the facts in this book?”

Archaeology

• You may want to research the so called “Ossary of James” -a burial box which was supposedly discovered in 2002. The inscription on the box said, “James, son of Joseph, brother of Jesus.” This writing was found later to be a forgery and the “discovery” was proven to be a hoax.

This is a good example of why we need to be careful when researching topics which claim to give us “new” light on the Bible.

• The foundations of ancient synagogues have been uncovered in Israel. If you will research the objects found in these synagogues, you will learn a lot from items such as the “Seat of Moses.”

• Find out where the pinnacle of the Temple was. What could you see from up there?

Archaeology books are filled with discoveries which confirm the Bible and no discovery has ever contradicted the Bible!
For example...

James wrote to the scattered tribes of Israel. Here are some of the major locations of the Jewish diaspora:

- Asia Minor
- Egypt
- Greece
- Italy
- Spain
- Syria

For example...

Read Josephus\(^3\) to get the full story on the murder of James. Hegesippus says that James lived according to a Nazarite vow, that he wore a linen garment and was often found on his knees praying alone in the Temple.

The Christian historian Eusebius called James the “Bulwark of the People.”
In older days, the laws of men have often been based on God's law. God's Law was given to show us what pleases God. The law is a tutor-servant who walks with us and brings us to Christ by convicting us of the things we have done which are offensive to God (Gal. 3:24). Jesus said He came to fulfill the Law (Mat. 5:17).

There are documented cases of people who were harassed by suicidal thoughts because they had violated a Law which required the death penalty and did not obtain a covering for that offense through the blood of Jesus.

**For example...**

And they shall say unto the elders of his city, This our son is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton, and a drunkard. And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he die: so shalt thou put evil away from among you; and all Israel shall hear, and fear. Deut. 21:20-21

Make a note of every place where James refers to the Old Testament Law. Notice how often he contrasts it with Jesus’ words of the New Covenant. Do you know of any passages where Jesus compared the two?

The Bible is filled with wisdom on how to avoid disease.

**For example...**

Exodus 15:2

Scientists didn’t discover it until 1961 but God revealed to Moses that a baby’s blood doesn’t clot properly until it is eight days old. Leviticus 12:3

Make a note of passages which describe a sickness unto death (John 11:4), a sickness of chastisement (1 Cor. 11:30) and a sickness to the glory of God (John 9:3).

Which one do you think James may be referring to in Chapter 5?
The evil spirits did not appreciate David’s harp music and the Accuser will likewise leave when you have melodious music in your home.

The Bible is full of music! Keep an eye out for passages which have been used as lyrics in Christian hymns.

For example...

And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. 1 Tim. 3:16

This passage is traditionally thought of as a hymn sung by the early church. Paul quoted it with the confidence that his readers would recognize it.

Compare James 5:13 to other passages which tell us to encourage each other with melodious music. See Eph. 5:19 and Col.3:16.

Science

Be alert to passages which supposedly “prove” that the Bible is scientifically inadequate. The Bible can hold its own and has never been proven to contain any scientifically invalid passages.

For example...

What about Cain’s wife? Rabbits chewing their cud? Millions of years needed to prove evolution? Genetic mutation? etc. etc. etc.

The answers are in the Bible, and are also addressed in the Stop, Look, Listen Bible series. Keep reading! As you do your homework, unbelievers will be able to tell that you have carefully researched and validated your answers.

Can you think of any examples from the world of science which teach us the kind of patience spoken of in the book of James?
Apologetics is the science of refuting those who claim that the Bible is full of errors.

Over thousands of years (and who knows how many scribes and copyists) some scribal errors have been found in various manuscripts. However, there are no scribal errors which affect the doctrines of the Bible. When the Dead Sea Scrolls were found in 1948, the 2000 year old scroll of Isaiah validated the accuracy of our previous copies of Isaiah.

For example...

• James 4:5 appears to be quoting a non-existent Old Testament reference. Check out the possibilities for yourself so that you are ready to give an answer on this apparent discrepancy.

• James 5:3 seems to be saying that gold can rust until you check the original language.

• James 5:17 seems to have added six months to the story of Elijah’s drought until you acquaint yourself with Hebrew idioms.

Most scribal errors in the Bible are corrected by sister passages, others are explained by cultural, scientific, grammatical or historical investigation so we aren’t left wondering what the answer is.

There are plenty of so-called “experts” who use these scribal errors to tear down the doctrine of the inerrancy of the Scriptures. Don’t make yourself look like a fool by trying to defend a textual variant.
The Bible makes a point of showing the effects of a father’s blessing (or lack thereof) on his children’s lives. Be careful to take notice of God’s blessings and how to obtain them.

Make a note of how blessings were given in Bible families. Pray the words of an appropriate verse of Scripture over each family member as you close your family Bible time.

Pray that these words will become real in their lives.

“I wish above all things that Johnny/Susie may prosper and be in health, even as his/her soul prospers.” 3 John 1:2

Track down any blessings which are mentioned in the book of James. What does James say will happen when we bless God but fail to bless others as Jesus commanded us? Mat. 5:44

Always ask yourself, “Has this concept been alluded to or illustrated elsewhere in the Bible?” You will notice that babies and geniuses learn by comparing one thing to another. Graduate students are given the Miller Analogies Test to measure their ability to match something they have learned with something they are unfamiliar with.

Sometimes you will need to go bed thinking on this and may find it coming back to your thoughts all day long. If you persevere (Prov. 2:1-5) the answer will come. This is one of the most rewarding experiences you can have in your Bible study.

2 Peter 1:20 tells us that no Scripture is of its own interpretation. Peter was telling us that if we see some meaning in a passage then we should confirm that truth with the witness of other Scriptures.

We would be wise to examine every word in Scripture so that we “rightly divide” what we are reading (2 Tim. 2:15).

These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched [examined] the scriptures daily, whether those things were so. Acts 17:11

Search [examine] the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. John 5:39
We base sound doctrine on the Words of Christ. When sound doctrine is taught people give their lives to Christ. When the commandments of men are taught in place of doctrine, Christians and non-Christians alike are confused.

Here are some of the major doctrines of the Christian faith:

- Mankind was created in God's image.
- Adam's sin brought depravity on mankind
- Jesus Christ is the Son of God.
- Jesus was born of a virgin.
- Jesus' death paid the penalty for our sins.
- Jesus Christ rose from the dead.
- Jesus is coming again to receive His own.
- The Bible is the inerrant Word of God.
- God is three persons in one Being.

How many of these does the book of James refer to?

If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, [even] the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness;

He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings.

1 Timothy 6:3-4

But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. Mat. 15:9

If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself. John 7:17

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; 2 Tim. 4:3
Jesus Christ is also found throughout the Bible as the Rock, the Spring of Living Water, the Word, the Manna, the Brazen Serpent, the Red Heifer, the Scapegoat and dozens of other examples.

There are also several people who are called types of Christ. This is because their lives contained some aspect of the life of Christ. Joseph is a type of Christ. Also, look for “Christophanies” which are appearances of Jesus in the Old Testament.

We use this category to track any reference to Jesus, including passages which remind us of His sayings. Jesus is referred to as the Word (John 1:1) and He can be found throughout the Scriptures.

And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. Luke 24:27

Christ is also found throughout the Bible as the Rock, the Spring of Living Water, the Word, the Manna, the Brazen Serpent, the Red Heifer, the Scapegoat and dozens of other examples.

There are also several people who are called types of Christ. This is because their lives contained some aspect of the life of Christ. Joseph is a type of Christ. Also, look for “Christophanies” which are appearances of Jesus in the Old Testament.

Notice the words James uses to describe Jesus. How many times does he call Him Lord? What does Lord mean? Did you discover the passage which James called Jesus’ Royal Law?
Promises always have two sides: “if you do this, I will do that.” What happens if we don't keep our promises, does God still keep His? To God, a promise is a promise, is a promise!

For example

Look for passages in the book of James where God says He will do something. That's a promise!

Promises always have two sides: “if you do this, I will do that.” What happens if we don't keep our promises, does God still keep His? To God, a promise is a promise, is a promise!

Prayer

There is no better way to learn how to pray than to study the prayers of the Bible! A careful study of the prayers in the Bible will show you that the answer to a prayer is directly related to the words used in the prayer. This is why Jesus taught us specifically how to pray.

Make a note of any prayers you find in the book of James. Since James was known as a man of prayer, there are plenty of insights on the power of prayer in this letter.

Find of examples of prayers which ask God to meet physical needs.

List some prayers asking for protection.

How did Bible characters ask God to change His mind?

How did they ask for God's favor?

Did God answer the prayer?

• Look for practical tips which James gives us on how to pray and how not to pray.

• God wants us to pray specifically. James 4:2-3

• What is the prayer of faith in James 5:15? Compare this with Rom. 14:23 and Psa. 66:18.

Promises

Look for "covenants" in the Bible. Many Bible scholars have devoted their lives to tracing God's dealings with His people to covenants that were made. “I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.” Genesis 9:13
Can you discover any passages where James seems to be referring to public prophetic teaching or a prophetic event?

Prophecy

Prophecy is the act of predicting future events or situations based on religious or spiritual beliefs. Prophecy can take many forms, including visions, dreams, or explicit statements from religious leaders or texts. In Christianity, prophecy is often associated with the Old Testament and the New Testament, where it is referred to as the gift of prophecy in the Bible.

Eschatological Prophecies

Eschatological prophecies are predictions of events that will occur at the end of the world or at the end of history. These prophecies are often found in the Bible, particularly in the Old Testament and the New Testament. They often include predictions of the return of Jesus Christ, the end of the world, and the establishment of a new heaven and earth.

Messianic Prophecies

Messianic prophecies are predictions of events that will occur before, during, or after the reign of the Messiah, also known as Jesus Christ. These prophecies are often found in the Old Testament, particularly in the books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel.

Prophecies of Death

Prophecies of death are predictions of a person's death. These prophecies are often found in the Bible, particularly in the Old Testament, where they are often used to foretell the death of important figures, such as prophets or kings.

Prophecies of Future Events

Prophecies of future events are predictions of events that will occur in the future. These prophecies are often found in the Bible, particularly in the Old Testament and the New Testament, where they are often used to foretell the end of the world, the return of Jesus Christ, or other significant events.

Prophecies of Salvation

Prophecies of salvation are predictions of salvation, or the forgiveness of sins and the eternal life that comes through faith in Jesus Christ. These prophecies are often found in the Bible, particularly in the Old Testament, where they are often used to foretell the coming of the Messiah and the salvation he will bring.

Prophecies of Judgment

Prophecies of judgment are predictions of judgment, or the consequences of sin and the need for repentance and forgiveness. These prophecies are often found in the Bible, particularly in the Old Testament, where they are often used to foretell the judgment of God and the destruction of the wicked.

Prophecies of Blessing

Prophecies of blessing are predictions of blessings, or the benefits and rewards that come from following God's will and living a righteous life. These prophecies are often found in the Bible, particularly in the Old Testament, where they are often used to foretell the blessings of the righteous and the curses of the wicked.

Prophecies of Restoration

Prophecies of restoration are predictions of restoration, or the renewal and healing of broken relationships and situations. These prophecies are often found in the Bible, particularly in the Old Testament, where they are often used to foretell the restoration of Israel and the rebuilding of the temple.
There are dozens of people in the book of Proverbs who illustrate good and bad character qualities.

Once you discern the traits of these characters they give you greater insight into the biographies of Scripture.

James has been called the “Proverbs of the New Testament.” A careful inspection will reveal many passages in the book of James which remind us of the book of Proverbs.

- You can learn more about Esau when you compare Prov. 12:27 and Gen. 25:30
- It is fascinating to see a Proverb put into action the way Abigail did. See Prov. 15:1 and 1 Sam. 25:23-31.
- Read Psa. 51 and make a note of the year of suffering David spent agonizing over his sin. Compare this with Prov. 24:16.
- Josiah was a good king but lost his life because he did not understand the wisdom of Prov. 26:17 (see 2 Chr. 35:20).
- Joseph lived out Prov. 11:26 by using his wisdom and compassion (Gen. 47:25) to provide for the people.

Proverbs People

Look for these people all through the Bible. Here’s a short list:

Adulterer
Angry Man
Fool
Froward (Perverse) Man
Greedy
Liar
Scorner
Simple
Slothful
Strange Woman
Wicked

There are some good examples as well:

Righteous
Self-controlled
Unselfish
Wise
God chose the Greek language to convey the New Testament because of its precise use of words. There are precise meanings for the Greek concept of a word. The words logos and rhema reveal a lot about a passage when you understand the difference in their usage.

Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary

“The significance of rhema (as distinct from logos) is exemplified in the injunction to take ‘the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God’, (Ephesians 6:17); here, the reference is not to the whole Bible as such, but to the individual scripture which the Spirit brings to our remembrance for use in time of need, a prerequisite being the regular storing of the mind with Scripture.”

The word logos is used to describe a conception of thought as well as to present one of the titles of the Son of God.

The word rhema is used to show that God spoke to someone in a personal way.

Peter remembered the rhema of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. Matthew 26:75

Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy rhema. Luke 1:38

But Mary kept all these rhemas, and pondered [them] in her heart. Luke 2:19

Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every rhema that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Matthew 4:4

Highlighting a rhema may mean that you have been tested in a particular area and have some confidence that you have passed the test.

Or, it may mean that you want to mark a passage which God used to speak to you in a personal way. The purpose here is to pass it on as a legacy to someone else.
Unfortunately, untaught believers have misused the concept of a personal word from God to justify things they imagine they should do and have used this as a means of appearing deeply spiritual.

They have not been taught how to take every thought captive (2 Corinthians 10:5). They have not been taught to try the spirits (1 John 4:1). They have not been taught to confirm every truth in the mouth of two or three witnesses (Mat. 18:16).

Don’t let the foolishness of some believers rob you of the experience of God’s word speaking to you personally.

Remember, our view of the word rhema is not an essential of the Christian faith. Let’s be careful how we instruct others on issues which are not prerequisite to orthodox doctrine.

If your previous teaching doesn’t leave room for this understanding of rhema, you might prefer to refer to verses that have spoken to your spirit as “my favorite verses” or “verses that everybody ought to know.”

Just don’t miss the fact that God’s Words are “spirit and life” (John 6:63) and can leap off the pages of your Bible and have a personal application to your life. Heb. 4:12

Pay attention to what God may be showing you as you study the book of James. Ask God to show you any related Bible stories or passages which will make this book clear to you.

Do you know of any Bible characters who showed favor to the rich as James warned against in Chapter 2?

Has God brought concepts from this book across your path? For example, have you met anyone who is like a fountain which flows with dirty and clean water at the same time? (Jam. 3:11)

Keep looking for anything which will reveal this book to you. As you fall asleep, meditate on verses you can remember from James. God will show you what you should do about what you have learned.
The Guided Tour

Step 1 - Underline or highlight key words!
Read a chapter as if you had just received a love letter from the Person you love the most. The best way we have found to open up a chapter is to start by underlining repetitive words.

Another helpful habit is to highlight key words such as the names of God along with other names of people or places, etc. Here are some suggestions to consider when highlighting key words in your Bible. Of course, you can use any color combinations you want to!

- Highlight references to Jesus in Red.
- Highlight names of people in Green.
- Highlight names of places in Blue.
- Highlight personal insights in Yellow.
- Highlight prophecies in Purple.
- Highlight references to the Old Testament in Orange.

Step 2 - Study the background!
Read the Introduction Sheet. These sheets are designed to save you the trouble of researching the background of the book.

This will help you to relate what you are reading to the events going on at the time the book was written.

A compilation of dozens of Bible Encyclopedias, Bible dictionaries, web sites, commentaries, text evidence and every reference imaginable has been condensed into a few pages for you.

Remember, we are only here to get you started, soon you’ll be doing your own research and discovering insights and facts that we have missed.
Step 3 - Using the Study Sheets

You will notice that there are half-sheets at the beginning of every chapter. Some versions of this guide require you to cut or fold the half-sheets so that you can use them side-by-side with the Bible text.

Use the **Stop** sheet to list key words and word studies. This is also a good place to answer the questions: Who?, What?, Where?, When? and Why?

The **Look** sheet reminds you of other passages where the material found in the chapter is revealed. It is often said (and very true) that the Bible is the best commentary on the Bible!

One of the best ways to get insight is to ask yourself, “Has anything like this happened somewhere else in the Scriptures?”

The **Listen** sheet prompts you to ask God to reveal the things in this chapter which apply to you. Use this sheet to come up with some ideas to bring your study to a conclusion.

The **Focus** sheet is where you will find background information on any Knowledge or Wisdom categories discovered in the chapter.

The Study Sheets are for your personal use. The **Worksheet** is a condensed version for use with groups. A good way to get a group involved is to begin the lesson with the sample skit found at the back of this book. Match assignments to those in the group who are best able to handle the job.

You may also want to photocopy the sample newspaper pages for handouts. Divide students into groups of reporters who are “on assignment” to report on two or three of the major topics covered in the chapter. Encourage them to come up with ideas for Want Ads, Lost & Found, etc.

As an alternative, give them a microphone and ask them to report the news on Jerusalem’s Channel 7, station WOW. Don’t forget commercials for “used camels” etc. Smaller students will love doing this from inside a cardboard box with the bottom cut out and knobs and dials drawn on the front. The audience will love passing the “remote” around and changing the channel or muting the news.

Younger people might be asked to do something easy such as counting how many times a particular word is found in the chapter. Another student could be asked to take a look at the Focus sheet and explain how it relates to what you are studying.
Step 4 - Add your own notes

Try drawing lines between opposite ideas to make them stand out. This is also useful for pinpointing other related concepts, such as what words like “therefore” are referring to. Often, you will discover a chiasm (the letter Chi looks like an X in Greek) which reveals two concepts being contrasted.

11. Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?  
12. Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.

Finding your way around in the Bible text

- The King James Version is used because it lends itself to textual comparison.
- The space alongside of the Bible text is for your notes.
- Old Testament references are highlighted, like this.
- Exhaustive cross-references have purposely been left out so that you can add your own. Many Bibles list only general references. Look for passages that illustrate what is happening in the chapter.
- Alternate translations are inserted in the text [like this]. We have tried to especially spotlight any cognates or English words which are similar to their Greek derivatives.
- References to God are bolded, like this: **Lord Jesus Christ**
- You may want to cut or fold the category half-sheets on the dotted line provided so that you can see the Bible text alongside of the categories.
- A list of the resources used (as well as footnote references) can be found at the back of this study guide.
Basic Suggestions for Learners and Teachers

You will, of course, want to go through all the material yourself before sharing it with anyone else. Here are some ideas that have worked for us:

- Start out by reading a Bible chapter a few times until your eyes begin to spot repetitive words and ideas. Underline those words (we haven’t underlined them all so that you can find some of them on your own). Quite often, the most repeated word is a key to the chapter.

- Read the introductory material provided at the beginning of the book of James.

- Never skip over hard words (like upbraideth) without finding out what they mean. Look for alternate translations in the New American Standard version, the New King James, the NET Bible or the Amplified Bible.

- Go through the categories (listed in the next section) and ask yourself if any of the concepts in the chapter can be illustrated historically, scientifically, medically, etc. You absolutely must relate Scripture to life or you will just be reading words.

- Make up your mind that there is something in the chapter that can speak to your life. If you don’t apply what you learn and purpose to act on it then you are wasting your time. See James 1:23-25

- Now you are ready to share what you have learned with others. You will have better results if you lead your family or group into a discussion of the chapter rather than giving all the answers away. Assign helpers to look up cross-references and assist with skits or projects. Ask little ones to color a picture (you may photocopy the pictures in the back of the book) which illustrates the lesson and to tell you what they think about the material covered. Include everybody.

- Keep it short! We’ve included a lot of material in these pages. If your audience is losing interest then stop and pick up from there next time. It might be best at that point to wrap up the lesson by asking one of the questions from the Listen page.

Find a way for your audience to take something away from the class. Show them how they can begin a journal of the things they are learning or how to make meaningful notes in the margins of their Bibles.

Don’t let this be the end of the story. Pray for each one by name (before and after class) that God will use what they have learned to speak into their lives.
Your path to meaningful Bible study

Read the chapter three times and underline key words...

Read the Introduction...

Use the Worksheet to assign projects to the group...

Look for any cross-references or places where similar ideas are illustrated in other books of the Bible...

Read the Focus sheet to discover major categories found in the chapter...

Add your own notes or discoveries to the Bible Study pages...

Use the Listen Sheet to ask God, “How does any of this apply to me?”
The Book of James

The letter was written between 45 and 48 A.D. This places the letter sometime shortly before the Jerusalem Council in 49 A.D. Most scholars believe this to be the oldest book in the New Testament.

This letter had been read to the churches from the earliest days but it wasn’t until the Council of Carthage in 397 A.D. that the book of James was placed in the canon.

James the Just

James was the half brother of Jesus, born of Joseph and Mary but he preferred to be called Christ's slave (Jam. 1:1). The Bible clearly tells us that Jesus had brothers and sisters (Matt. 13:55-56, Mark 6:3, Gal. 1:19). Some teach that the word “brethren” in these verses means “cousins.” This is a false doctrine designed to teach that Mary is an eternal virgin.

Before the resurrection, James didn’t believe that Jesus was the Messiah (John 7:5, Mark 3:20-31). At the time of His death Jesus had no one but John to trust with the care of His mother (John 19:25).

Jesus appeared to James after His resurrection. This is the first indication we have that James believed (1 Cor. 15:7). In Acts 15:13-21 we see that James was recognized as the leader of the church in Jerusalem.

James was described by the historians Hegesippus and Eusebius. They said that he lived according to a Nazarite vow and was called the “bulwark of the people.” When his body was examined after his murder, it was found that his knees were hard and calloused. James must have spent hours on his knees in prayer.

Although he was widely respected by the Jews, the high priest, Annas, wanted James killed. The historian Josephus describes how James was taken to the pinnacle of the temple in 62 A.D and commanded to deny Christ. When he refused he was thrown down. His body was then beaten with clubs. Annas lost his position as high priest because even the non-believing Jews were angry over this murder.

It’s interesting to note that Jesus was also taken to the pinnacle of the temple and tempted by Satan to deny His heavenly Father (Mat. 4:5).
How many times do the words trial or temptation appear in this chapter? What are the definitions of these two words and how are they different?

Compare what you can learn about temptations in 1 Cor. 10:13 to what James is saying. Notice how trials are like “interruptions” in our lives. Can you think of some people in the Bible whose lives were “interrupted” by God?

Notice we are to ask God if we need wisdom. He will not “upbraid” or rebuke us for asking. God does not accuse us as Satan does (Rev. 12:10).

Has God shown you that He will do something in your life? Then you are in the same place that Abraham was. Abraham was promised something (Gen. 15:6) and his assignment was to hold onto the Lord until the promise was fulfilled.

This is the test of our faith. Can you wait on the Lord to deliver on His promise?

**Project 1 - James 1:17**

Hand out some modeling clay or Play-Doh™ and tell the class to make some little people. Ask them how they think the people would feel if they were able to talk as their arms and legs were being stretched and shaped. What would they say if you were able to shape them into something very beautiful or useful? In other words, can testings and trials be worth the price?

**Project 2**

Ask each member of the group to create a newspaper story about the reading of this letter to the local synagogue.

Be sure to list the main items covered in the chapter.
Underline or highlight the keywords in this chapter. Look for repetitive words. Here are some words to get you started...

trials, humble, temptation

Ask God to help you discern what is

Who:
What:
Where:
When:
Why:
How:

Look up the meanings of words which can reveal the meaning of this passage. Pay attention to the meaning of names and verbs.

Word studies:
Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:

That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:

1 Pet. 1:6-8

If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king.

But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

Dan. 3:17-18
An example of how important it is for us to endure trials can be found in the life of a caterpillar.

In the second stage of its life a caterpillar builds a cocoon and begins the process of becoming a butterfly.

It is important to allow a butterfly to struggle as it breaks out of its cocoon.

If we attempt to “help” the process by tearing open the cocoon, the butterfly will not develop the strength in its wings which it will need to fly.

We are told to count it joy when we find ourselves in a “cocoon” of trials.

We prefer to count it joy when we escape trials.

God wants to prove to us that trials are His way of making us stronger.

You could say that James is asking to learn to “count” and that we are to “count” backwards or opposite of the way we usually count.
Notice we are to ask God if we need wisdom. He will not “upbraid” or rebuke us for asking. God does not accuse us as Satan does (Rev. 12:10).

Has God told you that He will do something in your life?

Then you are in the same place that Abraham was. He was promised something (Gen. 15:6) and his assignment was to hold onto the Lord until the promise was fulfilled.

This is the test of our faith. Can you wait on the Lord to deliver on His promise?

If you get ahead of the Lord then He will retreat from what He was going to do and wait for you to get out of the way.

The secret of the Christian life is that it is about Him and not about you.

Will you allow yourself to be potentially embarrassed as you wait? Can you resist the temptation to take things into your own hands?

Does it really matter what people think? Will you argue with the Lord over this thing or let it alone and watch what He does? See Prov. 13:10

Father, forgive me for going my own way in ________________.

I am taking back the ground that I surrendered to Satan. I ask you to put the armor of your Spirit on me and to protect me from Satan’s attacks on my mind, will and emotions.

Please place your hedge of thorns around me and my family. I purpose to live the rest of my days in surrender to what you want in my life and not in what I want.

Please reveal the Scriptures to me. Show me how to pay attention to what you are pointing out in my life every day. I pray this in Jesus’ name.
1. James, one who replaces Jacob, a servant of **God** and of the **Lord Jesus Christ**, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad [diaspora], greeting. Mat. 13:55, Acts 1:8, 8:1, 1 Cor. 15:7, Gal. 1:19

2. My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations [trials, strategic interruptions]; 1 Pet. 1:6-7

3. Knowing this, that the trying [testing] of your faith worketh patience. Gal. 5:22

4. But let patience have her perfect [complete, mature] work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. Mat. 5:48, Col. 1:11

5. If any of you lack wisdom [practical knowledge], let him ask of **God**, that giveth to all men liberally [freely] and upbraideth [rebukes] not; and it shall be given him. Mat. 7:7, Jer. 33:3, Psa. 40:1

6. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering [doubting]. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. Rom. 1:21, 2 Cor. 10:5

7. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the **Lord**. 1 Pet. 2:20

8. A double minded man [double-souled, split personality] is unstable in all his ways. 2 Chr. 16:9, Matt. 6:22

9. Let the brother of low [humble] degree rejoice in that he is exalted:

10. But the rich, in that he is made low [humble]: because as the flower [wild flowers] of the grass he shall pass away. Mat. 6:28, 11:29

11. For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways. Isa. 40:6

12. Blessed is the man that endureth temptation [testing]: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the **Lord** hath promised to them that love him. 1 Thess. 2:19, 2 Tim. 4:8, 1 Pet. 5:4, Rev. 4:10

13. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of **God**: for **God** cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:

14. But every man is tempted, when he is drawn [lured] away of his own lust, and enticed. 1 Cor. 10:13

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1. there are no “lost” tribes of Israel. The Jews who lived outside the Holy Land were called the Diaspora which means “scattered seed.” John 12:24, Mat. 13:38

4 - give patience time to work. Those who are patient are mature.

5 - ask for wisdom to deal with testing.

6 - this man follows whatever passes by and looks good to him (Prov. 14:12). Jehoshaphat is one of many examples of double-mindedness. (1 Kings 22:7).

13 - Adam accused God of being responsible for his temptations. Gen. 3:12

14 - list all the types of lures you can think of for fishing or trapping: live bait, attractive colors, etc.
15. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. Psa. 7:14

16. Do not err, my beloved brethren.

17. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights [photons], with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Mal. 3:6, Deut. 8:18

18. Of his own will begat [brought forth] he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures. Lev. 23:10, Col. 1:5-6

19. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow [cautious] to speak, slow to wrath [intense anger]:

20. For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. Prov. 14:29, Eph. 4:26

21. Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity [overflow] of naughtiness [baseness], and receive with meekness [humility] the engrained [implanted] word, which is able [dynamite] to save your souls. Rom. 11:17

22. But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. Rom. 2:13

23. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass [mirror]: Mat. 11:15, 27:24, 1 Cor. 13:12

24. For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway [immediately] forgetteth what manner of man he was. Jer. 17:9

25. But whoso looketh [intently] into the perfect [complete] law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer [poet] of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. John 14:15

26. If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain. Prov. 26:20, Jer. 17:9

27. Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world. Psa. 68:5, Prov. 15:25, John 17:14, 1 Tim. 5:3-5

25 - notice the careless versus the careful look in the mirror. How can a law bring liberty? See John 8:32
Hard Sayings Announced in Synagogue

Jerusalem - James of Nazareth, the respected leader of a local group called The Way, read a letter to the synagogue today.

The group has been meeting in the Solomon’s porch area of the temple. They are followers of someone they call the Messiah and have been outlawed by the high priest.

Rabbi Gamaliel was interviewed in the Temple courtyard by one of our reporters. “I think we should take a wait-and-see approach to this group. If they are sent from God we could be fighting against God if we attempt to stop them.

Lost & Found
Ask a volunteer to count how many times the words faith or works appear in this chapter.

Ask someone to explain the difference. Ask someone else to explain how these two ideas work together?

Assign someone to read 1 John 3:17. How is it similar to James 2:16?

How many people can you find in the Bible who were appreciated for the things they did for others?

Have you bought into the cult of “no works?” The teaching goes something like this: “I don’t need to ever do anything to show my faith because then I would be being saved by works. Therefore, I don’t do any good works.”

Neither James nor Jesus ever said that we would be saved by works. What they teach us is that we display (or shine) our faith with our works. What else could Mat. 5:16 mean?

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. Mat. 5:16

Faith is something that is invisible (Heb 11:1). If we don’t do anything which can be outwardly seen, then our faith remains invisible.

Ask God to give you an opportunity to do something for Him and then go do it!

**Project 1 - James 2:18**

Place some obstacles on the floor. Tell the class that whoever can walk across the floor without bumping anything will get a piece of candy. Ask for volunteers, then tell them that you forgot to mention that they will have to do it blindfolded.

After a couple of volunteers fail, explain to them that you will be willing to guide them through the maze if they will trust you. The idea is to show them that they wouldn’t be showing faith by just agreeing that you could guide them -they have to put their faith into action.

**Project 2**

Ask each member of the group to create a newspaper story about the reading of this letter to the local synagogue.

Be sure to list the main items covered in the chapter.
Underline or highlight the keywords in this chapter. Look for repetitive words. Here are some words to get you started...

faith, poor, judgment, works

Ask God to help you discern what is happening in this chapter.

Who:
What:
Where:
When:
Why:
How:

Look up the meanings of words which can reveal the meaning of this passage. Pay attention to the meaning of names and verbs.

Word studies:
For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error.

While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.

For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.

2 Pet. 2:18-20
Even though James was an unbeliever in his early years, he still grew up in the same house with Jesus. He must have also heard some of the Sermon on the Mount because the book of James is filled with the sayings of Jesus reworded.

James 2:1-6 - Jesus said that those who do not treat the “least of these” properly have “done it not unto me” (Mat. 25:40).

James 2:8 - Mat. 5:43 reveals that the scribes added to the law in Lev. 19:18 by adding “and shall hate your enemy.” Jesus refers to this not as if He were quoting the law but as something the Jews had “heard said.”

James 2:12 - Jesus said that not only our faith but our works will be judged. Mat. 16:27, 25:31-46, John 5:29

James 2:18 - Jesus said that the Jews should have had faith in Him because of His works. John 10:38, 14:11

One of the best ways to share the Gospel is to remind your audience of the Ten Commandments.

Once you show a non-Christian how they (and all of us) have broken God’s law, they will understand that they have offended God.

You can then show them that the punishment is death. Rev. 21:8

Finally, tell them the good news that if they repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ the punishment is taken away. Rom. 10:9

This is the purpose of the law, to show us our sinfulness. Rom. 7:7, Gal. 3:24
Have you bought into the cult of “no works?”

The teaching goes something like this: “I don’t need to ever do anything to show my faith because then I would be being saved by works. Therefore, I don’t do any good works.”

Neither James nor Jesus ever said that we would be saved by works. What they teach us is that we display (or shine) our faith with our works. What ELSE does Mat. 5:16 mean?

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. Mat. 5:16

Faith is something that is invisible (Heb 11:1). If we don’t do anything which can be outwardly seen, then our faith remains invisible.

Ask God to give you an opportunity to do something for Him and then go DO it!

Father, forgive me for going my own way in ______________.

I am taking back the ground that I surrendered to Satan. I ask you to put the armor of your Spirit on me and to protect me from Satan’s attacks on my mind, will and emotions.

Please place your hedge of thorns around me and my family. I purpose to live the rest of my days in surrender to what you want in my life and not in what I want.

Please reveal the Scriptures to me. Show me how to pay attention to what you are pointing out in my life every day. I pray this in Jesus’ name.
1. My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons.

2. For if there come unto your assembly [synagogue] a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; Luke 15:2, 16:19-21

3. And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay [brilliant] clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: Luke 11:43, 14:7-11

4. Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?

5. Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?

6. But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats?

7. Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called? Mat. 25:45

8. If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: Lev. 19:18, Mat. 19:19, 22:40, Gal. 5:14

9. But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convicted of the law as transgressors.

10. For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. Mat. 5:18-19, 23:23, Lev. 18:5, Gal. 3:12

11. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law. Ex. 20:13-14

12. So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.

13. For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment. Mic. 6:8, Mat. 9:13, 12:7,18:32-35, Heb. 10:28

14. What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?

15. If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food,

16. And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? 1 John 3:17
17. Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

18. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I [ego] have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. Rom. 2:13

19. Thou believest that there is one God; thou dost well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

20. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead [barren]? Heb. 6:1

21. Was not Abraham [father of a multitude] our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac [laughter] his son upon the altar?

22. Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect [complete]?

23. And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed [reckoned] unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Gen. 15:6, Isa. 41:8

24. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. Mat. 23:23

25. Likewise also was not Rahab [breadth] the harlot [Hebrew: innkeeper] justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? Josh. 2:1-21, 6:25

26. For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

23 - Abraham lived in Hebron which is called “the city of God’s Friend” by the Arabs.

26 - Luther resented James’ emphasis on the display of our faith by works. Luther called this letter “a book of straw” and didn’t believe it was written by James nor that it should be included in the canon of Scripture.

Luther was saved while reading Rom. 1:17, a passage which balances this one. We can understand how Luther relied on that which brought him to Christ. Sometimes we are all tempted to over-emphasize the distinctives of the church we attend.

When our distinctives take precedence over the fundamentals of the faith we need to remind ourselves that truth out of balance is akin to heresy.
Teachings of the So-called Messiah Continue

Jerusalem - the high priest became very angry as another page of a local letter was read in the synagogue.

Here is what Caiphas had to say when asked about this recent incident: “These teachings remind us of many things which Jesus of Nazareth said. We got rid of him and we may have to take action against the author of this letter.”
James 3 Worksheet

Assign someone to count how many times the words tongue or mouth appear in this chapter.

Ask someone to explain why it is so important that we have control over our tongue. What are the consequences if we don’t?

Read your pick of the Proverbs on the tongue found on the Look Study Sheet.

Ask the class if these verses give them any new ideas on the use of the tongue.

Are you planning to do anything about your sharp tongue? Please notice that almost every sin that is committed in this world is done with the tongue. Are you aware that there was no sacrifice in the Old Testament for intentional sin? Read Numbers 15:31

See also Heb. 10:26 and Psa. 120:3-4

Regardless of your doctrinal view or interpretation of these Scriptures - what do you intend to do about your tongue?

Does the chapter give you any new tools to work on this problem with?

Project 1 - James 3:5

Play the “Telegraph Game” by whispering a difficult sentence into the ear of someone in the front row and telling them to whisper it to next person and so on all around the room.

Ask the last person to speak out loud and tell the class what the message was. Most of the time the message will be passed on incorrectly. Explain how the tongue can often get us in trouble because we don’t know all the facts. Ask someone to read Prov. 18:13.

Project 2

Ask each member of the group to create a newspaper story about the reading of this letter to the local synagogue.

Be sure to list the main items covered in the chapter.
Isa. 28:9-10

Underline or highlight the keywords in this chapter. Look for repetitive words. Here are some words to get you started...

offend, tongue, tame, wisdom, peace

Ask God to help you discern what is happening in this chapter.

Who:
What:
Where:
When:
Why:
How:

Look up the meanings of words which can reveal the meaning of this passage. Pay attention to the meaning of names and verbs.

Word studies:
Prov. 6:17 *A proud look, a lying TONGUE, and hands that shed innocent blood,*

Prov. 6:24 *To keep thee from the evil woman, from the flattery of the TONGUE of a strange woman.*

Prov. 10:20 *The TONGUE of the just is as choice silver: the heart of the wicked is little worth.*

Prov. 10:31 *The mouth of the just bringeth forth wisdom: but the froward TONGUE shall be cut out.*

Prov. 12:18 *There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword: but the TONGUE of the wise is health.*

Prov. 12:19 *The lip of truth shall be established for ever: but a lying TONGUE is but for a moment.*

Prov. 15:2 *The TONGUE of the wise useth knowledge aright: but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness.*

Prov. 15:4 *A wholesome TONGUE is a tree of life: but perverseness therein is a breach in the spirit.*

Prov. 16:1 *The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the TONGUE, is from the LORD.*

Prov. 18:21 *Death and life are in the power of the TONGUE: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.*

Prov. 21:23 *Whoso keepeth his mouth and his TONGUE keepeth his soul from troubles.*

Prov. 25:15 *By long forbearing is a prince persuaded, and a soft TONGUE breaketh the bone.*

Prov. 25:23 *The north wind driveth away rain: so doth an angry countenance a backbiting TONGUE.*
The book of James is called the Proverbs of the New Testament. See how many “Proverbs People” you can find in the book of James.

The main offender of the tongue in the book of Proverbs is the Froward Man. Froward means “perverse.” Here are some examples of his lack of character:

A naughty person, a wicked man, walketh with a froward mouth. Prov. 6:12

A froward man soweth strife: and a whisperer separateth chief friends. Prov. 16:28

He shutteth his eyes to devise froward things: moving his lips he bringeth evil to pass. Prov. 16:30

See if you can find some of the froward men in the Bible. What were the consequences of their lifestyles?

Here are some more examples of ideas which James uses from the sayings of Jesus:

James 3:6 - members of our body and hell fire (Mat. 18:19).

James 3:14 - Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh (Luke 6:45).

James 3:18 - Blessed are the peacemakers (Mat. 5:9).
Listen
Eph. 6:11-18, Isa. 59:17

Are you planning to do anything about your sharp tongue? Please notice that almost every sin that is committed in this world is done with the tongue.

Are you aware that there was no sacrifice in the Old Testament for intentional sin?

But the soul that doeth ought presumptuously, whether he be born in the land, or a stranger, the same reproacheth the LORD; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Numbers 15:31

For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins... Heb. 10:26

What shall be given unto thee? or what shall be done unto thee, thou false tongue? Sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals of juniper. Psa. 120:3-4

Regardless of your doctrinal view or interpretation of these Scriptures - what do you intend to do about your tongue?

Pray Specifically
James 4:2

Father, forgive me for going my own way in ______________.

I am taking back the ground that I surrendered to Satan. I ask you to put the armor of your Spirit on me and to protect me from Satan’s attacks on my mind, will and emotions.

Please place your hedge of thorns around me and my family. I purpose to live the rest of my days in surrender to what you want in my life and not in what I want.

Please reveal the Scriptures to me. Show me how to pay attention to what you are pointing out in my life every day. I pray this in Jesus’ name.
1. My brethren, be not many masters [teachers], knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation. Eph. 4:29

2. For in many things we offend [stumble] all. If any man offend [stumble] not in word, the same is a perfect [complete, mature] man, and able also to bridle the whole body. Prov. 15:2

3. Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body. Psa. 32:9

4. Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm [rudder], whithersoever the governor [pilot] listeth [steers].

5. Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! Prov. 26:20

6. And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: [self-will ] so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature [wheel of existence]; and it is set on fire of hell [Gehenna]. Luke 6:45

7. For every kind [physiology] of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind:

8. But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Prov. 18:21, 21:23, Mat. 12:34, 15:9, Isa. 6:7-9

9. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude [image] of God. Gen. 1:26-27

10. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Prov. 26:21

11. Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter? Prov. 25:26

12. Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh. Mat. 7:16

6 - the word hell here refers to the Valley of Hinnom or Gehenna which was a place outside the walls of Jerusalem where trash was burned. It was also used for sacrifice to idols at one time.

8 - this is what the Indians used to call a “forked” tongue. Blessing is the only antidote for this poison. 1 Pet. 3:9

1 - could refer to the practice of speaking up in the synagogue (Acts 13:15). James may be cautioning his readers to be careful of doing this to appear spiritual to others. In other words, check your motives before you speak publically in the congregation (1 Cor. 14:29-31).

Notice the progression in this chapter from the tongue (verse 5) to the heart (verse 14) and finally bringing us to our knees (verse 17).

14. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.

15. This wisdom [sophistry] descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish [demonic].

16. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.

17. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality [favoritism], and without hypocrisy. Prov. 15:1, Ex. 31:3-6

18. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace. Mat. 5:9
Why Did God Give Us Tongues?

Jerusalem - the respected Rabbi James shocked the synagogue as he seemed to say that the control of our tongue is more important than the Law of Moses!

We invite our readers to take part in a city-wide survey. If you want to participate, just check one of the boxes provided here and leave your ballot with one of the Temple guards before next sabbath.

What Do You Think?

Survey Ballot

☐ Reciting the Shema five times a day is more important than being careful with our daily conversation.

☐ Controlling our tongue is more important than reciting the Shema.

Lost and Found
How many times do the words lust, law and humble appear in this chapter?
The word lust comes from the Greek word for “hedonism” - what does this word mean to you?

Compare James 4:12 and Mat. 7:3-5
How are these verses talking about the same thing?

The main issue is humility. Have you been humbled? Then notice that God HAS given you the grace to handle it. What's the opposite of humility? Pride, one of the three main sins in the world (1 John 2:16).

So take your pick, be filled with arrogant pride or be humbled.

Would it be worth it to experience the embarrassment of being misunderstood or looking like a fool if God’s purpose was served?

What if someone gave their life to Christ as a result of watching your response? Read 2 Cor. 3:2.

Project 1 - James 4:3
Teach young students how to pray by using their fingers.

**Thumb:** since it is the closest finger to you it reminds you to pray for your family.

**Index:** you point it like a pastor does when he’s preaching so pray for your church leaders.

**Middle:** this finger is higher than the others, pray for those in government who are over us.

**Ring:** this finger is weak, so pray for the sick.

**Pinky:** it’s the last finger which reminds you to put yourself last but still you need to pray for yourself.

Project 2
Ask each member of the group to create a newspaper story about the reading of this letter to the local synagogue.

Be sure to list the main items covered in the chapter.
Project 3 - Learn The Ten Commandments*

Exodus 20:3-17

God is First - “Thou shalt have no other gods before me.”

Scissors cutting out an idol - “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven images.”

A “W” which stands for “Watch your Words - “Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.”

Four wheels of your car going to church - “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.”

Salute - “Honor thy father and they mother.”

A gun pointing at other fingers - “Thou shalt not kill.”

A “V” (for virgin) which stays away from other fingers - “Thou shalt not commit adultery.”

Three fingers are left after a thief has his fingers cut off - “Thou shalt not steal.”

One hand of witnesses and one thumb down against a lie - “Thou shalt not bear false witness against they neighbor.”

Greedy fingers reaching for more - “Thou shalt not covet.”

*based on a teaching concept created by Ambassador Arts ©
Underline or highlight the keywords in this chapter. Look for repetitive words. Here are some words to get you started...

war, lust, law

Ask God to help you discern what is happening in this chapter.

Who:

What:

Where:

When:

Why:

How:

Look up the meanings of words which can reveal the meaning of this passage. Pay attention to the meaning of names and verbs.

Word studies:
Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.
Eph. 6:11

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.
1 Pet. 5:8

Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. 1Cor. 16:13
James teaches us not to pray with the wrong motives. 1 John 5:14

Here are some examples of prayers that God would not listen to:

Gen. 32:25 - Jacob was praying in fear.

2 Cor. 12:8 - Paul was asking for something that God hadn’t chosen for him.

Psa. 66:18 - if we intend to continue in sin, God will not hear our prayer.

Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy? James 4:5

Scholars disagree over how to interpret this verse. Some think that James means to say that he is about to quote Prov. 3:34 as we see in verse 6.

Is James quoting an Old Testament Scripture? If so there is no such passage to be found.

There is the possibility that this refers to God’s Spirit brooding over us as in Gen. 1:2 and Mat. 23:37.

The word “envy” can be translated “jealousy” and there are many instances of God’s jealousy towards us. Ex. 34:14

But Rotherham may have the best solution:

“Or do you think that in vain the Scripture speaketh?”

This avoids the need for a direct quote from Scripture. The verse would simply mean that the Scriptures, in general, don’t speak in vain.
The main issue is humility. Have you been humbled? Then notice that God HAS given you the grace to handle it. Notice also that if you are offended about the humbling of someone else - He HASN'T given you to the grace for that offense.

...nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour. Psa. 15:3

He that passeth by, and meddleth with strife BELONGING NOT to him, is like one that taketh a dog by the ears. Prov. 26:17

What's the opposite of humility? Pride, one of the three main sins in the world (1 John 2:16).

So take your pick, be filled with arrogant pride or be humbled. Would it be worth it to experience the embarrassment of being misunderstood or looking like a fool if God's purpose was served?

What if someone gave their life to Christ as a result of watching your response? God is watching for your response. In fact, 1 Pet. 2:19 says that this finds favor with God.

Father, forgive me for going my own way in ______________.

I am taking back the ground that I surrendered to Satan. I ask you to put the armor of your Spirit on me and to protect me from Satan’s attacks on my mind, will and emotions.

Please place your hedge of thorns around me and my family. I purpose to live the rest of my days in surrender to what you want in my life and not in what I want.

Please reveal the Scriptures to me. Show me how to pay attention to what you are pointing out in my life every day. I pray this in Jesus' name.
1. From whence come wars [polemics] and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts [hedonism] that war in your members?

2. Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not.

3. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts [hedonism].

4. Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity [to be an enemy] with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. Matt. 12:39, Heb. 10:31

5. Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain [do you think the Scripture speaks for nothing?], The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy? Gen. 1:2

6. But he giveth more [greater] grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. Psa. 9:12, Prov. 3:34, Isa. 14:14, Mat. 23:12

7. Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist [stand against] the devil, and he will flee from you.

8. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded [double-souled, split personalities]. Jam. 1:8

9. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Psa. 30:5, Mat. 5:4

10. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

11. Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge. Lev. 19:16, 1 John 4:20-21

12. There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another? Mat. 7:1

13. Go to now [now listen], ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Prov. 11:29, 20:18, Luke 12:20, 14:31

14. Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour [smoke], that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. Psa. 90:10, Prov. 27:1, Isa. 47:8

15. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.

16. But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil. Psa. 10:3

17. Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin. Matt. 23:23, Eph. 5:15-16

2 - lust (unlawful desire) never delivers on its promises.

6 - this greater grace is greater than our enemy’s power!

When you feel that you just can’t do something, ask God to show you ways that you can be humbled daily. You will receive more grace and be able to do that “impossible” task in due time! 1 Pet. 5:6

7 - notice how it takes no special power to get rid of the accuser.

11 - this is what happens when we take God’s place as judge. Notice that when we stop being “doers” our focus is off of the ministry which we have been called to.

17 - Prov. 24:9 says that even the thought of foolishness is sin.
Can the Law save us?

Jerusalem - In a sermon that is sure to spread more anger among the leaders of the Pharisees, James the Just continued to contradict the Law of Moses during the sabbath meeting yesterday.

Here is why he thinks we cannot be saved by trusting in the law alone:

Obituaries

James, the brother of John (not James the Just) was executed by Herod today. This has greatly pleased the leading Pharisees so Herod has arrested one called Simon Peter, a follower of the prophet, Jesus of Nazareth.
Assign someone to count how many times the words patient or patience and pray or prayer are found in this chapter.

What is another way of saying that someone is patient?

And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: Rom. 5:3-4

How is this sequence display stages which occur in our Christian lives?

Why is patience so important to a Christian? The answer is that the opposite attitude is: “I want it now!”

What kind of heaven would it be if we were demanding that the angels get busy and serve us fruit from the Tree of Life or telling them to run and get us all a drink from the River of Life? Ridiculous? Well, the kingdom of God is within us NOW (Luke 17:21) so we might as well act like it.

The main thing that James is saying is, “Give it TIME!” One of the best phrases to live by in the Bible is, “it came to pass.” This is not just a nice idea but a reality. Give it time and whatever it is will pass.

**Project 1 - James 5:10**

Secretly take the batteries out of a flashlight and ask the group why they think it has stopped working. As soon as someone mentions that the batteries are dead, put one battery in and show them that it is still not working.

Finally, put all the batteries in and explain that this is what it's like when we don't allow patience to work. We give up too soon on things that irritate us. Ask them if they are willing to allow God to put the power of His Holy Spirit in them so that they can shine?

**Project 2**

Ask each member of the group to create a newspaper story about the reading of this letter to the local synagogue.

Be sure to list the main items covered in the chapter.
Stop
Isa. 28:9-10

Underline or highlight the keywords in this chapter. Look for repetitive words. Here are some words to get you started...

riches, patience, prayer

Ask God to help you discern what is happening in this chapter.
Who:
What:
Where:
When:
Why:
How:

Look up the meanings of words which can reveal the meaning of this passage. Pay attention to the meaning of names and verbs.

Word studies:
If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it.

All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death.

1 John 5:16-17

And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. 1 Pet. 4:8
Bible critics have pointed out that 1 Kings 18:1 says that Elijah prayed for God to send rain after three years.

And it came to pass after many days, that the word of the LORD came to Elijah in the third year, saying, Go, shew thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth. 1 Kings 18:1

James 5:17 says it didn’t rain for three and a half years. The first problem is that there is no passage which describes Elijah’s prayer. Critics would have us believe that this means it can’t be proven that Elijah prayed such a prayer.

Not everything that happened in the world is recorded in Scripture. The context of Elijah’s statement in 1 Kings 17:1 would indicate that he had taken this situation to the Lord. As for the extra half year recorded by James the problem is solved when 1 Kings 18:1 is translated this way:

“...during the third year.”

James has taught us several secrets of prayer in this letter. He now shows us how to pray when we are sick.

The only other instance of healing and oil being combined is in Mark 6:13.

The oil is not said to be the cause of the healing but is symbolic of the anointing of the Holy Spirit. It reminds us of sheep who were anointed by their shepherd as they passed into the sheepfold.

They associated the shepherd with this fragrance and it reminded them of him whenever they smelled it.

Notice that the verse says IF he has committed sin. Being sick is not a sign that you are living in sin. See Phil. 2:27, 2 Tim. 4:20, 2 Cor. 12:9.

On the other hand, the fact that we can’t expect to be healed of sickness if we are cursing would fit with the context of verse 12.

James is simply reminding us to examine ourselves when we are sick and humbled (1 John 1:9).
Why is patience so important to a Christian?

The answer is that the opposite attitude is: “I want it now!”

What kind of heaven would it be if we were demanding that the angels get busy and serve us fruit from the Tree of Life or telling them to run and get us all a drink from the River of Life?

Ridiculous? Well, the kingdom of God is within us now (Luke 17:21) so we might as well act like it.

The main thing that James is saying is, “Give it time!”

A good saying to encourage yourself with is: “it came to pass.”

This is not just a nice idea but a reality. Give it time and whatever it is will pass.
1. Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Prov. 23:5, Mat. 19:22-25

2. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten. Mat. 6:19

3. Your gold and silver is cankered [corrupted, tarnished]; and the rust [poison] of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.

4. Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth [armies]. Deut. 24:15, Isa. 5:9, Jer. 22:13, Mat. 20:8

5. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton [openly wicked]; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter.

6. Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you. 1 Ki. 21:13

7. Be patient [long-tempered] therefore, brethren, unto the coming [rapture] of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman [farmer] waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Joel 2:23

8. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming [rapture] of the Lord draweth nigh. 1 Cor. 15:52, 1 Thess. 4:16-17

9. Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door. Rev. 3:20

10. Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. Mat. 5:12, 23:34-35

11. Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job [he will cry out], and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful [full of pity], and of tender mercy. Job 2:3,42:10, Psa. 103:8

6 - Herod condemned John the Baptist (Mat. 14:10) even though he knew John was a just man. James may also be referring to others who were falsely accused by the Pharisees and condemned to death. Since this letter may have been read in the ears of any Pharisees attending the synagogue, it reminds us of similar things Jesus said to the Pharisees (Mat. 23:34).
12. But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation. Ex. 20:7, Num. 30:2, Ecc. 5:4, Mat. 5:34-37, 23:16-22, Mark 3:28-29


14. Is any sick among you? 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: Mat. 18:19, Mark 6:13

15. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Isa. 38:1-5, 1 Cor.11:30

16. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. 1 John 1:9

17. Elias [Elijah, my God is Jehovah] was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. 1 Ki. 17:1, 18:42-45, Mat. 21:21

18. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.

19. Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him;

20. Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error [wandering planet] of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins. Ezk. 3:17-19, Mat. 18:11-13, Gal. 6:1-2, Heb. 4:13, 1 Pet. 4:8, 1 John 5:16, Jude 13
Stop Your Swearing!

Jerusalem - The final straw, in the series of sermons by James the Just, came after his recent warning that we are no longer to swear by heaven or earth.

This reminds us of that prophet who was recently killed by the Romans and who taught that we are not to swear by the temple nor the gold of the temple.
James Chapter 1

How do butterflies teach us to be patient?
Do you treat some people better than others?
James Chapter 3

Can all these animals be trained?

Can our tongues be trained?
What does the Law teach us?

What does the cross teach us?
James Chapter 5

What does James teach us about prayer?
An Interview with James

Here's a short skit you might like to use. Kids love holding anything they can use for a microphone and pretending they are doing an on-the-street interview. Let them ham it up!

Question: Wow! Is it really true that you are the brother of the Lord Jesus Christ?

Answer: I can't brag about my early years with Jesus at home. My brothers and I did not understand His words because we did not have the Holy Spirit to teach them to us. Many people don't realize that the Pharisees called us brothers -not cousins! By the way, a lot of people don't know all my brother's names.

Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Judas, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him. Mark 6:3

There are some who teach that Jesus never had any brothers (or sisters) because they think it makes my mother more holy. Actually God became a man in a normal family to show us how life could be lived. If He would have came any other way then the Christian life would be impossible for us to even try to understand.

Question: What changed your mind about Jesus?

Answer: Jesus appeared to me after His resurrection (1 Cor. 15:7). Once you see the nail scars in His hands you can never be the same.

Question: Where did you get these nicknames, “Bulwark of the People” and “James the Just”? 

Answer: You will have to ask someone else, I have heard that people called me something like that because I felt strongly impressed to pray in the Temple for Jerusalem. I didn’t ask to be the leader of the church but God used me because I had a strong sense of fairness.

For example, at the Jerusalem Council I was just trying to be fair to both sides. I had seen some examples of what happens when we don’t control our tongues, or don’t care for the poor, or pray for each other -so I was inspired by the Holy Spirit to write about them.

Question: What were you thinking when the Jews brought you up to the pinnacle of the Temple? Wasn’t that something like 400 feet off the ground?

Answer: I felt it was an honor to be tested in the same spot where my Lord Jesus was tested.

Question: Well, thanks for giving us a chance to get to know you! Do you have anything you’d like to say to everybody before we sign off?"

Answer: Sure! I’d like to take this opportunity to remind you to read the Word of God in order to be wise. I’m looking forward to meeting all of you in heaven someday. Goodbye and may God richly bless you!
Footnotes

1. Goodrick, Do it Yourself: Hebrew Greek, p. 1
2. ibid, p. 12:4
3. Josephus, Antiquities 20.9.1 also see Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, 1:169-175
4. McMillan, None of These Diseases, p. 21
5. The Power of Spoken Blessings
6. Arthur, How to Study Your Bible
8. Logan, Reclaiming Surrendered Ground, p. 56
10. Walvoord, The Bible Knowledge Commentary, p. 816
11. The Power of True Success, p. 17-19

Online Resources

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www.bible.org
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The Bible Marker Club

We thought you might like to read a sample of this exciting story for teenagers. Your kids will learn the answers to the same questions that all teenagers face as they follow along with the gang! They might even decide to sign up with our real life Bible Marker Club!

Chapter 3 - Star Date: 2033.1.24

After the time of the reconstitution, the old-fashioned region formerly known as U.S.A. was transitioned to the region of EverLand. The states were changed to districts. This is the story of how a group of kids discovered a banned book and the Bible Marker Club was born.

“What’s a textbook?” Squeaky popped the question to the whole group as she looked around with a puzzled face.

Vanessa picked up the little Bible.

“I think it’s something like this Bible you found. People used to read things without a prompter or any kind of machine.”

Barney offered his opinion that all this was “cool” but wanted to know, “How can we know the Bible is true?” Vanessa typed his question into the Reticulator.

GOOD QUESTION. THE BIBLE SAYS THAT EVERY TRUTH IS ESTABLISHED BY THE MOUTH OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES. Matthew 18:16

IF ANY MAN WILL DO HIS WILL, HE SHALL KNOW OF THE DOCTRINE, WHETHER IT BE OF GOD, OR [WHETHER] I SPEAK OF MYSELF. JOHN 7:17

ALL SCRIPTURE [IS] GIVEN BY INSPIRATION OF GOD, AND [IS] PROFITABLE FOR DOCTRINE, FOR REPROOF, FOR CORRECTION, FOR INSTRUCTION IN RIGHTEOUSNESS: 2 TIMOTHY 3:16

THESE THINGS HAVE I WRITTEN UNTO YOU THAT BELIEVE ON THE NAME OF THE SON OF GOD; THAT YE MAY KNOW THAT YE HAVE ETERNAL LIFE, AND THAT YE MAY BELIEVE ON THE NAME OF THE SON OF GOD. 1 JOHN 5:13

ARCHAEOLOGY, SCIENCE, HISTORY ARE JUST A FEW OF THE MANY WITNESSES THAT VERIFY THE TRUTH IN THE BIBLE. THERE HAS NEVER BEEN A FACT FROM ANY OF THESE DISCIPLINES WHICH SHOWS THE BIBLE TO BE IN ERROR.

THE MOST IMPORTANT WITNESS IS GOD’S SPIRIT. HE PROMISED TO GUIDE YOU INTO ALL TRUTH IF YOU WILL REPENT OF YOUR SINS AND CONFESSION THAT JESUS CHRIST IS THE SON OF GOD AND THAT HIS DEATH ON THE CROSS WAS PAYMENT FOR THE PENALTY OF YOUR SINS.

“Whoa, there pardner! What’s a sin and what ain’t a sin?” Barney asked in an exasperated tone of voice.

“And another thing, how can someone who died be God? If there’s a God how could he ever die?”

Vanessa was getting concerned about keeping the machine on too long.
“Well, I sure don’t have all the answers but I’ll bet the Reticulator does!” she said while reaching for the power button.

Jimbo stood up, his head bumping the ceiling of the little tree house.

“I’ve got something to say. First, we can all see we’ve got something powerful here. Second, we know someone is trying to track us and probably doesn’t want us to have this gadget. Third, it sounds like ought to use it sparingly or our parents are going to wonder what we’re up to.”

“I move we convene an official meeting of the Tree House Club and vote on where to go from here.”

Barney turned the box he was sitting on up on its end and stood behind it.

“Hear ye, hear ye. The honorable Tree House Club is called to order. The secretary will now give us the reading of the minutes for last week’s meeting.”

Squeaky stood up and looked around mournfully.

“We talked last time about whether it was right to use our electric fence on the neighbor’s dogs to keep them from killing our chickens. Everybody agreed but me. I still think there’s gotta be a way to teach the dogs without hurting them.”

Jimbo shouted her down.

“Let’s not start all that again. I move we accept the minutes as given by the secretary.”

“So moved. Any seconds?”

“Seconded.” Vanessa offered.

“O.K., are there any other issues to be voted on at this time?”

Jimbo’s hand shot up.

“I move that we limit our use of the Reticulator to one hour a day and not use the NET unless absolutely necessary.”

“So moved and seconded. Anything else?”

Squeaky reached over and picked up the little Bible from the tree house railing.

“Just from what I’ve heard today I think we oughta try to read some of this Bible book and see if it has anything else to say. Oh, and let’s keep this all a secret because it sounds like we’re in big trouble if anyone finds out what we’re up to.”

The meeting was adjourned and the kids all went their separate ways. No one noticed as a white van with a revolving antenna floated slowly past the house.
Satan's First Attack

“You never were saved in the first place!”

There are five basic ways that the devil attacks people and once you know how he attacks and see the answer to those attacks, you will be strengthened.

This is the first way that the devil attacks.

“‘You never were saved in the first place. Your experience with the Lord was not the same as that of others. You are not born again.’

So begins the heartbreak and confusion that Satan so dearly loves because he knows that it will hinder your service for God. A good brother or sister will stand up in a testimony service and say, “If you doubt your salvation, you are not saved.”

Well, let's look in the Scriptures to see if that statement is true or not.

Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them.

And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted.

Matthew 28:16-17

It is comforting when you realize that the Apostles of the Lord, who had walked with Him for three years, still had doubts. The most well-known of these, of course, was Thomas. Folks have rebuked Thomas for doubting and sometimes they rebuke others for doubting, but Jesus did not rebuke him.
Friday morning we held devotions at St. Edward's Preparatory School. This was especially exciting because we were told of something special the Lord had done there recently. It seems that the school had planned to have a Teacher Appreciation Day but something happened so that it could not work out. The 4th through 6th graders decided that something must be done so they came to school at 6:30 am that morning to fast and pray for their teachers instead!!!

After four years as a Christian school teacher I would have to say that I'd never heard of something like this before. I wish our Christian schools had this sacrificial attitude. I've noticed that people who have nothing tend to be more compassionate than those who have everything.

We moved on to open a clinic at Canterbury. Kerry Russell showed up as the clinic was closing. His Rastafarian friends had carried and pushed his wheelchair uphill through the narrow alleys between the sheds. This is a place you don't want anyone to know you are from. It is a valley with only one entrance and filled with corrugated tin buildings which have been tacked on to each other. Kerry had been gunshot and explained to me that it was the fault of the whites and the police. When I reminded him that he was not shot by a white man nor a policeman, he said it didn't matter because the police drive by daily and shoot at his "Rasta" brothers.

I told him that this was not my first trip to Jamaica and that I know the police department intimately and that he could not make me believe a lie. He said that my God was a liar and that the police only seek to kill the people. I told him that his god was lying to him and that I would have a policeman call him and offer to help him with anything he needed. He told me, "We're gonna see because they will never call me."

He gave me his phone number and left. The next day I was able to get ahold of Corporal Stirling who immediately called him and offered to help. Now whose God is a liar? Pray that Kerry will listen to the truth. I met a couple who have made Canterbury their priority and they are following up with Kerry.

Saturday

Our next clinic was at Bogue Hill Baptist Church. Two things stand out to me: first, an old woman stood at the doorway for hours smiling at me. She had seen the sign that said we could take no more patients and could only hope that her smile would help her gain entrance. You can only ignore the face of an angel for so long. After I got caught up on prescriptions, I asked her what I could do for her. She told me she could not eat or sleep and that her stomach hurt. I felt the Lord impressing me to ask her if there was anything bad going on at home.

Monica immediately grabbed me and hugged me shouting, "God has sent you to me! How did you know that? God has sent you!" We were able to pray and take background she had given to the deceiver and I gave her detailed instruction on how to stop being a "fixer" and surrender her home to the Lord Jesus Christ. She wouldn't let go of me for awhile, telling me how much she loved me and how God had sent me. Needless to say I was a basket-case for awhile.
There was no time to waste as a young girl named Judy had been looking at me through the window all day long and her eyes were getting desperate. She finally showed me the palms of her hands and revealed first degree burns and shreds of skin hanging loose.

Dear God, how she had stood there so patiently, feeling unworthy to ask for help. I snuck her into the doctor and God heard my prayer because he prescribed Furacin which was used in Vietnam to heal napalm burns.

It is a miracle drug. I showed Judy how to keep the wound clean and change the bandages. She will have her hands back in a month or so but came close to losing them to gangrene.

Sunday

I had not told anyone but the Lord of my great desire to preach at Pitfour Gospel Chapel. I wanted Him to confirm it. When we go we defer to the respected preachers who come with us and allow them to preach. I secretly thanked God that nobody thought of inviting them to Pitfour. I was speaking to a pastor who mentioned that he was going to preach at Pitfour on Sunday morning and asked me if I would like to come along. I said, "Yes!" He then asked if I would like to preach on Sunday morning there. God is so good.

During the service, I asked the people if they would commit themselves to serious Bible study. Three hands went up. I spoke to them of how Jesus was passing by and acting as if He would go a little further (as at Emmaus and when He walked on the water). I told them that He is suggesting they follow Him to a deeper walk in the Word. I said I would not press the issue but that if anyone wanted to begin the journey, there would be study sheets available after the service upon request. I was swamped by kids and adults afterwards and there were just enough copies for everyone!!!

Monday

We held a clinic at a new village called Cornwall Court. Later we held an open-air service and my habit is to stand in the street and engage passersby in conversation, inviting them to come in. The streets were strangely empty so I began walking the neighborhood with my partner, Isaac. We finally found the local hangout and got into a conversation with Garnett.

"So I hear there are a lot of bad guys around here?"
"No, mon, dey all be up on the hill. Dey come down, rob, go back."
"So you aren't one of the bad guys? You are a good guy?"
"Yah mon!"
"Can I ask you a few questions to make sure you are a good guy?"
"Sure, mon."
"Have you ever lied, stole anything, taken God's name in vain, lusted or dishonored your parents?"
(shortened version)

In a few minutes, Garnett saw his need for a Savior and was born into the Kingdom of Light! I brought him to the pastor and Garnett mentioned that he had been watching this church for weeks and that he would be attending on Wednesday night. Pray for Garnett to stay close to the Lord and the brethren.
Tuesday

We visited the interior of the island. Dr. Sam Wooldridge (formerly of MAF) estimated the cost of development and explained various things (clinic, dorm, housing, hydroponic gardening) which could be done in the area. Sam teaches jungle survival and has traveled the world helping to find investors and assistance for missionaries.

Wednesday

I was invited to visit my friends at the police station. Little did I know what would transpire! Superintendent of Police Ivan Brown (who lost both arms in a machete attack years ago) asked if there was anything they could do to assist me. I mentioned there were some people whom I had met on the last trip who needed various things and one who was on the verge of salvation. He assigned Corporal Carlton Stirling (one of my favorite people in the world) a four-wheel drive land rover and gave him the commission to carry out my orders. I had secretly prayed this would happen but didn't want to be the one who pushed it. Carlton and I drove up and down many dangerous hills looking for the cryptic addresses I had. People began to offer to throw stones at the police jeep and cursed us as we drove by. Everyone we asked for directions played dumb because they don't want to be tagged as informers (this is because they assumed we were there to arrest someone).

We finally found Althia (an unwed mother) next door to a fruit stand whose owner had just sworn there was no such person in the area. Althia has been writing us for two years telling us she doesn't understand salvation. Long story short, Althia and Karl (her live-in partner) gave their lives to Christ and promised me they would soon be married. I directed them to Pitfour church and told them there will be a nice wedding present waiting.

The grand climax was next!!! We had been searching for Heather (the one who works on the Logos ship and has badly needed a mattress) all day long. Carlton had to attend to some police business and we decided to leave the money for the mattress with someone and call it a day. I got back to my hotel room and cried out to the Lord, "Father, Heather really needs this mattress. Please help me find her, someone else may not get the job done." The phone rang as I was praying.

"Jimmy? This is Heather! I just got your letter (sent a month ago) saying that you are coming! I have been so discouraged, but today I have been skipping through the streets showing your letter to everyone"

This was only the beginning. The mattress cost was $13,900.00 ($242.00 USD) Carlton tried to negotiate in Patois for a cheaper price. No way. He called friends who knew the owners. No luck. The store was closing soon and there was nobody who could authorize a discount. I asked Carlton to count my bundle of US and Jamaican bills and breathed a prayer, kicking myself for buying a phone card and some coffee for friends in the states. I couldn't believe it when Carlton said, "$240.00." I looked through my wallet and found two single dollar bills and laid them in his hands. Yessssssssss!!!! We got it!!!

I wish you could have seen Heather skipping around the store with her hands in the air shouting, "Thank you Jesus!"

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