

Introduction to the book of James

James 1:1

A. Historical Setting

1. Author (1:1a)

- a. Name: _____
- b. Self-description: In the _____ of God and the Lord Jesus Christ.
- c. Background: A _____ of Jesus who did not initially believe that Jesus was the Messiah, but later came to believe and became the most prominent elder at the church in Jerusalem.

2. Audience (1:1b)

- a. Ethnicity: _____ people (“twelve tribes”)
- b. Location: Living outside the land of _____ (“scattered abroad”)
- c. Identity & destiny: _____ in Christ who are eternally secure.

Four reasons to conclude that the recipients of the letter were already eternally saved:

- 1) The content of the letter is only appropriate instruction for people who have _____ believed in Christ. Topics such as the testing of one’s faith, eternal rewards, and the proper way to carry one’s faith are wholly inappropriate for an unconverted audience.
- 2) James refers to the audience as “brethren,” “my brethren,” and “my _____ brethren” throughout the entire letter.
- 3) James introduced himself as a slave of the Lord Jesus _____, and then makes no attempt to prove that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ.
- 4) A reminder of their _____ is found explicitly in James 1:18. Compare with John 3:3 and 1 Peter 1:3, 22-25.

3. Circumstances of Writing

- a. Estimated date & location: 40s AD & written from _____
- b. Impacts of persecution: Most of the believers in Jerusalem were displaced from their homes and had relocated to other places (scattered abroad). Both as Jews and as Christians, these people were often subjected to _____ from their new neighbors. Yet, they had remarkable _____ to walk with the Lord and to proclaim the gospel wherever they went. (Acts 8:1-4)

B. Significance of James

1. Unique Character of the Letter

- a. Simply _____
- b. Vividly _____
- c. Highly _____

2. Compatibility with the rest of Scripture

- a. James is not in _____ with Paul or John or Peter or Jude in any way.
- b. James gives _____ commentary on the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5-7).

3. Significant Themes

- a. Overall Theme: _____
 - Living wisely with God-all-wise; righteously with the God of perfect righteousness
- b. About People (Anthropology)
 - 1) People are _____ for the conduct of their lives
 - 2) People are _____ by their own desires
 - 3) People are inherently _____
 - 4) People can _____ from foolishness toward wisdom (or not)
 - 5) People can _____ fellowship with God (or not)
- c. About God (Theology Proper)
 - 1) God is _____
 - 2) God is only going to _____ good things
 - 3) God _____ how people live their lives
 - 4) God _____ faithfulness
 - 5) God detests _____
 - 6) God desires to be _____ to people
 - 7) God answers _____