

*MY DAILY APPOINTMENT
WITH GOD*

the book of
JAMES

*BY JOHN D. SNYDER
lead pastor
crossroads community church*



The Book of James

The book of James is actually a letter. It was written by one of Jesus' brothers (see Matthew 13:55) who after Jesus' death became a leader in the church (see Acts 15). One of Jesus' 12 apostles was also named James, but he *was beheaded in 44 A.D. before this letter was written* (see Acts 12:1-2).

This letter was probably written between 25 and 30 years after Jesus' death and resurrection (around 60-65 A. D.). It was written primarily to Jewish people who had become Christians. These Jewish Christians did not live in Jerusalem, but were scattered throughout the Roman Empire. The letter was passed on from church to church. We can see this in James 1:1 when he addresses his recipients as "the twelve tribes scattered among the nations."

You will also find out that James often refers to stories and people from the Old Testament (like Abraham, the father of the Jewish nation, and Rahab, Job, Elijah and other prophets). Jewish Christians would be very familiar with these stories while Gentile Christians (anyone who wasn't from a Jewish background) might have not understood the point James was making because they didn't know the Old Testament.

The letter emphasizes "walking the talk" or "practicing what you preach." It is very practical and James has little patience with people who say they are Christians but don't live like it. I hope you enjoy James as much as I do!

The questions will be easier to answer if you read from a New International Version of the Bible, but any version you have will be okay.

My Appointment With God On Day 1

James 1:2-8

1. How are we to face the trials we face and why should we face them this way? (verses 2-3)
2. What kinds of trials in particular are we to face this way? (verse 2)
3. What do trials test? (verse 3) What do you think this means?
4. If we develop perseverance through trials, what will be lacking in our lives? (verse 4) What do you think this means?
5. What should we do if we lack wisdom about a situation we are in? (verse 5)
 - Is there something you need wisdom about? Pray for wisdom right now.
 - What promise does verse 5 give us about asking God for wisdom? Claim that promise!
6. If God gives us his wisdom about a situation and we doubt his wisdom...
 - ... what are we like? (verse 6)
 - ...what will we receive from God? (verse 7)
7. What two ways is a doubter described in verse 8?
8. List some things you need God's wisdom about?
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Now make a commitment to find out what the Bible says about these issues. Study the Bible or ask someone to help you find out what the Bible says. Once you discover God's wisdom about the issues, don't doubt God - do what his word says to do in faith.

My Appointment With God On Day 2

James 1:9-11, 5:1-6

1. What can a poor person take pride in? (verse 9)
 - How does James 2:5 explain what James 1:9 means?
2. What should a rich person take pride in? (verse 10)
 - How does I Timothy 6:7 and 17-19 help us understand James 1:10?
3. What are rich people (and poor people for that matter) compared to in James 1:11?
 - What does this verse mean?
4. James was a student of the Old Testament. Read Isaiah 40:6-8.
 - How do you see James as a student of the Old Testament after reading these verses?
 - What else does Isaiah talk about besides people in these verses?
5. What shouldn't rich people find security in? (James 5:1-3)
6. How did the rich people James condemn treat others? (James 5:4 and 6)
7. How did they treat themselves? (James 5:5)
8. Who did James warn the rich people to fear? (James 5:4)
9. What aspects of your life do you take pride in?
 - What should you take pride in?
 - Read II Corinthians 12:7-10 and then list what you should boast about in your life in light of these verses?

My Appointment With God On Day 3

James 1:12-18

1. Read verse 12 and answer the following questions.
 - What do you think it means to “persevere under trial”?
 - What does it mean to be blessed?
 - What do we receive when we stand a test?
 - Who does God give the “crown of life” to?
What does that say about “persevering under a trial” or “standing a test”?
 - How is John 14:21 similar to James 1:12?
2. What 2 truths do we learn about God and temptation? (verse 13)
3. What drags us away into temptation according to verse 14?
4. What is born when we give into temptation? (verse 15)
5. What do little sins in our lives eventually grow into? (verse 15)
6. Write out I Corinthians 10:13 word for word below. Try to memorize it this week.

7. God doesn’t tempt us. What does he do for us according to verse 17?
8. What doesn’t God ever do according to verse 17?
9. What do we receive from God through his word (verse 18)?
 - Read John 1:12-13. How do these verses help us understand James 1:18?

My Appointment With God On Day 4

James 1:19-21

1. What challenges does verse 13 give us concerning speaking and listening?
 - In what ways do you struggle with these challenges?
 - Philippians 2:3-5 might add some insights into this also. What challenge does verse 19 give us concerning anger?
2. What does our anger not bring about? (verse 19) What does that mean?
 - If anger doesn't bring about the righteousness of God, what, in your opinion does bring it about?
 - If you want to learn more about anger, how serious a problem it can be, and how to deal with it, read Proverbs 14:16-17, 14: 29, 15:18, 16:32,17:27, 19:19, 20:3, 22:24-25. Write out word for word at least one proverb that hits you the hardest.
3. Besides anger, what other 2 character flaws are we to get rid of according to verse 21?
4. Once we've gotten rid of sin in our life, what are we to receive, and what attitude are we to have as we receive it? (verse 21)

My Appointment With God On Day 5

James 1:22-27

1. If we go to church regularly and read the Bible a lot, how can we deceive ourselves? (verse 22)
2. Read Matthew 7:24-27.
 - How does Jesus warn us about the same problem that James does in James 1:22?
 - Who are you most like in this story? The wise man, or the fool?
3. What would you look like every day if you did what the person described in James 1:23-24 did?
4. We get “uglier” over night! None of us looks great physically when we first get up in the morning.
 - How much time do you spend each day working on your physical appearance?
 - How much time do you spend each day working on your spiritual condition?
 - What lesson is there in this analogy?
5. How does verse 25 explain how we can improve our spiritual condition each day? (List three things it says we should do with God’s word)
6. What can make our religion worthless (even if we know a lot about the Bible)? (verse 26)
7. What are two key qualities in “true religion” that God accepts? (verse 27) Are they a part of your life?

My Appointment With God On Day 6

James 2:1-13

1. What command are we given in verse 1?
2. Read verses 2-4.
 - Which of these two people would you tend to want to get to know and why?
 - What is the main reason we treat one person we've never met better than another?
 - If we treat one person we've never met better than another, what does that say about us according to verse 4?
3. List 2 or 3 ways James describes poor people in verse 5 and 2 or 3 ways he describes rich people in verses 6-7.

POOR PEOPLE

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RICH PEOPLE

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4. What is the "royal law"? (verse 8)
 - Why do you think he calls it "royal"?
 - List 3-5 ways we can practically keep this law.
5. Why shouldn't we take comfort in the fact that we don't break any really important laws, only minor ones? (verses 9-11)
6. What triumphs over judgment? (verses 12-13)
7. What does it mean to speak mercifully and act mercifully?
8. What is one thing you will strive to do differently because of studying this passage?

My Appointment With God On Day 7

James 2:14-26

1. What in our lives proves we have faith - proves that we believe what God says is true? (verses 14-18)
 - How is this similar to James 1:22?
 - How is this similar to James 1:6-8?
2. Why is believing in God not enough according to James 2:19?
3. Read Genesis 22:1-19 before answering the next question
4. What made Abraham's faith complete according to James 2:21-23?
5. In your own words write out what the phrase "his faith and actions were working together" means.
6. Why was Rahab the prostitute considered righteous? (verse 25) (See Joshua 2 for more details.)
 - How did faith play a role in what Rahab did?
7. What are faith and works compared to in verse 26?

8. Is there an area of your life where you don't "practice what you preach"? List it and make a plan to do something about what you say you believe.

My Appointment With God On Day 8

James 3:1-12

1. Why should we be careful about becoming spiritual teachers? (verse 1) What do you think James means by this?
2. James says if we are able to control one small part of our body, it is evidence that we can control everything else about our body.
3. What one thing is it? (verse 2)
4. The tongue is compared to three other things in verses 3-5. List them below and write out how the tongue can be similar to these things.
 - A _____ in a horse's mouth
 - A _____ on a large ship
 - A small _____ in a great forest
5. What specific flaw is mentioned in verse 5?
 - What warning does James 4:6 give about this flaw?
6. What two things is the tongue compared to in verse 6, and what two things does the tongue do according to verse 6?
7. In what two ways is the tongue described in verse 8?
8. How can the tongue cause a contradiction in our lives? (verses 9-10)
 - Is this a problem for you? When, where and how?
 - Which do you do more with your tongue - praise God or curse men?
 - What will you do to be more consistent with your words?

My Appointment With God On Day 9

James 3:13-18

1. What two qualities show that someone has wisdom and understanding? (verse 13)
2. Why do you think humility is linked to wisdom?
3. What two negative qualities do we need to look out for? (verse 14) List the qualities and then write out a definition of each.
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4. What three descriptions are given of "wisdom" that is driven by bitter envy and selfish ambition? (verse 15)
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5. What two things accompany bitter envy and selfish ambition? (verse 16)
 - Why do you think this is true?
6. List the 7-8 qualities that accompany wisdom from heaven, then beside each word, on a scale of 1-10, rate how much of each quality is in your life. (verse 17)

7. What is the result of being a peacemaker? (verse 18)
8. If you struggle with any of the areas above, write down the name of someone you know who handles this area well and make an appointment with them to see if you can learn from them how to develop this area in your own life.

My Appointment With God On Day 10

James 4:1-10

1. What causes us to have conflict with others? (verse 1)
2. What 4 negative activities do people participate in when they want to get something that they can't have? (verse 2)
 - Are you involved in any of these kind of activities with anyone?
 - What do you need to do to overcome these issues?
3. What should we do if we desire something strongly according to verse 2?
4. What can sometimes keep God from giving us the things we ask for in prayer? (verse 3)
5. Write out verse 4 in your own words.

6. Read I John 2:15-17. How is the teaching in these verses similar to James 4:4?
7. How does verse 5 help us understand that God's Spirit doesn't want to share our allegiance with anything else?
8. Why do you think God opposes proud people? How does he do it? (verse 6)
9. Why do you think God gives grace to humble people? How do you think he does it? (verse 6)
10. What are we to do with God, and what are we to do with the devil? (verse 7)
11. List 7-8 activities listed in verses 8-10 that we can do to draw near to God and to resist the devil.

My Appointment With God On Day 11

James 4:11-17

1. What command are we given in verse 11?
2. Write out your definition of "slander."
3. How do you feel when someone slanders, speaks against or judges you?
4. What do you think James means when he says if you judge your brother you judge the law?
5. What two titles is God given and what two things are we told God is able to do according to verse 12?
6. List two reasons we shouldn't confidently say what we are going to do tomorrow. (verses 13-14)
7. What phrase should we always add when stating what we are planning in the future?
 - Why should we say this?
 - How does this line up with James 4:6?
8. If we state our plans without including God, what are we doing according to verse 16?
9. Have you been making plans without considering God? Ask him to forgive you and ask him for his will in your plans.
10. We all know that doing wrong is sinning, but what else is sin according to verse 17?
11. Are there any good things you know you should be doing, but aren't? List them and make a commitment to do them.

My Appointment With God On Day 12

James 5:7-II

1. What virtue are we to put on while we struggle through life? (verse 7)
2. What should give us hope while we wait? (verse 7)
 - See John 14:1-9 for more encouragement in this area.
3. Besides being patient, what else are we to do as we wait for the Lord to return? (verse 8)
 - See how many times Ephesians .6:10-18 tells us to do this same thing.
4. What shouldn't we do as we wait for the Lord, and why? (verse 9)
5. What is harder for you –
 - a) to be patient during difficult times,
 - b) to stand firm in your convictions when attacked spiritually, or
 - c) to not grumble about or judge another person?
 - Make a commitment to grow in one of these areas. Write out what you need to work on and then call a friend and ask them to hold you accountable in these areas.
6. Verses 10-11 says we should have heroes from the Bible who were patient in the face of suffering.
 - What Biblical characters do you admire? List one or two and write down what you admire about them.
7. What do we learn as we look at how God treated people in the Bible according to verse 11?
8. List 5-10 ways God has been "full of compassion and mercy" toward you. Then in prayer thank him for it!

My Appointment With God On Day 13

James 5:12

1. What are we to NOT do above all?
2. What are we not to swear by?
3. What do you think James means when he says "Let your 'Yes' be 'Yes' and your 'No' be 'No'"?
4. Read Matthew 5:34-37.
 - What was the old commandment about oaths? (verse 33)
 - What 4 specific things does Jesus say we are not to swear by, and why? (verses 35-36)

DO NOT SWEAR BY

BECAUSE

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5. Why does Jesus say we should either say "Yes" or "No" and nothing else? (verse 37)
6. Read Matthew 23:16-22 to learn more about why Jesus said this.
7. How often to you say "Swear to God," or "I promise," or "I give you my word"?
 - Do you say this because people don't trust you unless you swear?
 - What will you do different as a result of today's appointment with God?

My Appointment With God On Day 14

James 5:13-20

1. List the three conditions people might find themselves in according to verses 13-14 and then list the action steps we should take if we find ourselves in any one of these conditions.

CONDITION

ACTION TO TAKE

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2. Now, list how you usually respond if you find yourself in one of these conditions. What do you usually do when you are...
...in trouble?
...happy?
...sick?
3. Do you find yourself in one of these conditions today? If so, what should you do about it?
4. What quality should be a part of a prayer prayed for a sick person? (verse 15)
5. What should we do to be healed besides be prayed for and anointed? (verse 16)
6. What two words describe the prayer of a righteous man? (verse 16)
7. James uses Elijah as an example of someone who prayed effectively. But if you read his story (I Kings 17-18), you'll find that God told Elijah what He was going to do and Elijah merely told others what God's Spirit had revealed to him. This implies that prayer isn't just us telling God what we think He should do, but ought also to be a time when we become sensitive to what God is going to do and what God wants us to do.
 - What percentage of your prayers are telling God what to do?
 - How often do you ask God to reveal to you what he wants you to do? Why not pray that right now?"