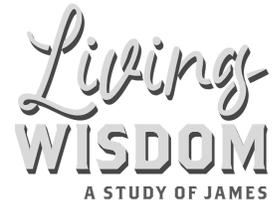


INTRODUCTION and JAMES 3:13-18

September 7-8, 2022



1. Share some reasons you decided to be a part of Women in the Word this semester.

What three words would you use to describe yourself?

2. We are studying the book of James this semester. Many theologians think the author of James is James, the half-brother of Jesus. Read James 1:1. How does James describe himself?

What do you learn about James' character from his description?

What else do we learn about James from the following verses?

Mark 6:1-3

John 7:1-5

Acts 1:12-14

1 Corinthians 15:3-7

Galatians 1:18-19 and 2:8-9

3. The book of James teaches a great deal about God's wisdom. How do you define wisdom?

In what ways do you see understanding as different from wisdom?

What does Proverbs 9:10 teach about wisdom?

4. Read James 3:13-18. Read verse 13 again. Give examples of how both good works and humility can display wisdom.

5. Read James 3:14-16. What attitudes describe false wisdom?

From where does this wisdom originate?

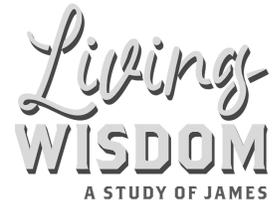
Think of some times in your own life when applying worldly wisdom led you to envy, selfishness, confusion, or even wrongdoing.

6. Read James 3:17. Describe the characteristics of wisdom 'from above' in your own words.

Which evidence of God's wisdom would you like to see more of in your own life and why?

JAMES 1:2-18

September 14-15, 2022



1. Read James 1:2. What thoughts come to your mind after reading these words?

Can you share a time when you were able to walk through a trial with a joyful spirit? What would you say were the reasons it was possible?

James wrote these words to the Jews who were dispersed outside the land of Israel because of persecution for their faith. What might have been some of the trials these people faced?

2. Read James 1:2-4. James teaches us that the testing of our faith produces steadfastness or endurance. Write down the definition of these words. What might be some good synonyms for these words?

According to James, what are the benefits of being steadfast or enduring?

What words does Peter use in 1 Peter 5:10 to help explain James' meaning of becoming 'perfect' complete and lacking in nothing'?

What more can we learn about the importance of being steadfast when we read Ephesians 4:13-14?

3. Read James 1:5. Why do you think James would bring up this subject during his teaching on trials?

How does James describe heavenly wisdom in James 3:17?

4. There is a prerequisite for receiving wisdom from God. Read James 1:5-8 and record this truth.

James compares a believer who prays without faith to a wild wave on the sea. Use your imagination and record your own illustration of the person who cries out to God without believing He will answer.

5. In James 1:9-11, we realize trials will come to everyone. Who are the people groups mentioned in these verses?

Consider James' flower illustration. What is true for both people groups that should cause them to turn to God during suffering? Also read 2 Corinthians 4:16-18.

6. In James 1:12, we learn true happiness comes to those who persevere during trials. How has this been true in your life?

The 'crown of life' is best translated the 'crown *is* life,' which probably refers to both a fulfilling life today and an eternal life tomorrow. What do we learn about the person's relationship with God who receives this crown according to 1:12?

7. After studying these verses in James 1:2-12, how would you summarize mature responses to *external* trials?
8. In James 1:13-16, we will look at mature responses when facing *internal* trials. These are the trials related to temptations in our lives. Read James 1:13. What is the wrong way to approach temptations? Why?

Think about some of the temptations that have come your way. What would be the negative results of accusing God of tempting you?

We live in a fallen world full of temptations. How does God help us during temptations according to 1 Corinthians 10:13?

9. Read James 1:14-16. James presents sin as a process in these verses. What is the process?

Who is the responsible party?

10. Read James 1:17-18. In one sentence, summarize the correct view of God's involvement in our lives.

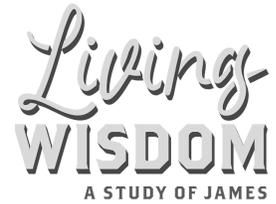
List all that God does for us.

11. After studying these passages in James 1:2-18, how do we face the trials and temptations that come our way? Also read 2 Timothy 2:15 along with 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24.

12. Write out a personal prayer request in one or two sentences to share with your small group.

JAMES 1:19-27

September 21-22, 2022



1. As a Christian, it is important to seize every opportunity to spend time in God's Word where He reveals His truth. Recall a time when you were not pursuing time alone in God's Word and record the reasons for it.

What changes do you see in yourself when you are purposeful about spending time in God's Word?

2. Read James 1:19-21. What three commands are given in verse 19?

Which one is hardest for you to follow and why?

3. Although the three commands found in verse 19 are wise words for us in everyday life, the context in this portion of Scripture deals with how to approach God's Word. Explain how each command, if followed, would be a benefit as you study God's Word.

Quick to hear

Slow to speak

Slow to anger

4. Reread James 1:20. How do you think anger toward God's Word hinders righteousness? Look at Proverbs 14:29 for insight.

5. According to James 1:21, how do we properly prepare our heart to receive God's Word?

Why is meekness or humility important for us to receive and obey God's Word?

6. Read James 1:22-25. Along with hearing God's Word, what is just as important according to verse 22?

Name specific ways we rationalize our failure to be doers of God's Word.

What do the following portions of Scripture say about being hearers and doers of God's Word?

Psalm 19:7-11

Luke 6:46-49

Luke 11:28

John 14:21

7. Read James 1:23. How does the word picture James uses in this verse describe a hearer only and not a doer of God's Word?

How is God's Word a mirror to us?

What do you think are some dangers of looking into self-help sources outside of God's Word?

8. To be a doer of God's Word we must remember the truths we have learned. Read Deuteronomy 6:6-7 and Joshua 1:8 and record the ways the Israelites were instructed to remember God's Word.

What are some practical things you do to remember the truths you have learned while studying God's Word?

9. Finish by reading James 1:26-27. How do you think our unbridled tongue interferes as we seek to live out God's Word?

10. In verse 27, James gives two behaviors indicative of a hearer and a doer of God's Word. Why do you think these two examples were chosen?

Which of these two examples is harder for you to do and why?

Read Romans 12:2 and 2 Timothy 3:16-17 along with James 1:27. Describe how we are able to live our lives pure, undefiled, and unstained by the world.

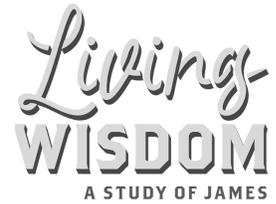
How does this prepare us to sacrificially care for others in need?

11. Glance back over James 1:19-27. Which verse stands out to you and why?

12. Write out a personal prayer request in one or two sentences to share with your small group.

JAMES 2:1-13

September 28-29, 2022



1. Define favoritism or partiality in your own words.

Think of a time when you benefitted or suffered from someone's favoritism. What was the result? How did it make you feel?

2. Read James 2:1-4. Note the specific command given in verse 1. To whom does James address this command?

According to James, what is incompatible with faith in Christ?

3. What life circumstance does James use to illustrate favoritism or partiality?

How was partiality given to one man over the other?

Describe the possible motives for showing partiality to the wealthy man over the poor man in the early church.

Read Leviticus 19:15 and reflect on how this truth should also apply in a fellowship of Christians.

4. List and describe some ways the world around us practices partiality today.

5. Read James 2:5-7. As James questions his readers, what insight does he reveal concerning the poor in verse 5?

What will the poor inherit that outshines worldly wealth?

According to James, favoring the rich is inconsistent and double-minded. Can you think of a time when your partiality was inconsistent or double minded? Share your answer.

Read the following Scripture and record the characteristics God values in His people.

1 Samuel 16:7

Matthew 5:3, 5, 8

Luke 1:52

1 Corinthians 1:26-29

How do these truths contrast with the favoritism most often shown in the world?

6. Read James 2:8-11. The ‘royal law’ mentioned in verse 8 refers to the primary law of the King. The King heads the Kingdom we will inherit as His followers. What is the royal law which governs relationships according to verse 8?

In your own words, describe what it means to ‘love your neighbor as yourself.’

How does favoritism or partiality violate this royal law of love?

7. What is James' response in verses 9-11 to those who would argue that favoritism or partiality is a minor offense in the big picture of life?

Is it difficult for you to equate partiality with other sins that have more serious consequences? Explain your answer.

In what circumstances are you most tempted to commit the sin of partiality?

8. Read James 2:12-13. James refers to the law of liberty which is freedom from sin through our faith in Jesus Christ. How should this law of liberty be reflected in our lives, according to verse 12?

Write down some synonyms for *mercy*.

How does a lack of mercy for those in need reveal a lack of understanding of God's mercy in our lives?

Give some practical ways we can live out God's great desire for us to let mercy triumph over judgment.

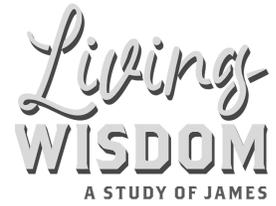
9. Reflect back on James' words concerning favoritism and partiality. How can partiality or favoritism damage the church and the message of the Gospel in our world today?

What steps can we take to protect the church and the message of the Gospel from the sin of partiality as we reach out to the world around us? Read Luke 6:31 and Philippians 2:3.

10. Write out a personal prayer request in one or two sentences to share with your small group.

JAMES 2:14-28

October 5-6, 2022



1. Reflect on the lives of a few Christians you respect. What causes you to appreciate their faith?

What are some of the good works you observe in their lives?

2. Read James 2:14-26. What are some words and phrases repeated in these verses?

3. Read James 2:14-17 again. What circumstance concerns James in verse 14?

In James 2:15-17, what is the example James gives of a dead, useless faith?

Living faith is one that results in good works. Why is living faith important?

In what ways does living faith glorify God and show Him to the world?

4. Read James 2:18 and Ephesians 2:8-10 and answer the following questions.

Ephesians 2:8 - What saves us?

Ephesians 2:9 - What does not save us?

Ephesians 2:10 - What happens after God saves us?

As you reflect on your life, what are some of the good works God has given you to do?

5. Read James 2:19-20. James uses demons to illustrate dead, useless faith. In James 2:19, how does James describe the demons?

Read Deuteronomy 6:4, which is referenced in James 2:19. Demons correctly believe there is one God but do not trust or obey Him. True faith results in a changed life with right actions. Share a time your faith in God caused you to obey God in a hard situation.

6. Read James 2:21-24. Read also Genesis 15:1-6 and Hebrews 11:17-18. Describe Abraham's faith.

Read Genesis 22:1-2, 9-19. Describe Abraham's actions.

Which came first: Abraham's faith or actions?

7. Read James 4:4. Reread James 2:23. Describe the differences between friendship with God and friendship with the world.

8. Read James 2:25-26. Read also Joshua 2:1-15 and Hebrews 11:31. According to Hebrews 11:31, what motivated and helped Rahab to obey God?

What did Rahab do that demonstrated her justification and faith?

Rahab's faith and actions had a positive impact on the lives of those around her. How have someone's faith and actions had a positive impact on your life?

9. Contrast the dead, useless faith of the unhelpful person in James 2:15-16 and demons in James 2:19 with the living, fruitful faith of Abraham and Rahab.

What specifically do you respect about the living faith and good works of Abraham and Rahab?

10. James 2:14-26 gives us an opportunity to prayerfully evaluate our own lives. Take a few moments to ask God to give you insight into your own heart and life.

Have you realized you have a faith that is only intellectual? Write a prayer with your heart and mind placing your full trust and faith in Jesus for salvation.

Many of us have a faith that is alive and active, but there's always room for us to grow in our spiritual maturity. What are some specific areas where you would like your faith and obedience to grow?

What are some ways you see the connection between faith and works in your own life?

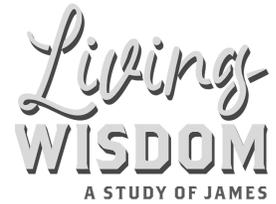
What ways of helping others bring you joy?

Thank and praise God for your salvation and the work He has prepared for you to do.

11. Write out a personal prayer request in one or two sentences to share with your small group.

JAMES 3:1-12

October 12-13, 2022



1. We will study what the Bible has to say about our speech over the next two weeks. Pause for a moment and prayerfully evaluate how well-controlled your words are in everyday life on a scale of 1-10.

Identify a common situation that tempts you to speak unwisely.

2. Read James 1:19 and 1:26 to remember what James has previously written about our speech. How does James describe the religion of someone who does not control their words well?

Read James 1:22-25. According to verses 22 and 25, what is the right response when we understand God's will for our conduct, including our speech?

What can we expect when we respond with obedient action?

3. Read Matthew 12:33-37. According to Jesus, what is the source of our speech?

4. Read James 3:1. What is James' warning for teachers of God's Word?

While you may not be a formal teacher, each of us has a sphere of influence over which our words carry great value. Think about your life. With whom are your words especially significant or powerful?

What do the words of both James and Jesus cause you to consider about your own speech with those you influence?

5. Carefully read James 3:1-12. In verse 2, James acknowledges we all sin against God in many ways. Why do you think James sees controlling our speech as necessary to becoming spiritually mature in other areas?
6. In verses 3-5, James gives two examples of small things that control large objects. What is the purpose of a horse's bit and a ship's rudder?

Think about both wild horses and large ships. What are characteristics of each that make them hard to control?

James uses illustrations from everyday life to warn us that small things like bits, rudders, sparks, and our tongues can have overwhelming influence over large things like horses, ships, forests, and our whole lives. Think about a ship on the open sea. What would happen to that ship if it had a faulty rudder? How would this affect the people and cargo aboard?

We may be as familiar with the destruction of a forest fire as James' original readers. Describe in detail the kind of damage these fires cause.

How is this like the damage an out-of-control tongue can cause in our lives?

7. Look again at James 3:5. In your own words, what important observation is James making about the power of our speech?

What 'great things' have words accomplished in your life? What 'great things' have words destroyed?

8. Read James 3:6-8. List the words and phrases James uses to describe uncontrolled speech.
9. Read James 3:8 once again. While we cannot control our tongue in our own strength, there is hope! Read the following verses and record God's provision for help when we are tempted to use our words poorly.

Psalm 119:171-173

Psalm 141:1-3

1 Corinthians 10:13

James 4:6-8

Based on these verses, write out a simple action plan you can use the next time you need to control your tongue.

10. Read James 3:9-12. What inconsistent use of our speech does James address in these verses?

Look again at James 3:9. What specific sin of the tongue grieves God's heart?

Read 1 John 4:19-21. What are some specific words or phrases you can speak to those you encounter throughout your day?

11. Spend some time considering one or two specific ways you are not honoring God with your words and write them here. Read 1 John 1:9 and confess those sins now.

12. Write out a personal prayer request in one or two sentences to share with your small group.