

“James: A Life Revealed”
James 1
Sermon date 5/17/2026

Ice breaker

- 1) What’s one skill or hobby you’ve tried to learn that required more patience than you expected?

Unpack It

What stood out to you from Sunday’s sermon and why? What was a takeaway or something that left you wondering about?

Looking Back

The book of Epistle of James was written to Jewish Christians scattered outside of Israel, likely facing hardship, persecution, poverty, and social tension. James writes in a deeply practical style, focusing less on abstract theology and more on what genuine faith looks like in everyday life. Many scholars believe the letter was written by James, the brother of Jesus and a leader in the Jerusalem church (Acts 15). His writing echoes the wisdom literature of the Old Testament, especially Proverbs, and frequently reflects themes from Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount.

James chapter 1 addresses trials, perseverance, temptation, wisdom, anger, and obedience to God’s Word. The original audience was navigating suffering and uncertainty while learning how to live faithfully in a hostile culture. James encourages believers to see trials as opportunities for spiritual maturity and reminds them that God is generous, unchanging, and good. The chapter repeatedly contrasts merely hearing truth with actively living it out, emphasizing that authentic faith transforms daily behavior.

Diving In

Read together: James 1

Diving Deeper

- 1) James says to “consider it pure joy” when facing trials. Why do you think he connects joy and hardship together?
- 2) What kinds of trials tend to test people’s faith most deeply in our culture today?

- 3) James talks about perseverance leading to maturity. What do you think spiritual maturity actually looks like in everyday life?
- 4) James makes a distinction between trials and temptations. What's the difference, and why does that matter?
- 5) James compares hearing God's Word without obeying it to looking in a mirror and forgetting your appearance. Why is acting on truth often harder than hearing it?
- 6) Where might God be inviting you to grow through a current challenge rather than simply escape it?
- 7) When you need wisdom, what usually becomes your first response: prayer, anxiety, advice from others, avoidance, or something else?
- 8) Are there areas where you've become comfortable hearing truth without practicing it? What would one step of obedience look like this week?

Closing It Out With Prayer

1. Begin with Gratitude (2–3 minutes): Invite everyone to briefly share one thing they are thankful for this week. Then open in prayer by thanking God for His goodness, wisdom, and faithfulness in every season.

2. Pray Through Trials Honestly (5–10 minutes)

Since James 1 focuses heavily on trials and perseverance, create space for people to share challenges they are facing, without pressure to overshare. Encourage the group to listen well and avoid immediately trying to fix problems.

After sharing, pray specifically:

- For endurance
- For wisdom
- For peace
- For faith that remains steady
- For God to work through difficult circumstances

You might divide into groups of 2–3 so everyone has time to pray aloud if comfortable.

3. Ask God for Wisdom (3–5 minutes)

James 1:5 says God gives wisdom generously. Spend time praying for wisdom in:

- Parenting
- Marriage
- Work decisions
- Relationships
- Health challenges
- Spiritual growth
- Witnessing to others

4. Practice Listening Prayer (2–3 minutes)

After active prayer, allow a short moment of silence before God. Encourage the group simply to listen, reflect on Scripture, and ask:

- “God, what are You teaching me?”
- “Where are You inviting me to trust You?”
- “What step of obedience do You want me to take?”