

THE BOOK OF

James

BIBLE STUDY GUIDES FOR SMALL GROUPS

RELATIONAL BIBLE STUDY SERIES

CREATED BY STEVE CASE

This is Tough

OPENING QUESTION

Work/School, family, sports, spirituality, social life, church, social media—which area is easiest for you and which area is the hardest for you?

READ James 1:1-27

1. How do you usually respond to tough times?

- A. Buck up and push through them.
- B. Fall apart.
- C. I love the challenge.
- D. Find someone to help me through it.
- E. Complain to God.
- F. Label it “bad luck.”
- G. Look for opportunities for my faith to grow.
- H. Tell others how rough life is for me.
- I. Other.

2. When does your faith usually grow?

- A. When everything is going great for me.
- B. When I’m at church.
- C. Getting involved in service projects.
- D. Participation in a small group Bible study.
- E. Experiencing tough times.
- F. Consistency in personal devotions.
- G. Sharing my faith with others.
- H. Listening to inspiring music.
- I. Other.

3. How does God give wisdom?

- A. You’ve gotta ask for it.
- B. Expect some tough times.
- C. God downloads it on your brain’s hard drive.
- D. God strips away your stupidity.
- E. Replacing double-mindedness with singular focus.
- F. It helps if you’re already pretty smart.
- G. It’s given to those who give all they have to God.
- H. Other.

4. Rich and poor—how are they similar or different when it comes to:

- A. Basic necessities.
- B. Work opportunities.
- C. Housing.
- D. Final destiny.
- E. Relationships.
- F. Health care.
- G. Life—quality and quantity.
- H. Achievements.
- I. Other.

5. Where does temptation originate?

- A. Satan.
- B. God.
- C. In our heart/mind.
- D. The sinful nature inherited from Adam and Eve.
- E. Seductive lies.
- F. American culture.
- G. Media—movies, music, internet, social media, advertising.
- H. Other.

6. What are examples of a message from God you don't follow?

- A. Be salt and light here on earth.
- B. Trust God in all things.
- C. Invest in heaven.
- D. Forgive others.
- E. Experience peace by putting on Christ's yoke.
- F. Spend more time in prayer.
- G. Repent.
- H. Love your enemies.
- I. Other.

7. What are examples of good gifts that most people don't consider to be “coming from God” (vs. 17)?

8. What do you consider to be “pure and genuine religion” (vs. 27)?

Working Faith

OPENING QUESTION

Who is one of your heroes? What has that person done for you and what have you done for that person?

READ James 2:1–26

1. Whom do you favor more? How does this relate to James' message?

- A. Family.
- B. Friends.
- C. People from my church/denomination.
- D. People from my gender.
- E. People from my ethnicity.
- F. People from my socio-economic class.
- G. People from my country.
- H. People from my age bracket/generation.
- I. Other.

2. From the options below, who impresses you the most?

- A. School teacher.
- B. Someone who went from "rags to riches."
- C. Public servant.
- D. Superstar in sports, music, or movies.
- E. Someone with head-turning good looks.
- F. Philanthropist.
- G. Visionary leader.
- H. Humble Christian.
- I. Other.

3. How does the law judge us AND set us free (vs. 12)?

- A. It doesn't.
- B. If you're innocent, you get to go free.
- C. All laws come from God.
- D. God overrules the law.
- E. God doesn't judge us.
- F. When you're obedient, the law is your friend.
- G. It provides the parameters and guidance we need.
- H. Other.

4. What is the relationship between faith and works?

- A. Faith comes first, and then the works follow.
- B. Works increase our faith.
- C. Works demonstrate our faith.
- D. Faith requires trust; works require tenacity.
- E. Faith is really all that matters.
- F. Faith without works isn't really faith.
- G. Works without faith is a misguided merit system.
- H. Faith is what you feel; works are what you do.
- I. Other.

5. What's a good example of faith and works?

- A. My life.
- B. Rahab who hid the Israelite spies in Jericho.
- C. Christ's death on the cross.
- D. The Israelites in the wilderness.
- E. Paul and Silas singing in jail.
- F. Trust and obey.
- G. One's body and breath—it takes both to be alive.
- H. Other.

6. Abraham is a good example of:

- A. Trusting God in all things.
- B. Trusting God in some really big things.
- C. Faith.
- D. Faith and works.
- E. Faith and inconsistent works.
- F. Someone who got blessed because God chose him.
- G. Other.

7. Who is a role model you have for faith? Who is a role model you have for works?

8. Where do you see faith (and works) in your life? Where would you like to see more?

Big Talk

OPENING QUESTION

What is something that you have said that you wish you could take back?

READ James 3:1–18.

1. Why did James write that not many should be teachers in the church?

- A. Few people have the gift of teaching.
- B. The more teachers there are, the greater the variety of what's taught.
- C. It doesn't pay very well.
- D. Teachers get a lot of scrutiny, and not many people can handle that.
- E. James felt threatened by teachers.
- F. With so many spiritual gifts, don't expect many to have this one gift.
- G. Teachers belong in schools, not in church.
- H. When there are fewer teachers, they are appreciated more.
- I. Other.

2. What metaphor best captures for you the idea that a small tongue can have a BIG impact?

- A. A small bit in the mouth of a mighty horse.
- B. The rudder of a large ship.
- C. A spark that ignites a forest fire.
- D. A microscopic virus can create a pandemic.
- E. The tongue is only a small part of the human body.
- F. A snowball can grow quickly as it rolls down a mountain.
- G. An internet virus can damage many computers and systems.
- H. An inspiring individual can change society (Gandhi, MLK, etc.).
- I. Other.

3. Rate (1–8) these 8 negative things a tongue might do (1=worst).

- ___ Tear down people through verbal assaults.
- ___ Lie.
- ___ Gossip.
- ___ Deny or curse God.
- ___ Use “put downs”—subtle, direct, or passive-aggressive.
- ___ Spread rumors.
- ___ Support or endorse the start of something bad.
- ___ Other.

4. Rate (1-9) these 9 positive things a tongue might do (1=best)?

- ___ Encourage people.
- ___ Praise God.
- ___ Tell the truth.
- ___ Keep silent.
- ___ Provide helpful information.
- ___ Stand up for someone or something.
- ___ Communicate a message from God.
- ___ Proclaim a warning in advance.
- ___ Other.

5. Which passages of Scripture tie into the same message in James 3?

- A. Matthew 16:15-23—Jesus commended and corrected Peter.
- B. Luke 6:45—Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks.
- C. Exodus 4:10-12—No complaints; God empowers people to speak.
- D. Psalm 19:14—Let the words of my mouth, and the meditations . . .
- E. Isaiah 29:13—These people honor me with their lips, but . . .
- F. Acts 5:1-6—Lying can be fatal.
- G. Matt. 23:2-3—Do what religious leaders say, but not what they do.
- H. Other.

6. What causes jealousy/envy?

- A. Someone else's blessing(s).
- B. Feeling personally inadequate.
- C. Lack of wisdom.
- D. Another person's abilities.
- E. Another person's opportunities/breaks/luck.
- F. Unfairness.
- G. Not understanding God.
- H. Someone else being honored.
- I. Other.

7. How is the same tongue able to speak both evil and good?

8. How have you used your tongue to “plant seeds of peace” (vs. 18)?

Battle

OPENING QUESTION

Who did you fight with most often when you were a child?

READ James 4:1–17.

1. What causes quarrels and fights?

- A. Injustice.
- B. Greed.
- C. Desire.
- D. Siblings.
- E. Not praying for what you want.
- F. Testosterone.
- G. Ego.
- H. Power seekers.
- I. Other.

2. Which values of the world tempt you to be a spiritual adulteress?

- A. Always looking out for number one (yourself).
- B. Eat, drink, and be merry, because tomorrow you die.
- C. Make your work your first priority.
- D. Make your family your first priority.
- E. Do whatever it takes to get to the top.
- F. Image is what matters.
- G. Express your sexuality whenever and with whomever you want.
- H. Whoever dies with the most toys wins.
- I. Other.

3. How does a person “humble one’s self before God”?

- A. Bow down on your knees.
- B. Get a clearer view of God.
- C. Embarrass yourself.
- D. Repent of your sins.
- E. Recite your weaknesses and mistakes from the past.
- F. Admit privately and publicly your dependence on God.
- G. Cry, groan, grieve over your inadequacies.
- H. Make a list of your strengths and weaknesses; compare with God’s.
- I. Other.

4. How can you “resist the devil”?

- A. Quote Scripture.
- B. Sing or play religious music.
- C. Just say, “No!”
- D. Argue.
- E. Pray.
- F. Remove yourself from where the devil seems to be.
- G. Remind Satan of his past.
- H. Remind Satan of his future.
- I. Other.

5. Why did James said to not speak evil of another person (vs. 11).

- A. It’s not nice.
- B. Judge not.
- C. It creates a spirit of harshness and withdrawal rather than openness.
- D. It’s against God’s law.
- E. Such actions put you in God’s place.
- F. Leviticus 19:18 says: “Love your neighbor as yourself.”
- G. Who are you to pass judgment?
- H. Other.

6. Since you don’t know what’s going to happen tomorrow, what should you do about making plans for the future?

- A. Make plans, but be flexible in case they don’t match God’s plans.
- B. Let God direct you one day at a time.
- C. Be like a hippie and just chill out.
- D. Make plans now with God’s guidance.
- E. Charge up your credit card and hope you won’t have to pay for it.
- F. Discover God’s will for your life and this won’t be a problem.
- G. Get a spiritual director and just follow what they tell you to do.
- H. Other.

7. What have you found draws you close to God?

8. What’s an example of something you know you ought to do, but you haven’t done it? Why not? What would it take for you to do it?

James 5

OPENING QUESTION

When did you first become aware that some people are very, very rich?

READ James 5:1–20.

1. Who are the rich people that James referred to in chapter five?

- A. Millionaires.
- B. Billionaires.
- C. Americans.
- D. Owners/Bosses.
- E. Those with a retirement plan.
- F. Those with good health insurance.
- G. Those who have more money than you have.
- H. Those out of debt.
- I. Other.

2. What troubles did James predict for the rich?

- A. A stock market crash.
- B. Revolution from the poor.
- C. Bad showing on Judgment Day.
- D. No more tax loopholes.
- E. Payback from taking advantage of others.
- F. Loss of physical health.
- G. Judgment against insulated luxury.
- H. Family squabbles about the rich person's inheritance.
- I. Other.

3. What should determine your standard of living?

- A. The government.
- B. Your income.
- C. Fit in with the people you like to be around.
- D. The lifestyle you had as a child.
- E. Middle class is the best target.
- F. Whatever you desire.
- G. Comparing yourself with others.
- H. Personal conviction.
- I. Other.

4. Why do Adventists need patience while waiting for the Lord's return?

- A. It's been 2,000 years since Christ promised to return.
- B. Waiting for Christ's return includes suffering.
- C. It seems like you're missing out.
- D. Promises require patience.
- E. People make fun of believers.
- F. Adventists tend to always be in a hurry.
- G. Life is hard.
- H. Other.

5. What did James mean about not ever taking an oath (vs. 12)?

- A. Never swear.
- B. Never say, "I swear it."
- C. Don't ever take the stand in a court room.
- D. Everything a person says should be true, without needing to swear by it.
- E. It's okay to tell little lies since you didn't take an oath.
- F. Don't make vows when you get married.
- G. Never promise anyone anything.
- H. Too many people take oaths and then break them.
- I. Other.

6. What is the anointing service for the sick all about?

- A. Sick people need healing.
- B. It should be done only when medical care isn't enough.
- C. It gives the elders a task to do.
- D. People should turn to God because of their great need.
- E. An anointing service sanctifies the sick person.
- F. It's based on faith rather than your health insurance plan.
- G. It's risky because the miracle of healing might not happen.
- H. It's a consecration of the sick person into God's hands.
- I. Other.

7. To whom do you confess your sins? How often?

9. When have you found prayer to be powerful?

