

Book in a Day

James

Nigel Styles

Timetable:

09:00-09:30 - Registration and Coffee

09:30-10:45 - Session 1

10:45-11:15 - Refreshments

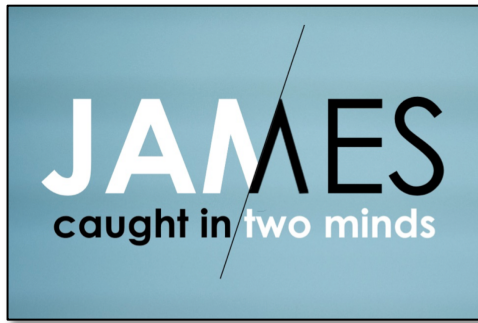
11:15-12:30 - Session 2

12:30-13:45 - Lunch

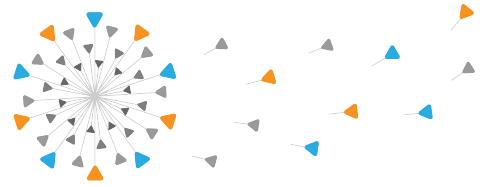
13:45-15:00 - Session 3

15:00-15:20 - Refreshments

15:20-16:30 - Session 4



Cornhill
Scotland



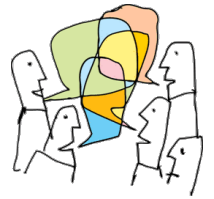
Book in a Day / Nigel Styles

5:19-20

Now discuss:

What is the danger?

What can be done about it?



THE DANGER:

THE NEED:

THE RESULT:

Two important cross-references back into ch 1:

1:21 'save ... soul' phrase of 5:20

1:16 the 'deceived' word is the 'wander' word of 5:19

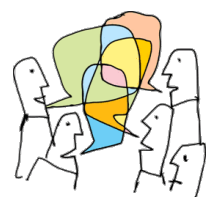
1:14-21 repeats a metaphor of seed – conception – birth – growth

Complete the table below (by filling in as many boxes as you can):

	verses 14-15	verses 17-18, 21
seed		
conception		
birth		
growth		

Now discuss:

How might I 'wander' (5:19) / 'be deceived' (1:16)?



What is the prescription for such wandering/deception, from these verses in chapter 1?

The issue in James is the danger of 'wandering' (5:19-20)
How?

By being 'doubleminded' (lit. *two-souled*) (1:8; 4:8)

- it's living like a Christian, and like a non-Christian
- it's dangerously unstable (1:6-8)
- it's seriously misguided (4:6)



Evidence of doublemindedness

3:1-13

'Stick out your tongue' says Doctor James

Your tongue is a diagnostic tool, and it shows you are double-minded (3:9-11)

- the tongue **boasts** (3-5a) ... it packs a big punch
- the tongue **burns** (5-6) ... it starts a big fire
- the tongue '**beasts**' (7-8) ... it's like a wild beast

So ...

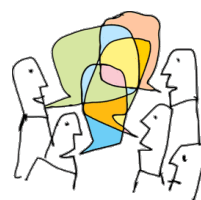
1. Not many teachers (1)

Now discuss:

Why not?

What reason(s) does James give why 'not many teachers'?

What is the logic of that command here in chapter 3?



2. We have a 'forked tongue' (9-11)
It should not be like this - and it doesn't make any sense that is like this - but it is!

Our tongue shows that we are doubleminded
And that means we are potentially in danger

Where does our doublemindedness come from?

two wisdoms

3:13-18

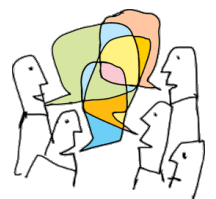
'wise and understanding'

two friendships

4:1-10

Look carefully at 4:6-10.

Analyse the structure of these verses. Consider 'bookends', and 'pairs' ...
How does structure analysis help us to understand what James is saying here?



Now discuss: what does James tell the double-minded person to do?

An example of doublemindedness

2:1-26 'show no partiality'

The issue: 'do not have the faith ... with partiality' (2:1-4)

It is doubleminded to be a Christian ('have the faith') and to adopt the world's attitudes ('partiality')

How does James show that 'partiality' is wrong in v5-13?



How does this fit with the broader purpose of the letter?

2:5-11 explains why this is a problem:

You're not following through on your belief (ie your faith is not 'completed' [22])

(1) what Christians believe about the rich and poor (5-7)

(2) what Christians believe about the law and judgment (8-11)

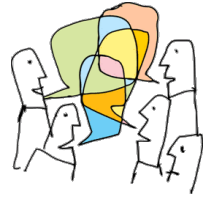
Conclusion: live out what Christians believe (12-13)

The issue: someone with faith/who has received mercy who does not show mercy (14)

It is doubleminded to be a Christian and to adopt the world's attitudes

2:14-26

What are 'works'?



What are the 'works' of Abraham and Rahab?
What have they got to do with 'the poor' (15-16)?

What kind of faith saves? (14-18)

- (1) not the kind of faith demons have (19)
- (2) but the faith of Abraham (21-24): he lived out what he believed
- (3) and the faith of Rahab (25-26): she lived out what she believed

The Big Idea:
a friend of God shows their faith in all of life

5:7-11

Remain steadfast ...

- like a farmer
- like the prophets
- like Job

... because the Lord and Judge is coming

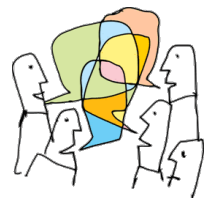
Now discuss:

Read the four sections: James 4:11-12; 4:13-17; 5:1-6; 5:12

What do these sections have in common?

What links them ...

- (a) to each other
- (b) to the theme of the letter?



Remain steadfast
What does that look like?

	REMAIN STEADFAST	are these sections all about the future?	are these sections all about pride/humility?
4:11-12	don't speak badly of a brother	... because you're not the one who will judge	... because it's arrogant to claim the role of judge
4:13-17	don't presume in planning your life	... because you don't know tomorrow	... because presumption like that is boasting and arrogant boasting is evil
5:1-6	don't pursue wealth, and so oppress the righteous	... because you will face the Lord of those you oppress	... because your self-indulgent pursuit of this world's treasure has been at others' expense
5:12	don't 'swear', but instead let your word be your bond	... because breaking your word will be condemned	... because 'swearing' comes from an arrogant overconfidence

The Big Idea:
as you face the 'trials' of 1:2-4, 12-14, **remain steadfast** (1:3-4, 12 ... and 5:7-11)

What 'trial'?

- the words 'trial' (in 1:2, 12) and 'tempted' (in 1:13-14) are translations of the same Greek word
- the 'trials' cannot be persecution-type suffering
- these trials are linked to 'being steadfast ... the crown of life' OR 'desire-sin-death'
- the danger in these 'trials' is being led astray/wandering (1:16; 5:19-20)

Perhaps every situation is a 'trial':

- will I be doubleminded here?
- will I be tempted/lured/enticed?
- will **worldly** desire drown out '**wordy**' truth?

5:13-20

What is this passage about?

- Words 'translation' and 'interpretation'
- Context what the immediately-surrounding verses in chapter 5 are about

what the whole of the book has been about

⁷⁻¹² *Be patient/steadfast as you wait for the coming of the Lord since he is actually right at the door. Be single-minded in ordering your life around this perspective. The last thing you want is for Christians to drop out in these final furlongs! So ...*

¹³ Is anyone among you facing the kind of suffering that the prophets did? Let him pray.

Is anyone in good heart meeting such trials? Let him sing praises, counting it all joy.

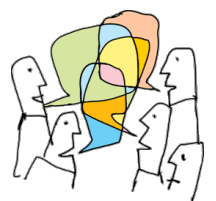
¹⁴ Is anyone among you faltering in his faith, wandering from the truth? Let him call for the elders of the church to come and to pray for him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord to set him apart to renewed Christian service. ¹⁵ And this prayer offered in faith (OR this prayer of the man of faith) will save the weary Christian; the Lord will raise him up (from death). And whatever sins he has done, he will be forgiven.

¹⁶ So, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be restored to the faith. For a justified man's prayer is effective to achieve lots.

¹⁷⁻¹⁸ *Look how much Elijah's prayer was effective to achieve: he brought back a wandering nation!* ¹⁹⁻²⁰ *So do whatever you can to bring back any wandering Christian, to save him from death as his sins are dealt with.*

Now discuss:

Speed read 1 Kings 17-18 (which span the time of the drought)
How do the prayers of Elijah link to the issue in *James*?



How is Elijah a man just like us? for what should we pray?

- Elijah
Elijah's two prayers are 1 Kings 18:1-2 (we presume) and 18:42-46
Prayers about drought are actually about covenant curse for disobedience (cf Deut 28: 22, 24, 48)

Note 1 Kings 18:21 which comes between Elijah's two prayers

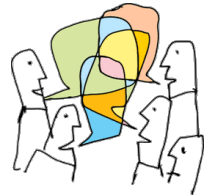
Now discuss:

James 1:2-4, 12-15; 5:7-11

what are the 'trials'?

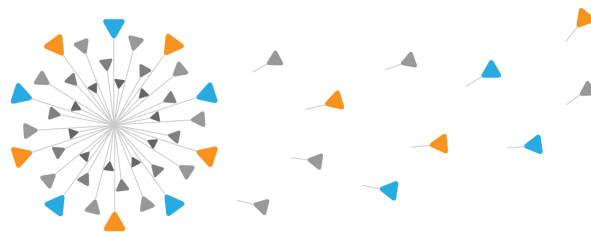
what is 'steadfastness'?

what is 'the central application' of the letter as a whole?



pray for the wanderer

plead with the wanderer



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