

Session 7

James 1:19-21

Prayer

As a group, spend time praying through the verse below. Consider each word and meditate on the promises and commands of the scriptures. Make note of any insights, questions, moments of clarity, convictions, gratitude, or promises as needed in your reflection.

"¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil."

-Ephesians 6:10-11

Suggested Prayer Prompts

Prayers of gratitude for the gift of scripture.
Prayers for understanding what God is communicating through this study.
Prayers for spiritual growth and maturity as you study.
Prayers for conviction as you strive to be more like Christ.
Prayers that the Lord will bring your group together in unity and accountability as you study His word.

Series Goal: To urge Grassroots Church to live in a way that demonstrates faith in action.



Sermon Tie-In

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

Memory Minute

MAY CHALLENGE

James 1:5-11

How many verses can you memorize this week? Shade in a block for each verse you learn!

5	6	7	8	9	10	11
---	---	---	---	---	----	----

“The word, stored in the heart, provides a mental depository for the Holy Spirit to use to mediate His grace to us, whatever our need for grace might be.”

-Jerry Bridges

See page 10 for this week's practice exercise.

Series Goal: To urge Grassroots Church to live in a way that demonstrates faith in action.



Launch

One of the most beautiful things about scripture is the consistency and conformation found throughout the entire Bible. James is no exception and mirrors ideas found in both the Old and New Testament.

The ESV Archaeological Study Bible describes it by saying, *“The eclectic nature of the letter’s topics can be compared with OT wisdom literature (such as Proverbs) and with the array of topics Jesus addressed in his teaching ministry (such as in the Sermon on the Mount;)”*

To begin today’s study, take some time to familiarize yourself with the portion of scripture we will be studying in James 1:19-21. Read the scripture aloud, then work with your group to match those ideas with the references below that confirm the same truth.

Scripture Bank

Proverbs 18:13
Colossians 3:8
Proverbs 20:22

Matthew 12:36
Luke 11:28
Matthew 5:22

JAMES	OTHER REFERENCE
be “quick to hear”	
be “slow to speak”	
be “slow to anger	
“the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God”	
“put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness”	
“receive with meekness the implanted word which is able to save your souls?”	

Series Goal: To urge Grassroots Church to live in a way that demonstrates faith in action.



THE WORD

James 1:19-21

Before we take a deeper dive into the scripture, take a minute to soak up the entire section together. Listen for repeated phrases, unfamiliar words, several points in a row, attributes of God, or ideas you don't fully understand. Feel free to note them below or just relax and take in whatever God may be speaking to your heart.

Hearing and Doing the Word

“¹⁹ Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; ²⁰ for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God. ²¹ Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.”

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slight shadow on the right side, suggesting it's resting on a surface.

Series Goal: To urge Grassroots Church to live in a way that demonstrates faith in action.



Explore

James 1:19-21

Hearing and Doing the Word

"¹⁹ Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; ²⁰ for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God. ²¹ Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls."

A

"Know this, my beloved brothers:"

As we saw before, James is a book of wisdom. Overviewbible.com summarizes the book, as seen in the footnote of this study, as being written to urge all believers to live in a way that demonstrates their faith in action. This book is filled with concise statements, plainly stating how believers are called to live.

The ESV Study Bible organizes the sections we have studied so far as laid out below.

- 1.) Greeting
- 2.) The Testing of Faith
 - a. Joy in trials
 - b. Wisdom from God for trials
 - c. The place of the rich and poor before God
 - d. Reward for those who endure
 - e. The Process of temptation
- 3.) Hearing and Doing the Word
 - a. Hearers of the word

You are here!

Throughout the book, James refers to the audience as *"brothers"* 15 times and consistently speaks of his love for them. Think about these topics in light of the persecution the early church was experiencing and imagine yourself hearing this letter read for the first time.

How would the phrase *"Know this, my beloved brothers:"* influence how you received the challenging call he presents? Why do you think James interacts with the reader's this way?

Series Goal: To urge Grassroots Church to live in a way that demonstrates faith in action.



B

After refocusing the audience's attention and reminding them he speaks in love, James gives 3 specific directions to believers. He offers an explanation in the following verse, but for now we'll start by wrapping our minds around what each directive means. Read the last portion of James 1:19 below.

"let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger;"

First, underline the phrase that shows who these directions apply to. Then draw a smiley face above that phrase if you agree that these also apply to us as believers today.



Now fill in the blanks below, focusing your mind on each individual statement.

LET EVERY PERSON BE...

- 1.) _____ to _____
- 2.) _____ to _____
- 3.) _____ to _____

QUICK TO HEAR



What does it mean to be quick to hear? Are you feeling any sense of discrepancy between these words? It's like coming to both of these signs on the road. How can I listen quickly? The original language should help us here.

Read the definition of "quick" below.

Quick (*tachus*): prompt or ready

How does understanding that in this case James is directing believers to be *ready* to hear affect your interpretation?

What are some potential negative outcomes if we neglect James' instructions?

Series Goal: To urge Grassroots Church to live in a way that demonstrates faith in action.



SLOW TO SPEAK

While James begins with instructions on what we should do, he follows with a warning against the opposite. While we are to be quick and eager in our hearing, we are to be slow in our speech. Think about how these ideas could be related. Remember, this scripture doesn't tell us to NEVER speak. Instead, we are given insight into the way we speak.

How might being *quick to hear* help us honor God in the words we *speak* (slowly)?

SLOW TO ANGER

James concludes verse 19 with a final command to be slow to anger and then expands on why this is important in verse 20. Again, the scripture doesn't tell us to NEVER be angry. Instead, we are told to process our anger carefully.

In psychological circles, anger is typically agreed on as one of the most difficult emotions to regulate. Why do you think that is?

C

James is about to address the reasoning behind controlling our anger. Read verse 20 below and draw a box around the word that means BECAUSE.

The rest of the verse can be broken down into three sections. Draw a line between each phrase.

"²⁰ for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God."

We'll start with the *anger of man*. Read Ligonier's description of anger, as well as the biblical definition below.

What is the difference between the anger of man and the anger of God?

"Anger says, 'That is wrong.' Anger says, 'I will make that right.' Anger is compelled to do something about a wrong. The wrong has risen past the level of overlooking an offense, and anger acknowledges that something should be done about it." -Ligonier.org

Anger (*orgē*): wrath, anger, the feeling and expression of strong displeasure and hostility;

Series Goal: To urge Grassroots Church to live in a way that demonstrates faith in action.



James has created a sort of equation in verse 20. On one side, we see the anger of man and on the other, *the righteousness of God*, while their relationship is sandwiched in between. Before we tackle that, let's first skip to see what we're comparing.

Again, the biblical meaning offers important insight. Read the definition below

Righteousness (*dikaïosunē*): what is right, justice, the act of doing what is in agreement with God's standards, the state of being in proper relationship with God

In your own words, what does it mean to be in a proper relationship with God?
(Consider this from the perspective of both a believer and a nonbeliever.)

"...does not produce..."

Now that we have a better idea of what we're comparing, we can look at how they're related.

Think about the word **produce** for a minute. It can be used in so many different contexts. Take 1 minute and list as many things as you can think of that you have produced. Then share your list with the group and try to find out what all the items have in common.

I hope that you agreed that the things that were produced did not previously exist as they are now. Whether you planted a seed, created art, brewed coffee beans, built a table, or made someone laugh, you brought it into existence through action. But James makes it clear that our actions do NOT produce the righteousness of God.

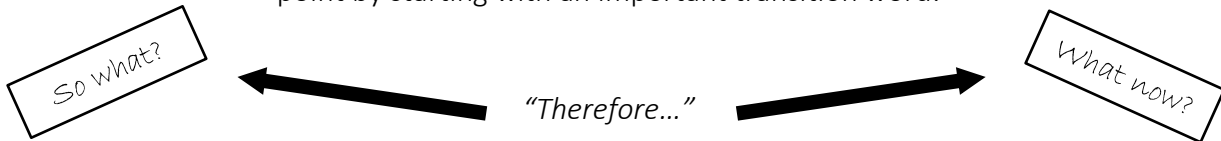
How would conducting our lives in the way James describes affect our ability to encourage others with the gospel? Again, consider this from the perspective of both a believer and a nonbeliever.

Series Goal: To urge Grassroots Church to live in a way that demonstrates faith in action.



Apply

James is a tough read. It requires a lot of humility and willingness to understand and address our imperfections. This section of scripture concludes with verse 21 that emphasizes that point by starting with an important transition word.



“²¹ Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.”

When James tells us to put away all the filthiness and wickedness, he uses the same word that refers to removing soiled clothing. We are called to put on an entirely new way of being. Colossians expounds on what God calls us to put away.

“But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth.”-Colossians 3:8

Underline those things that you find hardest to remove from your life or jot down any other struggle that comes to mind.

Circle which call of James is most difficult for you to honor.

Being quick to hear.

Being slow to speak.

Being slow to anger.

Spend time reflecting on “receiving the implanted word” and its ability to “save your soul.”

What areas of your life do you feel God calling you to live differently? Spend time with your group in both prayer and committing to accountability. Ask God to show you the areas where He is asking you to grow. Ask forgiveness for the times you have missed the mark. Share those insights and invite other group members to lovingly hold you to the commitments you’re making. Offer the same encouragement to them as well.

Write any reflections on the lines below, as desired.

Series Goal: To urge Grassroots Church to live in a way that demonstrates faith in action.



Memory Work

James 1:5-11

For this week's memory work, you will use a memory grid to practice each verse. Each block below represents one verse. The first letter of each word is included.

Recite each verse 3 times each day, using only the first letters as clues.

At the end of the week, recite each verse to a partner without using any clues. If you can do that, congratulations! You memorized seven verses! If not, keep practicing! Give your partner the copy of the text from Session 1. Ask them to mark any word you're struggling with so you know what to practice! You may also find a Bible memory app or an audio Bible helpful.

If you struggle, don't get discouraged. Any time spent in scripture is time well spent!

James 1:5	I	a	o	y	I	w,	I	h	a	G,	w
	g	g	t	a	w	r,	a	i	w	b	g
	h.										
James 1:6	B	I	h	a	i	f,	w	n	d,	f	t
	o	w	d	i	I	a	w	o	t	s	t
	i	d	a	t	b	t	w.				
James 1:7	F	t	p	m	n	s	t	h	w	r	a
	f	t	L;								

Series Goal: To urge Grassroots Church to live in a way that demonstrates faith in action.



James 1:8	h	i	a	d	m	m,	u	i	a	h	w.
James 1:9	L	t	l	b	b	i	h	e,			
James 1:10	a	t	r	i	h	h,	b	l	a	f	o
	t	g	h	w	p	a.					
James 1:11	F	t	s	r	w	i	s	h	a	w	t
	g;	i	f	f,	a	i	b	p.	S	a	w
	t	r	m	f	a	i	t	m	o	h	p.

Use the chart below to track your study habits by checking off each day you study!

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7

Check in with other group members who are attempting the challenge and encourage each other to practice every day!

*¹⁶Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.”
-Colossians 3:16*



Series Goal: To urge Grassroots Church to live in a way that demonstrates faith in action.

