

James

Epistle of Good Works

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Big Photo:

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Martin Story:
Stealing Campaign Signs

◦ Epistle of Good Works



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Basics:

📖 Author: 1:1 James (Mark 6:3), brother of Jesus?

📖 Recipients: 1:1 "To the twelve tribes scattered among the nations"

📖 Date Written: 49?

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Who was James?

📖 Mark 6:3 Isn't this Mary's son and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas and Simon?

📖 Acts 12:17 "Tell James and the brothers about this..."

📖 Acts 15:13 "When they finished, James spoke up..."

📖 I Corinthians 15:7, "Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles..."

📖 Jude 1:1: "A servant of Jesus Christ, and a brother of James..."

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Purpose:



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Connections to Acts

📖 Council of Jerusalem

📖 Acts 15:13-21, "When they finished, James spoke up: "Brothers, listen to me...we should not make it difficult for Gentiles turning to God..."

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Key Verse & Chapter:

📖 Key Verse: 1:25: "But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets, but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing." ESV

📖 Key Chapter (Required Reading): 1

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Lutherans?

- We obey the law & do good deeds, therefore we are saved.
- We are saved, therefore we obey the law & do good deeds.

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TCF #1

- ❖ Very Jewish author--
- ❖ Use of OT quotations--2:25
- ❖ Using senses and examples, rather than Classic Persuasion and Greek Logic of Paul

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TCF #1 continued:

- James uses lots of stories--analogies; sounds like Jesus? Jewish style-
- 3:3-12: "Bits into the mouths of horses...ships...small rudder...tongue..forest...beast and bird...fresh and salt water...Can a fig tree, my brothers, bear olives, or a grapevine produce figs? Neither can a salt pond yield fresh water." ESV

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TCF #2a

- Emphasis on Good Deeds
- 3:13, and lots of other examples, "Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom." ESV
- 2:24 "justified by works and not by faith alone..."ESV

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TCF #2b:

- If you have faith, you (automatically? naturally) do good works.
- You don't have any reason to do good works unless you already have faith. (KJ)

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TCF #3

- Emphasis on "A Faith that works"
- 2:17 "...Faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead"ESV
- "Faith apart from works is dead"ESV(2:26)
- catholics--good works is more important than jogof
- lutherans--jogof in james -- if you have faith and don't act on it, then it wasn't real faith to start with.

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TCF #4

- Familiarity with Jesus' teachings--
- James 2:5 "Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom..."ESV
- Luke 6:20 "...Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of heaven." ESV

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TCF #5

- Similarity to Proverbs

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TCF #6

- Simple Organization
- James writes in one smooth storyline

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Luther:

- "I praise [James] and consider it a good book, because it sets up no doctrines of men, but vigorously [defends] the law of God."
- "[James] wanted to guard against those who relied on faith without works, but was unequal to the task. [He does this by harping on the law, while others did it by stimulating people to love.]"
- You do good works because of faith {James}, and have faith so you do good works {Paul}.
- (LW 35:397 in CSSB 1896)

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Grace

- "James describes the type of life a Christian should live and some common sins he should overcome-- as a child of God whose life is molded by the gospel of God's grace." (CSSB 1896)
- Therefore lives, not because lives!
- Which comes first, the grace or the works?

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Activity to Remember

SMART Board Matching Game

Works vs Grace

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Life Lessons from James

- “Therefore lives, not because lives”.
- Which of these people are you?
- Option A: I obey the law & do good deeds, therefore I am saved.
- Option B: I am saved, therefore I obey the law & do good deeds.

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