

# James | Expectations and Reality (James 1.1-12)

## Outline

### Introduction

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- *The Importance of Understanding Faith in the Book of James (v.2-4)*
- *Wisdom and Doubt (v.5-8)*
- *Bragging Rights (v.9-12)*

**Main Idea- James opens his letter by establishing a clear hope in the promises of God in the face of trials and challenge.**

### Faith in James James 1.2-4

- A command towards joy
- Definition of faith – *Faith is a posture of trust and dependence upon God to accomplish his purposes in the world, rooted in the future hope of salvation from judgment and life for eternity with him.*

### Wisdom and Doubt James 1.5-8

- Maturity includes wisdom
  - God's generosity
  - Generous is part of a word group meaning single, simple, and undivided
- Ask with single-minded intent
  - Matthew 7.7-11

### Bragging Rights James 1.9-12

- Major theme in James: The lowly vs the rich (*disparity of class, wealth, influence*)
- Temporal vs Eternal

### Implications and Practices

- *Skepticism is the aggressive cousin of doubt.*
- *Wholeheartedness is key to life in the kingdom of God.*

### Reflection Questions

- Is your life marked by joy or skepticism? If we were to look at your text messages, emails, posts on social media over the past six months, would we see joy and maturity or doubt and skepticism?
- Where are you placing your confidence? What are you spending your energy to develop, protect, and boast about?

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## Discussion Questions

1. Introduction: Throughout the book, James addresses our internal purity and external actions.
  - a. What stood out to you about the ways he does this in this passage?
  - b. How often do you take time to think about this?
  
2. James tells us to have joy in the midst of trials.
  - a. How would the original audience of this letter have received this command? Why is that important?
  - b. How have trials tested the depth of your faith?
  - c. How can we practically position ourselves in a way that trials will produce steadfast faith?
  
3. This passage teaches us that we need wisdom in order to be more mature.
  - a. Why do you think God tells us to ask him for wisdom, instead of just giving it to us?
  - b. Where do you tend to have faith to ask the Lord for wisdom?
  - c. Where do you waver in doubt rather than ask the Lord for wisdom?
  
4. A major theme in James is the lowly versus the rich.
  - a. How is the economy of the kingdom different from the economy of the world?
  - b. What are the temporal things you are tempted to put your hope in?
  - c. How can you be intentional to put your hope in eternal promises that Jesus points us to?
  
5. The 2 implications from the sermon were to avoid skepticism and pursue wholeheartedness.
  - a. How can you do this in your own life?
  - b. How would this change the way you interact with God?
  - c. How would this change the way you interact with others?
  - d. What can you do to make God's voice the loudest in your life?