

GOD'S MASTERWORK, VOLUME SEVEN

THE FINAL WORD—A SURVEY OF HEBREWS—REVELATION

JAMES: A PLEA FOR AUTHENTICITY

A SURVEY OF JAMES



The Heart of the Matter

Although Martin Luther saw the letter of James as merely an “epistle of straw”—something lightweight and easy to dismiss—it stands to this day as one of the most practical and penetrating books in the Bible. Don’t be fooled by its size. It may be small, but it’s strong. It refuses to let the reader hide behind the walls of theological theory or intellectual faith. True faith produces authenticity. “No authenticity . . . no faith”—that’s James’s conclusion on the matter. James’s letter may make us squirm, but it also makes us tear down our facades.



Discovering the Way

1. General Introductory Facts

Two main themes dominate in Scripture: the *way* to God and the *walk* with God. The book of James deals with our walk and focuses on one main point: if your faith is genuine, your walk will be authentic.

2. Questions Deserving Answers

To get a handle on the letter of James, we need to answer the following questions: To whom was the book of James written? Who was the apostle James? What was his major concern, or what is the book’s theme? And how does the letter flow together?



Starting Your Journey

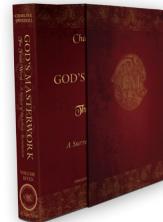
The message of James is similar to the message of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount: live your life in such a way that the world might see your good works and thereby glorify God.



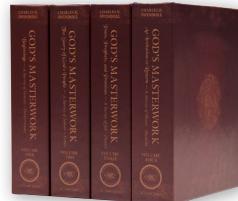
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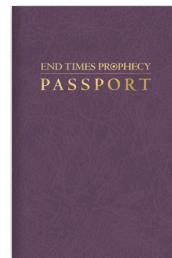
Tools for Digging Deeper



God's Masterwork,
Volume Seven: The Final
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JAMES

Faith	When stretched, it doesn't break.	When pressed, it doesn't fail.	When expressed, it doesn't explode.	When distressed, it doesn't panic.
Deeds	Authentic stability	Authentic love	Authentic control and humility	Authentic patience
	Greeting Trials Temptation Response to Scripture	Partiality and prejudice Indifference and mere intellectualism Obedience and action	The tongue The heart The will	Money matters Sickness Carnality and correction
	CHAPTER 1	CHAPTER 2	CHAPTERS 3–4	CHAPTER 5
Background	The difficulties of life caused the scattered saints to drift spiritually, leading to all forms of problems—unbridled speech, wrong attitudes, doubt, strife, carnality, shallow faith.			
Characteristics	“The Proverbs of the New Testament,” James contains many practical, straightforward exhortations. Emphasis is on importance of balancing right belief with right behavior. The book has many Old Testament word pictures and references.			
Theme	Real faith produces authentic deeds.			
Key Verse	2:17			
Christ in James	Jesus is the glorious Lord, who inspires true faith and authentic works (2:1, 14–26).			

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