

Bible Survey

Lesson 15 – James, Galatians

Just before His ascension into heaven, Jesus told His disciples not to leave Jerusalem but to wait for the Promise of the Father. Ten days later, on the Day of Pentecost, that Promise (the Holy Spirit) came. This coming of the Holy Spirit to indwell believers marks the beginning of the Church.

In Matthew 16, about a year before the Crucifixion, Jesus told Peter that he would build His church. At that point there was no Church. When the Holy Spirit came upon believers on the Day of Pentecost, they spoke in tongues (Acts 2:4). Several years later when Peter visited with Gentiles in the house of Cornelius the Holy Spirit came upon them when they believed and they also spoke in tongues. When Peter was sharing this situation with the apostles in Jerusalem he made an interesting statement. He said the Holy Spirit fell upon them, “as upon us at the beginning” (Acts 11:15). When did the Holy Spirit fall upon them? It was on the day of Pentecost. Peter refers to this as “the beginning.” What is it the beginning of? It was the beginning of the Church.

So the Church began on the Day of Pentecost. Luke tells us at the end of Acts chapter 2 that “the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved” (Acts 2:47). Thousands of people were saved in those early years. Acts 2:41 mentions 3000 that were saved in one day. Later the number of men who believed is given as 5000 (Acts 4:4). In chapter 5 of Acts we are told that “believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women” (Acts 5:14). Acts 6:7 says that “the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem.” Great things were happening in Jerusalem. There was a lot of enthusiasm and excitement.

We learned last week that the Gospel spread out from Jerusalem into the areas of Judea and Samaria as a result of persecution. Persecution forced believers to flee Jerusalem and these believers preached the Gospel as they traveled through Judea and Samaria. We know that Saul was zealously involved in persecuting believers. He was saved and eventually became a part of the church at Antioch.

In Acts 13 we read that Saul was serving as a prophet and teacher at the church of Antioch. This was about 14 years after his salvation. The Holy Spirit told the leaders of the church at Antioch to send Barnabas and Saul on a missions trip. They left Antioch and sailed to Cyprus. They traveled from one end of the island of Cyprus to the other and then sailed up to Perga, which was in Pamphylia. Then they traveled up into Pisidia and Southern Galatia.

What was Paul teaching in Antioch? What was he teaching in Cyprus and Pisidia and Galatia? The first letter that Paul wrote was the letter to the Galatians, which he didn't write until after he returned from that first missionary journey. Consequently, there were no Pauline Epistles. This missionary journey took place about AD 47-49 – almost 20 years after the ascension – almost 20 years after those early years in Jerusalem when thousands were being saved. What did they preach? The earliest Gospel was not written until after Paul's first missionary journey. The only book that we have in our New Testament that had been written by the time of Paul's first missionary journey was James' epistle. But Paul had little contact with James and he may not have a copy of that letter. What did he preach (Acts 13:5,14-41,44)?

He preached the word of God. We have already mentioned that there was no New Testament. The word of God was the Old Testament and what the Lord had revealed to Paul. He showed that Jesus was the Messiah and preached forgiveness of sins and justification through faith in Christ.

I mentioned that the only book that we have in our New Testament that had been written was *James*. Let's look at *James*...

James

1. The Background and Summary

James writes to Hebrew Christians who “were scattered abroad” (outside of Jerusalem). It is possible that this is the scattering of _____. We don’t know exactly when this letter was written. It could have been as early as _____, just a few years after the beginning of the Church and not long after the scattering of Acts 8. It may have been written later, but probably no later than AD 44-46. In either case, it is the earliest of the New Testament books and was written before Paul’s first missionary journey.

These believers were facing many problems that were _____ their faith (1:2-3). James shows how testings and circumstances bring about maturity. This letter was written to admonish these believers and to encourage them in the midst of these trials. It is a very practical book.

This letter can be divided into two parts: _____ and _____. *The Principle*: TESTS OF OBEDIENCE PRODUCE MATURITY is stated in the first 18 verses of chapter 1. *The Practice* is encouraged in the remainder of the letter. James tells us that God is working through each circumstance of life to mold us into what He would have us to be. Since we know that God is dealing with us for our good we should _____ when these trials and tests come. This is possible because as Christians we anticipate the day when the Lord will come to receive us unto Himself (5:7-11). Until that day comes we are in the world and subject to all its trials and temptations. We are to “count it all joy when we meet with various trials.” We should not see them as _____ or obstacles but as steppingstones to spiritual growth. The test does not necessarily produce maturity in itself. It is the bearing up under the test that does that (1:4).

After stating this important principle, James moves on to the practice.

- Use the Word for deliverance 1:21-27
- Don't show partiality 2:1-13
- Prove your faith by your works 2:14-26
- Control your tongue 3:1-12
- Prove your wisdom by your works 3:13-18
- Resist worldliness 4:1-5:6
- Endure to the end 5:7-11
- Be a man of your word and a man of prayer 5:12-20

2. The Author

The author is said to be James. But we are not told which James. This is probably the half-brother of the Lord.

Parallels between the letter of *James* and the speech of James (Acts 15).

- *Greeting* – Acts 15:23 and James 1:1 (This word is only used three times as a greeting.)
- *Hearken* – Acts 15:24 and James 2:5 (This word is used only at these two places.)
- *Your souls* – Acts 15:24 and James 1:21
- *Visit* - Acts 15:14 and James 1:27
- *Called* – Acts 15:17 and James 2:7 (This particular word is only found at these two places.)

3. The Date

If the famine of this book is equated with the great famine of AD 44-46 then James was written about AD 44. But this famine affected both the rich and the poor. The famine spoken of by James only affected the poor. It is possible that the situation of which James speaks is equated with the scattering of the Church (Acts 8:1). If that is the case then this book could have been written as early as AD 35-38.

4. The Theme

5. The Key Verses

6. The Outline

- I. The Principle: TESTS OF OBEDIENCE PRODUCE MATURITY
1:1-18
- II. The Practice: TESTS OF OBEDIENCE PRODUCE MATURITY
1:19-5:20

7. The Highlights

JAMES

TESTS OF OBEDIENCE PRODUCE MATURITY

<p>1:1 1:18 1:19</p> <p>Principle</p>	<p>5:20</p> <p>Practice</p> <p>9. 5:13-20 8. 5:12 7. 5:7-11 6. 4:1-5:6 5. 3:13-18 4. 3:1-12 3. 2:14-26 2. 2:1-13 1. 1:21-27</p> <p>Call to Practice Specifically</p> <p>Cause for Practice 1:20</p> <p>Command to Practice 1:19</p>
<p>Principle</p>	<p>Tempted by the Flesh 1:13-18</p> <p>Tested by God 1:1-12</p>

Galatians

1. The Background

Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch from their _____ missionary journey about AD 48 (Acts 14).

Peter visited Antioch and fellowshiped with _____ there. When men came from Jerusalem and expressed their disapproval, Peter withdrew from eating with the Gentiles (Gal. 2:11-12). In the meantime a similar controversy broke out in _____ (1:7; 4:17, 21; 5:2-12; 6:12,13). Paul wrote this letter to the Galatians to deal with the problem.

Leaders of the church met in _____ and a formal decision was made concerning this issue (Acts 15). Judaizers were saying that faith was not enough for salvation. They said that Gentiles must also _____.

Paul wrote this letter:

1. To defend the true Gospel (1:9)
2. To expose and condemn this false teaching (1:6-9; 3:1)
3. To show the true purpose of the law (3:24-25)
4. To show how the believer is to be perfected in the Christian life by walking in the Spirit (5:16)

2. The Theme of Galatians

3. The Key Verses

4. The Outline

- I. Paul the Apostle (Personal Argument) 1-2
- II. Paul the Theologian (Scriptural Argument) 3-4
- III. Paul the Preacher (Practical Argument) 5-6

5. The Highlights

GALATIANS

THE GOSPEL OF THE
GRACE OF CHRIST
WHICH BRINGS LIBERTY

<p>¹ PERSONAL</p>	<p>² ³ DOCTRINAL</p>	<p>⁴ ⁵ PRACTICAL ⁶</p>
<p>Paul the APOSTLE</p>	<p>Paul the THEOLOGIAN</p>	<p>Paul the TEACHER</p>
<p>¹ The Cross Delivers Us From Sin</p>	<p>² The Cross Delivers Us From the Law</p>	<p>³ The Cross Delivers Us From Curse of Law</p>
<p>⁴ The Cross Delivers Us From Bondage</p>	<p>⁵ The Cross Delivers Us From Power of Flesh</p>	<p>⁶ The Cross Delivers Us From the World</p>

Things to Know

James

- Does not contradict Paul's teaching of salvation by faith and not works. His teaching **complements** Paul's by showing that genuine faith will be demonstrated by works. Faith without works is dead (inoperative, not really faith at all, a "no faith").
- Theme – "Tests of Obedience Produce Maturity"

Galatians

- Written to combat the teaching of Judaizers who were saying that Gentiles must keep the law in addition to placing their faith in Christ
- Know the purpose of the Law (3:24-25) – to bring us to Christ
- Theme – "The Gospel of the Grace of Christ Which Brings Liberty"