

**The Art of Steering Through Life**  
**James 1:1-8**

0.0 Introduction

- 0.1 Beginning of winter-spring series & my first-ever sermon series on Epistle of James
- 0.2 One/seven circular/catholic epistles: different in content & tone from Paul or gospels

1.0 Who Was “James”?

- 1.1 Actually, *Jakob* – among handful in NT
- 1.2 ‘Half-brother’ to Jesus (Mark 6:3)
- 1.3 Early on, not positive toward Jesus (Jn.7:5)
- 1.4 Surprise: early church leadership! (Ac.15:13-21; also Gal.2:9 – a “pillar”)
- 1.5 When killed by mob violence in AD62, well known across Jerusalem
- 1.6 Addressed fellow Palestinian Jews, particularly those with faith in Jesus

2.0 What Did He Tell Them?

- 2.1 Counterpart to OT wisdom literature (Prov, Ecc, Job, some Psalms)
- 2.2 Topics included: “If you lack wisdom, ask God for it” (1:5) – incl....
  - life under fire (1:1-4, 12-18; 5:7-12), being humble (1:9-11), hearing & doing (1:19-27), being fair with all (2:1-13), faith → life habits (2:14-26), speech (3:1-12),1-17), divine wisdom (3:13-18), worldliness (4:1-5:6), prayer & faith (5:13-20)
  - diversity of applications: ‘the art of steering through *life*’
- 2.3 Some parts sound very much like Jesus...who embodied God’s wisdom

3.0 What Did He *Not* Mention? – (Christology, Atonement, Moral Issues, Family Standards)

4.0 What Else Does Wisdom Look Like?

- 4.1 First, some cautions, from classical times to James and beyond
- 4.2 Yet what can we hope for, esp. if God is really *that* generous? (1:5)

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom” (Prov.1:7; Ps.111:10, etc.)

***Next week (Jan.31) – Being Vulnerable - James 1:9-11***

# James 1:1-8 (NASB)

## The Testing of Your Faith

1 James, a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,

To the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad: Greetings.

<sup>2</sup> Consider it all joy, my brothers *and sisters*, when you encounter various trials, <sup>3</sup> knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. <sup>4</sup> And let endurance have *its* perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

<sup>5</sup> But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. <sup>6</sup> But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. <sup>7</sup> For that person ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, <sup>8</sup> *being* a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.