James - An Outline

We'll begin our study of the book of James with an overview of the book as a whole. The outline below is taken from Henry Krabbendam's commentary, "The Epistle of James," privately published in 1995.

Introduction 1:1

1.
1.

The Author 1:1a

1.

James, the brother of Jesus (Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3; Gal. 1:19), leader of the Jerusalem church, presided at Council in Jerusalem (Acts 15; Gal. 1:19). Initially skeptical of Christ (John 7:5), but converted when Christ appeared to him after the resurrection (1 Cor. 15:7). Martyred in AD 62, thrown from the pinnacle of the temple.

2.

Date of writing: Probably before the Council in Jerusalem in AD 49; perhaps earliest NT book.

3.

The Addressees 1:1b

1.

Twelve tribes – Luke 22:30; Acts 26:7

2.

Dispersion – 1 Pet. 1:1; Acts 2:9-11; John 7:35

3.

Characteristics

1.

Content: Epistle, sermon, wisdom literature, diatribe, moral exhortation

2.

Construction: Separate preaching units loosely woven together by linked themes? Better: a unified guidebook on holiness.

3.

The Way to Holiness: The Divine Perspective 1:2-27

1.

The Trial-Temptation Complex 1:2-18

2.

The Word of God 1:19-27

3.

The Principles of Holiness: The Biblical Framework 2:1-26

1.

The Law as Substance of Holiness 2:1-13

1.

The Focus upon Partiality 2:1-7

2.

The Nature of Partiality 2:8-13

3.

Faith as the Dynamics of Holiness 2:14-26

1.

Faith and Works 2:14-19

2.

Faith and Justification 2:20-26

3.

The Implementation of Holiness: The Christian Experience 3:1-4:10

1.

The Obstacle to Victory 3:1-9

1.

The Fact of Human Impotence 3:1-5

2.

The Root of Human Impotence 3:6-9

3.

The Nature of Victory 3:10-18

1.

The Rejection of Compromise 3:10-13

2.

The Description of Defeat 3:14-16

3.

The Description of Victory 3:17-18

4.

The Requirements for Victory 4:1-10

1.

Self-knowledge 4:1-5

2.

Godcenteredness 4:6-10

3.

The Range of Holiness: The Fabric of Life 4:11-5:18

1.

The Relationship to "The Other" 4:11-17

1.

Facing your Brother 4:11-12

2.

Facing the Future 4:13-17

3.

The Relationship to Yourself 5:1-11

1.

The Rich 5:1-6

2.

The Poor 5:7-11

3.

The Relationship to the Circumstances 5:12-18

1.

The Description of a Godcentered Attitude 5:12-14

2.

The Effectiveness of a Godcentered Attitude 5:15-18

3.

Conclusion 5:19-20

1.

Instruments of Conversion 5:19-20a

2.

Instruments of Pardon 5:20b-20c