

What have you done in your life so far that will outlast your memory here on earth. In other words if you are not George Washington, Lincoln, Napoleon or someone like that, what will remain beyond you? This morning I am going to invite you to be a part of the only thing that lasts! The Bible clearly says that God has set the rules and only what is done for Christ will last. This morning serving Christ as a part of His church is all that can last.

James 1:1 James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting. (KJV)

James presents to us unvarnished Pioneer or Classic Christianity. He is speaking as the Pastor of the real 1st church!

- I. **"JAMES"** was one of four brothers and two sisters of Jesus who were fully children of Joseph and Mary. Jesus was born through the supernatural conception known as the virgin birth. James rose to the place of pastoring the church at Jerusalem. He is profiled in Acts 12:17, 15:13-21, 21:18; Galatians 2:9-10.
 - A. **JAMES IS THE VISIBLE LEADER OF THE JERUSALEM CHURCH.** (Note the apostle James dies in Acts 12:2). Acts 12:17 But motioning to them with his hand to keep silent, he declared to them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, "Go, tell these things to James and to the brethren." And he departed and went to another place. (NKJV)
 - B. **JAMES WAS A PART OF THE COMMISSIONING OF PAUL TO HIS MISSIONARY JOURNEYS.** Galatians 2:9-10 and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we [should go] to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. 10 [They desired] only that we should remember the poor, the very thing which I also was eager to do. (NKJV)
 - C. **JAMES WAS THE SHEPHERD AND PASTOR OF THE JERUSALEM CHURCH AT THE COUNCIL TO DETERMINE WHAT TO DO ABOUT GENTILES COMING TO CHRIST.** Acts 15:13-21 And after they had become silent, James answered, saying, "Men [and] brethren, listen to me: 14 "Simon has declared how God at the first visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name. 15 "And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written: 16 'After this I will return And will rebuild the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down; I will rebuild its ruins, And I will set it up; 17 So that the rest of mankind may

seek the LORD, Even all the Gentiles who are called by My name, Says the LORD who does all these things.' 18 "Known to God from eternity are all His works. 19 "Therefore I judge that we should not trouble those from among the Gentiles who are turning to God, 20 "but that we write to them to abstain from things polluted by idols, [from] sexual immorality, [from] things strangled, and [from] blood. 21 "For Moses has had throughout many generations those who preach him in every city, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath." (NKJV)

D. **JAMES WAS THE MOST PROMINENT MEMBER OF THE JERUSALEM CHURCH TO WHOM PAUL REPORTED AFTER HIS 3RD MISSIONARY JOURNEY.** Acts 21:18 On the following [day] Paul went in with us to James, and all the elders were present. (NKJV)

II. **"A SERVANT OF GOD AND OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST"** What do Moses, Paul, James and Peter all have in common with us, the Tribulation saints and the future inhabitants of Heaven? All are called by God -- HIS SERVANTS! The word "servant" is used over 889x in the Bible. It is a big concept.

III. "To the 12 tribes scattered" What is James talking about? To find out we need to turn to Acts 8:1,4 and then 11:19. It is a church fleeing the persecutions. And that is the repeated scene of the early church in Acts. What we see is a bold and fearless group being driven out of place after place by persecution. There are no less than 47 different times of persecution recorded. Among these are:

- A. Accosted publically 4:1
- B. Imprisoned 4:3; 12:4; 24:23
- C. Public intimidation 4:6
- D. Threatened 4:18
- E. Roughed up 5:18; 21:27-28
- F. Arrested and tried 5:26-27
- G. Flogged 5:40
- H. Blasphemed 6:10-13; 13:45; 18:6;
- I. Hated 7:54
- J. Stoned to death 7:58-59; 14:19-20
- K. Ravaged 8:3
- L. Murderous plans against them 9:1-2
- M. Death threats 9:23-25; 14:5-6; 20:3; 23:12
- N. Persecution 11:19-20
- O. Rushed upon 12:1
- P. Butchered 12:2
- Q. Opposed 13:8; 14:2; 15:1;
- R. Driven out 13:50-51
- S. Harsh treatment 16:19-21
- T. Cruel beating 16:22-23
- U. Mob violence 17:5-6; 17:13-14; 19:23; 19:28-29;
- V. Slandered 17:18; 19:9; 24:5;
- W. Sneered upon 17:32
- X. Dragged around 18:12
- Y. Whipped (tupto) 18:17; 23:2
- Z. Discouraged by brethren 20:23-24;

- AA. Mob beating 21:30-31
 - BB. Stretched out for scourging 22:24-25
 - CC. Torn in pieces 23:10
 - DD. Forgotten 24:27
- IV. And what is the responses of this persecuted and scattered group of people so much like you and me?
- A. Praying 1:14
 - B. Speaking in ever way possible about Christ 2:1 (31 different words for 160 different occasions in Acts they speak for Christ)
 - C. Worshipping God 2:42-47
 - D. Sharing their resources 4:32-37
 - E. Rejoicing to be worthy to suffer for Christ 5:41
- V. WITNESSING IN ACTS: Thirty-one terms in the Greek are found in Acts for Christian verbal communication, and altogether they are used about 160 times. Of these, the words evangelize or preach the Gospel proclaim, announce, testify, speak boldly, speak freely, and prophesy suggest what might be thought of as formal delivery. Yet they represent less than a third of all the usages of speaking words. The other terms are teach, reason, exhort, answer, speak, charge, ministrare, prove, confound, relate, expound, confirm, explain, persuade, confute utterly, greet, address, speak in defense, admonish, draw out, set forth, cry out, talk and say. Many words are used in references to both ordained church spokesmen and un-ordained believers. This raises an interesting question in regard to what usage pertains to a call to preach. Since there are thirty-one words in Acts that indicate speaking, one has to ask which word for speaking is meant. What would distinguish that form of preaching from the speech of any other member of the church?
- VI. What can we do? Let me just share some ideas for the 1 in 5 of you that are our young people. Jr. High, grade school, high school and college. I'd like to give you three challenges:
- A. Raise the Flag this week by taking your Bible to work or school and reading it at lunch or on break; bow your head and pray for your food; tell people you belong to Christ . . . raise the flag of your King and let them know.
 - B. Start a Collection. While you are young and your mind is fresh and so receptive collect some verses that will shape you for life: Psalm 1, 23, 100, 119; I Cor. 13, Romans 6-8; James 3-4. . . and so many more!
 - C. Plant some seeds. Take a tract from Mardells and give them out to friends to read. You may save one on the way to suicide or a horrible mistake. Share your testimony with someone each week at school, work, on the sports field or as you spend time with friends!

Are you a part of anything that will outlast your memory here on earth. What will remain beyond you? This morning I am going to invite you to be a part of the only thing that lasts! The Bible clearly says that God has set the rules and only what is done for Christ will last. This morning serving Christ as a part of His church is all that can last. Have you received Christ?