

JAMES (59-2)

A SERVANT OF GOD

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 right to the point. In his short letter of 108 verses there are no less than 50 commands. Last week we met James, he is one of four men named James in the New Testament. This one was the brother of Jesus in Mark 6:3 "Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?" And they were offended at Him. (NKJV)

- 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.

A. First LOOK Back with me. What would James think of when he calls himself this?

1. First time used it is God who says Abraham is His servant. Genesis 26:24 And the LORD appeared to him the same night and said, "I [am] the God of your father Abraham; do not fear, for I [am] with you. I will bless you and multiply your descendants for My servant Abraham's sake." (NKJV)
2. Moses is called a servant of the Lord second most often. Starting in Deuteronomy 3:24, 'O Lord GOD, You have begun to show Your servant Your greatness and Your mighty hand, for what god [is there] in heaven or on earth who can do [anything] like Your works and Your mighty [deeds?]' (NKJV). Joshua continues in his book calling Moses by that term six times (1:12-13, 15; 9:24; 22:4-5). Then in First Kings (8:53), Second Kings (18:12), First Chronicles (6:49) and Second (1:3; 24:9). In Nehemiah (10:29), Daniel (9:11) and Revelation (15:3). In all Moses is called God's servant 15 times.
3. David was a man after God's own heart. He refers to himself as a servant of God 1 Samuel 23:10 Then David said, "O LORD God of Israel, Your servant has certainly heard that Saul seeks to come to Keilah to destroy the city for my sake. (NKJV). After that initial time I Sam. 23:11; II Sam. 7:20, 25-29; I Chronicles 17:24-26, 21:8; II Chr. 6:42. With Psalm 27:9; 36:1 and 86:2 - For a total of 16 times.
4. Solomon often refers to himself as God's servant. I K. 3:7; 8:25-26, 28, 59; II Chr. 6:16-17, 19). This totals eight times.
5. God calls Nebuchadnezzar His servant (Jer. 43:10), Jacob (Ezk. 28:25), David (Ezk. 34:24). Nebuchadnezzar also calls Daniel God's servant (Dan. 6:20) as well as Daniel referring to himself as a servant of God (Dan. 9:17).
6. Other great Old Testament heroes called a servant of God are: Elijah (I K. 18:36), Jonah (2 K. 14:25), Hezekiah (II Chr. 32:16), Job (1:8; 2:5 both by God), Isaiah (49:5).
7. In the New Testament we find Paul referring to himself as such (Rom. 1:1; Gal. 1:10; Titus 1:1). James (1:1), Peter (II Peter 1:1) and Jude (1:1) and John (1:1) all say the same. Paul calls Epaphras a servant (Col 4:12). And finally God calls all the redeemed His servants seven times in the Revelation.

8. The most comprehensive term for God's people in the Scriptures is SERVANT. Here is a breakdown of the most frequently used designations for those who are redeemed:
- a) Christian is used by the Word of God 3 times (Acts 11:26; Acts 26:28; I Peter 4:16).
 - b) Believer is used two times (Acts 5:14; I Timothy 4:12).
 - c) Born again is used 3x (John 3:3, 7; I Peter 1:23).
 - d) Saved is used 39 x in the New Testament (Mt. 10:22; 19:25; 24:13; Mk. 10:26; 13:13; 16:16; Luke 7:50; 8:12; 13:23; 18:42; John 3:17; 5:34; 10:9; Acts 2:21, 47; 4:12; 11:14; 15:1, 11; 16:30-31; Romans 5:9-10; 8:24; 10:1, 9, 13; I Cor. 1:18; 5:5; 10:33; 15:2; II Cor. 2:15; Eph. 2:5, 8; I Th. 2:16; II Th. 2:10; II Tim. 1:9; Titus 3:5).
 - e) Converted is used 12x (Psalm 19:7; 51:13; Isaiah 6:10 - quoted in Mt. 13:15; Mk. 4:12; Jn. 12:40; Acts 28:27; also Mat. 18:3; Luke 22:32; James 5:19-20).
 - f) Disciple is used 255 x in the New Testament outside of the gospels it used 28x in Acts (1:15; 6:1-2, 7; 9:1, 10, 19, 25-26, 36, 38; 11:26, 29; 13:52; 14:20, 22, 28; 15:10; 16:1; 18:23, 27; 19:1, 9, 30; 20:1, 7; 21:4, 16).
 - g) Follower of the Way is used 18x (Acts 9:2; 16:17; 18:25-26; 19:9, 23; 22:4; 24:14, 22) and describes the life of the redeemed in special terms:
 - (1) It is the WAY OF Christ John 14:6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. (NKJV)
 - (2) It is the WAY OF peace Romans 3:17 And the way of peace they have not known." (NKJV)
 - (3) It is the WAY OF lostness recovered Hebrews 5:2 He can have compassion on those who are ignorant and going astray, since he himself is also subject to weakness. (NKJV)
 - (4) It is the WAY OF holy access Hebrews 9:8 the Holy Spirit indicating this, that the way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing. (NKJV)
 - (5) It is the WAY OF newness and life Hebrews 10:20 by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, (NKJV)
 - (6) It is the WAY OF error recovered James 5:20 let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins. (NKJV)
 - (7) It is the WAY OF truth 2 Peter 2:2 And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. (NKJV)

- (8) It is the WAY OF rightness 2 Peter 2: 15 They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam the [son] of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; (NKJV)
- (9) It is the WAY OF righteousness 2 Peter 2:21 For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known [it,] to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. (NKJV)

B. Second LOOK Forward to what servants will be forever

- 1. **Confident Servants** Revelation 22:6 Then he said to me, "These words [are] faithful and true." And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things which must shortly take place. (NKJV)
- 2. **Holy Servants** Revelation 19:5 Then a voice came from the throne, saying, "Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great!" (NKJV)
- 3. **Trusting Servants** Revelation 10:7 but in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished, as He declared to His servants the prophets. (NKJV).
- 4. **Singing Servants** Revelation 15:3 They sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying: "Great and marvelous [are] Your works, Lord God Almighty! Just and true [are] Your ways, O King of the saints! (NKJV)
- 5. **Suffering Servants** Revelation 19:2 "For true and righteous [are] His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants [shed] by her." (NKJV)
- 6. **Serving Servants** Revelation 22:3 And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. (NKJV)

III. Finally LOOK INWARD. Are you serving God this morning? Servanthood comes down to entrusting your life to God (1 Chronicles 23-29) The Scriptures give us the answers to the deepest of our questions. Among them are these four: What will my legacy be after I'm gone? What really counts in God's sight? What about my children? What about my weaknesses?

- A. A Servant is ENTRUSTING their Life's Work to the Lord 1 Chronicles 23:14 Now the sons of Moses the man of God were reckoned to the tribe of Levi. (NKJV). This is almost a thousand years after his life. What was he remembered for? For the murmurings of the rebels, the near mob lynching, the rebellion of his sister and brother . . . no. He was remembered as God's man! Do you look at your life as the task of being a man of God or not?
- B. A Servant is ENTRUSTING their Service to the Lord. 1 Chronicles 23:28 because their duty [was] to help the sons of Aaron in the service of the house of the LORD, in the courts and in the chambers, in the purifying of all holy things and the work of the service of the house of God, 32 and that

they should attend to the needs of the tabernacle of meeting, the needs of the holy [place,] and the needs of the sons of Aaron their brethren in the work of the house of the LORD. (NKJV). There are two ways to look at the same thing. One from a mere earthly, temporal, meish mindset. Or, we can look at things the way God does. What were these men doing? God said 7 items all elevated. What could we say? " Oh we are just sweeping up the dust and sand that those priests keep tracking in from this hot and unbearable wilderness. Oh and all the desert bugs that sting us and keep making nests in our equipment and cause problems. Yes, and what a mess is the hair from those hides God asked us to make the coverings of this tent out of. Why the flies and lack of ventilation with all the smoke from the incense and lampstands . . . keeps getting on the floor and the moths are eating the hangings. What about all the blood stains that we have to keep cleaning up . . . ". Do you look at things the way God does or merely from your limited and fallen perspective?

- C. A Servant is ENTRUSTING their Children to the Lord. 1 Chronicles 28:5 "And of all my sons (for the LORD has given me many sons) He has chosen my son Solomon to sit on the throne of the kingdom of the LORD over Israel. (NKJV). All told David had no less than 19 sons (1 Chr. 3). Of these #1 Amnon was murdered by Absalom, #3 Absalom was executed for treason by Joab, #4 Adonijah was executed by Solomon for the same! And who was to be king? #10 Solomon. Who but God could sort all that out and plan perfectly? Have you entrusted your children to the Lord ? Are they given over to Him? Their outcome is up to their willingness to obey. Just lead them to the truth and show them the truth and God will do the rest!
- D. A Servant is ENTRUSTING their Frailties to the Lord. 1 Chronicles 29:15 For we [are] aliens and pilgrims before You, As [were] all our fathers; Our days on earth [are] as a shadow, And without hope. (NKJV). We are weak, we fail, our bodies grow weaker each day we live, time is running out unless we link up with God ! Are you seeing life as a caterpillar on its way to glorious metamorphosis or as a withering daylilly headed to the compost pile? We need to see frailty as God's means for us to need and depend upon Him!

IV.