

The Book of James

The word "perfect" (a reference to maturity) is found many times in James. Thus the term maturity will be used in outlining this book.

- I. SUFFERING MAKES A MATURE MAN (JAMES 1:1-15).
 - A. The background of sufferings. Both God and Satan are usually involved in the sufferings of a Christian.
 - 1. God's purpose is to purify and strengthen us. He wants to make us better (1:2, 12).
 - 2. Satan's purpose is to pervert and weaken us. He wants to make us bitter (1:13-15).
 - B. The purpose of suffering.
 - 1. It produces endurance down here (1:3-4).
 - 2. It promises rewards up there (1:12).
 - C. The response to suffering.
 - 1. Positive:
 - a. We are to praise God for it (1:2).
 - b. We are to pray while in it (1:5).
 - c. We are to persevere through it (1:12).
 - 2. Negative:
 - a. We are not to become as tossed waves (1:6-8).
 - b. We are not to become as wilted flowers (1:9-11).
- II. SCRIPTURE STUDY MAKES A MATURE MAN (1:16-25).
 - A. Its author--the Father (1:17).
 - B. Its accomplishments (1:18).
 - C. Its admonitions (1:19-22).
 - 1. Our talk is to be pure (1:19).
 - 2. Our walk is to be pure (1:21-22).
 - D. Its analogy (1:23-24).
 - E. Its assurance (1:25).
- III. SINCERITY MAKES A MATURE MAN (2:1-13).
 - A. Commands against partiality (2:1-8).
 - 1. An earthly example (2:2-4).
 - 2. A heavenly example (2:5).
 - B. Consequences of partiality (2:9-13).
 - 1. To be guilty of the law (2:9-11).
 - 2. To be judged by the law (2:12-13).
- IV. CHRISTIAN SERVICE MAKES A MATURE MAN (2:14-26).
 - A. The problem. Some have imagined a contradiction between James and Paul. Note:
 - 1. Paul's words (Eph. 2:8-9).
 - 2. James' words (2:14, 24).
 - B. The particulars.
 - 1. Paul speaks about vertical justification before God.
 - 2. James speaks about horizontal justification before man.
 - C. The pattern.
 - 1. Two examples of head faith only.
 - a. Concerning the destitute (2:15-16).
 - b. Concerning the devil (2:19).
 - 2. Two examples of head and heart faith.
 - a. Abraham (2:21-23).
 - b. Rahab (2:25).
 - D. The principle (2:17).
- V. SOUND SPEECH MAKES A MATURE MAN (3:1-18; 1:26-27).
 - A. Importance of the tongue (3:2).
 - B. Illustration of the tongue.
 - 1. How it can control.
 - a. It is as a bridle to a horse (3:3).
 - b. It is as a rudder to a ship (3:4).
 - c. It is as a fire to a forest (3:5).
 - 2. How it can consume (3:5).
 - C. Iniquity of the tongue (3:5-6; 1:26).

1. It can destroy our witness for God (1:26).
 2. It can defile our walk with God (3:6).
 - D. Incurrigibility of the tongue (3:7-8).
 - E. Inconsistency of the tongue (3:9-12).
 1. The contradiction (3:9-10).
 2. The conclusion (3:11-12).
 - F. Instructions for the tongue.
 1. Seek and speak the wisdom of God (3:13, 17-18).
 2. Refuse and renounce the slander of Satan (3:14-16).
- VI. SUBMISSION TO GOD MAKES A MATURE MAN (4:1-17).
- A. What we escape when we do this.
 1. The flesh (4:1-3, 11-12, 16-17).
 2. The world (4:4-5).
 3. The devil (4:7).
 - B. What we enjoy when we do this.
 1. God's grace (4:6).
 2. God's guarantee.
 - a. Of his presence (4:8).
 - b. Of his promotion (4:10).
 3. God's guidance (4:13-15).
- VII. SELF-SACRIFICE MAKES A MATURE MAN (5:1-6).
- A. The consternation of the selfish rich (5:1).
 - B. The corruption of the selfish rich (5:2, 5).
 - C. The cruelty of the selfish rich (5:4, 6).
 - D. The condemnation of the selfish rich (5:3).
- VIII. STEADFASTNESS MAKES A MATURE MAN (5:7-11).
- A. A past example--Job and his trials (5:10-11).
 - B. A present example--a farmer and his crops (5:7).
 - C. A future example--the Savior and his return (5:8-9).
- IX. SUPPLICATION MAKES A MATURE MAN (5:12-18).
- A. The seasons of prayer: when one should pray.
 1. In times of trouble (5:13-14).
 2. In times of triumph (5:13).
 - B. The reasons for prayer: why one should pray.
 1. Prayer can heal the sick (5:14-15).
 2. Prayer can restore the carnal (5:16).
 3. Prayer can accomplish the impossible (5:17-18).
- X. SOULWINNING MAKES A MATURE MAN (5:19-20).