



James

The Epistle of Straw?



Recap



- ▶ James, Jesus' brother, was a leader in the early Christian Church in Jerusalem
- ▶ James' letter is difficult to outline, but has many interrelated themes. Each class will discuss one or two of these themes in detail.

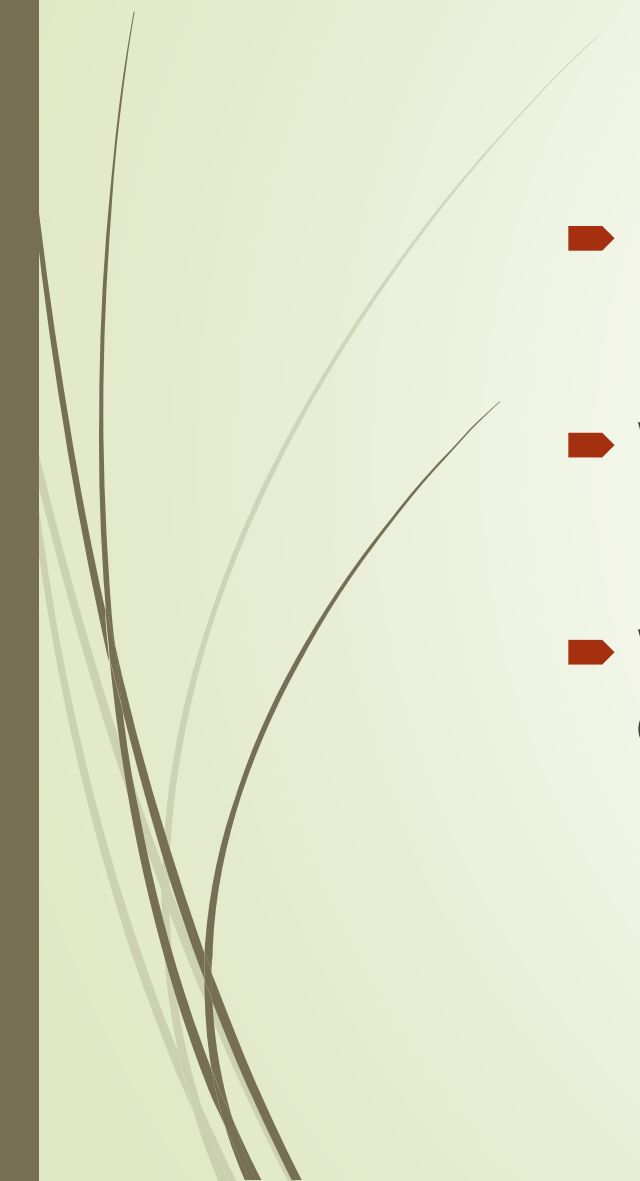


Do not be deceived... but...

Our topic today



Some questions to start us off...

- ▶ Is there such a thing as a fully trustworthy news source?
 - ▶ Where do we look for input on major life decisions?
 - ▶ Why are there so many denominations within Christianity?
- 



Do not be deceived...

James 1:1–27

¹⁶ Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers. ¹⁷ Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. ¹⁸ Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.



[But?] know this...

James 1:1–27

¹⁶ Do not be deceived...

¹⁹ Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; ²⁰ for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God. ²¹ Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.



But...

James 1:1–27

¹⁹ Let every person be quick to hear...

²² But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. ²³ For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer...



“... be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger.”



How does action relate to steadfastness?

James 1:1–27

¹⁹ Let every person be quick to hear...

²² But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. ²³ For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. ²⁴ For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like.



Perfect law, perfect people?

James 1:1–27

¹⁹ Let every person be quick to hear...

²² But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. ²³ For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. ²⁴ For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. ²⁵ But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.



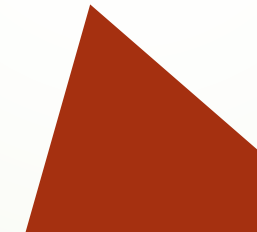
“...let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.”



Do not be deceived!

James 1:1–27

²⁶ If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless. ²⁷ Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.



“²² But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.”



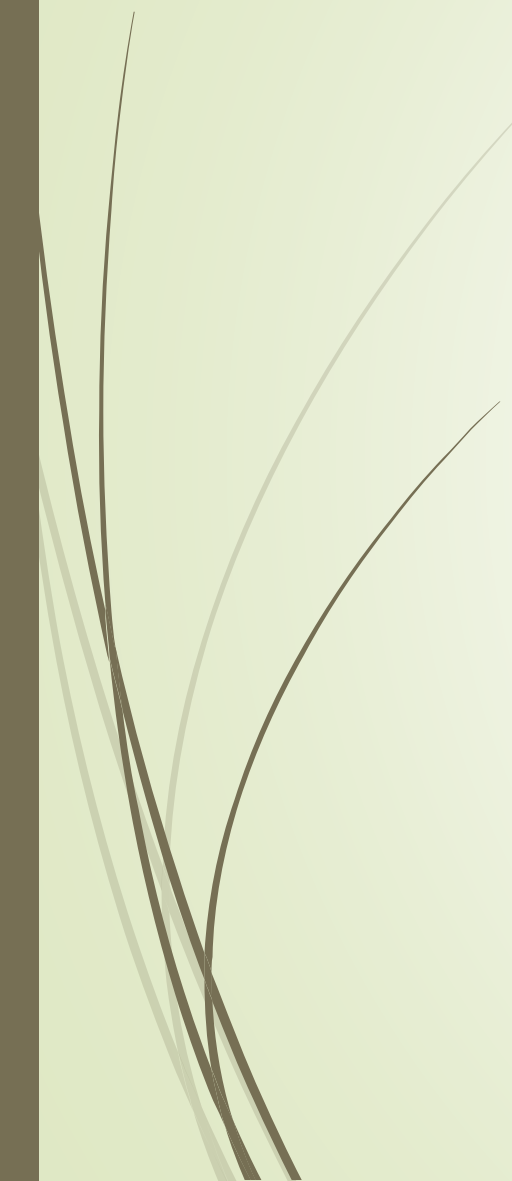
Do not be deceived...

James 2:1–13

¹ My brothers, show no partiality as you hold the faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory. ² For if a man wearing a gold ring and fine clothing comes into your assembly, and a poor man in shabby clothing also comes in, ³ and if you pay attention to the one who wears the fine clothing and say, “You sit here in a good place,” while you say to the poor man, “You stand over there,” or, “Sit down at my feet,” ⁴ have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?



James 2:1–13



⁵ Listen, my beloved brothers, has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, which he has promised to those who love him? ⁶ But you have dishonored the poor man. Are not the rich the ones who oppress you, and the ones who drag you into court? ⁷ Are they not the ones who blaspheme the honorable name by which you were called?



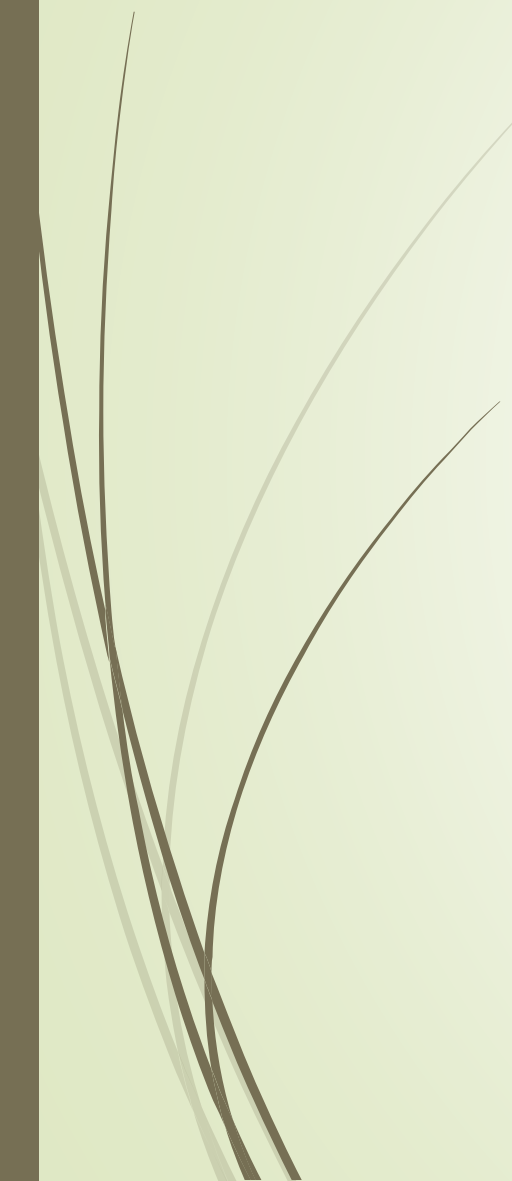
James 2:1–13

⁸ If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing well. ⁹ But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. ¹⁰ For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it. ¹¹ For he who said, “Do not commit adultery,” also said, “Do not murder.” If you do not commit adultery but do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law.



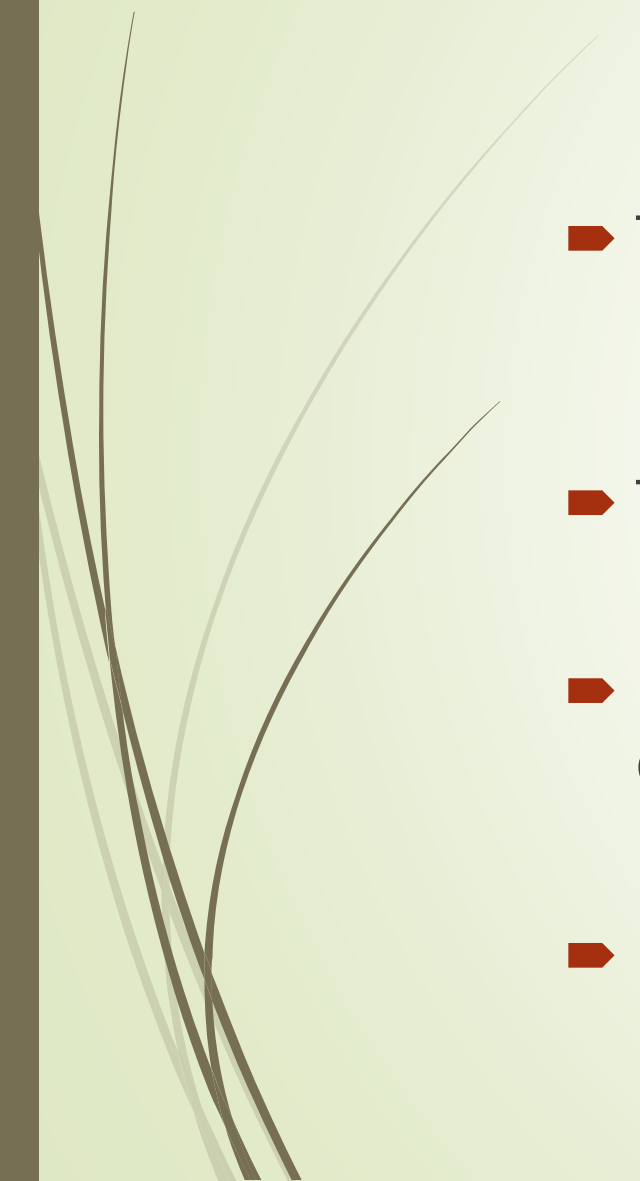
James 2:1–13

¹² So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty. ¹³ For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.



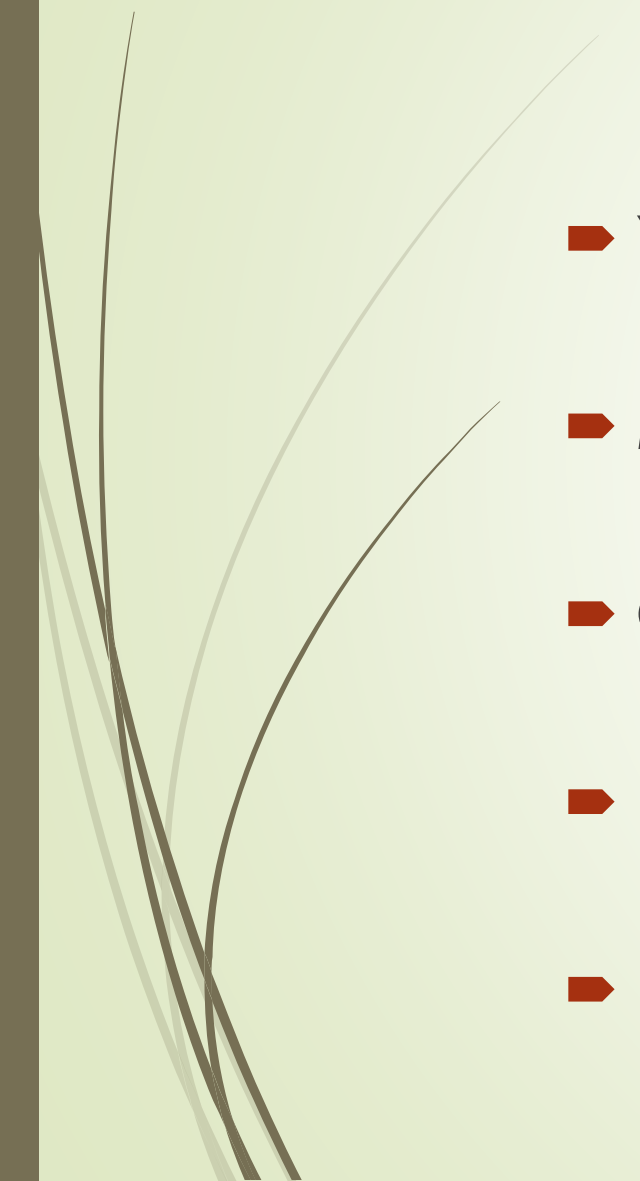


A litany of self-deceits:

- That good and perfect gifts do not come from above (1:16)
 - The anger of man can produce righteousness (1:20)
 - Filthiness and rampant wickedness have a place in Christian life. (1:21)
 - It is enough to hear and not do the word (1:22)
- 



A litany of self-deceits:

- You can be religious and not bridle your tongue (1:26)
 - My faith is unrelated to how I treat other people (2:1)
 - One sin is not a big deal (2:10)
 - Faith doesn't need works (2:14)
 - Faith is merely belief (2:19)
- 



How do we avoid self-deceit???

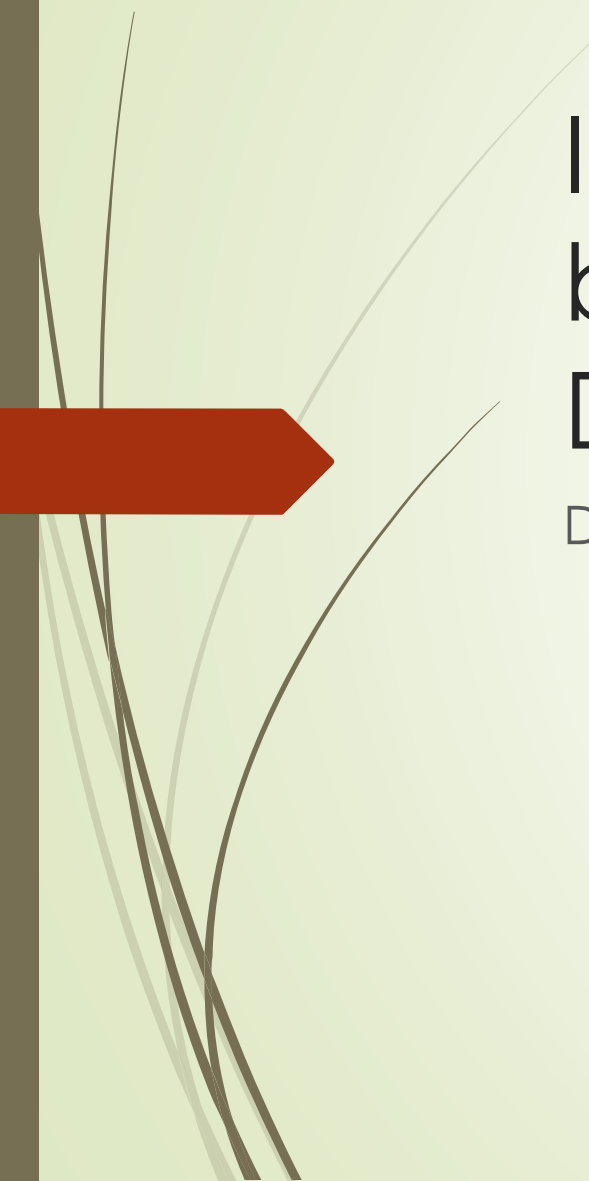
James' answer might surprise you.

- ¹⁶ Do not be deceived...
- ¹⁹ Know this: Let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger...
- ²¹ Receive with meekness the implanted word which is able to save your souls.
- ²² But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves...



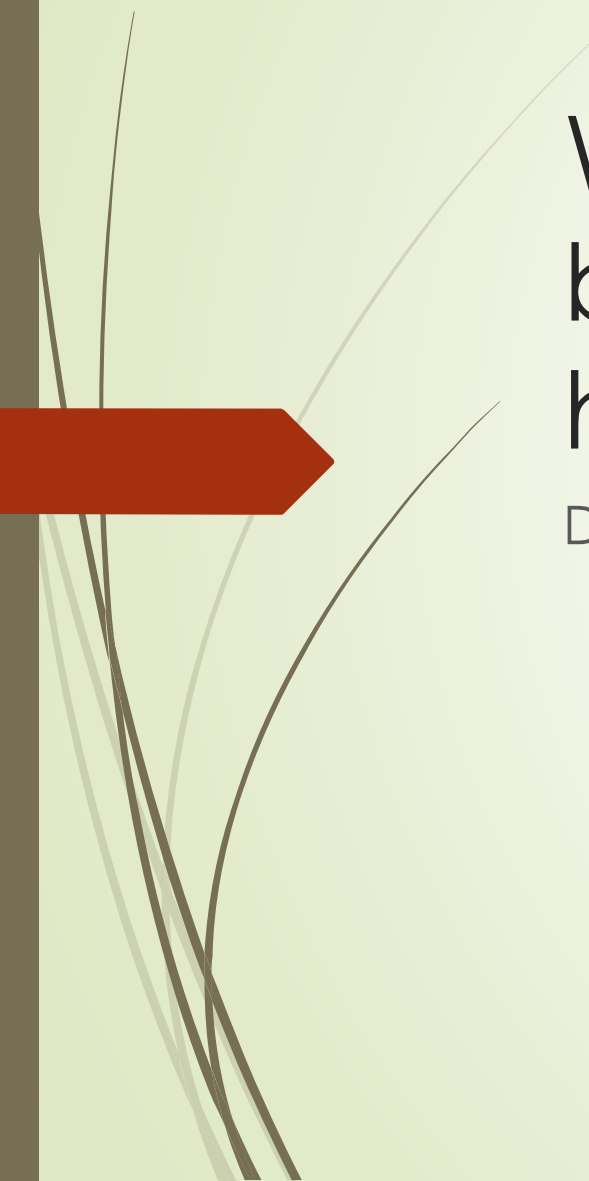
Discussion Questions

For journaling, calling a friend, discussing with family, and prayer



In this era obsessed with media bias, where do you get your news? Do you trust it? Why or why not?

Discussion Questions



When met with a difficult choice
between two options,
how do you come to a decision?

Discussion Questions



Do you trust yourself to read the Scriptures?

Discussion Questions



How *specifically*
has your life changed
because of the word of God?

Discussion Questions



Additional Scripture Passages

For more study



Compare with James 1:16-18

1 Timothy 4

¹ Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to **deceitful** spirits and teachings of demons, ² through the **insincerity** of **liars** whose consciences are seared, ³ who forbid marriage and require abstinence from foods that God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the **truth**. ⁴ For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, ⁵ for it is made holy by the word of God and prayer.



Compare with James 1:2-4

2 Timothy 3

¹² Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, ¹³ while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, **deceiving** and **being deceived**.

¹⁴ But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it

¹⁵ and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶ All Scripture is

breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,

¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.



Partiality

Next Week...