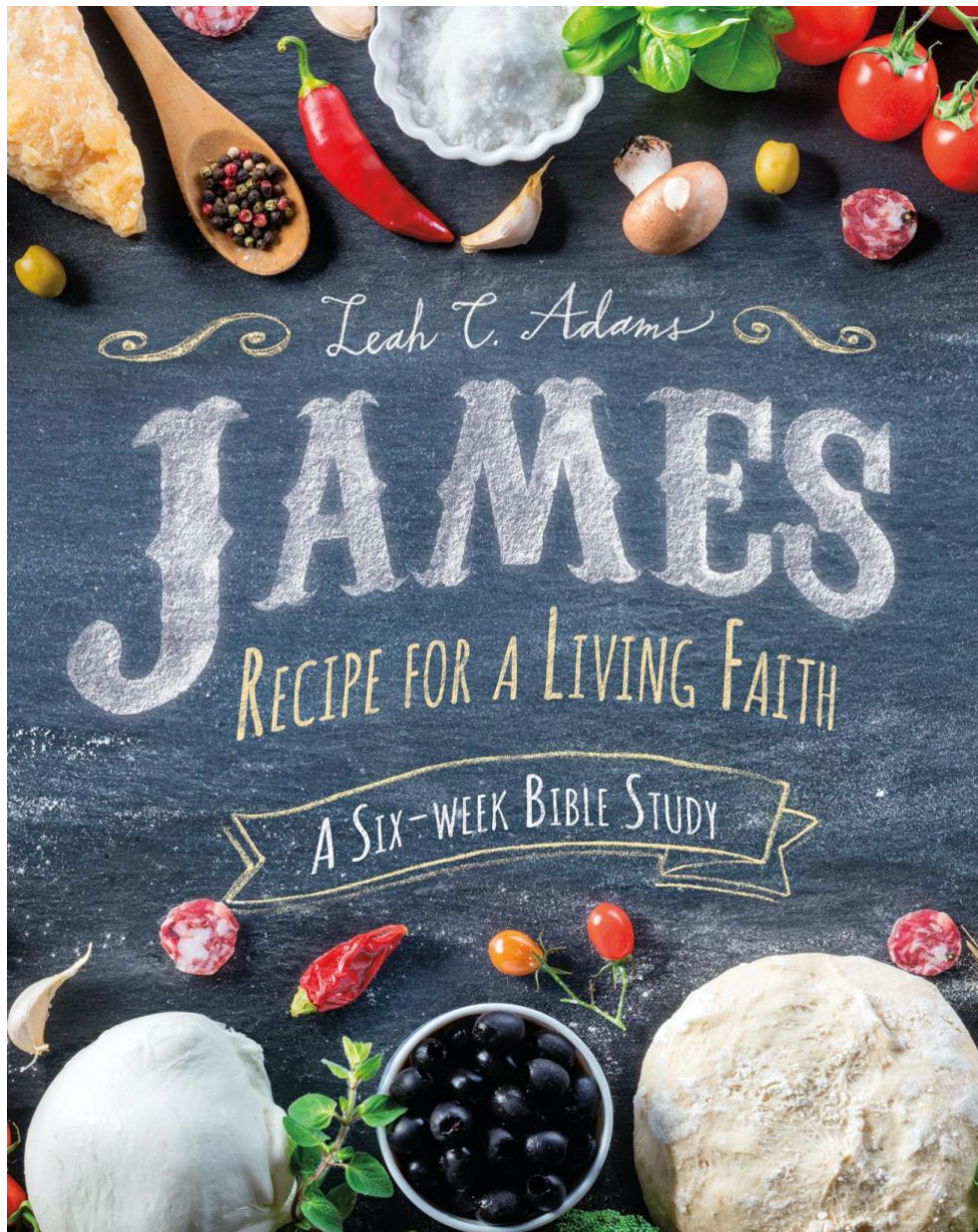


LEADER GUIDE



LeahAdams.org

Dear Leader,

Welcome to the study of ***James: Recipe for a Living Faith!***

It is my honor to walk alongside you as you lead this study. I do not, for one minute, take for granted that you have chosen this study for your group. There are literally hundreds of studies out there that you could have chosen, and it humbles me to know God led you to choose this one. Thank you!

This guide contains my *suggestions* for encouraging discussion and application of the study material in your group. They are only suggestions, so please, listen first for the leading of the Holy Spirit in this matter.

It would be a blessing to my heart to know that your group is doing the James study. I love to pray for the groups and individuals who do any of my studies, so please use the CONTACT page on my website (leahadams.org) to let me know. Feel free to send pictures of you and your group, as well.

Thank you, again, for choosing ***James: Recipe for a Living Faith*** Bible study. I pray it encourages your faith and blesses your heart. I am praying for you!

Warm regards,

Leah

James: Recipe for a Living Faith

Before You Begin

I encourage you to pose the following questions to your group in the days leading up to your first session together.

- What brings you here today? To this group? This study?
- Of the major Christian disciplines (prayer, Bible study, worship, fellowship), which do you sense you most need to work on and be encouraged in?
- What do you come here already knowing about the book of James?
- What personal goals do you have for this study? In other words, what do you hope to gain by studying the book of James?

Week 1 – James: His Life and Legacy

Day 1

- Ask the group which “James” they think wrote the book of James?
- Did anyone do additional exploration regarding the identity of the author of the book of James? If so, ask them to share what they learned.
- How might James’s lack of belief in Jesus as Messiah at first have informed the later ministry of James?
- Encourage your group to talk about the progression of James’ faith from doubter to believer to leader.

Day 2

- Ask the group what thoughts come to mind when they hear or read the word ‘slave’ or ‘bondservant’.
- Review the Scripture passage about slaves, ending with Philippians 2:5–11. Ask the group how they feel about the word ‘slave’ or ‘bondservant’ in view of the Philippians passage.

Day 3

- Review the history of Israel and the details of the first dispersion, then ask the group why Israel experienced a scattering.
- Ask about the second dispersion and what caused it.
- Ask how have you experienced a scattering in life? Remind your group that God *never* wastes a trial and that their scattering does not/did not happen outside the knowledge of God.

Day 4

- How does the brief overview of the life and work of Charles Colson impact you?
- James, the brother of Jesus, went from doubter and mocker to believer and leader of the early church. Ask the group how this hits them, and what their thoughts are about it.
- Ask the group to share what they found in the story of grace they studied on pages 30–31. How might that story encourage them? Challenge them?

Day 5

- What did you learn about sin?
- What is the difference between sinning and practicing sin?

Week 2 – Count It All Joy

Day 1

- On page 39, Leah discussed the meaning of the word joy. Ask your group to share their thoughts about joy and whether they struggle with finding joy.
- In the midst of trials and suffering, what are some constants and truths that can bolster our joy?

Day 2

- Ask what the word 'sovereignty' means to the group members.
- How might Joseph's story have turned out differently had Joseph not understood the concept of sovereignty?
- Let the group share about times they saw the sovereignty of God at work in their own lives.

Day 3

- Have the group read 1 Kings 3:3–12 and discuss answers to the questions posed on pages 48–49.
- Ask the group to share personal examples of times they asked God for wisdom and how it turned out.
- Is going to God for wisdom your first thought or your last resort?

Day 4

- Ask the group what new insights they gained this week as they studied temptation.
- What strategies might be employed to prevent our hearts from falling to temptation?

Day 5

- Ask the group if Satan has used any of the lies from today's lesson to deceive them. If anyone is currently in that situation and they share it openly, take the time to pray with them as a group.
- This day of study is crucial. Allow the Holy Spirit to lead you in your group time and don't rush through it.

Week 3 – Heart Things

Day 1

- Discuss what the group thinks James 1:9–11 teaches.
- How might 1 Corinthians 1:18–25 encourage Christians today?

Day 2

- Ask how the group sees partiality (favoritism) exhibited in our world today.
- In the story of the Samaritan woman in John 4:1–39, how did Jesus break with societal norms and show impartiality?
- Discuss Revelation 7:1–10 and ask what feelings the passage elicited from your group members.

Day 3

- How does the description of God's mercy on pages 71–72 impact your group?
- Lead your group through answering the questions on pages 73–74 and invite them to discuss how this parable applies to them.

Day 4

- Ask your group how often they make plans, then expect God to bless them?
- Invite the members to share what lessons and insights they learned about the sins of presumption, boasting, and omission.
- The story of Joshua's sin of making a covenant with the Gibeonites teaches us the importance of covenants. Ask the group how seriously God takes the making of a covenant based on their study.

Day 5

- In the introduction to this day of the study, your group read about Gollum from *Lord of the Rings*, and the ring that was his 'precious'. Invite your group to share about any object or person that this day of study might have revealed is a 'precious' to them.

Week 4 – A Faith That Works

Day 1

- Review with your group the two quotes on page 87 concerning listening, then read Ecclesiastes 5:1–7. Ask your group what they learn about listening from these verses.
 - There are two kinds of people: those who are listening, and those who are waiting to speak.
 - Those who draw near simply to listen (i.e. in reverence) do not give themselves any occasion for getting into trouble.
- Ask the members how the idea of being offended for rather than offended by (p.88) might impact their life and relationships.

Day 2

- Walk your group through the verses and ideas about faith and works on page 92. It is important to emphasize that faith, and faith in Jesus alone, is what saves and justifies us.
- This day of the study could very well be a cornerstone day. Ask the group about the differences in a Dead Sea Christian and a Sea of Galilee Christian. What would one have to do to move from being a Dead Sea Christian to a Sea of Galilee Christian?

Day 3

- Today's lesson is a bit more theological than most. Take time to work through the concepts and Scriptures with your members. You may have members who have a works-based theology background, so it is important they understand that James and Paul are NOT contradicting each other in their teachings.

Day 4

- Very few people wake up one morning and say, "I want to do something unwise today." Ask your group for some ideas about how they might be pro-active in making wise, godly decisions in their lives.
- Encourage your group to share any insights the Holy Spirit revealed to them regarding the two lists they made (godly wisdom/fruit versus worldly wisdom/fruit).

Day 5

- Lead your group to discuss the differences in submission as the world views it and submission modeled by Jesus in the Garden.
- Ask what method Jesus used for combatting the devil's temptations?
- Lead the group to list some ways Jesus modeled humility during His earthly life.
- Ask the group what prevents us/them from walking in humility?

Week 5 – The Tongue

Day 1

- Encourage your group to share any thoughts that come to mind as they read James 1:26.
- Invite your group members to share how the review of the Scriptures concerning the tongue impacted them. Which verses were most impactful?

Day 2

- Read James 3:1–12 in your group from a couple of different translations of the Bible.
- Ask the group which of the metaphors from nature and commerce spoke to them personally.
- Ask the group how the fact that when we use our tongues to curse people who are made in the likeness of God, we are cursing the image God in them impacts them.

Day 3

- Ask if anyone can identify a time when their heart was deceitful and did not tell them the truth. If someone is willing to share, make sure your group does not condemn them, but rather points them to Jesus.
- Discuss the Meditation Moment questions in your group.

Day 4

- Talk with your group about the ideas of murmuring and grumbling, and how easily these things can become a stronghold.

- Ask the members which of the Scriptures from this day of study had the most impact on their hearts.

Day 5

- What does taking an oath, then breaking it, say about the character of a person? This is so common in our culture today that some members may not even connect with the seriousness of it, so be prepared to talk about this.
- Ask your members which of the groups detailed in the Titus 2 passage (Titus 2:1-8) they think they fall into. Encourage them to spend some time assessing how they well they exhibit the godly traits listed in that passage.

Week 6 – Dear God, I Want It NOW!

Day 1

- In today's study, we looked at patience from an eternal perspective. Ask your group how this exercise might help them be more patient in their day-to-day lives.
- Review the description of the returning Christ from Revelation 19:11-16 and lead your group to contrast it with the first coming of Christ and how He lived. Ask them how and why Christ might have been able to be patient and endure what He endured when He was on earth the first time, given what Revelation 19:11-16 tells us.

Day 2

- Review the definitions for the two words used for patience in the New Testament (p. 141).
- This is a long day of study, but one I believe will be useful. Ask your group if they gained new insights into the concept of patience while studying Job's story.
- How might Job's patience with his friends and God's patience with Job help the members to be patient when they go through trials?

Day 3

- Ask your group to share about their prayer lives. Do they pray daily? Do they have a pattern they use when they pray? Is thanksgiving always part of their prayer time? Do they have a special place they like to pray?
- If you can, play the hymn 'What a Friend We Have in Jesus' as you close your time together this week.

Day 4

- Ask how we attain right standing with God. This is a foundational principle of Christianity, so make sure your group understands it. This is the **ONLY** way to righteousness.
- Elijah's prayers were effective and powerful because he was standing before God, listening for God's voice, and desiring for God to be known. He was obedient and humble. Spend time talking with your group about these characteristics of powerful pray-ers. Ask the three questions offered just prior to the Meditation Moment on page 158.

Day 5

- Remind your group that the responsibility of a Christian is to point others to Jesus, and then to teach them how to grow up to be a mature Christ-follower.
- Our world says that truth is what each person says it is, but Scripture tells us differently. Who is the **TRUTH** according to John 14:6? How do we know what Christ's truth is?
- Ask your group to share their answers to today's Meditation Moment as you close.

Friend, you have done a spectacular job of leading your group through this study. I know there were probably times you felt wholly inadequate for the task, but I also know that God empowered you for it. Thank you! Thank you for stepping out and making a difference in the lives of those you led. Only eternity will reveal the full impact of your obedience. For now, feel the smiling nod of God on your efforts. Be blessed, dear one!

Leah Adams