

The Epistle of James

Student Syllabus

ACADEMIC
PACKET

RESOURCES FOR GROUPS
USING THE ACADEMIC PACKETS



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ABOUT THIRD MILLENNIUM MINISTRIES

Founded in 1997, Third Millennium Ministries is a non-profit Evangelical Christian ministry dedicated to providing:

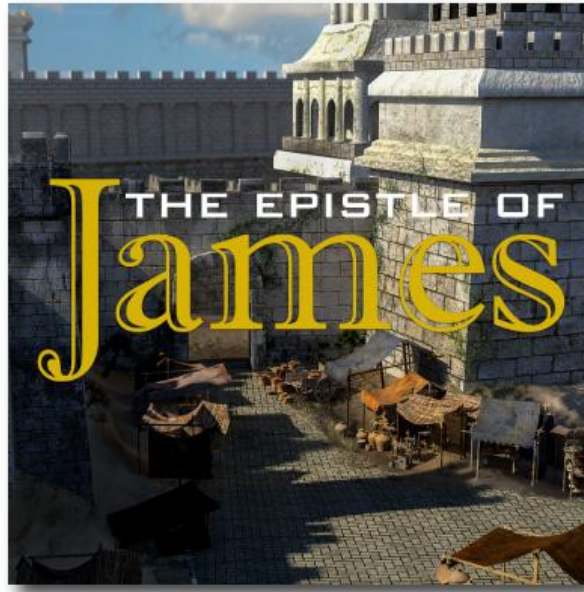
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Our goal is to offer free Christian education to hundreds of thousands of pastors and Christian leaders around the world who lack sufficient training for ministry. We are meeting this goal by producing and globally distributing an unparalleled multimedia seminary curriculum in English, Arabic, Mandarin, Russian, and Spanish. Our curriculum is also being translated into more than a dozen other languages through our partner ministries. The curriculum consists of graphic-driven videos, printed instruction, and internet resources. It is designed to be used by schools, groups, and individuals, both online and in learning communities.

Over the years, we have developed a highly cost-effective method of producing award-winning multimedia lessons of the finest content and quality. Our writers and editors are theologically-trained educators, our translators are theologically-astute native speakers of their target languages, and our lessons contain the insights of hundreds of respected seminary professors and pastors from around the world. In addition, our graphic designers, illustrators, and producers adhere to the highest production standards using state-of-the-art equipment and techniques.

In order to accomplish our distribution goals, Third Millennium has forged strategic partnerships with churches, seminaries, Bible schools, missionaries, Christian broadcasters and satellite television providers, and other organizations. These relationships have already resulted in the distribution of countless video lessons to indigenous leaders, pastors, and seminary students. Our websites also serve as avenues of distribution and provide additional materials to supplement our lessons, including materials on how to start your own learning community.

Third Millennium Ministries is recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) corporation. We depend on the generous, tax-deductible contributions of churches, foundations, businesses, and individuals. For more information about our ministry, and to learn how you can get involved, please visit www.thirdmill.org.



COURSE DESCRIPTION

The Epistle of James is an intensely practical book for readers in every age. James' original audience had professed faith in Christ, but many were not living lives that reflected their beliefs. To address this disparity, James dealt with real-world issues that still speak to us today. This course looks at the background, structure and content of the Epistle of James and explores the wisdom and practical instruction in James that remain relevant for modern readers. It is based on the lecture series, [The Epistle of James](#), produced by Third Millennium Ministries and hosted by Dr. Paul Gardner with contributions from a variety of professors.

PROFESSORS

In this course a wide variety of professors from different backgrounds and different denominations participate in the making of the videos. That list has been given at the bottom of this syllabus.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOALS

In this course, we would like to accomplish the following:

1. We hope the student will grow in his desire to gain wisdom for practical living, as described in the Epistle of James.
2. We hope the student will learn key information about the background, structure and content of the epistle of James, and that he will understand the theme of wisdom in the epistle of James and its relationship to practical living.
3. We hope the student will begin to apply the teachings of the course to his own life.

OBJECTIVES

When you have done the following, it will show that the goals are met:

1. Answer the application questions in the study guides, expressing your own thoughts and attitudes regarding wisdom as described in James.
2. Obtain satisfactory grades on the tests, demonstrating that you can: a) identify key information about the background, structure and content for James, and b) identify the meaning of the two paths of wisdom expressed in James.

THE FACILITATOR

This course is designed to be studied in a group with a facilitator, supervisor, or mentor. If you do not have a facilitator, you may wish to speak with your pastor or some spiritual leader in your church. The facilitator should read the "General Guidelines for Facilitators"

OTHER MATERIALS

Besides this syllabus, there are other resources you will need for this course. They should be available in the same place, or same folder, where you found this file. If not, talk to your facilitator.

CREDIT

Third Millennium does not offer credit for their courses. However, the materials are offered freely to any institution that would like to use them. If the student would like to seek credit for the course, he needs to find an institution that will supervise his studies and give him credit. He should consult with them to see about their requirements and expectations.

THEMATIC OUTLINE OF THE COURSE

1. Introduction to James
2. Two Paths of Wisdom

GENERAL EXPLANATION OF ASSIGNMENTS

The guidelines for assignments below are meant to be suggestions. Each group or academic institution may customize the course according to the needs of their students. For example, some may prefer to require the additional reading, while others may not. The same applies to the optional written project. Furthermore, some may prefer to meet once a week, while others prefer to meet more often or less often. Some groups may prefer to restructure the assignments to fit a regular pattern of classes, possibly a period of eight weeks, for example.

Don't worry about the details now, since they will be given to you as you go through the assignments of each session, but in order for you to know what to plan for, the suggested assignments can be summarized as follows:

The Lectures

1. Watch the video lectures (or listen to the audio, or read the text version).
2. Complete the study guides for each section of each lesson. This includes writing notes on the lesson while using the outline provided, answering the review questions, and answering the application

questions.

3. Take the tests on each lesson. These will be administered in the classes. (For credit, they must be graded by the authorities of the academic institution where the student is seeking credit.)

Optional Additional Reading

Read the additional reading. This may be done in two different ways, according to the agreement you have with the facilitator or academic institution. Option 1: Read the selected additional reading, or readings, provided for this course, and take the test on the contents. Option 2: Read at least 300 pages of additional reading that you select from the list of "Recommended Extra Reading." In this case, you should turn in a written report on each book or article, using the "Form for reading reports." (For credit, these reports must be turned in for evaluation.)

Optional Written Project

Write an 8-10 page project, following the instructions found below. (For credit, this must be turned in for evaluation.)

GRADES

We recommend calculating the final grade as follows, depending on the option selected:

a) Without the additional reading or written project:

Each test is 50%.

b) Including the additional reading, but without the written project:

Each test is 40% (total: 80%).
The additional reading is 20%.

c) Including the written project, but without the additional reading:

Each test is 40% (total: 80%).
The written project is 20%.

d) Including both the additional reading and the written project:

Each test is 30% (total: 60%).
The additional reading is 20%.
The written project is 20%.

SPECIFIC ASSIGNMENTS FOR EACH SESSION

These plans are only suggestions. Your facilitator may decide to modify them, as he talks things over with the group.

INITIAL PLANNING MEETING

The first meeting is a brief orientation for the course. There is no homework before the first meeting. The student will receive the materials he needs and talk over plans for the course.

NOTE: If the group is studying a series of courses, we recommend that you take advantage of the last session of each course to make arrangements for the following course, thus avoiding unnecessary extra meetings.

LESSON 1

Watch the first lesson in the video series from *Third Millennium*, "The Epistle of James." The first lesson is called "Introduction to James." We have broken down the assignments into parts, according to the main sections of the video.

SECTION 1

1. Watch section 1 of the first video lesson, called "Background." (The video time is from the beginning to 28 minutes and 07 seconds, 00-28:07.)

Remember: You may also download the audio files for listening to the lecture, or you may also read the text version.

2. Use Study Guide 1.1 to help learn the contents of the first section of the video lesson. Use the outline to take notes, answer the review questions, and answer the application questions.

SECTION 2

1. Repeat this procedure for section 2 of the video lesson, "Structure and Content" (Video time: 28:08-1:05:11), using Study Guide 1.2.

2. Review all sections of the video lesson, in preparation for the test.

LESSON 2

Watch the second lesson of the video series, called "Two Paths of Wisdom." We have broken down the assignments into parts, according to the main sections of the video lesson.

SECTION 1

1. Watch section 1 of this second video lesson, called "Reflective Wisdom" (00-29:22).
 2. Use Study Guide 2.1 to help learn the contents of the first section of the lesson. Use the outline to take notes, answer the review questions, and answer the application questions.
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SECTION 2

1. Repeat this procedure for section 2 of the video lesson, "Practical Wisdom" (29:23-1:08:46), using Study Guide 2.2.
2. Review all sections of the lesson, in preparation for the test.

ADDITIONAL READING

Option 1:

1. Read the sections of the commentary by A. R. Faussett on *James* and John Calvin on *The Catholic Epistles*, using the study guide to see which sections and to find the most important points.
2. Take the test in the next class on the reading.

NOTE: Some groups may choose to do only part of the above reading.

Option 2:

1. Read at least 300 pages of additional reading, selecting from the list of "Recommended Extra Reading."
2. Fill out a separate written report on each book or article, using the "Form for Reading Reports."
3. Prepare to share what you are learning from your reading and *turn in your written reports*.

OPTIONAL WRITTEN PROJECT

Some groups may require a written project. If so, we recommend a project of 8-10 pages, using the following guidelines:

1. Choose a short passage (from two to eight verses) from The Epistle of James, in order to write an analysis (exegesis) of the passage. Find a passage that you have a hard time understanding, or that raises questions. This way you will learn more from your study.
2. Read the passage in several different translations, and write down key questions that you have regarding the proper interpretation of the passage. For example: What words do you not understand? What phrases seem perplexing? Is there something that seems to contradict some other passage of the Bible? Is there something that seems to go against your understanding of theology?
3. Investigate the historical background and context of the passage. For this, you may need to find Introductions or commentaries. See the list of "Recommended Extra Reading." If you have electronic software, such as Logos, BibleWorks, E-Sword, or Bible Gateway, you can use it for this research.
4. Research key words in the passage. Look them up in a dictionary. Look them up in a concordance to see how the rest of the Bible uses them. Focus especially on writings of the same author. If you know Greek, look up the words in a dictionary of New Testament Greek. Use electronic software for this also.
5. Review the immediate context of the passage to see if anything helps understand your verses.
6. Consider the overall historical context of your passage. How does this fit into the history of the whole Bible? How does it fit into the general plan of redemption?
7. Look up cross references to see parallel passages or passages that deal with similar subjects.
8. Read commentaries to evaluate the opinions of these authors. See the list of recommended extra reading for suggestions.
9. Make sure you keep good notes on your research. If you are quoting from some source, or even taking ideas without quoting exactly, you must write down the author, name of book, place of publishing, publishing company, year of publishing, and the page or pages where you got your ideas or your quotes.
10. Write a rough draft of the project.
 - a. Be very careful to follow the "Guidelines for Writing an Essay," which should be given to you by the facilitator.
 - b. Make an outline and begin writing. Make sure you include an introduction that stirs interest in the study.
 - c. Explain the questions that you are especially researching. In the main body, you should include possible answers to your questions that others offer, then give your own conclusions. Back up your opinions with biblical evidence and linguistic resources.
 - d. Try to discover the message of the passage for the believers who would read it at the time it was written, and try to apply the same message to people today. What practical importance does it have?
 - e. Take into account how the passage relates to Christ and the plan of salvation.
 - f. Include a conclusion, summarizing your answers.

11. Make sure to add footnotes where you have used ideas or if you have quoted from another source, and a bibliography at the end.

12. Edit the final version of your project. Read and re-read it until it flows clearly and is easy to understand. Correct any spelling errors or grammatical errors. Make sure you have documented the sources properly with footnotes and a bibliography. Make sure you have an introduction and a conclusion. Again, make sure you follow the "Guidelines for Writing an Essay."

13. Be prepared to turn in your project, and be prepared to share what you have been learning about the passage.

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS TO *THE EPISTLE OF JAMES*

- Dr. Jimmy Agan is Associate Professor of New Testament and Director of Homiletics at Covenant Theological Seminary.
- Dr. David Chapman is Associate Professor of New Testament and Archaeology at Covenant Theological Seminary.
- Dr. Brandon D. Crowe is Assistant Professor of New Testament at Westminster Theological Seminary.
- Dr. Daniel Doriani is Vice President of Strategic Academic Initiatives and Professor of Theology at Covenant Theological Seminary.
- Dr. Jeffrey A. Gibbs is Professor of Exegetical Theology at Concordia Seminary.
- Dr. Thomas L. Keene is Part-Time Lecturer at Westminster Theological Seminary and is Associate Pastor of Family Ministries at Christ the King Presbyterian Church in Conshohocken, PA.
- Dr. Michael Kennison is Minister of Congregational Care at Kirk of the Hills Presbyterian Church in St. Louis, MO.
- Rev. David I.M. Lewis is an Assistant Professor of Exegetical Theology at Concordia Seminary.
- Dr. Dan McCartney is Professor of New Testament interpretation at Redeemer Seminary in Dallas, Texas.
- Dr. Gregory R. Perry is Associate Professor of New Testament and Director of City Ministry Initiative at Covenant Theological Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri.
- Dr. J. Scott Redd is Campus President of Reformed Theological Seminary in Washington D.C. and Assistant Professor of Old Testament.
- Rev. Dr. Michael Walker is Theologian-in-residence at Highland Park Presbyterian Church in Dallas, Texas.
- Rev. Dr. Peter Walker is Professor of Biblical Studies at Trinity School for Ministry.
- Dr. Larry J. Waters is Professor of Bible Exposition at Dallas Theological Seminary.
- Rev. Dr. Thurman Williams is Associate Pastor at Grace and Peace Fellowship in St. Louis.