



HIS-STORY: The Bible in 18 Weeks

Volume 2: The New Testament Story

Chapter 7: Letters to Jewish Christians

Hebrews: Christ Supreme Over All

1. Authorship: Who wrote Hebrews?
 - a. Paul?
 - b. Someone else?
 - c. Characteristics of the Author
 - Greek speaking, well-educated, Jewish-Christian
 - Brilliant theologian with a pastor's heart
2. To Whom? The Recipients
 - a. Jewish Christians
 - b. They have been persecuted in the past
 - c. They are in danger of returning to their old life
 - d. Their Location?
3. Occasion & Purpose
 - Mostly Jewish Christians
 - In danger of drifting back to the political and social safety of Judaism
 - A call to persevere and grow in light of the superiority of Christ's person & work
4. Key Themes
 - a. The Superior Revelation of the Son
 - b. The Superior Sacrifice of the Son
 - c. Call to Persevere and Mature





James: Faith That Works

1. The Author: James

- The half-brother of Jesus
- Did not believe in Jesus during his lifetime (John 7:5)
- Saw the resurrected Jesus and believed (1 Cor. 15:7)
- Key Leader of the Jerusalem Church

2. The Recipients and Date

- Twelve Tribes" = Jewish Christians
- The true remnant of Israel
- Perhaps the "dispersion" after the stoning of Stephen (Acts 8:1)
- James writes as pastor to his scattered congregation
- Date: Perhaps the earliest letter in the NT (AD 45-50?)

3. Some Characteristics

- a. A very Jewish Epistle
- b. Influenced by Jesus' teachings

4. Central Theme: Faith that Works

Paul	James
Opponents = Judaizers claiming the "works of the law" are necessary for salvation	Opponents = Christian Libertarians claiming they are saved by faith & can live anyway they want
Faith = Trust & dependence on God for Salvation	Faith = Mere profession of faith, saying you believe
Justification = Declared righteous by God as judge	Justification = Proven or shown to be righteous
Works = Attempts to save oneself by keeping the Law (pre-conversion).	Works = The inevitable outworking of faith in a person's life (post-conversion).





Study/Discussion Questions:

1. Who wrote the letter to the Hebrews?
2. To whom was Hebrews written and why?
3. What was causing some of the members of this church to turn away from Christ?
Can you think of a similar situation today?
4. What are some ways the author tries to convince them not to turn away from Christ?
Do these apply to us today?
5. Which James wrote the letter of James? What do we know about him?
6. To whom is James writing and why?
7. What are some characteristics of this letter?
8. Some people say that James and Paul contradict each other. Why is this? How would you answer this charge?
9. James says, "faith without works is dead." Give an illustration of this truth from your own life or from a situation you have seen.

