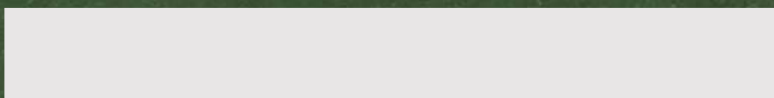


THE BOOK OF JAMES

S.O.A.P. JOURNAL



THIS JOURNAL BELONGS TO:



S.O.A.P Journaling

What is S.O.A.P. Journaling?

A S.O.A.P journal is designed as a guide to walk you through God's Word in a way that brings you to a deeper understanding of the gospel. Each day you will have space to read scripture, make observations, look for the application, and take time to pray. By using the S.O.A.P. method you will be equipped to get more out of scripture than simply reading.

S - Scripture

Open your Bible to your reading for the day. Take time reading and allow God to speak to you. When you are done, look for a verse that particularly spoke to you that day, and write it in your journal.

O - Observation

What struck you and caught your attention in what you read? What do you think God is saying to you in this scripture? Ask the Holy Spirit to teach you and reveal Jesus to you. Paraphrase and write this scripture down in your own words.

A - Application

Personalize what you have read by asking yourself how it applies to your life right now. Perhaps it is instruction, encouragement, a new promise, or correction for a particular area of your life. Write how this scripture can apply to you today.

P - Prayer

This can be as simple as asking God to help you use this scripture, or even a prayer for a greater insight on what He may be revealing to you. Remember, prayer is a two-way conversation, so be sure to listen to what God has to say! Now, write it out.

Historical Context

Author, Date, and Recipients

This letter was written by James, the brother of Jesus (Matt. 13:55) and leader of the Jerusalem church (Acts 15). It was probably written about A.D. 40–45 to Jewish Christians living outside Palestine.

Theme

Christians must live out their faith. They should be doers, not just hearers, of God's Word.

Purpose

James's readers were suffering persecution and living in poverty. They were in social and spiritual conflict. Many believers were living in a worldly manner. James corrects them and challenges them to seek God's wisdom to work out these problems.

Outline

Greeting (1:1)

The Testing of Faith (1:2–18)

Hearing and Doing the Word (1:19–27)

The Sin of Favoritism (2:1–13)

Faith Without Works is Dead (2:14–26)

The Sin of Dissension in the Community (3:1–4:12)

The Sins of the Wealthy (4:13–5:12)

The Prayer of Faith (5:13–18)

Concluding Admonition (5:19–20)

WEEK ONE

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

James 1:1-4

MONDAY

S - Scripture

O - Observation

A - Application

P - Prayer

James 1:5-8

TUESDAY

S - Scripture

O - Observation

A - Application

P - Prayer

James 1:9-11

WEDNESDAY

S - Scripture

O - Observation

A - Application

P - Prayer

James 1:12-15

THURSDAY

S - Scripture

O - Observation

A - Application

P - Prayer

James 1:16-18

FRIDAY

S - Scripture

O - Observation

A - Application

P - Prayer

Confidence in Trial

SATURDAY

Pain and trouble are inevitable. Financial struggles, relational difficulties, job loss, illness, natural disasters, pandemics...all part of life in a fallen world. And what does James tell us to do in the face of all this?

Consider it an opportunity for great joy. (James 1:2)

At face value, this statement makes absolutely no sense, but I promise you James isn't a masochist. He's not telling us to love pain or even to like the trial, but to look for the purpose God wants to work in the trial.

When trouble comes, you might struggle, doubt, or feel confusion. But at the end of the day, when you allow hardship to pull you closer to God, rather than push you away, the result is an endurance that can power you through whatever life brings. Little by little, our patience and stamina grows until it is *perfected*: finished and mature. Trials toughen us up, grow us up, and build us up.

Any time we feel our faith fading in this process, we can come to God in prayer. If we need wisdom, all we have to do is ask for it and God will give us a new perspective. So rather than asking Him to get you out of the trial, ask Him what you can get out of the trial.

Trials will bend us, but we will not be broken. Instead, we will be stronger, more flexible, and more like Christ.

WEEK TWO

[illegible]

James 1:19-21

MONDAY

S - Scripture

O - Observation

A - Application

P - Prayer

James 1:22-27

TUESDAY

S - Scripture

O - Observation

A - Application

P - Prayer

James 2:1-4

WEDNESDAY

S - Scripture

O - Observation

A - Application

P - Prayer

James 2:5-7

THURSDAY

S - Scripture

O - Observation

A - Application

P - Prayer

James 2:8-13

FRIDAY

S - Scripture

O - Observation

A - Application

P - Prayer

Confidence in Equality

SATURDAY

There are some things that go together: peanut butter and chocolate, red bull and snowboarding, fries and milkshakes. But snobbiness and Christianity is like orange juice and toothpaste—they're incompatible and leave a nasty taste in your mouth.

In James chapter two, we're warned against being a spiritual snob. In fact, we're told it's a sin to look at people with a heart of discrimination (verse 9). To judge anyone based on their appearance, status, or race is to break God's law of love: Love God and love people (Matthew 22:37-40).

Favoritism is also contrary to the gospel. If God was a snob, Jesus would have never descended to the earth; He would have stayed in heaven on His throne. Instead, He took the lowliest route to earth ever, born as a baby in a stable. He endured death on the cross because of His love for each and every one of us. As Christians, to show favoritism of any kind is to send the wrong message. No outer factor—our works, our riches, our social status—can get us into heaven.

God is watching to see how we treat the people we encounter. As Warren Weirsbe said, "We should look at every single person we meet as having value. If they're a believer, Christ lives in them. If they're an unbeliever, Christ died for them." Jesus was God in human flesh, yet He ministered to everyone equally. He was the friend of sinners—and that's every single person ever.

WEEK
THREE

[illegible]

James 2:14-17

MONDAY

S - Scripture

O - Observation

A - Application

P - Prayer

James 2:18-24

TUESDAY

S - Scripture

O - Observation

A - Application

P - Prayer

James 2:25-26

WEDNESDAY

S - Scripture

O - Observation

A - Application

P - Prayer

James 3:1-6

THURSDAY

S - Scripture

O - Observation

A - Application

P - Prayer

James 3:7-12

FRIDAY

S - Scripture

O - Observation

A - Application

P - Prayer

Confidence in Action

SATURDAY

When James says that faith without works is dead (2:17), he isn't saying you can earn your way to heaven. What he is saying is that your salvation—through the grace and death of Jesus Christ alone—should impact how you act. That to say "it doesn't matter what I do" is just as wrong as saying "it only matters what I do." True salvation will work its way into action; it doesn't accept that you can live however you like as a spiritual freeloader.

If you say you have faith, but that faith is not reflected in your actions, there is no change in your life you can point to that will be evidence to the world of what Christ has done for you. This doesn't mean you'll be perfect, but it means the grace of God should be evident in your life. Your actions should give proof to the faith that you claim. This also gives you personal confidence. When Satan comes at you and tries to make you doubt your salvation, you can point to all the ways your life has been changed as evidence to the contrary.

Faith is the root, the works are the fruit. True faith will leave a visible mark. A changed heart will always result in a changed life.

WEEK
FOUR

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James 3:13-16

MONDAY

S - Scripture

O - Observation

A - Application

P - Prayer

James 3:17-18

TUESDAY

S - Scripture

O - Observation

A - Application

P - Prayer

James 4:1-3

WEDNESDAY

S - Scripture

O - Observation

A - Application

P - Prayer

James 4:4-6

THURSDAY

S - Scripture

O - Observation

A - Application

P - Prayer

James 4:7-10

FRIDAY

S - Scripture

O - Observation

A - Application

P - Prayer

Confidence in the Wild

SATURDAY

Christians are often warned against “the world”—a term that is sometimes twisted to legalistic proportions. (Dancing? Secular music? Gasp! Only churning butter and memorizing scripture allowed.) But when James says to avoid friendship with “the world,” he’s not talking about people, or the planet we live on. He’s not saying don’t enjoy the beauty around you or be a good steward of creation. He’s not saying don’t love people or make friends. When the Bible tells us not to love “the world” it’s talking about the world’s system—the one that says our own pleasure and comfort is top priority. 1 John 2:16 calls it “the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.” This pride leads to world-focused living that distances us from God.

Jesus came to seek and save the lost and hurting. But Jesus never became worldly as he hung out with worldly people. There was a line in the sand that he walked carefully and prayerfully, focusing not on what the world had to offer, but on eternity. By following Jesus’ example, avoiding compromise, and embracing accountability, we can enjoy life while also ensuring our loyalty won’t be “divided between God and the world” (James 4:8).

With eyes on heaven and humble hearts submitted to God’s authority, we can live in the wild while growing closer to Him.

WEEK
FIVE

[illegible]

James 4:11-12

MONDAY

S - Scripture

O - Observation

A - Application

P - Prayer

James 4:13-17

TUESDAY

S - Scripture

O - Observation

A - Application

P - Prayer

James 5:1-3

WEDNESDAY

S - Scripture

O - Observation

A - Application

P - Prayer

James 5:4-6

THURSDAY

S - Scripture

O - Observation

A - Application

P - Prayer

James 5:7-9

FRIDAY

S - Scripture

O - Observation

A - Application

P - Prayer

Confidence in Planning

SATURDAY

None of us can predict the future. We can have a great idea of what we would like to have happen, but ultimately, tomorrow is a mystery. Does that mean you should never plan anything? Not at all. Make plans, but leave room for God to change them. In James 4:15, James doesn't correct the people's planning, he corrects the manner in which they're planning. He cautions them to have the right motivations. "If the Lord wills..." The key is to want what God wants more than what we want.

But how do we discern God's will? Start with the general, then seek the specific. Look to the Bible: How has God called us to live? As we align our decisions with His Word, God will reveal more along the way. Then, when He tells you to do something, do it. Big or small—a nudging to text a friend, or a burden to plant a church—don't pass on that opportunity.

We may not know what the future holds, but God does. While we can't plan for everything we encounter on earth, we can plan for eternity. Psalm 90:12 advises us to "number our days." Jesus gave His life so we could be certain of what will happen when those days come to an end. Through this gift of salvation our eternity is secure. We can face the unpredictable with confidence, knowing God is with us through it all, because we've submitted our plans, and our lives, to Him.

WEEK
SIX

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James 5:10-11

MONDAY

S - Scripture

O - Observation

A - Application

P - Prayer

James 5:12

TUESDAY

S - Scripture

O - Observation

A - Application

P - Prayer

James 5:13-16

WEDNESDAY

S - Scripture

O - Observation

A - Application

P - Prayer

James 5:17-18

THURSDAY

S - Scripture

O - Observation

A - Application

P - Prayer

James 5:19-20

FRIDAY

S - Scripture

O - Observation

A - Application

P - Prayer

Confidence in Prayer

SATURDAY

James gives us four different scenarios for praying: when you're suffering, when you're stoked, when you're sick, and when you're in sin. These examples run the gamut of human experience and add up to the single best time to pray: all the time. Too often we equate praying with calling 911; we use it only in emergencies. But God is with us all day, every day, not just when we're in crisis, or when our Bible is open or we're at church. Our conversations with Him, through prayer, should be just as ongoing, "at all times and on every occasion" (Ephesians 6:18).

When you're hurting, confused, or afraid, tell God. Be honest. Keep praying through the pain. God may not take away the situation, but He will sustain you through it. When things are going well, speak prayers of praise, thanking God for His goodness. Worship. Worship is simply turning your prayers into song (Ephesians 5:19). Are you sick? Pray to the God who heals. Ask others to pray for you. (And seek common sense medical help if necessary—God can heal miraculously and also through modern medicine.) When you sin, confess it in prayer and seek God's forgiveness. In all of this, you can be confident that God hears you (Psalm 116:1-2).

Let the soundtrack of your life be a song of prayer to the Lord and you'll be able to sing even in the night.

Congratulations!

You made it!

We hope that this journey through the book of James has encouraged you and challenged you as you've spent time digging deeper into God's word.

As you step into the days and weeks ahead, our prayer is that you will continue in this daily rhythm of spending time with God. Dive into His scripture, have an eye for observation, search for application, and submit yourself to prayer. As you do, you will be equipped and strengthened to live a life anchored in hope, faithful in suffering, honoring to those around you, and glorifying to God. We are believing He has more beauty and strength and grace in store as He continues to work in you and through you.

We're in your corner!

Pastor Tim and Pastor Angel

Next Steps

As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.

Colossians 2:6-7

Discipleship Journey

At North Hills Church, we believe following Jesus is a trail that keeps unfolding the further you walk it. Our Discipleship Journey is a guided path of group studies — ranging from four to eight weeks — designed to help you explore what it actually looks like to live like Jesus in your everyday life. Whatever your next step is, there's a place for you to take it.

Grab a trail map at nhillschurch.org/walk

Community Groups

Life-change happens in community. North Hills small groups are the perfect way to put your roots down deep, make friends, and grow in your relationship with God. No matter what season of life you are in, there is a group for you!

Find your circle at nhillschurch.org/groups

Faith in Action

One of the best ways to grow as a follower of Jesus is to serve. At North Hills, there's a place for everyone — whether you love being up front or prefer working behind the scenes, and no matter your age. Our volunteer teams are where faith gets lived out together. We'd love to have you join us.

Find your spot at nhillschurch.org/volunteer