



SUNDAYS | APRIL 24 - MAY 22

One cannot read the book of James without walking away with a couple of bruises. He cuts through the flowery words, skips past the niceties, omits the pleasantries, and hits us between the eyes. "Faith without works is dead." "Tame that tongue of yours." "Don't just be hearers of the word, but doers." Speaking to Easter People who have heard the Gospel, James comes not with a warm embrace but packing a punch.

April 24 • A Jab of Temptation

Let's not blame our shortcomings on temptations, especially suggesting that such temptations come from God. God tempts no one to sin. We are people of Easter. We have been named and claimed by the resurrected Lord. It is time to walk as such.
James 1:5-15; Matthew 5:11-16

May 1 • A Hook to Partiality

The Bible has this amazing way of leveling the playing field. From janitor to president, in God's sight, we are all equal—equal in need of forgiveness, equal in worth, equal in value. It is a consistent message from Jesus to Paul to James. Show no partiality.
James 2:1-13; Luke 14:12-14

May 8 • An Uppercut to the Jaw of Grace

The hallmark of the Protestant Reformation was justification

by faith alone apart from works of the law. Perhaps that is why Luther called James the "straw epistle." It doesn't mention the resurrection. It only uses Jesus' name twice. And it is so bold as to come right out and say, "A person is justified by works and not by faith alone." In good Lutheran manner we ask, "What does this mean?"
James 1:22, 14-26; Romans 3:19-20, 27-28

May 15 • A Punch in the Mouth

When we chanted in the school yard that "Sticks and stone may hurt my bones, but names will never hurt me," we never did believe it, did we? Our words have great damaging effect. A tongue is like the small rudder on a boat. It isn't that big, but it can steer the entire vessel. Best to hold onto those reigns tightly.
James 3:1-12; Matthew 5:21-22

May 22 • A Combination of Slander, Arrogance & Oaths

James ends with a list of do's and don'ts—making friends with the world, slandering a person, avoiding oaths, praying for others and preventing backsliding. It is not intended to be an onerous thing to care for one another, but rather the marks of what it means to be in a Christian community. We build up one another to live a life worthy of our calling as people of the Resurrection.
James 4:1-10; Romans 12:1-3; John 17:13-19

