

# 1 John and James: Comparisons and Contrasts

## A Study Guide

1. Let's go over the "Orienting Data" for James and for John.  
[see handout]
  
2. Purpose:
  - a. 1 John: that believers may know they have eternal life, 1Jo 5:13
  - b. James: an exhortation for believers to strive to become pure in heart, Jam 4:8.
  
3. Main Concern
  - a. John's main concern is combating the dangerous influence of false teachers on the congregation. [see handout]
  - b. James' main concern is combating the lusts of the flesh in the congregation. ( Jam 1:13-17; 3:13-18; 4:1-3, 8 )
  
4. Imperative and Indicative
  - a. James is heavy on the imperative mood [see handouts]
  - b. John is heavy on the indicative mood [see handout]

## 5. The teachings of Jesus

- a. John echoes Jesus as He is recorded in the Gospel of John – particularly in the Upper Room Discourse ( Joh 13-17)
- b. James echoes Jesus as He is recorded in the Gospel of Matthew – particularly in the Sermon on the Mount (Mat 5-7)

## 6. What they write a lot about

- a. John writes a lot about life and love [see handout]
- b. James writes a lot about law [see handout]

## 7. 1 John reinforces basic truths about our Lord Jesus Christ (this is not found in James)

- a. His humanity and His deity
  - i. He has come in the flesh , 1Jo 1:1-2; 4:2
  - ii. He is the Son of God, 1Jo 1:3; 3:8; 4:15; 5:5, 10-13, 20
- b. His death on the cross redeemed us from our sins and propitiated the Father, 1Jo 1:7. 2:1-2, 12; 3:5
- c. Jesus Christ is our Advocate with the Father, 1Jo 2:1
- d. Jesus Christ is the Messiah and the Son of God, 1Jo 2:22-23; 5:5-13
- e. Jesus Christ is righteous, 1Jo 2:1,29
- f. The Lord has given us the Spirit, 1Jo 3:24

- g. We are in Christ and He abides in us, 1Jo 3:24; 5:20
8. When John deals with practical Christianity, his subject matter is very similar to that of James
- a. The tongue
    - i. Jam 1:19, 26; 2:14-18; 3:2-12 (James deals with sins of the tongue in the congregation)
    - ii. 1Jo 1:6,8, 10; 2:4; 4:20 (John deals with the lies that the false teachers say)
  - b. The plight of the poor
    - i. Jam 2:1-9; 5:1-5
    - ii. 1Jo 3:16-18
  - c. Purifying ourselves
    - i. Jam 4:8 (using an imperative)
    - ii. 1Jo 3:3 (using an indicative)
  - d. Confessing sins and refraining from sin
    - i. 1Jo 1:8-10; 2:1
    - ii. Jam 2:19-21; 5:16
  - e. Hypocrisy (saying one thing but living the opposite way)
    - i. Jam 1:22; 2:16
    - ii. 1Jo 2:3-6, 9; 3:18; 4:20
  - f. Sin and death
    - i. Jam 1:13-15; 5:20
    - ii. 1Jo 1:7-9; 2:12; 3:14; 5:16-18

- g. Turning a brother from his sins
  - i. Jam 5:19-20
  - ii. 1Jo 5:16
- h. The evil of friendship (love) with the world
  - i. Jam 4:4
  - ii. 1Jo 2:15-17
- i. We are to practice righteousness
  - i. Jam 1:19-20; 2:20-24; 3:18
  - ii. 1Jo 2:29; 3:7
- j. Prayer
  - i. Jam 5:14-18
  - ii. 1Jo 3:22-23; 5:14-16