

**#1 – JAMES 1: CHRISTIAN MATURITY (Peter Burton)**

- Where have you seen God at work in your life this week? (Share any brief examples and encouragements).
- Was there anything from Sunday's message which you found particularly inspiring or challenging?
- Was there anything else you particularly noticed?

**James 1:1-4 (Please read the whole chapter)**

*James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes scattered among the nations: Greetings. Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything...*

James, the author of this book which bears his name, was, it is widely thought, the younger brother of Jesus, who was martyred for his faith in 62 AD. It is a letter crammed full of practical wisdom, written to exiled Jewish followers of Jesus. 'James the Just' led the Jerusalem Church through 20 years of famine, poverty, pioneering and persecution. His life had more than its share of trials and temptations, and yet he writes with great joy and confidence in God. As followers of the way of Jesus, not one of us is exempt from trouble, and so, this is a book for us all.

- *What trials have you faced since you became a Christian? How has your faith been tested?*
- *Is there a trial you are facing right now?*
- *What story are you telling yourself about the trial you are facing?*
- *What does it mean to 'consider it pure joy'? Is that even possible?*
- *Where have you found joy in the middle of trouble? Can you find it now?*
- *Have you been tempted to give up your faith? Perhaps you did give up... What brought you back?*
- *What might it look like to be 'mature and complete'? How 'complete' are you?*
- *What are you still lacking? (Do you blame God? v.13... get angry? v.19, something else?)*
- *How do we take responsibility for the way we respond in times of trial and temptation? (vv. 12-16)*
- *What is 'the word planted in you'? (v.21) What does it mean to 'do what it says' (v.22)*
- *How is your tongue? (v.26) Or you thumb-tongue on social media? How is your religion going? (v.27)*