

James - Not Just Jesus' Brother Anymore James 1:1

James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes scattered among the nations: Greetings.² Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds,³ because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance.⁴ Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

Tracking the Author's Transformation:

- _____: The ultimate sibling _____!
- _____: thought his brother is _____!
- _____: A mess not a _____!
- _____: Had he _____?
- _____: Of the Lord Jesus Christ

What Happened?

_____. James met the _____!

The Real Question:

Not whether I _____, but
how Jesus _____?

Small Group Guide

Was there any one insight from the story of James' changing relationship with Jesus that you found to be particularly surprising or helpful?

This weekend we saw that Jesus' brother, James, was a skeptic for a long time - then all at once, he got it. What is the Significance of James being the author of a book on authentic Christianity? Explain.

Have you ever observed anyone who went from being a strong skeptic to a full-on follower of Jesus almost overnight? If so, what happened and how did it change their attitude and actions?

How does James commitment to his brother Jesus affect your own commitment to Christ?

Describe your initial response when you first heard the truth about Jesus' resurrection? Was it closer to being a skeptic or sold-out follower? What factors influenced your initial response to the truth and power of Jesus' resurrection? Then explain what, if anything, happened to change your initial response?

How can a better understanding of James journey to faith help you interact better with acquaintances who are skeptical about Jesus and the power of His resurrection?

In some ways verse 1 is a statement about James' identity. How do you think it affected his ability to live out the Christian life? Have you thought about your identity in relation to God lately? Can we really live out the life God calls us to without knowing our identity?

Several passages in the New Testament make it clear that God intends for Christians to have great power available to them because of Jesus' resurrection. One of the Apostle Paul's prayers for followers of Jesus asks specifically that they might grasp the incredible impact of the resurrection in their day-to-day life. Read **Ephesians 1:1-23** and then jot down some of the key points you observe.

If you have one, share the best example of the power of the resurrection that you have ever personally experienced or witnessed?