JAMES WRAP-UP / NEW SERIES INTRO

INTRO: Today I have two goals. One, put-a-bow on our 14-lesson study in James. Two, do an introduction to our next series.

THE BOOK OF JAMES

- **AUTHORSHIP (v. 1)** – Who humanly wrote it? James, the half-brother of Jesus (Jesus had 4 brothers and two sisters). James was the oldest next to Jesus. Early on saw Jesus as a bit crazy and an embarrassment. He, along with his siblings, were post-resurrection believers. James became leader of the Jerusalem church (early 30's) until he was martyred by Jewish leaders in 62 AD – pushed off Temple and then stoned. (Acts 12:1-5).
- **AUDIENCE (v. 1)** – He writes a circular letter to Jewish Christians dispersed by Roman and Jewish persecution, who had lost almost everything and were undergoing intense suffering for their newly embraced faith.
- **DATE** – Best 45-48 AD. No mention of Jerusalem Council (49 AD) or destruction of Temple (70 AD). The earliest NT book of Christian teachings.
- **THEME** – To encourage them to remain strong and to instruct them in what they needed to know and do to mature in their journey. James instructs them in 13 specific skills they needed to develop. James asks this uncomfortable question, "You say you believe, then why do you live like you don't?" Then he explains what that life looks like. Rate yourself on each: 1 (Almost never), 2 (Sometimes), 3 (Normally), 4 (Almost always) . . . show those two previous slides again! Take note of strongest and weakest areas. They are tests of maturity.

NEXT SERIES? LIFE LESSONS FROM FAMOUS FAILURES

We tend to see biblical characters as spiritual "giants," facing incredible circumstances, yet always triumphed, and ended up in the Hebrews 11 Hall of Fame. Some did (Abraham, Moses, Samson, David). More did not. Some never recovered from their failures (Adam and Eve, Lot, Achan, Saul, Solomon).

- BIG IDEA – Failure never has to be final (Pro. 24:16). Valuable lessons can to be learned from flawed biblical characters.
- Recognize these failures? Lay and Skilling, Akers, Johnson, Winterkorn, Holmes, Nardelli, etc.
- Life is a battle and the casualty rate is high. True biblical history over last 5000 years and still true today. People of the Bible fought all kinds of battles. Many of the same enemies remain our enemies to this day. The Bible is an honest book, recording not only the successes, but also the sins of the saints. There are many famous failures in God's Word. Many heroes of the faith were guilty of sins like: lying, deceit, robbery, adultery, greed, even murder. Our struggles are just as real today. Like those people of faith, we all fail at times. Like them, some recover, others don't. Failing doesn't make us a failure, but quitting or refusing to repent can (Prov. 24:16). Much can be learned from some of the Bible's not-so-perfect saints. Their failures can both warn and encourage us. No matter the failure, all can make a comeback. Don't miss this series. Valuable lessons can be learned from some of God's Famous Failures.

Each life shouts, regardless of how they failed, "There is hope!" We will look at 9 OT characters by surveying their life, then failure(s), and offer lessons to learn and live from each.

1. Adam and Eve – The First Failures – The Legacy of Adam and Eve
2. Abraham – The Faithless Man of Faith (Heb. 11 – HoF)
3. Lot – The Mugwump!
4. Moses – The Successful Failure (Heb. 11 – HoF)
5. Achan – The Power of Secret Sin
6. Samson – The Weak Strong Man (Heb. 11 – HoF)
7. Saul – He Had Everything and Became Nothing
8. David – A Failure After God's Own Heart (Heb. 11 – HoF)
9. Solomon – The Wisest Fool Who Ever Lived

CONC: The Book of James has left us bruised, bleeding and challenged to live out our faith. He has challenged us to not only know the way/truth, but to live it. Next, will look at some biblical failures and life lessons to be learned and lived.