

Two ways to do the studies:

1. **Do studies the usual way** (look at a chunk of text, ask questions about it, apply to our lives, pray). I'll be sending out studies each week to help you in your preparation (see next page).
2. **Do an extended version of what we did on the SGL Training Day.**
 - a. Have the group read through the whole book, looking for themes and connections.
 - b. On a big piece of paper, write down the main themes, and see if you can see some connections between them (ie. Judgment and speaking seem to be connected).
 - a. and b. would probably take up an entire night.**
 - c. Then pick one theme per week (I strongly recommend following the themes indicated in the sermon outline – see the email for those) and work through it.
 - i. Have the group read through James and find all instances where that theme is mentioned. (If you print out the James document I've attached with the email, people can go through and highlight the theme in a particular colour and jot notes in the margins)
 - ii. Ask the group: what is James teaching about this topic? What parts are hard to understand? How does tracing the theme through the book help us to understand it better?
 - iii. Make sure you give a good chunk of time to application: What challenges or encouragements does James have for us in this area? How do we need to respond to this? What practical changes can you make in your life in response?
 - d. Pray

A note on this method: this method is great for helping people to understand Bible books as they were intended to be understood – as 'complete packages', rather than something to be dipped in and out of arbitrarily, with little consideration to context.

People tend to get a more holistic understanding of the message (and hopefully then apply that in their lives) than they do with (some) other methods of Bible study. This is especially likely to be true of James, because of its unique structure.

That said, it will be *painful* for some members of your group, especially those who are unused to extended textual study, and possibly some extroverts.

It also requires some deftness on the part of the leader, to help people go further with discussion, so new leaders might find it tricky.