

WALKING THE TALK: JACOBITE EXHORTATION AS A MISSIOLOGICAL METHOD

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Abstract: A study of the Epistle of James reveals that true faith is expressed in obedience. The message of the letter, therefore, is not just a set of rules but a call to transformation, transcending the mere observance of rules. It is designed to shape a new community of disciples who embody a new way of life, a life that belongs to the new era established by Jesus Christ through His death and resurrection. This new life changes believers and enables them to radiate Christ's life to the world. The letter advocates for a life of faith expressed through obedience, providing practical biblical principles for living in a way that pleases God and fosters connections with others. The book is designed to inspire dispersed messianic communities to uphold God's moral and ethical standards in their daily lives and, in doing so, to experience the transformative power of Christ.

INTRODUCTION

James' letter asserts direct ethical teachings and authoritative statements that call on the messianic communities to demonstrate their faith through obedience. Essentially, it encourages believers to unite their obedience with their faith, emphasizing that faith without works is dead (2:17). This meticulously composed document aligns with the traditional teaching patterns of the Word of God, particularly the Torah.¹ The letter addresses the twelve tribes scattered among the nations (1:1) and encourages all readers to embrace its teachings, regardless of their church or city affiliations. The letter highlights essential themes that illustrate James's commitment to ethical behavior as outlined in the Torah. These themes include the importance of facing trials, demonstrating faith through action, showing perseverance, advocating for socio-economic justice, using respectful speech, displaying compassion for the marginalized and needy, and obeying the commandment to love God and others. Additionally, the letter discusses the temptation of violence, offers practical advice on responding biblically, and emphasizes the need to provide pastoral care for those who are lost and wandering. Adhering to these ethical standards is not a mere suggestion but a responsibility and accountability that believers must earnestly embrace.

Surprisingly, Christians have avoided this book in their studies or at least given it short shrift because most assume it contradicts Paul's preaching of salvation by grace. On the contrary, the letter reveals that true faith is expressed in obedience. The letter is not just a set of rules but a call to transformation, transcending the mere observance of rules. It shapes a new community of disciples who embody a new way of life, a life that belongs to the new era established by Jesus Christ through His death and resurrection.

This new life, transformed by the power of Jesus Christ's resurrection, changes believers and enables them to radiate Christ's life to the world. Hence, the letter advocates for a life of faith expressed through obedience, providing practical biblical principles for living in a way that pleases God and fosters connections with others. Those who follow God's Word serve as a living testament to their faith, demonstrating that Christianity is not just a religion but a relationship with the resurrected Christ and the transformative power it brings. The letter of James inspires dispersed messianic communities to uphold God's moral and ethical standards in their daily lives and, in doing so, to experience the transformative power of Christ.

These messianic communities endured various trials and hardships. The letter encourages these communities to find joy in their circumstances, as they can help build patience and lead to perfection and fulfillment. The letter of James was a guide and a unifying force, reminding members to support those in

¹ Scot McKnight, *The Letter of James* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2011), 44.

need and cautioning the wealthy to prioritize ethical living. The communities were more than just a group of individuals; they were a family, aligning their behavior with their shared principles. This behavior fostered a sense of belonging and unity in their commitment to God's moral and ethical standards, making each member feel valued and part of something greater.

In his message to believers enduring trials, James urges them to persevere, knowing God uses these challenges to refine them in their spiritual journey. Through patience, these trials shape them into wholehearted disciples of Christ, lacking nothing (1:4). Understanding God's purpose in trials can be difficult, so he advises them to seek wisdom from God to discern their purposes and what God intends to allow in their lives (1:5). These trials can range from everyday struggles to inner conflicts between following God's word and personal desires, ultimately leading to sanctification brought about by external struggles faced daily due to their faith. James also strongly warns wealthy oppressors who exploit the poor, amass wealth unfairly, and disregard the well-being of their fellow believers (2:6, 5:3, 5:5). He reminds them of the approaching judgment day (5:1-7) and encourages believers to remain faithful in this life, expecting a reward in the future.

The duty of Christians is to live in a way that brings honor to Him and fulfills His command to spread the gospel and disciple all nations. The Bible teaches us that just as the Father sent Jesus, He also sends us to share the message of the Kingdom of God to the ends of the earth (Matthew 28:18-20; John 17:18; 20:21; Acts 1:5-8). Therefore, preaching and making disciples is a sacred responsibility that the church has faithfully fulfilled throughout history and will continue to do until His return. However, for the message of Christ to truly impact the unbelieving world, it must first be lived out by those who proclaim it. Sharing the Good News of the Lord Jesus Christ involves displaying the fruit of the Spirit and proclaiming the message (John 15:10; Galatians 5:16-24).

In addition to facing persecution, one of the church's significant challenges is complacency, which involves embracing a worldly lifestyle that diminishes the church's ability to serve as a guiding light in the world. To counteract the threat of complacency, the church can actively demonstrate its faith through obedience. Therefore, an examination of the letter of James encourages believers to purposefully participate in God's mission through a life of obedience. Although James does not explicitly promote the messianic community to engage in missionary work, a missiological interpretation of the book offers valuable insights into spiritual growth and discipleship practices. James urges believers to lead ethical and moral lives that bring honor to God through a combination of faith and obedience.

MISSIOLOGICAL MODELS AND METHODS

Before discussing a missiological method in James' letter, looking at different views on the missiological models is essential. The two major missionary models in practice worldwide are Incarnational Missiology,² where Jesus is the model missionary, and Representational Missiology, where Paul is the model missionary.³

In the Incarnational Missiology, three groups differ in understanding and applying biblical passages. Liberation-Incarnationalists take their cues from Israel's emancipation from Egypt and Jesus' announcement in Luke 4:16–20. They believe that Jesus is the great liberator and emancipator of men

² Some theologians argue that the term "Incarnation" presents both lexical (vocabulary) and semantic (meaning in language) challenges. They note that the English word "Incarnation" is derived from the Latin "incarnates" and refers to the process by which the second person of the Trinity took on human form (John 1:14). Therefore, strictly speaking, only God the Son is the subject of incarnation. This theological assertion creates a difficulty when applying the term to humans, as no human can be reborn into another culture and take on physical form like Jesus Christ did. The second issue is semantic, as there is concern that emphasizing the mission of Jesus as a movement toward addressing political and socio-political injustices may shift the focus away from preaching the good news to the unsaved world and toward social justice. See Ross Langmead, *The Word Made Flesh: Towards an Incarnational Missiology* (Lanham: UPA, 2004), 19; Duan Litfin, *Wors versus Deed* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2012), 164–65, Craig Ott and Stephen Strauss, *Encountering Theology of Mission* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), 100.

³ David J. Hesselgrave & Keith E. Eitel, eds., *Paradigms in Conflict*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academics, 2018), 129–51.

from enslavement, to which sin subjects them to ignorance, misery, hunger, operation injustice, and hatred.⁴ For them, the solemn obligation of the church is to be an agent of socio-political revolution where the oppressed achieve their liberation.⁵ Holism-Incarnationalists seek the extension of Christ's Kingdom over life and society. The adherents of this view, like John Stott, think of witness in terms of word, deed, and sign. They see Jesus as the transformer of societies, cultures, and individuals. Conversion-Incarnationalists see the mission of the church in terms of discipling the *ethnē* by proclaiming the Good News, bringing people to Christ, baptizing, instructing them, and incorporating them into the church body.⁶

Representational Missiology takes Paul as its model of missiology. Two words stand out in this model to help understand its difference from that of Incarnationalists: *discontinuity* and *witness*. Köstenberegger describes it:

Another view, the "representational model," accentuates more keenly the discontinuity between the respective missions of Jesus and his disciples. It acknowledges the uniqueness of Jesus' person and work while viewing the primary task of his disciples as witnessing to Jesus. While Jesus can be said to "give life" in a primary sense, the disciples' contribution is limited to their witness.⁷

Representationalists emphasize the unbroken connection between the message of salvation in the Old and New Testaments and between the gospel of Christ and the message of the gospel preached by Paul. According to them, Paul can declare that Jesus Christ has been crucified, raised from the dead, and seen by the disciples (1 Cor 15:3–9), which makes the post-passion gospel complete and distinct. In this model, the word "witness" is especially significant for representationalism. It highlights that missionaries are sinners saved by grace and have no ground for preaching to others apart from their witness to the saving power of their Lord Jesus Christ.⁸

Some Evangelicals embrace incarnational models, but reject the Liberation-Incarnational model. Instead, they adhere to two different incarnational models: holism-incarnation and conversion-incarnation. Other Evangelicals follow representative models. Conversion-incarnationalists can coexist with Representationalists in a collaborative relationship. Both models can find common ground and draw inspiration from the examples set by Christ and Paul in advancing the gospel's message through missions. Therefore, when discussing missiological methods, one can refer to either or both models based on personal preferences. Christians should look to Jesus as the ultimate example, Lord and Savior. The Book of Hebrews emphasizes that Christ is the founder and perfecter of faith, as well as the apostle and High Priest of the confession of that faith (Heb 12:2; 3:1). Paul himself made it clear that he was an imitator of Christ (1 Cor 11:1). Jesus Christ is the model for Christian lives and ministry. Examining Paul's method of mission work in the context of the church's mission can also be instructive. Don N. Howell writes,

From the moment of his conversion, Paul understood the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ to be his mission in life. However, he was more than an itinerant evangelist. He aimed to bring the Gentiles to the obedience of faith (Rom. 1:5) and to organize his converts into self-governing churches. Paul energetically labored not to gain many converts but to present each person mature in Christ (Col. 1:28-29). Such maturity in the corporate congregation of believers occurs as each one exercises his or her gifts to the edification of the whole (Eph. 4:11-16). In short, Paul was a pioneering church-planting evangelist.⁹

⁴ Gustavo Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, trans., and ed., Caridad Inda and John Eagleson (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1973), 281–82.

⁵ Hesselgrave and Eitel, 132.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 133–4.

⁷ Andreas Köstenberger, *The Mission of Jesus and the Disciples According to the Fourth Gospel: With Implication for the Fourth Gospel's Purpose and the Mission of the Contemporary Church* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 3–4.

⁸ Hesselgrave and Eitel, 136–38.

⁹ Don N. Howell Jr., "Mission in Paul's Epistles: Genesis, Pattern, and Dynamics." *Mission in the New Testament: An evangelical approach* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2001): 63–91.

As previously discussed, both models play a crucial role in the mission to fulfill God's will and share His message. From a practical perspective, both models are valuable for individuals who wish to aid and build connections with others, whether locally or internationally. By emulating the humility, selflessness, and sacrifice demonstrated by Jesus and Paul, believers can spread the gospel to many. Therefore, it is important to recognize the value of both models and not separate them from one another.

James' letter profoundly impacts the believer's journey toward perfection by encouraging them to model their work with faith and moral ethics after Christ. It emphasizes the importance of demonstrating Christ's love and care for humanity in everyday life, in addition to the eschatological reward. The letter identifies the followers of Christ by their conduct among their neighbors through the fruits of their labor. By aligning faith with good works, the spiritual community can spread the glorious gospel of Christ. Embracing the imitation of Christ as a way of life is key to gaining traction in witnessing, as evidenced by church history and contemporary experiences. Obedient living and practicing charity bear more fruit than living according to worldly desires or in a nominal manner.

Elsa Tómez shares a powerful account of her experience in Latin America, where she encountered individuals who identified as Christian but did not demonstrate God's love through their actions. She raises the concern that if the letter of James were delivered to Christian communities in a country plagued by violence and exploitation, government security forces could intercept it because the letter of James condemns oppression and injustice by the wealthy and powerful. Tómez's firsthand experiences have led her to believe that some who claim to be Christian do not live by their faith, using religion as a means of oppression in politics and business. However, faith should show itself in good works that honor God and benefit the neighbor. While her viewpoint aligns with the Liberation-Incarnational model rooted in liberation theology, which may not be universally accepted, there is a shared belief that God desires justice and righteousness.¹⁰ James encourages the community to obey and show their obedience with good works.

Acknowledging the balance within Christianity is essential, where neither social action nor personal holiness should overshadow the other. Genuine faith requires a harmonious blend of individual and ecclesiastical commitment. Merely engaging in acts of charity in the name of Jesus may not effectively bring people to Christ if they do not witness a transformation in those reaching out to them. Similarly, a morally upright believer who does not demonstrate love and aid to the needy may struggle to share Christ's message with others. So, how can the Christian effectively reach out to the world? Acts of charity and a personal relationship with Jesus demonstrated through the fruits of the Spirit lead to acceptable worship and outreach to others. Therefore, orthodoxy and orthopraxy go together. By intentionally honoring God and extending help to others, Christians can make a meaningful impact that alleviates suffering and offers eternal life to many.¹¹

TRIALS OF MANY KINDS: INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL TRIALS (1:2–15; 5:7–11)

In this passage, James encourages believers to embrace trials with joy, as they can lead to spiritual growth by cultivating patience. He emphasizes that developing patience can lead to spiritual maturity and a sense of completeness, even though it can be challenging to understand why suffering is necessary. For those who are confused and do not see the benefits of enduring hardships while remaining faithful to God, James highlights the importance of seeking wisdom from God to understand the purpose and outcomes of

¹⁰ Liberation-Incarnationalists take their cue from Israel's emancipation from Egypt, a servant passage in Isaiah, and Christ's incarnation and ministry, especially Jesus' announcement in Luke 4:16–20. They view Jesus as a great liberator and emancipator from all kinds of enslavement to which sin has subjected them. The most influential of liberation theologians is Gustavo Gutiérrez. They contend that the church's solemn obligation is to be the divine agent of a sociopolitical revolution so the oppressed may achieve total liberation on earth. See David J. Hesselgrave and Keith E. Eitel, eds., *Paradigms in Conflict*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academy, 2018); Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation*; Roland Allen, *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1962).

¹¹ Craig L. Blomberg and Mariam J. Kamell, *James: Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*, Clinton E. Arnold, ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2008), 100.

these trials. He also emphasizes that God is not the author of evil but instead oversees every situation for the benefit and growth of His followers. By following this divine guidance, believers can mature in their faith and ultimately receive a reward from God. New Testament believers have the advantage of enduring suffering with the help of the Holy Spirit, enabling them to bear fruit and testify to the risen Lord, bringing glory to Him.

The letter explores the inner struggles that followers of the faith may encounter when facing external challenges and trials. External pressures have the potential to test one's faith in the Lord unless one chooses to place reliance on God. This internal struggle can lead believers astray, as it can be challenging to sense His presence during trying times. Therefore, James advises his audience to draw nearer to God when tempted. When a believer reacts inappropriately to trials intended by God to foster growth, it becomes a temptation that the devil can exploit to lead the believer into sin. However, this internal trial also presents a significant opportunity for spiritual development for those who comprehend that God does not set temptation traps. When believers grasp the nature of God, His benevolent intentions, and His bestowal of good things, they begin to live by God's wisdom, relying on Him and His strength to withstand the influence of temptation (1:13; 4:8-10).

Hence, those who persevere through trials, recognizing that God desires His children to endure with patience, will ultimately receive the crown of life promised by the Lord. The persecution of believers, referred to as external trials, is a common experience for Christians due to their faith in Jesus. Early Christians were known for finding joy in their sufferings and tribulations, knowing that a crown of life awaited them in heaven. There is a notable example in the book *From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya*, where Ruth Tucker shares accounts of early believers who encountered persecution and death, leading many non-believers to embrace the Kingdom of God during the early Roman empire. The unwavering faith of these early Christians was evident not just in their lives but also in their deaths, as they faced persecution with confidence and a willingness to become martyrs.¹² Similarly, James encourages believers to endure suffering and turn to prayer, drawing inspiration from the perseverance of Job, who was ultimately shown compassion and mercy by the Lord (5:10-13).

CARING FOR OTHERS AS TRUE RELIGION (1:27)

According to James, caring for orphans and widows is fundamental to the community's spiritual values, reflecting a pure and genuine faith. He emphasizes that those who ignore the needs of others are only fooling themselves, and their religious devotion is insincere. Therefore, believers ought to prioritize helping those in need within their community. By supporting the vulnerable, individuals can lessen their suffering and demonstrate a genuine religious commitment pleasing to the divine. The passage echoes the proclamation in Psalms 24:4 that individuals who find favor with God are those with pure hearts and clean hands. This depiction illustrates the intersection of ritual and moral symbolism.

The Old Testament emphasizes caring for vulnerable individuals and refraining from mistreating widows and orphans. This command is clearly stated in Exodus 22:22 and reiterated in Deuteronomy 10:18, highlighting the significance of providing for their needs. It is evident that helping those in distress, whether due to loss or poverty, is pleasing to the Lord. Additionally, James urges the community to maintain moral purity and remain unstained by the world. This call for holiness emphasizes the contrast between the Kingdom of God and the world, with believers demonstrating their sanctified lives through their actions. The Bible emphasizes holiness as God himself is holy (1 Peter 1:13–16) and separation from worldly desires to live by God's will (1 John 2:12-17; 1 Pet. 2:9-10; Rom. 12:1-2).

WEALTH AND POVERTY AND JUSTICE DECONSTRUCTED (4:13-16; 5:1–6)

¹² See Ruth Tucker, *From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya: A Biographical History of Christian Missions* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 1983).

James calls on the community to avoid preferential treatment towards the wealthy and influential, as they often unfairly condemn and mistreat the poor. He warns those who are rich not forget its transience and use material resources to buy preferential treatment (4:13, 15-16). Instead, they can use their wealth to help the neediest. He also highlights the abuse of power to exploit the vulnerable for personal gain, which he describes as a form of both legal and physical violence. James brings awareness to corruption within law enforcement and the legal system, where those in power abuse their authority. These oppressors, who also hold leadership positions in the community, can dictate seating arrangements in the synagogue and courtroom.¹³ James encourages the righteous to show kindness to one another and to maintain patience during conflicts for multiple reasons: (1) they will receive the crown of life from the Lord in the future, (2) the Lord, who is the righteous Judge, will soon pass judgment, (3) they are urged to pray for one another, and (4) the righteous do not retaliate with violence against evil.

There is a powerful demonstration of the breakdown and function of justice in the experiences of James H. Cone, a black theologian who grew up in the deep south of Arkansas in the 1940s and 1950s. Cone witnessed the harsh realities of Jim Crow and grappled with his faith as he observed the cruelty and injustice faced by African Americans at the hands of those white Americans who professed Christianity. Cone's reflections on this brutal treatment of African Americans led him to conclude that new ways of expressing the truth of the gospel were necessary when the perpetrators of inhumanity controlled the public interpretation of the Christian faith. The confusion and disillusionment made him consider the idea that liberation theology is God's will for the oppressed to move forward in seeking justice and freedom.

Cone also reflected on Malcolm X's characterization of Christianity as the "White Man's religion" and his subsequent embrace of a new religion aimed at combating racism. While Cone did not condone Malcolm X's actions or share his departure from the Christian faith, Cone empathized with his disillusionment with white oppressors who professed to be Christian but did not align their actions with the principles of love and justice that Christ espoused. Ultimately, Cone concluded that the church was the issue, not Christ. He argued that the church did not align with the values of Christ, especially in its treatment of the poor and oppressed, and therefore could not fulfill its prophetic role. These accounts should remind Christians to embody Christ's teachings actively, attract others to His Kingdom, and refrain from actions that could push fellow believers away from the faith.

In addition to preaching, personal testimony, and intellectual argument, the unwavering faith displayed during persecution and the early Christians' nonverbal demonstration of Christian love profoundly impacted evangelism. The letter of James thus urges Christians to live out the faith in ways that are visible to others, as advocated in the New Testament. Living according to God's word truthfully sets an example for others to see the love of God in us and prevents them from rejecting the message. Unfortunately, the church has been complicit in injustice and oppression at various points in history. James addresses economic injustice and public policy with forceful language that may challenge us.¹⁴ It is very clear from the teaching that faith not backed up by good works is not faith.

The Jacobite ethics prioritize the socio-economic factors that contribute to societal well-being, a perspective that differs from some of the ideologies of Liberation Theology. In other words, James does not support responding to violence with more violence, as some Liberation theologians do. Instead, he promotes prayer and patience while awaiting divine intervention. Christians should advocate for social justice and equality in a manner that aligns with the Word of God. For instance, James focuses on addressing the mistreatment of the poor, the injustices committed by the wealthy, the arrogance of merchants, and the importance of showing mercy to those in need and vulnerable (1:9-11, 26-27; 2:1-4, 507, 14-17; 4:13-5:6) without advocating violence at any time.

¹³ McKnight, 396-7.

¹⁴ D. Warden, "The Rich and the Poor in James: Implications for Institutionalized Partiality," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 43 (2000), 247-57, Quoted in Scot McKnight, *The Letter of James* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011), 4.

CONCLUSION

The book of James emphasizes the significance of embodying the gospel of Jesus Christ in daily life, effectively spreading the message of faith. In essence, the letter encourages believers to speak about their faith and live a life that reflects the teachings of Christ through obedience. While the term "mission" is not explicitly used in the letter, James communicates that demonstrating faith through good deeds requires unwavering commitment and adherence to the Scriptures. He expresses his concern for the scattered Christian community, cautioning them against allowing persecution to lead them to contradict the teachings of the word. Instead, he urges them to remain steadfast in obeying God's commandments in the face of adversity. Their faithful obedience will ultimately yield fruits that reflect God's goodness and serve as a testimony to those around them. By enduring hardships, their actions will be evident to the unbelieving world, allowing them to witness the risen Christ through the believers. This demonstration of godliness amidst various trials and injustices they encounter can be a powerful tool for spreading the message of faith in their local community.

During her time as a student in Spain, Rebecca Pippert had a meaningful encounter with a woman named Ruth Siemens, whose warmth and generosity left a lasting impact on her. This experience significantly influenced Pippert's decision to embrace Christianity and reinforced the notion of "lifestyle evangelism." Pippert stresses the importance of living authentically, reflecting one's faith in Christ, thereby demonstrating the gospel to others through acts of obedience.¹⁵ This story highlights the universal desire for the love of God to be evident in His children, creating an openness to receiving the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The letter of James encourages believers to look out for one another with the love of God.

Ruth Tucker also recounts the events surrounding the persecution of early church martyrs. Despite their suffering, these believers remained obedient and faithful to the point of death. Their commitment to pleasing their Lord led to a newfound openness among unbelievers and created an environment conducive to the manifestation of the power of the gospel. Tucker also shares the story of Emperor Julian, who was troubled by the testimony and obedient lifestyle of persecuted Christians, fearing that it might overshadow the members of his religion. The Christians' selfless service to even strangers, including his people, greatly unsettled him, as he saw it as a threat.¹⁶ Persecution and death did not deter the early church from being faithful and obedient unto the Lord to the point of death.

James stresses the importance of Christians showcasing their faith through obedience, which serves as a compelling testimony to the love and righteousness of God in society. Growing up in southern Ethiopia, I saw some Protestant leaders become enthusiastic supporters of communism, leading to oppressive actions toward political dissidents and evangelicals. However, other believers, firm in their faith, remained steadfast in their beliefs and opposed godless Marxist ideology, even in the face of persecution. Those who embraced Marxist ideology caused some immature believers to turn away from their faith and non-believers to be offended. Conversely, those who chose to obey the Lord and endure persecution bore much fruit by bringing many into the Kingdom of God through their lives of obedience in the underground church. Therefore, James' encouragement resonates with us to be living testimonies of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

James delves into several crucial themes fundamental to the Jewish world, the early messianic community, and the current era. These themes encompass God, church community, Torah, salvation, faith and works, socio-economic justice, speech, prayer, wisdom, and eschatology. Each theme shapes the believing community through the new era it represents. The letter provides guidance and fosters the growth of the dispersed Christian community, aiding them in strengthening their moral and ethical

¹⁵ Rebecca Pippert, *Out of the Saltshaker and into the World: Evangelism as a Way of Life* (InterVarsity Press, 2021), 7.

¹⁶ Ruth Tucker, *From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya: A Biographical History of Christian Missions* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 1983), 27.

beliefs. Ultimately, this leads to the expansion of the messianic community, bringing them closer to the likeness and image of the Lord Jesus Christ.

When discussing missions and missionary methods, the most frequently cited approach within the faith community is the commonly known models derived from the ministry of Jesus and Paul's missionary work. However, other missiological models go beyond those based on the lives and ministries of Jesus and Paul that align with biblical principles. The letter of James may [provide such a model. James' focus on obedience, justice, and ethics is crucial for disciple-making, as discipleship is essential for attaining maturity and emulating Jesus Christ. When believers embody the word through their actions and words, they preach it in their proclamation and through a life lived well for His glory.

The New Testament emphasizes the crucial responsibility of spreading the message of Jesus and the salvation He provides to people worldwide (Matt 28:18-20, Mark 16:15-20; Acts 1:8). Jesus preached about the arrival of God's salvation for all humanity, and after His resurrection and ascension, the Holy Spirit marked the beginning of a new era. This new age brings salvation through faith to all who believe in Jesus Christ. Therefore, sharing the gospel is a divine mandate for all believers. Additionally, the Bible addresses the sinful reality that causes injustice and despair in this broken world, as people live in the blessings of the Kingdom of God that are already present but not fully realized. Christians show compassion for the less fortunate and uphold moral and ethical principles by confronting evil with the goodness of God. It is essential to recognize that the church's mission and social action are interconnected, guided by the Spirit and the teachings of the Bible. The letter of James encourages believers to live in a way that brings light to their communities, laying the foundation for reaching the world through a life of faith demonstrated through obedience. This lifestyle evangelism reflects the love and righteousness of God. When the life of Christ shines through His children, the world can see His loving grace extended to them. Thus, James' exhortation can indeed serve as a missiological method.

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