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## P R E F A C E

### *The Bible*

The words of the Bible are the very words of God our Creator speaking to us. They are completely truthful;<sup>1</sup> they are pure;<sup>2</sup> they are powerful;<sup>3</sup> and they are wise and righteous.<sup>4</sup> We should read these words with reverence and awe,<sup>5</sup> and with joy and delight.<sup>6</sup> Through these words God gives us eternal life,<sup>7</sup> and daily nourishes our spiritual lives.<sup>8</sup>

### *The ESV Translation*

The English Standard Version® (ESV®) stands in the classic stream of English Bible translations that goes back nearly five centuries. In this stream, accurate faithfulness to the original text is combined with simplicity, beauty, and dignity of expression. Our goal has been to carry forward this legacy for this generation and generations to come.

The ESV is an “essentially literal” translation that seeks as far as possible to reproduce the meaning and structure of the original text and the personal style of each Bible writer. We have sought to be “as literal as possible” while maintaining clear expression and literary excellence. Therefore the ESV is well suited for both personal reading and church ministry, for devotional reflection and serious study, and for Scripture memorization.

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<sup>1</sup>Ps. 119:160; Prov. 30:5; Titus 1:2; Heb. 6:18 <sup>2</sup>Ps. 12:6 <sup>3</sup>Jer. 23:29; Heb. 4:12; 1 Pet. 1:23

<sup>4</sup>Ps. 19:7–11 <sup>5</sup>Deut. 28:58; Ps. 119:74; Isa. 66:2 <sup>6</sup>Ps. 19:7–11; 119:14, 97, 103; Jer. 15:16

<sup>7</sup>John 6:68; 1 Pet. 1:23 <sup>8</sup>Deut. 32:46; Matt. 4:4

### *The ESV Publishing Team*

The ESV publishing team has included more than a hundred people. The fourteen-member Translation Oversight Committee benefited from the work of fifty biblical experts serving as Translation Review Scholars and from the comments of the more than fifty members of the Advisory Council. This international team from many denominations shares a common commitment to the truth of God's Word and to historic Christian orthodoxy.

### *To God's Honor and Praise*

We know that no Bible translation is perfect; but we also know that God uses imperfect and inadequate things to his honor and praise. So to God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—and to his people—we offer what we have done, with our prayers that it may prove useful, with gratitude for much help given, and with ongoing wonder that our God should ever have entrusted to us so momentous a task.

To God alone be the glory!  
The Translation Oversight Committee



THE LETTER OF  
JAMES

*Greeting*

**I** James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,  
To the twelve tribes in the Dispersion:  
Greetings.

*Testing of Your Faith*

<sup>2</sup>Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, <sup>3</sup>for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. <sup>4</sup>And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

<sup>5</sup>If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. <sup>6</sup>But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. <sup>7</sup>For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; <sup>8</sup>he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

<sup>9</sup>Let the lowly brother boast in his exaltation, <sup>10</sup>and the rich in his humiliation, because like a flower of the grass he will pass away. <sup>11</sup>For the sun rises with its scorching heat and withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beauty perishes. So also will the rich man fade away in the midst of his pursuits.

<sup>12</sup>Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life,



which God has promised to those who love him. <sup>13</sup>Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. <sup>14</sup>But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. <sup>15</sup>Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

<sup>16</sup>Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers. <sup>17</sup>Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. <sup>18</sup>Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

#### *Hearing and Doing the Word*

<sup>19</sup>Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; <sup>20</sup>for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God. <sup>21</sup>Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

<sup>22</sup>But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. <sup>23</sup>For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. <sup>24</sup>For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. <sup>25</sup>But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.

<sup>26</sup>If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless. <sup>27</sup>Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the



