Study Guide for *Commentary on the Catholic Epistles*, by John Calvin

Extra Reading for the course: "The Epistle of James"

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REVIEW QUESTIONS

Translator's Preface // James - The Argument

1. What reason does Owen give for Calvin's ordering of the Catholic Epistles?

2. Who does Owen give as the author of this epistle?

3. Was the Epistle of James universally and instantly accepted as canonical from the time it was written?

Chapter One

1. How does Calvin describe the social standing of Jewish Christians at the time James wrote his letter?

2. How does Calvin define the kind of wisdom we should ask of God?

3. Calvin gives the two psychological/emotional outcomes of being double-minded as what?

4. Complete the quote: "...for if he be accepted of God, he has sufficient consolation in his adoption alone, so as not to grieve unduly for a _____ prosperous state of life."

5. According to Calvin, what is James' objective in chapter 1 verse 15 concerning his teaching on sin?

6. Which word is given the definition, "humility and the readiness of mind disposed to learn," in Calvin's comments on James 1:21?

7. Which Old Testament passage does Calvin reference to support the idea that the law was given to reform us?

Chapter Two

1. Complete the quote: "He sins who honors the rich _____ and despises the poor, and treats him with contempt"?

2. What New Testament cross reference does Calvin give in explaining the phrase, "Hath not God chosen the poor of this world"?

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3. Complete the quote: "For as men commonly exercise their power in doing what is _____, it hence happens, that the more power any one has, the _____ he is, and the more _____ towards his neighbor."

4. Summarize Calvin's argument for keeping the "whole law" in James 2:10.

5. Can faith be separated from love? Why/why not?

6. Complete the quote: "Unless thy faith brings forth _____, I deny that thou has any _____."

7. According to Calvin, why did James place Rahab alongside Abraham to illustrate his point in verse 25?

Chapter Three

1. How does Calvin explain James' use of the term "masters" in verse 1?

2. What exercises "dominion over the whole of life," according to Calvin's comments on verse 3?

3. Complete the quote: "...if we desire to form our life aright, we must especially strive to _____ the tongue, for no part of man does more harm."

4. What was lost in the image of God in human nature when Adam sinned?

5. What two-word phrase is given the definition, "all those duties which benevolent men perform towards their brethren"?

Chapter Four

1. Complete this quote from the Roman poet Horace: "The tyrants of Sicily found no torment greater than _____."

2. True or False? The "adulterers" mentioned in verse 4 should be interpreted literally.

3. What Old Testament passage does Calvin cite to strengthen his interpretation of verse 7? Why?

4. Which early church father said, "As a tree must strike deep roots downwards, that it may grow upwards, so everyone who has not his soul fixed deep in humility, exalts himself to his own ruin"?

5. Which historical figure does Calvin label 'antichrist,' calling him one "who exercises tyranny over the souls of men, making himself a lawgiver equal to God"?

Chapter Five

1. True or False? According to Calvin, James condemns the rich indiscriminately.

2. Why does James use the term "Sabaoth" to describe the Lord in verse 4?

3. How does Calvin explain the call to be patient in light of the Lord's return?

4. According to Calvin, what reason does James have for setting up Job as a good example of patient endurance?

5. What Catholic sacrament shouldn't be in view when interpreting James 4:14-15, according to Calvin?

6. Who does Calvin give as an example of one "fully persuaded that he does not pray in vain"?

7. Complete the quote: "For as the command to pray is common, and as the promise is common, it follows that the _____ also will be common."

8. How does Calvin view the relationship between evangelism/discipleship and mercy ministries (e.g. - giving food to the hungry)?

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