

James 1:9-11
Prosperity can be More Dangerous than Poverty
J.D.Farag

All right, good morning and welcome to our Second Service. On Sunday mornings we have two, the first of which is the Bible Prophecy Update that we do weekly. And now Second Service, which is the sermon, a verse-by-verse study through God's Word.

A couple three weeks ago, we started in the Book of James, having completed the Book of Hebrews, and today's text is going to be Chapter 1:9-11. So I'll ask those of you that are here if you're able to stand. You can follow along, as I read. If not where you're seated is fine.

James continues to write by the Spirit and says, verse 9, **"Believers in humble circumstances ought to take pride in their high position. But the rich should take pride in their humiliation - since they will pass away like a wild flower. For the sun rises with scorching heat and withers the plant; its blossom falls and its beauty is destroyed. In the same way, the rich will fade away even while they go about their business."**

Let's pray. If you would please join with me. Father in heaven, I am so thankful to You for this time that we, as a church, as Your church have together in Your Word, particularly as it relates to this passage that's before us today.

Lord, it's here for a reason. All scripture is God breathed. So You've got something here that You want us to see and know. So Lord, we need for the Holy Spirit now to get our attention and keep our attention so our minds don't wander because they're prone to do that. And when that happens, we miss what it is that You have for us, and I don't think there's any of us here that want that.

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That's why we're here. We're here for You to speak into our lives in and through Your Word. So Lord, will You do that? Will You speak? Your servants are listening. We ask in Jesus' name, amen and amen.

You can be seated. Thank you.

This is what I love about God's Word and teaching verse-by-verse. What I'm hoping to do today is answer the question of why it is that prosperity can be more dangerous than poverty in the life of a Christian.

They can both be dangerous, but based on what James, by the Spirit, writes in the text that's before us today, true to form, he really addresses this issue of how dangerous prosperity can be.

This is a word for the rich. Nothing wrong with being rich. It's not what you have, it's what has you. And this is what he's going to tackle here in the text.

And in so doing, we're provided with a clear explanation in no uncertain terms, which as we get to know James in our study through this epistle, that's going to become abundantly clear. It already has in a way. I mean, very blunt, very clear. He pulls no punches and in no uncertain terms, he's going to now address this issue concerning the dangers of prosperity.

I think before we jump in, it would be appropriate by way of a reminder to share with you the most misquoted verse in all of the Bible. You know which one I'm talking about?

It's when the Apostle Paul writes to Timothy and says that **"The love of money" [not money] "the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil"**.

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So this is the danger, and we're going to talk about that. The first one is in verse 9, and it's that prosperity can foster spiritual pride.

Here, James makes it clear that the believers who aren't wealthy and humble by earthly standards should actually take pride in their exalted position.

Now that's quite paradoxical, isn't it? Because you would think he would say the exact opposite, but he doesn't.

Which brings up the question, and the question is: Why is he starting out this way?

And the answer is, is that it's because the rich Christian who is wealthy by the world's standards, is prone to fancy themselves as being more blessed than others.

This is what in turn leads to spiritual pride. Here's what it looks like: Here's this wealthy Christian that certainly has been prospered, and they'll let you know by the car that they drive and the clothes that they wear and the bling that is on them. And we're going to talk about this when James addresses this again later on.

He said, Hey, if somebody walks into your church, Pastor - this is to me. You can come, but it's to me. Don't show them - well, it's to you too. So don't show them favoritism. A guy walks in; he's got bling on all over. Gold rings on all of his fingers and the big gold chain. And he's not a rapper. He's just got bling.

Pulls up in his Mercedes Benz or whatever and walks into your church. You're like, Oh, brother, have a seat here. You, get up! What are you doing sitting there? You go in the back. Here, can we get you anything? A cup of coffee maybe?

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What are you doing? Well, maybe better asked, why are you doing that?

Because that's how we think. We look at that guy and we think, Wow, this guy is blessed of God! He has the favor of God.

I'm not. I don't drive that kind of car. God must favor him more than me.

And make no mistake about it, they're going to eat that up. In fact, they will invite and encourage that from you, which is why they dress like that. They want you to notice that. Look at me.

Did you see the kind of car I pulled up in?

Yeah, I think if it's the same one I'm thinking about, it's got a huge door-ding in it because you tried to park at an angle so it wouldn't. And then somebody saw that and thought, Oh, I know where I'm going to park, and so it's got a door-ding in it now.

It's all going to burn. And that's really the point that James is going to make here.

But the issue here is that the believer who is not rich sees themselves as being humble. And by the way, humility comes from the word humiliate.

That's why we have this word here in our text today. It's a humiliation. And what's the opposite of humility? Pride. And so here's the rich brother in Christ who is taking pride in their status by worldly standards.

Here's the thing. Our net worth has absolutely nothing to do with our self-worth in Christ. Oh, man looks at the outward appearance. Man notices the car that someone drives or the clothes that someone wears, or the bling that someone has on.

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That's what we notice. And we tend to judge them on that basis and even favor them and try to even cater to them.

But God sees the heart. And you're looking at this guy outwardly, and there he is with all of his wealth. And here's the other brother or sister in Christ who does not possess that wealth. And they think that they are less in the eyes of God, and James is seeking to correct that by the Holy Spirit.

Don't do that. Actually, hold your head up and take pride. This is a healthy pride, by the way.

I thought pride was sin.

Not this pride. This is a pride, a healthy pride in your position in Christ. You hold your head up.

Well, yeah, I'm not going to sit next to him because - did you see that bling? You won't be able to see the pastor. It's already bright enough up here anyway.

Do you see yourself as less than them?

Actually, as we're going to see next, it's the other way around. And that's our second one in verse 10. Prosperity can foster wrong trust. This really, they're all dangerous, but to me, this is probably among the most dangerous when it comes to prosperity.

Here again, James makes it just as clear that believers, conversely, who are wealthy by earthly standards, are actually in more danger because having riches can lead to wrongly trusting in riches.

I love that proverb that basically goes like this, So you've got wealth. Don't feast your eyes on your wealth. Do you want to know why?

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Because wealth has this way of sprouting wings and flying up to heaven. Bye bye. Don't trust in it. Don't feast your eyes on it. Don't look to it.

That's the wrong trust, you know. All of our money, right?

In God, we trust.

Give me a break.

Do you realize which God that is?

It's not Jehovah God. That's another topic for another time. I probably shouldn't have opened up that can. So let's put that lid back on.

So here, James wants to again correct this misunderstanding when it comes to the wealthy Christian and the Christian who's not wealthy. You're both on a level playing field. Don't let the wealthy Christian think he's all that, and don't let the Christian who's not wealthy think I'm not worthy because God sees you on the same level playing field.

It matters not. It matters not.

Hey, is it okay to have that?

Yes. But again, don't let that have you. The Lord should have you. He exhorts them to take pride, not in their riches, but in their humility.

And here's why: Because riches pass away. They don't last. You're trusting in that? Well, here's what you're trusting in, you're trusting in a flower that - well, you know how flowers are.

We just - guys, we just bought flowers, right, for our wives? My wife loves flowers and I'm always, you know, getting her flowers. But the Lord knows my heart, and I love my wife very much. Them flowers don't last. I mean, they're you know, when they're in the case at the florist and - by the way, has the

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price gone up? It's just me? Wow! Anyway, enough of my problems.

So you know, you bring them home, and here's these beautiful flowers. You're like, Whoa! Wake up the next morning; instead of going, Wow, you're going, Oh!

You know, the flowers are like this, [drooping down] kind of wilting and dying; it just doesn't last. So buy chocolates instead, I mean, you know of course, those don't last either. That's if they make them home when you buy them.

This is what I love about God's Word and this is what I love about James, inspired by the Holy Spirit, because he's being so honest here. He's not just - and this is how God does what God does when He inspires the writer of His Word.

I mean, this is a textbook case of, Don't do this; here's why. Here's the 'why' behind the 'what.' What's the 'what?' The 'what' is: Don't trust in your riches.

Why?

Because it's like a flower that's going to wilt and die and pass away. It's like this bird or whatever you want to call it, insect that you know, all of a sudden grows wings. It didn't have wings yesterday.

Well, this morning it has wings and it's flying away. Don't trust in it. Don't look to it. Don't feast your eyes on it.

But that's what happens when we experience a measure of prosperity. We look at them and go, Wow! Well, don't get too - what do I say - too fond of that. Here's the truth.

And this is apropos for where we're at in the world today, concerning money. Do you realize that you can go to bed tonight and the amount of money you have in the bank when you

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go to bed tonight may not be there when you wake up in the morning?

Do you know why?

Well, like the flower that passes away, as we're going to talk about at the conclusion of our time, it can be taken away that fast. For those of you who have been following the situation in Canada, you know what they did, right?

You know that GoFundMe had 10 million with an M dollars in it for those truckers. You know what they did? They confiscated it. They took it. They took the money.

So if I'm not to trust in my riches, but instead, obviously, trust in the Lord who gives riches, I got nothing to worry about. Because my GoFundMe account in heaven -

Wow!

[Laughter]

I'm set for a life, I'm set for eternal life. And oh, by the way, not just then-and-there, but here-and-now. What do you mean? Oh, like God is going to say, Hey, I'm going to take care of you, the riches that you have in heaven. Well, I could use some of that now. Can I get an advance?

[Laughter]

Whatever I have need of God is going to provide. You know, those who don't have the riches and the wealth by earthly standards, I tell you what they do have, faith.

No, think about it. Hey, when the money's in the bank, you're like, I'm good. It's when you don't have the money in the bank and the rent is due and you've run out of month, I mean money before you've run out of month.

Let me try that again. You know how it is when you get your money and it's your paycheck, and it's supposed to last for a

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month? And the problem is you run out of money before you run out a month and the rent's due at the end of the month or the beginning of the month and you don't have the money.

What is your prayer life like? Tell you what mine is like. Oh God! And actually, it's more like, this: It's like, God, You got a serious problem. The rent's due.

[Laughter]

Yeah, because wait, You're the owner of everything. I'm the manager. I mean, I own nothing. I manage everything.

It's Your money. God, You got rent due the first of the month. I don't know what You're -

[Laughter]

That's in a sanctified way, of course, but you get the point, right? When we were renovating this church, I tell you, I learned, I grew so much in my faith because I watched God provide in miraculous ways. That's not hyperbole.

I mean, literally, it was a miracle. I mean, we're looking at our payables and our expenses, and I'm looking at the building going, Oh God!

But this is God's church, and that's God's money.

And so I'm like, God, did You see the payable You've got due? It's Your church. What are You - I've got it.

Well, why don't You do it then?

Because I'm doing something in you.

Oh, I get it now. In fact, if I'm not mistaken, JD, I'm using myself as the poster child, taking one for the team here.

If I'm not mistaken, JD, you actually prayed and asked Me to teach you to trust Me more. Remember that prayer?

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Oh, that was an old prayer, Lord. I didn't know that - if I'd had know this is how You're going to answer that prayer, I would not have prayed that prayer.

Well, you wanted to have more faith. You wanted to trust Me more. How's that going for you?

Oh! I don't have any choice. I have to trust You, Lord. Those who put their trust in the Lord will never be disappointed.

I bet I could go around the room; every single one of you could share your testimony about how you trusted the Lord and at the 11th hour He pulled through as only He can and is always faithful to in ways you weren't even thinking.

And He made you sweat, but that's a sanctified sweat because He's teaching you to trust Him. Put your faith in Him; He will never ever let you down.

See, our problem is we want God to advance us that which we're asking Him for so that we can sleep better at night knowing we've got it covered.

God says, well it sounds to Me like then you're putting your trust in the balance, your bank balance.

Think about the Israelites. Stay with me on this. This is a powerful, powerful principle.

The Israelites had to go to bed every single night, trusting God that in the morning there would be manna to eat. And you know what happened, what they did?

And come on, don't be too hard on them. You would have done the same thing.

I'm going to get extra so that, you know, I got more just in case, you know, just kind of - And then it turns into maggots. And oh, how quick are we to say, Those Israelites, they don't trust God.

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That's you! That's you!

Every morning they would wake up and that manna was there. And even on the Sabbath, which was a picture of Jesus, fulfilled by Jesus.

The Lord said, You can get enough for two days so that you're not gathering on the Sabbath. And so they got - so every night they would have to go to bed. They don't have the rent in the bank. They've got the manna on the ground, but they have to trust God for it.

And without fail, God always provided the manna. And then, you know what happened after that. So a period of time goes on and all of a sudden now they're just kind of, You know, I'm kind of getting sick of manna. Manna burgers, manicotti, manna this, manna that.

Give us meat to eat! We want flesh, you know, like we did in Egypt.

What Egypt are you talking about?

Oh, you know, the Egypt where we had the leeks and the onions and the buffet, barbecued chicken, spicy ahi poke over here. We were in slavery!

What are you talking about?

And so what does God do? Oh, the manna's not good enough anymore? It's not satisfying you?

And by the way, I don't know, I think we're going to get to know what the manna was. But some of the studies I've done in the Bible of what manna was; this stuff was amazing. So amazing, they put it in the Ark of the Covenant, along with Aaron's budding rod and the tablets. Oh! I'd like to see that.

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Well, don't look in. The last guy that did that was - anyway, that's another topic. Lifted the mercy seat off and then - anyway.

But apparently this manna was exactly what they needed physically. And it was a picture of God's provision, if they would, but trust Him and be content with that which He provided.

I know what you need. See, you need this. It's not - you don't need this. You want that. That's your problem. The appetite of the flesh.

You know, when Paul says, "If you walk according to the Spirit, you won't fulfill the lust of the flesh"? As a new believer, I could never quite wrap my mind around what that really meant.

What does that mean?

Walk in the spirit, you won't fulfill the lust of the flesh.

I mean, I've got to tell you that, you know, the Spirit's willing, but the flesh is weak. Man, that flesh rears its ugly head, 'Give us meat to eat!'

How do I not fulfill the lust of the flesh? Starve it. Feed the Spirit. Starve the flesh.

You weaken the flesh so when the flesh wants to rear its ugly head, it's too weak to do it.

Here's an example, an analogy. Best one I've heard. If you got a better one, let me know. The lion is the flesh. [roaring] You know your stomach's growling. That's the lion, the flesh. The lamb is the Spirit.

Well, what happens - We saw this on Thursday night. The lion lays down with the lamb in the millennium. I can't wait just for that during the Kingdom Age, 1000 years. But what happens

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if a lion is next to a lamb now? You get lamb chops because the lion is going to eat the lamb.

Wait a minute. What if I starve that lion and feed that lamb? So here's the lion. Instead of that growl, it's more like,
[gasping sounds]

But I've been feeding that lamb, feeding the Spirit. And as Gayle Irwin once said, Now I've got a Lamb-bo.

And I mean, he's so strong and he rises up and walks over to that weak lion that can't even get up. Na-na-na-na-na!

[Teasing]

You can't do nothing. That's the Spirit and the flesh.

So God gives them over to the lust of their flesh. And it's really quite intense; it's graphic, actually. He sends this quail and they get this quail and they eat this quail. And while the meat is still in between their teeth, they die because they ate so much of it.

That's a good picture of the flesh, isn't it?

Trust the Lord. He will always provide the manna [manna] that you need. If you need it, He'll provide it.

Well, what about those things in my life that He's not provided?

You didn't need it.

I know what you did, and so does God. You went into the store, you switched the labels. So the label was, you know, 'desire'. Oh, I desire this! And so you took that 'desire' label and you switched it with the 'need' label.

Like God's going to be fooled. Oh, wait, you need that?

Okay. It worked!

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No, it didn't. That's a desire. In fact, not only do you not need that, truth be made known, you don't want that, which is why it is, by the way, that God, when we ask God for something, God goes, [shaking head no].

The angels given charge concerning you are going, Don't ask for that. You don't want that.

And we have a safety mechanism in place because as James will say, "every good and perfect gift comes from the Father above".

God's not going to give us something if it's bad for us. Just like you as an earthly parent, a fallen parent, will not give something bad to your children.

So we're praying. We have no idea. We're praying; we're asking God, God, let me win the lottery.

Come on, you prayed that.

Oh, let me just - Because you hear all these statistics - Well, I'll tithe on the winnings. So just, you know Lord, can - No, I'm not going to let you get all that money all at once because it'll destroy you, and I love you. It would not be good for you. I'm not going to give it to you.

If it were good, I would give it to you. But I can't, and you don't want Me to because your life would be destroyed.

You know, I probably say this more often. Now, I hope you don't tire of me saying it. But God will always answer our prayers exactly the same way we would answer our own prayers if we knew what He knew.

And He's all-knowing, He knows the end from the beginning. So here we're praying for something. We're asking God for something. We're trusting God for something and God's like, No, not because I'm being mean, but because I love you.

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And if I were to give that to you, it would be catastrophic. So no, I'm not going to give it to you. I've got something way more better I have something way more better.

You know, for those of you that that have prayer list that you keep, you know, prayer lists or prayer journals. Have you ever gone back over those?

I've had one for many, many years. I've gone back; this is, it's really actually humorous. But you go back over those prayers that you prayed so many years ago and you find yourself praising God and thanking God that He did not answer that prayer the way you prayed it when you prayed it.

Because if He did, it would have been unthinkable, horrific. And here's another thing with the way my prayer list is, I've gone back and edited them. I have a lot of edits where you know, we say prayer changes things, but actually prayer changes the one who prays.

So I've gone back over those prayers and I've thought, hmm... Yeah, let me try praying this way. And God's like, Whoa! Did you see he made the edit? Get down there. It's good now. Give it to him. It's good.

See, he was praying for this and 'No'. But now he's edited it, changed it; that's what prayer does, and now I can give that to him. God's never going to give us anything that's going to take us away from Him. Whenever God gives us something, it's always with the purpose of us drawing nearer to Him.

And again, as James is going to talk about, we draw near to the Lord, and He in turn draws near to us. And that's really a good litmus test, by the way, something that has served me well over the years.

And this is in every arena of life. The question, the test is, this is the template, if you will, that you have to

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superimpose on everything in your life. All your prayer requests, entertainment, relationships, everything.

Does it, you fill in the blank, draw me closer to God or does it distance me further from God?

So if I'm all of a sudden coming into all of this wealth, is that going to draw me nearer to God or is it going to busy me, distract me and distance me from God?

That's the test.

Because see if having that is going to change me to where I start putting my trust in what I have, God knows that and He's going to withhold that so that my trust is in Him.

I love that saying, I know you've heard it before. You'll never know Jesus is all you need until Jesus is all you have.

That is so, so true. And when you don't have, you're going to look to the Lord. If you do have it; it's already in the bank. No problem.

But if it's not in the bank, man, I got to trust the Lord.

What a novel idea. Oh my goodness, you have to trust the Lord? Oh, you poor thing. Really? That's how we think though, isn't it?

Again, here's the truth: The humble will be exalted and the exalted humbled, especially when it comes to worldly possessions and wealth.

Here's the last one in verse 11. Prosperity can foster false security. Now we're going to, instead of talking about trusting in riches in the present, we're going to now talk about putting our security and riches for the future.

It's important to understand that the context in which James is inspired to write this is in the context of trials. He

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starts out right out of the chute talking about, "**Consider it pure joy when you encounter various trials.**"

It's in the context with which he writes about now, riches. Why do I point that out? Because think this through with me. While those in poverty certainly have their financial trials, and in that day the recipients of this epistle had lost everything to follow Jesus.

They lost their livelihood, they lost their jobs, they lost their families, they lost their homes because they counted the cost to follow Jesus.

So that in and of itself was a trial. So the poverty, those in poverty certainly had their financial trials, but those in prosperity had the much greater trial.

And here's why: It's because having wealth gives a person this false sense of security. I find it very interesting that at the end of verse 11, James by the Spirit would say, Not only is this flower of your riches passing away, it's you're going to go to work one day, you're going to go to your business one day, and while you're conducting business while you're at work, it's gone.

Have a nice day. That's what he says.

Wait, oh, wait a minute. You thought you had security. Your security was in your business, your job, job security, we call it. I have job security.

Oh, really? You might want to revisit verse 11 because you're going to go to your job one day and it's going to go away that very day while you're at work. That's your security? You're placing the security of your future in what you have? Oh!

Can I draw your attention to Matthew's gospel chapter 6? We'll close with this.

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This is affectionately referred to as the sermon on the Mount, I think it was Larry Burkett, the late Larry Burkett, who dubbed it the sermon on the Amount.

Okay, well, I know it's late. We're almost done. Just hang in there.

So listen to what Jesus says concerning money. And by the way, did you know that Jesus talked more about money than He did heaven and hell combined? You think this is an issue? It's an issue. Jesus had a lot to say about money, and such is the case here.

Beginning in verse 19. Listen to what He says. **"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where [the IRS, I mean] thieves break in and steal."**

That's in the JDV, by the way.

Verse 19. **"But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal."**

And here's why. Here's the why behind the what again, **"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."**

Notice He doesn't say it the other way around. It doesn't say where your heart is, that's where your treasure is going to be. No, where your treasure is, that's where your heart is.

And by the way, it's very secure. You want financial security?

Yeah.

All right. I got a great account up here for you, and it's very secure. Nobody has access to it. The Canadian government can't touch it. Neither can the US government, for that matter. In fact no government can because it's in heaven, secure.

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Once again you'll forgive me for quoting Larry Burkett. I was a student of his, a big fan of his, but he would always talk about, you can't take it with you.

When was the last time you saw a hearse pulling a U-Haul? I mean, that still works today in our day. In fact, there's no rental cars, so people are renting U-Haul's I guess, when they come to Hawaii.

But anyway, you've never seen a hearse towing a - you can't take it with you, but you can send it ahead. It reminds me of that true story.

I forget the guy's name, one of these big wealthy guys. You would know his name if I could remember it, but I can't. But that's not the point. He dies extremely wealthy. I mean, just absurd, obscene wealth, and he dies.

So at his funeral, the question is asked, How much did he leave?

The answer? All of it. That's how much he left.

So I have an idea. Instead of stockpiling it here, why don't you transfer it up there? By the way, if your treasure's down here, if your heart is where your treasure is, if your treasure's down here, then that's where your heart is.

So your treasurer is in your financial portfolio. How's that working out for you, especially now?

Oh, but I've got a pretty secure portfolio.

Really? Okay. Not for long. Not for long.

Yeah, but I'm secure.

No, you're not. It's vulnerable. And by the way, that's why you don't sleep so well at night because you, your heart is where your treasure is and your treasure is here on Earth and it's very volatile and very insecure and very vulnerable.

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And so you're up and down with the stock market or your portfolio value or cryptocurrency. You're up and down with it because that's where your heart is. You'll sleep so much better at night because it's up there and the return on the investment in heaven, there's no number, there's no number.

And not only that, but not only do you have an investment portfolio in heaven, you've also got a place that is being prepared for you in heaven.

A mansion: I can't wait to see what mine is going to look like. One time, my daughter and I walked to Kailua Beach, and there's this one place at flags where on the corner somebody bought it and they just built a mansion. Not just one guesthouse, I think there were two or three guesthouses. I'm like, Oh, this is nice.

And then the Holy Spirit is right there going, What are you doing? This is an outhouse compared to what I'm building for you up there. Okay, I digress.

Verse 22, he goes on. We're almost done. **"The lamp of the body is the eye. [This is very important] If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light.**

But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness?"

And then he says this. You know this passage, you know this verse. **"No one can serve two masters; for either [keyword] he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon"** [or money].

Notice He doesn't say you should not, it would be a good idea if you didn't.

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No, He says you cannot. It's an impossibility. It's one or the other, either/or. You're either serving mammon or you're serving God, but you can't serve both.

I know you're trying. Maybe that would explain why your life is the way it is. Maybe that would explain why you're in the turmoil that you are. Maybe that will explain why you're riddled with fear and crippled with worry, because you know what He talks about right after this?

"Therefore, do not worry."

Oh, wait a minute, I see a connection here. Duh! The more you have down here, the more you worry about losing what you have down here. If it's up there, no worries. No worries. I don't have to worry about a thing. It's up there.

If it's down here, you better worry. You got a lot to worry about. But if it's up there, you got nothing to worry about. Don't worry about what you're going to - And this is why it applies to us here and now, not just thereafter. Your Father is going to take care of you.

And for those of you that have been to Israel with us, It is so, I mean, it is magnificent. That's an understatement. There you are on the hillside. You got the Sea of Galilee there, and this is where Jesus preached this sermon.

And he points to the - because He didn't have PowerPoint then. So He points to make His point to the birds and He says, See that bird up there? Do you see it like building extra big barns and stuffing worms in there, because it wants to make sure it has enough for next month's rent and next month?

No, you don't. You don't see that bird freaking out. Why? Because your heavenly Father feeds that bird.

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And by the way, you want to talk about flowers like James likening wealth to? He says, Look at these flowers. Now in the Spring, these flowers on the hillside are just, I mean, oh, they're in full bloom and beautiful, and they're free, they're not expensive, but anyway, Until the florist gets a hold of them, but anyway...

So here's these beautiful flowers, so He points to this flower. He says, Look at that flower. Okay. Have you ever seen anything so beautifully clothed? Even Solomon in all of his wealth, the wealthiest man who ever lived in human history was not even close to being clothed as beautiful as this flower.

What's your point, Lord?

My point is, that flower's here today and gone tomorrow. And if your heavenly Father is going to clothe that flower that beautifully - and it's nowhere close to being as valuable as you, neither is that bird. Because that bird and that flower were not created in the image of God. You were.

So how much more is God going to feed you and clothe you? Why are you running around? What am I going to eat? What am I going to wear? I wore that last week. I can't wear that this week. The pagans do that.

I'm going to provide for you. You've got nothing to worry about. I will feed you. I will clothe you. How much more valuable are you to Me than they?

And then He closes out. I love verse 33 of Matthew 6. I'm not happy about verse 34. I'm just being very open with you. Verse 33, you know it. **"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added on to you."**

I'm good with that. He could have stopped right there, but He didn't. He says, **"Therefore, do not worry about tomorrow for sufficient unto the day are the worries there in."**

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What? You just told me not to worry. And then you just - now you're telling me that tomorrow I've got plenty of worries to worry about. Wait.

No, stop at 33.

I'm good at that. What do you mean?

In other words, don't worry about tomorrow. The worries will be there for you tomorrow. You don't have to borrow them today. And by the way, I love how one said it.

Do you realize that today is the tomorrow you worried about yesterday? I'll give you just a moment on that.

Okay, you know you're worried about tomorrow, right? Well, it's tomorrow, today. And today is the tomorrow you worried about yesterday.

How are you doing?

Do you know that 99.9999% of the things that we worry about never happen?

Now, for those of you that are fellow worriers like myself, what about the 0.000001 that does?

Oh, I'm glad you asked. if it does happen, that which you worry about happening, which the Lord says, don't worry about it. God will give you the grace that you need at the time that you need it, and it's never as bad as you imagined it.

And aren't we good at imagining? I mean, we manufacture these scenarios, you know, the what ifs? I mean, it's not - and Satan is all too ready to take you down that road as far as you'll let him.

What if?

And Oh, wow! What if?

Isn't it true that the worry is always about tomorrow?

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I mean you're not worried about yesterday. It's over. Well, you're not worried about yesterday as yesterday's gone. You're worried about tomorrow. You're worried about the future.

You have no reason to be insecure. You are secure in Christ. If you belong to Him, He's obligated to you for His namesake. Not because you're special. It's not for your sake it's for His namesake.

Because if word got out that this God doesn't take care of His people, that's on Him then. No, He's going to provide. That's His name. That's His nature. He's got to take care of you if you belong to Him. You're a child of God. He going to take care of you.

It may not be the way you think, in the amount that you want, in the color you want.

Oh, we're good at that too, right? When we ask God, we are very specific when it comes to the things we want, right? And we tell God, we give Him instructions on how to answer our prayer. I want it in this color this way, at this time in Jesus' name.

God's like, Really, that's what you want? Okay.

Tomorrow, don't borrow tomorrow's worries today. Don't ruin today with tomorrow's worries. Tomorrow's worries are going to be there when you wake up.

But the Lord is going to take care of whatever those are, tomorrow, not today. Let's just deal with today, and I'll take care of you today.

Well, yeah, but Lord, I need -

Well, you don't need that right now, right?

No, I need it tomorrow.

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Okay. Well, that's tomorrow. Don't worry about it today. Don't borrow tomorrow's worries today.

Why don't you stand. Kaponu, why don't you come up.

I hope I - Lord I just do my best. The Holy Spirit has to take it from here. I love James, though. I hope you do, too.

I mean, don't you like someone who tells it like it is? It reminds me of that proverb, "The wounds of a friend are faithful, but an enemy multiplies kisses."

You're my friend if you'll tell me what I need to hear, even though it might hurt me. Oh, you don't love me!

No, I love you. That's why I'm telling you the truth. It's the truth in love, because of love. You don't love me if you only tell me what I want to hear and not what I need to hear. That's not love. That's self-love.

You care more about yourself because you don't want me to unfriend you on social media.

Come on. You know what I'm talking about, right?

So we don't want to ruffle anyone's feathers so, you know, we're not going to tell them, Hey, you keep going in this direction, you're going off the cliff and it's game over and I love you enough to tell you the truth.

And here's this other person over here, they love themselves more. They're going to say, you know, it's an issue, you've got an issue.

And here's the one who really loves you said, No, **"There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end, it leads to death."**

You're careening towards, very fast towards that destruction, choosing that path, and I love you enough to tell you that. If I didn't love you, I wouldn't bother.

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Okay, go ahead. I don't care.

No, I care. I love you. I'm going to tell you the truth.

And that's what James is doing by the Holy Spirit. So let's pray. Father in heaven, thank You so much. This hits home for many of us, really all of us, if the truth be made known.

We all deal with this on a daily basis and it's hard because we've been so conditioned to put our trust in worldly riches. And now here comes James, inspired by the Holy Spirit, saying, you got it backwards.

Lord, I thank You that You know the heart, You see the heart, You see every heart in this church right now. The heart that's hurting. The heart that's full of fear. The heart that is so worried and stressed right now about this very thing we've talked about.

Lord, I pray that You, as only You can, would reveal Yourself to them a fresh and new. And You're so gentle Lord, when You do. Just that reminder in that still small voice of the Holy Spirit. I've got this. I'm going to take care of you. I will never leave you or forsake you. I will always provide for you. Just trust Me. Just trust Me.

Lord, thank You. In Jesus' name, amen.