

# **The Book of James**

## *So How Am I Doing?*

### Chapter 1

Introduction (1:1)

The Test of Perseverance and Suffering (1:2-12)

The Test of Blame in Temptation (1:12-18)

The Test of Response to the Word (1:19-27)

### Chapter 2

The Test of Partiality (2:1-9)

The Test of the Law (2:10-13)

The Test of Faith and Works (2:14-26)

### Chapter 3

The Test of the Tongue (3:1-12)

The Test of Wisdom Applied (3:13-18)

### Chapter 4

The Test of the World's Influence (4:1-12)

The Test of Dependence (4:13-5:6)

### Chapter 5

The Test of Endurance (5:7-12)

The Test of Prayerfulness (5:13-20)

# Chapter 1

**Passage:** James 1:1

**Title:** Real Faith, that Shows Up in Real Life

**Summary:** There are only 108 verses in this short Book, yet we will see and hear, 54 imperatives (which are callings to do this, and to do that). It is a “Doing” Book, and if we will do what this Book calls us to do, we will go deeper our Christian maturity, and we will have “A Real Faith, that Shows Up in Real Life”

## Book Summation

If I ask you today, of the 27 letters/books of the New Testament, which one would you give first to that person who has recently come to salvation through the preaching of the Gospel. Of course, most of us would say I would have them read John, or one of the other Gospels, or Romans, oh tough choice because now I think of all the riches of Ephesians. Well, and most all the scholars agree, the first Book God gave in written form?..... it is open before you, the Book of James. I find that fascinating, and I personally am not trying to put it in order of the most significant Book in the New Testament, but I can't pass on how interesting it is that first Book of all twenty-seven put in written form, is this one.

But..... I do see the great significance of this Book, so I won't pass on why it is first and one of the first; for it is written to call and to bring a Believer into mature faith. A faith that shows, a faith that shows up!

A Faith that shows up in how we handle trials, temptation, money... It's more than intentions, but a faith that produces action. A Faith that affects how we treat people less fortunate... A Faith that works... A Faith that affects how we talk and what we say... A Faith that doesn't conform to the world but seeks wisdom from above... A Faith that walks humbly and prays fervently... A Faith that connects with other believers in meaningful ways...

## A Real Faith, that Shows Up in Real Life!

There are only 108 verses in this short Book, yet we will see and hear, 54 imperatives (which are callings to do this, and to do that). It is a “Doing” Book, and if we will do what this Book calls us to do, we will go deeper our Christian maturity, and we will have “A Real Faith, that Shows Up in Real Life”.

Here are three key verses to get us going:

*James 2:20 (NKJV)* <sup>20</sup> *But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?*

*James 1:22 (NKJV)* <sup>22</sup> *But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.*

*James 1:4-5 (NKJV)* <sup>4</sup> *But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.* <sup>5</sup> *If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.*

## Prayer

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

*Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV)* <sup>12</sup> *For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

## In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

*Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> *Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need*

**(James 1:1 NKJV) James, a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad: Greetings.**

#### **4 James in NT / James ½ Brother of Jesus**

Verse 1 – James: There are four James mentioned in the New Testament; the James of this book is the half-brother of Jesus. Same mother, different fathers. James' father was Joseph, Jesus Father is God: *(Galatians 1:19 KJV) But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother.*

*(Matthew 13:55 NKJV) "Is this not the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joses, Simon, and Judas?"*

Of the four men named James in the NT, only two are candidates for authorship of this epistle.

1. No one seriously considers James the Less, the son of Alphaeus (Matt 10:3, Acts 1:13),
2. or James the father of Judas (not Iscariot) (Luke 6:16, Acts 1:13).
3. Some have suggested James the son of Zebedee and brother of John (Matt 4:21), but he was martyred too early to have written it (Acts 12:2).
4. That leaves only James the oldest half-brother of Jesus (Mark 6:3) and brother of Jude (Matt 13:55) who also wrote the epistle that bears his name (Jude). James would become a leader in the early church we see from Acts 21.

This is quite possibly the first book written of the New Testament. It was written somewhere around 45AD, only a dozen or so years after the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (33AD).

Church history states that in 62 AD, James died a martyr's death. The Jews took him to the highest point of the Temple. They ordered him to recant his faith before all the people. Instead, he boldly preached the Gospel. The Jews were so angry they pushed him off the pinnacle of the Temple. When he survived the fall, they beat him to death with clubs as he knelt and prayed.

Now, I don't want to spend a lot of time there some try to say that the brethren the brothers and sisters of Jesus were really cousins and of course those are people who want to preserve the perpetual virginity of Mary. Well the scripture knows nothing of that and clearly teaches that Jesus had brothers and sisters when the New Testament wants to say cousins it says cousins, when it wants to say brothers and sisters it says brothers and sisters. We can see from Matthew 13 that Jesus had at least 4 brothers and at least 2 sisters (because the word for sisters is plural. One of his brothers was Judas (Jude) who will write the Book of Jude, so remember that when we come to that book here some day in the future.

*Matthew 13:54–56 (NKJV) <sup>54</sup> When He had come to His own country, He taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished and said, "Where did this Man get this wisdom and these mighty works? <sup>55</sup> Is this not the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joses, Simon, and Judas? <sup>56</sup> And His sisters, are they not all with us? Where then did this Man get all these things?"*

#### **First Didn't Believe / Then the Resurrection**

James doesn't believe that Jesus is God when He walked this earth:

*(John 7:5 NKJV) For even His brothers did not believe in Him.*

But after the resurrection Jesus appears to him, and everything changes:

*(1 Corinthians 15:4 NKJV) and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures,*

*(1 Corinthians 15:5 NKJV) and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve.*

*(1 Corinthians 15:6 NKJV) After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep.*

*(1 Corinthians 15:7 NKJV) After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles.*

#### **Imagine that Meeting**

Imagine what that meeting must have been like: the two brothers sitting together like they had so many times as brothers, but this time Jesus is sitting, and there is no mistaking His nailed-scarred hands; He would no doubt say to His younger brother, it is true, I am God, I am everything that I said I was when I walked on this earth as your brother.

### **When See Resurrected Christ**

Whether James or you, when you see the resurrected Christ through an empty cross and an empty tomb, everything will change for you.

### **He Writes – As He Reflects / Love in a Sinful World**

Now James is going to write us this letter, he will talk about everyday practical stuff. He will talk about trials in life, our works, our tongue, prayer, and other things; as he writes these things, he will be remembering how Jesus handled them, as James will reflect back on watching situations, and watching his oldest brother. He will reflect on a life of love, and a life of sinlessness, in a world that can be so hateful at times, and so full of sin.

### **Dad's Death / Financial Hardship / Midnight Prayers**

James would reflect back on trials the family had faced, and he will remember how his older brother handled them. He would remember how Jesus handled dad's death (Joseph). Knowing the nature of Jesus he would have called them for prayer and comforted them with the promises of God. Maybe that caused financial hardship upon the family (they lacked food or clothing – remember Joseph and Mary could only provide two turtledoves at the Temple)), and James would remember how Jesus would tell the family that God would provide. James after the resurrection meeting would remember back how Jesus always had the right word for the right time. He would remember all those times that he woke up early to get a drink of water and see/hear Jesus praying to the Father.

### **It All Makes Sense Now**

After the resurrection meeting, James would say it all makes sense now, I can see clearly now. James who thought Jesus was out of his mind, would see that it was he who wasn't in the right mind.

*(Matthew 12:46 NKJV) While He was still talking to the multitudes, behold, His mother and brothers stood outside, seeking to speak with Him.*

*(Matthew 12:47 NKJV) Then one said to Him, "Look, Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, seeking to speak with You."*

James would be known church history tells us as “Old Camel Knees”, because he spent so much time in prayer that his knees became callous. Of course that makes sense, as He would miss the leadership of his older brother, but know that Jesus was not far away, and that he could come and fellowship with Him, and ask for help from Him in such a great time of need.

### **Leader In Church / Writes Hindsight / Everyday Life**

James would become a leader in the church, a pillar in the church

*(Acts 21:17 NKJV) And when we had come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly.*

*(Acts 21:18 NKJV) On the following day Paul went in with us to James, and all the elders were present.*

*(Galatians 2:9 NKJV) and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised.*

So James will write these things based on hindsight, based on first hand witnessing of watching his older brother lived life, everyday. It has been said the problem with life, is that it is so daily. James watched Jesus handle everyday life, and that is what this book is about; it is about living everyday life as a Follower of God, in a fallen world. If James had written this book in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, he might have titled it,

- "Things I've Learned from God", or
- "30 years with Jesus",
- "Conversations with God",
- "Sharing a Bedroom with God",
- "My Brother can Beat Your Brother Up".

### **Jesus Rubbed Off / Nature Illustrations / Sermon on Mount**

We can see how much Jesus rubbed off on James, for James style resembles his brother so much. Like Jesus used nature as illustrations for His teaching points, so does James some 30 times. He uses nature analogies such as the sea, flowers, sun, fire, horses and ships to name a few). It is obvious who James favorite teacher was, because this epistle covers almost every topic that Jesus covered in the Sermon on

the Mount. There is amazing parallelisms between the two; James does not actually quote the Lord's words, but he obviously had internalized Jesus' teachings and reproduced them with spiritual depth. Jesus covered about 30 topics in the Sermon on the Mount, and we will see that James touches on every one of them in this epistle. The Book of James is the New Testament Version of the Old Testament Proverbs. It resembles Proverbs because it is almost poetic.

This what do you expect from somebody who grew up and their older brother was God. The kind of an attitude James would have, as we read through this epistle he's saying live as mature disciples, the living Christ can be in your heart there's no messing around do this, live this way, we have the capacity, you can do it! He's very straightforward there's no messing around in his life he despises hypocrisy, compromise, false piety false religiosity because no doubt he remembers Jesus with the Pharisees and the Sadducees and is very much in the spirit of Christ his older brother who despised the false religious system of his day who challenged hypocrisy who wouldn't put up with false religiosity and James is very much the same way because he doesn't want any of that in the church and it's very much in the spirit of his brother he wants in the life of a believer, he wants Christ likeness in our lives because no doubt he is a man who is overwhelmed with the fact that his own brother is dwelling in his heart!

Of course, this would be one of, if not the, first written record of the church. James has a new attitude after the resurrection, and he doesn't want any one (that means you too) wasting any time, not a minute not a moment, of anything less than Jesus, and all of Jesus being who He says He is, doing what He says He will do in your life, and living a faith filled life that is real.

**A Real Faith, that Shows Up in Real Life!**

### **So We can Examine Self / How am I Doing**

Jesus gave the Sermon on the Mount so that we might examine ourselves and ask the question, "so how am I doing in each of these areas?" James writes to the church, to us, and as we read, we have to ask ourselves, "so how am I doing in these areas?" This book is practical and applicable for us living in the year 2022, and the ultimate goal of this epistle is giving to us in verse 4 of chapter 1.

#### Theme of the Book of James:

*(James 1:4 NKJV) But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.*

*(James 1:5 NKJV) If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.*

As in school, we take tests to see how much of a handle and mastery we have on a subject, we will do the same in this book:

#### The Outline of the Book of James:

##### Chapter 1

- Introduction (1:1)
- The Test of Perseverance and Suffering (1:2-12)
- The Test of Blame in Temptation (1:12-18)
- The Test of Response to the Word (1:19-27)

##### Chapter 2

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## Chapter 5

The Test of Endurance (5:7-12)

The Test of Prayerfulness (5:13-20)

So, let's see how we are doing as we study these five chapters over the next few months.

**(James 1:1 NKJV) James, a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad: Greetings.**

### **What an Underestimate/ Bondservant / Has Your Ear been Pierced?**

*James, a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ* - What an understatement. If it was me writing I'm sure I would have written something like, Ray the younger brother of the Creator of the Universe. I would have made sure everybody knew my special position, so my authority in the matters of God would never be challenged. But not James, he calls himself a bondservant, which means slave.

In those days if a person in financial trouble could sell himself to someone in order to pay off a debit. It was usually for a determined time (7 years), now if at the end of seven years when he was to be set free, if he chooses to he could say I love my master, I do not want to leave my master, my master treats me well and takes care of me, I want to serve my master for life. What would happen then would be that the master would take the slave to the door of the home and pierce his ear with an awl, and then put a gold earring in, and it was a sign that he was now his bondservant. So the bondservant had the responsibility to serve the master, and the master had the responsibility to take care of all the slaves needs. Christian, have you gone to the door, have you had your ear pierced by the hand of God? For as we have said in times past, there is "power at the door", when we simply yield our lives to Him.

Oh I remember like it was yesterday 'cause it truly was in my heart mind and soul I was probably saved maybe six months or so and I was struggling with the cares of the world and the love of the world and the struggle to fully give myself and trust Jesus for everything that His word says, and not pick and choose as I chose so that I can satisfy my flesh. But I remember that night in Cocoa Beach FL, Banana River Blvd, laying in my bed struggling back and forth and then finally come into the place where I say Lord, I give up and I give in to You, and Your Word becomes my will and I will live in accordance that Your word knows better than I do. And all I can describe to you that happened it was like waves of liquid love washing over me, I don't know how long it lasted but it was one of the most beautiful moments of my life and I truly know it was the Holy Spirit washing over me and again, and again all that I can describe it as was waves of liquid love. But I know what I can clearly describe it was a Peace which passed all understanding for I knew that my life was in His hands now. And I pray that you have a moment like that when you fully surrender take your ear to the door for there is power at the door when you say I'm all yours Lord.

### **Hosted Association of Churches / To Serve Others – Not to be Served or Recognized**

So he is James the bondservant. A while back we hosted a gathering of local churches, and it was so interesting, there were few Joe's and Bob's there. Everybody introduced himself or herself as Reverend, or Bishop, or Associate Minister to the Senior Development Council - whatever that was. In a world of titles and positions, James just says, James a bondservant. I'm the under-rower of the ship, I'm just keeping the ship moving forward so the passengers can get to their destination. I wonder what the churches would be like today if people introduced themselves as Ray the slave of Jesus Christ, maybe people would see they are here to serve others, and not others to serve them. James lost his will, into the will for the heart of God.

Mind you this is written under the Inspiration of the Holy Spirit; my how I would love that the Holy Spirit would write a letter about me and He addresses it that I am a bond servant of Jesus Christ. Oh what a glorious recording that would be my prayer is that God would write a letter about me He would say such things, Ray a bond servant of Jesus Christ.

How about you?

## 12 Tribes / You are Remembered

To the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad: Greetings - These people were scattered for they were driven out of Jerusalem for their faith in Jesus. The twelve tribes represent the Jewish people. There were twelve tribes of Israel, and James is making a statement to them right off the top, this persecution has affected every one of us, you are not alone. And just as God preserved the children of Israel for their 40 years in the wilderness, so will He preserve and protect you. Just as they entered the Promised Land, so too will you.

## 2 Words / Scattered Unto Life Sermon Mount

Scattered, diaspora, is from two words...."dia" which means scattered about, and "speiro" which means seed. James starts by telling these people I know you are experiences hard-times, but you haven't been scattered upon not to death, but to life. For everywhere you now go, you take the seed of life unto others. You are the fulfillment of go therefore:

*(Matthew 28:19 NKJV) "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,*

*(Matthew 28:20 NKJV) "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.*

### Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:

*(Matthew 5:13 NKJV) "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.*

*(Matthew 5:14 NKJV) "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden.*

*(Matthew 5:15 NKJV) "Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house.*

*(Matthew 5:16 NKJV) "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.*

## Left Behind / Cross

Do you remember the Left Behind Movie 2, they do the old switch on the anti-christ, and the Rabbi says Jesus is the Messiah? Then Nicoli starts screaming, no, not thy will, but my will. I love that because that it so the way it is. Satan was high-fiving on that Friday, then screaming in pain on Sunday. What he thought was victory was the ultimate loss. Here he scatters the Christians, and he begins to high-five again, then it turns to screams of pain, for everywhere the Christians went, the Gospel went, and more people got saved. I love it.

## Remember at Work Tomorrow

You are planting the word of God, the precious promises of God, everywhere you go. Christian when you go to that job you don't like, or to that school you don't like, know that the Lord is scattering you for His purposes. You may very well be the last link to God and eternity that those people ever will have.

## The Scattering of Israel – 740BC

I am reminded when the Assyrians were pressing in and threatening the Southern Kingdom of Israel (Judah) around 740BC. The Northern Kingdom (10 northern tribes) will fall first and be carried away by the Assyrians, and the prophet Isaiah was sent to tell the King of Judah that they would fall too and be scattered, dispersed from their homeland because of their sin and unrighteousness. Yet God makes a beautiful promise to them even in all the uncertainty before them,

*Isaiah 7:14 (NKJV)<sup>14</sup> Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.*

"The Lord will indeed give you a sign," Isaiah said. The word "you" is plural. Therefore, it speaks not only to Ahaz, but to all humanity through all of history. You who feel threatened, intimidated, pressed upon, worried, anxious—the Lord will give you a sign: A virgin shall conceive and bear a Son whose name means "God with us." I love that! God says, "The sign I'm giving you is that I'll be with you." How? Through the miracle of the Incarnation. "Great is the mystery of godliness," Paul says, "that God was manifest in the flesh" (1 Timothy 3:16). God was born a Man in the person of Jesus Christ.

And here is who He (God) is that is with you:

*Isaiah 9:6–7 (NKJV)<sup>6</sup> For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup> Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no*

*end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.*

He is the God who came, and He is the God who gives, He is a God who is strong enough and caring enough to bear my burdens (the government on His shoulder), He's a God who these very attributes are synonymous with His name; He is the wonderful counselor, He is the mighty God, and He is an everlasting Father who will never ever no ever leave you nor forsake you! And when you come in to that belief in the midst of whatever scattering you may be facing, whatever trial, whatever burden you find yourself in, you will God with you is the God who will be to you the Prince of Peace.

And you will find, and live.....

**A Real Faith, that Shows Up in Real Life!**

### **Greetings**

Greetings – This word in the Greek means “rejoice”. I am writing to you for a reason to rejoice. This letter is taken by many to be a letter of correction, but James lets us know it is written, so that we may rejoice, be glad, for applying this letter to our lives will produce fruit in our lives, we will become more like Christ, and that is a reason to Rejoice!

### **Conclusion**

Here are three key verses to get us going:

*James 2:20 (NKJV)*<sup>20</sup> *But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?*

*James 1:22 (NKJV)*<sup>22</sup> *But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.*

*James 1:5 (NKJV)*<sup>5</sup> *If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.*

### **Prayer**

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

*Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV)*<sup>12</sup> *For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

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Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

*Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV)*<sup>16</sup> *Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need*

**Passage:** James 1:2-12

**Title:** The Test of Perseverance and Suffering

**Summary:** In order to endure a trial and suffering, we must understand trials from God's perspective, and what He says about them. He says count them all joy, which is a way different perspective that we have on them. In our study we will see four things the Lord wants us to know in and from trials:

- The Perspective of Trials – 1:2
- The Purpose of Trials – 1:3-4
- The Power in Trials – 1:5-11
- The Promise from Trials – 1:12

**James 1:2–12 (NKJV)** <sup>2</sup> My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, <sup>3</sup> knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. <sup>4</sup> But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. <sup>5</sup> If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. <sup>6</sup> But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. <sup>7</sup> For let not that man 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 glory in his exaltation, <sup>10</sup> but the rich in his humiliation, because as a flower of the field he will pass away. <sup>11</sup> For no sooner has the sun risen with a burning heat than it withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beautiful appearance perishes. So the rich man also will fade away in his pursuits. <sup>12</sup> Blessed *is* the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

### **Written by James / Didn't believe – to Leader / Hindsight / Everyday Living**

The Book of James was written by none other than Jesus' brother James. James was a leader in the church, a pillar in the church (Acts 21). James didn't believe that Jesus was God when He walked this earth (John 7:5); but after the resurrection Jesus appears to him (1 Cor 15:4-7), and everything changed. James is going to write us this letter, he will talk about everyday practical stuff. He will talk about trials in life, our works, our tongue, prayer, and other things; as he writes these things, no doubt he will be remembering how Jesus handled them, reflecting back on watching situations, and watching his oldest brother. He will reflect on Jesus' life of love, and a life of sinlessness, in a world that can be so hateful at times, and so full of sin. James will write these things based on hindsight, based on firsthand witnessing of how his older brother lived life, every day. James watched Jesus handle everyday life, and that is what this book is about; it is about living everyday life as a Follower of God, in a fallen world.

### **Jesus Rubbed Off / Nature Illustrations / Favorite Teacher - Sermon on Mount**

We can see how much Jesus rubbed off on James, for James's style resembles his brother so much. Like Jesus used nature as illustrations for His teaching points, so does James some 30 times. He uses nature analogies such as the sea, flowers, sun, fire, horses, and ships to name a few). It is obvious who James's favorite teacher was, because this epistle covers every topic that Jesus covered in the Sermon on the Mount. There is amazing parallelisms between the two; James does not actually quote the Lord's words, but he obviously had internalized Jesus' teachings and reproduced them with spiritual depth. Jesus covered about 30 topics in the Sermon on the Mount, and we will see that James touches on every one of them in this epistle. The Book of James is Sermon on the Mount 2. The Book is also very quick and concise, moving from thought-to-thought quickly. So, the Book of James is the New Testament Version of the Old Testament Proverbs. It resembles Proverbs because it is very poetic the way it flows its thoughts using illustrations and analogies.

### **So We can Examine Self / How am I Doing**

Jesus gave the Sermon on the Mount so that we might examine ourselves and ask the question, "so how am I doing in each of these areas?" James writes to the church, to us, and as we read, we must ask ourselves, "so how am I doing in these areas?" This book is practical and applicable for us living in the year 2022, and the ultimate goal of this epistle is giving to us in verse 4 of chapter 1, to bring us into maturity, perfect and lacking nothing.

As in school, we take tests to see how much of a handle and mastery we have on a subject, we will do the same in this book:

### **3 Key Verses**

Here are three key verses to get us going:

**James 2:20 (NKJV)** <sup>20</sup> *But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?*

*James 1:22 (NKJV)* <sup>22</sup> But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

*James 1:4-5 (NKJV)* <sup>4</sup> But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. <sup>5</sup> If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

### The Outline of the Book of James:

#### Chapter 1

- Introduction (1:1)
- The Test of Perseverance and Suffering (1:2-12)
- The Test of Blame in Temptation (1:12-18)
- The Test of Response to the Word (1:19-27)

#### Chapter 2

- The Test of Partiality (2:1-9)
- The Test of the Law (2:10-13)
- The Test of Faith and Works (2:14-26)

#### Chapter 3

- The Test of the Tongue (3:1-12)
- The Test of Wisdom Applied (3:13-18)

#### Chapter 4

- The Test of the World's Influence (4:1-12)
- The Test of Dependence (4:13-5:6)

#### Chapter 5

- The Test of Endurance (5:7-12)
- The Test of Prayerfulness (5:13-20)

So, let's see how we are doing? The first test is the Test of Perseverance and Suffering.

### **Outline:**

#### The Test of Perseverance and Suffering (1:2-12)

- The Perspective of Trials – 1:2
- The Purpose of Trials – 1:3-4
- The Power in Trials – 1:5-11
- The Promise from Trials – 1:12

### **Prayer**

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

*Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV)* <sup>12</sup> For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

### **In Every Study**

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

*Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need

## The Perspective of Trials – 1:2

In order to endure a trial and suffering, we have to understand trials from God's perspective, and what He says about them. He says count them all joy, which is a way different perspective that we have on them.

**(James 1:1 NKJV) James, a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad: Greetings.**

**(James 1:2 NKJV) My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials,**

### **Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:**

*(Matthew 5:10 NKJV) Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

*(Matthew 5:11 NKJV) "Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake.*

*(Matthew 5:12 NKJV) "Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.*

### **Scattered**

In verse 1 James could have been thinking primarily about Jewish history: their captivity under the Assyrians and Babylonians and then dispersion under the Romans. James was well aware that the Jews had been scattered from their homeland all over the world. But it is also possible that he was thinking of the dispersion of the early church. After Stephen was martyred, Christians scattered, fleeing the persecution in Jerusalem. We can't say conclusively to whom he is writing, but the point is that seeing the scattering of believers and the Jews, James was well aware that trials were inevitable

*Acts 7:59–8:3 (NKJV) <sup>59</sup> And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on God and saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." <sup>60</sup> Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not charge them with this sin." And when he had said this, he fell asleep. <sup>1</sup> Now Saul was consenting to his death. At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. <sup>2</sup> And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him. <sup>3</sup> As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison.*

*Acts 12:1–4 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> Now about that time Herod the king stretched out his hand to harass some from the church. <sup>2</sup> Then he killed James the brother of John with the sword. <sup>3</sup> And because he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to seize Peter also. Now it was during the Days of Unleavened Bread. <sup>4</sup> So when he had arrested him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four squads of soldiers to keep him, intending to bring him before the people after Passover.*

*\*note – this James spoken of here is the Apostle James, brother of John, not the James of this Epistle*

### **15 Times / Camel Knees / Miss You Brother**

*My brethren* - 15 times he will call his fellow believers' "brethren". James is saying I'm with you, I know where you are at. I love this, James is calling them his flesh and blood in a sense. Tradition of early church writings say that James was called "camel knees" for he was such a man of prayer. Imagine, his prayer time, was communion with his brother. I can only imagine what that was like, like anybody who has lost a loved one, James prayer would be a wanton prayer, "I wish you were here Jesus, I miss you my brother, I feel scattered, you were always there for me, I need you today, I need to hear your big brother advice." I see James calling the fellow believers' brethren, because he knows the pain of a separated family, and he longs for the time of family reunion.

### **Count it Joy**

*count it all joy when you fall into various trials* - First thing he starts with is count it all joy. But not what for what we consider joyful things – Trials! Give me a commentary any day, I'd rather read about trials than have to go into one, but James who watched his own Brother endure the Cross, says count it all joy.

How do we count it all joy when I just lost my job, how count it all all joy I've just been diagnosed with an illness? Well count is a accounting term and in accounting it's always the same all accounting is profit and loss and then, where the books balance. He's speaking to us and he's saying count it a profit you will find a tremendous profit if you can endure this, see through this, for see when we come into a trial, we say this is a total loss, this is a total loss for everything that I worked for everything that I'm looking for in the future and all these things it's a loss, sometimes a total loss. But here God says no, count it a profit, counted a joy that's gonna do a mighty work in you.

## **Sins of Fallen World / Not Sowing - Reaping**

various trials - These trials are the result of sin in the world, not sin in you. Do you see the difference? Sin in you, your willful sin will bring repercussions upon you, it is the law of reaping and sowing. But the trials spoken of here are the result of sin in the world, of living in a fallen world, a world that is steadily deteriorating - daily I might add. The fallen world has brought cancer, hurricanes, earthquakes, unemployment, and car wrecks. Sin in other people is what has brought wars, religious persecution, and wrongful and unjustified attacks. As Christians we are subject to these things because we live in this world, salvation does not make us immune to them.

Fall – On a visit to the Central America I saw an open manhole, and it was extremely dangerous during the rain and floods—sometimes people forgot it was there under the water and fell into it. The word James uses for trials conveys the same kind of image: you encounter them unexpectedly.

The same word is used in the story of the Good Samaritan about a certain man going down from Jerusalem who 'fell among robbers' (Luke 10:30, ESV). You remember also that Paul and his companions were sailing in a storm. The ship was falling apart, and then they 'struck a sand-bar' (Acts 27:41). It's exactly the same word.

You fall into a flooded manhole, you fall into the hands of robbers on the way from Jerusalem or you hit a sandbank, and before you know it, you are in over your head. This is the image that James uses to describe how these testing times will come.

Various - And these testings come in many forms. The word James uses is often best translated 'many-coloured', 'variegated'. Christian Jay Adams puts it this way: 'Our testings can come in the fiery reds of affliction, the icy blues of sorrow, the murky browns of failure, the sickly yellows of illness and disease.'

## **When – Not If / Golgotha / Why Me**

when you fall into various trials - notice here brethren, that it says "when", not "if". Let me dispel an ancient Christian myth, the one of "don't pray for patience because then God will give you trials to produce your patience". It says when, you will get them because you live in this fallen world. Again, the difference here is that they have come upon you by no fault of your own. Don't think that God is mad at you, or that He is punishing you. Your Father in Heaven loves you more than you will ever know, and He did not leave the throne of heaven 2000 years ago, be mocked, beaten, whipped, spit upon, and then nailed to a cross to make your life miserable. He took our misery so that we might have His love. When I am faced with things I do not understand, I always go back to what I do understand, God loves me and came and died for me. I do not know why some people get cancer, and others live their whole life in perfect health. I don't know why, my ways are not His ways, but I do know He loves me and will be with me through them all.

## **Weight Room**

His loves us and always does what is best for us. And just as curls are the best exercise to build up the biceps, trials are the perfect work to produce Christ-likeness in us. Trials are Christian bodybuilding. That brings us to the purpose of trials in our life.

## **The Purpose of Trials – 1:3-4**

**(James 1:3 NKJV) knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.**

## **Bear-up Under Pressure**

produces patience - Trials produce patience. It is ever so important to know what this word patience means. It means "the ability to bear-up while under pressure." Like a Lighthouse continues to in spite of the constant pounding of the waves. Patience is endurance under pressure. It means that the patience we get from trials, that we build-up in us, will let us react differently to future trials and pressures.

## **Today's Trials**

It is amazing to me today, but there are trials today in my life that I am currently living through right now, that I really don't even realize are trials, but just accept as daily life. The same trial today that I thought was going to break me 10 years ago, is today, just an annoyance.

**(James 1:4 NKJV) But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.**

**Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:**

*(Matthew 5:48 NKJV) "Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.*

**Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:**

*(Matthew 6:33 NKJV) "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.*

*(Matthew 6:34 NKJV) "Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.*

### **Airplane Testing**

I am so thankful that the Boeing Corporation puts every airplane it produces through test flights before they turn it over to the airlines to fly you and I. After they design and build it, they test it. They see how fast it can go before the engines could overheat, how high before the engines could flame out, how far it can fly before it could run out of fuel, how sharp a turn it could make before the wings break off, how it responds to foul weather, how often it needs repaired, multiple of tests to make sure it is ready to be used for what it was designed for and to be used to its fullest potential. They are proving out the design. I am glad that they do that, and so are you. I am glad that they don't buck the last rivet and say, tell Southwest Airlines to come get it. We expect it to be tested.

### **That's What God is Doing in Us / Comfort Zone**

That is what God does with trials in our life, He allows these things to prove out the design. You see we really do not know how high and how fast we can soar. We get in a comfort zone, and we cease to grow. God will bring, or allow a trial to come to get us off the couch, and into the weight room. I notice how much better my prayer life and study life is when things aren't in autopilot. God wants us to soar with the eagles, and not peck seeds with the chickens waiting to be Satan's dinner.

### **Trials produce Christ-likeness / That's the Joy / Firsthand Account / I Watched My Brother**

God say I have a life for you so abundant that you have no idea. Trials produce Christ-likeness in us. James is speaking from a first-hand account. I watched my brother Jesus react when hard times came upon Him, and never once did He react in the flesh, never once did he lose it. And now it is my turn to be like Him. What can we be thankful for, why can we count it all joy, because I am becoming more like the God I seek to draw nearer to:

*Romans 12:1-2 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. <sup>2</sup> And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

Take the trial and use to grow and become more like Christ!

### **What Changes is the Heart / Perseverance is Hanging on To**

What changes in a trial is not the trial, but the heart, the attitude; *Perseverance is not getting on through, but hanging on to - hanging on to Jesus Christ.*

### **Don't Bail Out Until Completed**

*But let patience have its perfect work* – Notice the word "let". Here the author asks us to let patience have its perfect work; he is saying don't bail out of your trial, don't try to find a shortcut, don't quit on God, or the work that is being perfected in you, will not complete. How many times have we bailed out of a trial before God has completed what He wanted to-do in us. We bail out by complaining the whole time, attacking back, yelling at God, or bailing out at the bar or works of the flesh. How often we have bailed out before He brings us to a place where in this area of your life, you will be complete, lacking nothing. God will let you try to work your way out of a trial, so that you will run out of steam, reach the bottom, because at the bottom you will be ready to listen.

### **Football Practice / Day to Day Battle / Just Make it One More Day**

The worst part of football practice was when we had to lay on our backs and hold our legs six inches in the air, which seemed like forever. Your abs would be burning, the pain was grueling, but the coach knew it was going to make our abs solid and enable us to endure the blows in the game. He would say 30 more seconds, and you could always make 30 more seconds. I remember my most intense trial, 9 months of unemployment, God would ask me every day, can you make one more day, and I'd say yes, because I could always make one more day. Our trial is a day-to-day battle, once you start looking at it from a distance it makes it so much harder. Take your trial day by day, and I'll you'll ever have to do, is make it one more day.

### **God Won't Let a Trial Go to Waste / So Don't You**

God will not let a trial go to waste, hang in there, He will use it to draw you closer to Him, for a time of fellowship with Him. The worse thing to do is to let a trial go to waste. If you are in it, then get something out of it. A precious saint always said, Lord don't let this suffering go to waste.

### **Toothpaste / Perfection – Lacking Nothing**

If you squeeze a tube of toothpaste, yes toothpaste comes out because you squeezed it, but truly toothpaste comes out because toothpaste was in the tube. The things that come out of us during trials are the things God wants to bring to the surface, bring to our attention so we can deal with them. You will never know what is in the tube until you squeeze. Next time you are going through a trial, every time you brush your teeth may it remind you of what God is doing, He is bringing you into perfection, so that you may be lacking nothing. So that you may become like your Jesus – and becoming like Him is something to count it all joy!

### **The Power in Trials – 1:5-8**

Sometimes it feels as if God has abandoned us, but know that He is right there with you, I never leave you:

*(Hebrews 13:5 NKJV) Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."*

The one thing the Lord promises to us in a trial, is Himself. You will never have to go through a trial alone, for He is always right there with you.

And He gives us power to endure, for He gives us His word to apply to the situation.

**(James 1:5 NKJV) If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.**

### **Ask & He will Show**

We are to ask, "Lord how am I to handle this pressure upon me." This verse says ask and the Lord will show you. Wisdom is "knowledge applied". The things I know, the things I have learned, wisdom is putting that knowledge in motion, into action, it is getting the knowledge from our minds into our walk. Wisdom doesn't just apply to trials, but to every area of our lives. We are given some 50 things we should be doing in this short 5-chapter book.

Lord how do I hang on in the storm, and He says come and I will tell you.

### **Moses Numbers 9**

A great example of this is in the Old Testament. The children of Israel have been delivered from Egypt and they are now in their wilderness journey. One of the things the Lord commands them to do is to observe the Passover on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the 1<sup>st</sup> month every year. Now everyone who did not keep the Passover were to be cut-off, which meant to be killed (Remember Hebrews the whole meaning of Passover). Well there is a problem, for it said also that if anyone had touched a dead body the week of the Passover, they were "ceremonially unclean". So these men come to Moses and say we have a problem, we touched a dead body and can't keep the Passover. Do you see the problem, by the Law, they were to be killed if they didn't keep the Passover, but by the Law they weren't allowed to keep the

Passover either. Now what does Moses do, in this dilemma, in this trial? He says, be still (be quiet), let me hear what the Lord says to do:

*Numbers 9:6–11 (NKJV)* <sup>6</sup> Now there were certain men who were defiled by a human corpse, so that they could not keep the Passover on that day; and they came before Moses and Aaron that day. <sup>7</sup> And those men said to him, “We became defiled by a human corpse. Why are we kept from presenting the offering of the LORD at its appointed time among the children of Israel?” <sup>8</sup> And Moses said to them, “Stand still, that I may hear what the LORD will command concerning you.” <sup>9</sup> Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, <sup>10</sup> “Speak to the children of Israel, saying: ‘If anyone of you or your posterity is unclean because of a corpse, or is far away on a journey, he may still keep the LORD’s Passover. <sup>11</sup> On the fourteenth day of the second month, at twilight, they may keep it. They shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.

### **When We Enter Be Still / The Written Word**

When we enter a trial, are in a trial, we need to be still, be quiet, and say Lord how do I handle this. So, so many times you will hear the Lord bring a Scripture to your mind and will answer you through His written Word. That is why it is so important that we study and stay in this word.

### **A Place of Tarrying**

There is a place of tarrying and waiting upon the Lord for a Word of Wisdom. How often when we don't hear from the Lord within the first moments of our asking that we get up and move on. There is a time to sit, ask, and be totally silent. It is a most wonderful thing to be still before the Lord (even if you're not in a trial) and just wait to hear from Him. You just sit, for it takes time for your mind to stop racing, for the world to fade away, and then the Lord starts to speak.

*Habakkuk 2:1–3 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> I will stand my watch And set myself on the rampart, And watch to see what He will say to me, And what I will answer when I am corrected. <sup>2</sup> Then the LORD answered me and said: “Write the vision And make it plain on tablets, That he may run who reads it. <sup>3</sup> For the vision is yet for an appointed time; But at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it; Because it will surely come, It will not tarry.

*Psalms 46:10 (NKJV)* <sup>10</sup> Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!

### **The Scattering of Israel – 740BC**

I am reminded when the Assyrians were pressing in and threatening the Southern Kingdom of Israel (Judah) around 740BC. The Northern Kingdom (10 northern tribes) will fall first and be carried away by the Assyrians, and the prophet Isaiah was sent to tell the King of Judah that they would fall too and be scattered, dispersed from their homeland because of their sin and unrighteousness. Yet God makes a beautiful promise to them even in all the uncertainty before them,

*Isaiah 7:14 (NKJV)* <sup>14</sup> Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.

“The Lord will indeed give you a sign,” Isaiah said. The word “you” is plural. Therefore, it speaks not only to Ahaz, but to all humanity through all of history. You who feel threatened, intimidated, pressed upon, worried, anxious—the Lord will give you a sign: A virgin shall conceive and bear a Son whose name means “God with us.” I love that! God says, “The sign I’m giving you is that I’ll be with you.” How? Through the miracle of the Incarnation. “Great is the mystery of godliness,” Paul says, “that God was manifest in the flesh” (1 Timothy 3:16). God was born a Man in the person of Jesus Christ.

And here is who He (God) is that is with you:

*Isaiah 9:6–7 (NKJV)* <sup>6</sup> For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup> Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

He is the God who came, and He is the God who gives, He is a God who is strong enough and caring enough to bear my burdens (the government on His shoulder), He's a God who these very attributes are synonymous with His name; He is the wonderful counselor, He is the mighty God, and He is an everlasting Father who will never ever no ever leave you nor forsake you! And when you come in to that belief in the midst of whatever scattering you may be facing, whatever trial, whatever burden you find yourself in, you will God with you is the God who will be to you the Prince of Peace.

And you will find, and live.....

**A Real Faith, that Shows Up in Real Life!**

## Be careful

Be careful brethren, I know in a trial it is hard to be in it, and God gives us brethren to come alongside of us, but be careful that you do not seek them for comfort and counsel, over the Lord.

**(James 1:6 NKJV) But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind.**

**(James 1:7 NKJV) For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord;**

**(James 1:8 NKJV) he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.**

## Believe He Answers / Sermon Mount

Now if we go to God, asking for wisdom, then we must go believing that He will give us what we ask for. He will answer us and direct us.

### Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:

*(Matthew 7:7 NKJV) "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.*

*(Matthew 7:8 NKJV) "For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.*

*(Matthew 7:9 NKJV) "Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone?*

*(Matthew 7:10 NKJV) "Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent?*

*(Matthew 7:11 NKJV) "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!*

## Waves of Sea

*like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind.* - When you ask the Lord for wisdom, believe that you will receive it, and once you receive it, keep it. Peter was walking on water, until what, until he took his eyes off of Jesus and looked at the waves.

**Matthew 14:28–31 (NKJV)** <sup>28</sup> And Peter answered Him and said, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water." <sup>29</sup> So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. <sup>30</sup> But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!" <sup>31</sup> And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?"

## God Allows It / Pierced Ear / His Problem

Anything that is going on in my life God is allowing it, therefore I need not panic, I know my problem is His problem, for I am His bondservant, my ear has been pierced through at the door, making me His responsibility. Therefore, I keep my eyes fixed upon Him, waiting for Him, He will work in my trial. Since it is His problem, I now have unlimited power working for me.

*double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.* - Patience is consistency. A double-minded person is unstable. Instability and immaturity go hand in hand.

**(James 1:9 NKJV) Let the lowly brother glory in his exaltation,**

**(James 1:10 NKJV) but the rich in his humiliation, because as a flower of the field he will pass away.**

**(James 1:11 NKJV) For no sooner has the sun risen with a burning heat than it withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beautiful appearance perishes. So the rich man also will fade away in his pursuits.**

### Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:

*(Matthew 5:3 NKJV) "Blessed are the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

## Money Answers Some / Causes Others

Ohh if only I had more money, then this wouldn't be a trial. We think money can solve so many problems. It may solve some problems, but these verses tell us that it brings on a whole new set of problems that us not so rich people have no idea about.

## The Promise from Trials – 1:12

Each trial, every suffering, must be put into its proper perspective, there is a precious promise of the "Crown of Life" for all those that endure.

**(James 1:12 NKJV) Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.**

**Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:**

*(Matthew 7:14 NKJV) "Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.*

The word used here in NKJV is temptation, but it is the same Greek word, and it can mean both temptation and trial. Next study we will look at the test of temptation.

### **Crown of Life - Twice in Bible**

*crown of life* – this phrase is only used one other place in the Bible, and it used for a group of people who are suffering and being persecuted:

**Revelation 2:8–10 (NKJV)** <sup>8</sup> "And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write, 'These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life: <sup>9</sup> "I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. <sup>10</sup> Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

### **Zoe / Life Intensive / Vines**

This Greek word for "life" (Crown of Life) is "zoe", It has a very wordy definition in the Greek dictionary, it sums up to "life intensive, life vigorous"

Vines Dictionary describes it like this: **Life as God has it, that which the Father has in Himself, and which He gave to the Incarnate Son to have in Himself, which He gives to us to have in Ourselves.**

### **Zoe Early Church / That is the Crown of Life**

I like that, but I like how it has been summed up from the early Christian Church; "**Life emanating from God, manifested by Christ**". We can only have this life through Jesus Christ. And Jesus is making you more like Him, as He manifest's (makes clear) Himself in you. That is the Crown of Life, it is the Life of Christ in me, in you, coming to the surface, emanating from us. And it takes trials to bring that about.

### **Trials & Perspective of Crown**

Beloved, put your "trials in life", in perspective with your "crown of life".

### **The Tube Squeezed**

There will come a day that when the tube is squeezed, all that will come out is Jesus!

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### **Prayer**

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**Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV)** <sup>12</sup> *For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

### **In Every Study**

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

*Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) <sup>16</sup> Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need*

**Passage:** James 1:12-18

**Title:** The Test of Blame in Temptations

**Summary:** When a temptation comes before us, who do we blame (especially if we fall). Do we blame ourselves, someone else, or do we blame God? If we blame anyone other than ourselves when we fall, then we are destined to repeat this failure over and over, because we don't take the responsibility for our actions. In this study we will look at four points that will help us have victory in every temptation that comes before us.

- The Source of Temptation – 1:12-14
- The Conception of Temptation – 1:14-15
- The Deception of Temptation – 1:16-17
- The Deliverance of Temptation – 1:18

*James 1:12–18 (NKJV) <sup>12</sup> Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. <sup>13</sup> Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. <sup>14</sup> But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. <sup>15</sup> Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death. <sup>16</sup> Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. <sup>17</sup> Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. <sup>18</sup> Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.*

### **Written by James / Didn't believe – to Leader / Hindsight / Everyday Living**

The Book of James was written by none other than Jesus' brother James. James was a leader in the church, a pillar in the church (Acts 21). James didn't believe that Jesus was God when He walked this earth (John 7:5); but after the resurrection Jesus appears to him (1 Cor 15:4-7), and everything changed. James is going to write us this letter, he will talk about everyday practical stuff. He will talk about trials in life, our works, our tongue, prayer, and other things; as he writes these things, no doubt he will be remembering how Jesus handled them, reflecting back on watching situations, and watching his oldest brother. He will reflect on Jesus' life of love, and a life of sinlessness, in a world that can be so hateful at times, and so full of sin. James will write these things based on hindsight, based on first hand witnessing of how his older brother lived life, every day. James watched Jesus handle everyday life, and that is what this book is about; it is about living everyday life as a Follower of God, in a fallen world.

### **Jesus Rubbed Off / Nature Illustrations / Favorite Teacher - Sermon on Mount**

We can see how much Jesus rubbed off on James, for James style resembles his brother so much. Like Jesus used nature as illustrations for His teaching points, so does James some 30 times. He uses nature analogies such as the sea, flowers, sun, fire, horses, and ships to name a few). It is obvious who James favorite teacher was, because this epistle covers every topic that Jesus covered in the Sermon on the Mount. There is amazing parallelisms between the two; James does not actually quote the Lord's words, but he obviously had internalized Jesus' teachings and reproduced them with spiritual depth. Jesus covered about 30 topics in the Sermon on the Mount, and we will see that James touches on every one of them in this epistle. The Book of James is Sermon on the Mount 2. The Book is also very quick and concise, moving from thought-to-thought quickly. So the Book of James is the New Testament Version of the Old Testament Proverbs. It resembles Proverbs because it is very poetic the way it flows its thoughts using illustrations and analogies.

### **So We can Examine Self / How am I Doing**

Jesus gave the Sermon on the Mount so that we might examine ourselves and ask the question, "so how am I doing in each of these areas?" James writes to the church, to us, and as we read, we have to ask ourselves, "so how am I doing in these areas?" This book is practical and applicable for us living in the year 2022, and the ultimate goal of this epistle is giving to us in verse 4 of chapter 1, to bring us into maturity, perfect and lacking nothing.

As in school, we take tests to see how much of a handle and mastery we have on a subject, we will do the same in this book:

### **3 Key Verses**

Here are three key verses to get us going:

*James 2:20 (NKJV) <sup>20</sup> But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?*

*James 1:22 (NKJV)*<sup>22</sup> *But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.*

*James 1:4–5 (NKJV)*<sup>4</sup> *But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.* <sup>5</sup> *If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.*

### The Outline of the Book of James:

#### Chapter 1

- Introduction (1:1)
- The Test of Perseverance and Suffering (1:2-12)
- The Test of Blame in Temptation (1:12-18)
- The Test of Response to the Word (1:19-27)

#### Chapter 2

- The Test of Partiality (2:1-9)
- The Test of the Law (2:10-13)
- The Test of Faith and Works (2:14-26)

#### Chapter 3

- The Test of the Tongue (3:1-12)
- The Test of Wisdom Applied (3:13-18)

#### Chapter 4

- The Test of the World's Influence (4:1-12)
- The Test of Dependence (4:13-5:6)

#### Chapter 5

- The Test of Endurance (5:7-12)
- The Test of Prayerfulness (5:13-20)

### **Recap Trials**

The last Test was the Test of Perseverance and Suffering (1:2-12):

- The Perspective of Trials – 1:2
- The Purpose of Trials – 1:3-4
- The Power in Trials – 1:5-11
- The Promise from Trials – 1:12

Which flows right into the next:

- The Test of Blame in Temptation (1:12-18)
- The Test of Response to the Word (1:19-27)

### **Today's Test**

When a temptation comes before us, who do we blame (especially if we fall). Do we blame ourselves, someone else, or do we blame God? If we blame anyone other than ourselves when we fall, then we are destined to repeat this failure over and over, because we don't take the responsibility for our actions. In this study we will look at four points that will help us have victory in every temptation that comes before us.

- The Source of Temptation – 1:12-14
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- The Deception of Temptation – 1:16-17
- The Deliverance of Temptation – 1:18

### **Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:**

*(Matthew 5:8 NKJV)* *Blessed are the pure in heart, For they shall see God.*

*(Matthew 6:13 NKJV)* *And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.*

### **Outline**

#### The Test of Blame in Temptation (1:12-18)

- The Source of Temptation – 1:12-14

- The Conception of Temptation – 1:14-15
- The Deception of Temptation – 1:16-17
- The Deliverance of Temptation – 1:18

### Prayer

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

*Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) <sup>12</sup> For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

### **In Every Study**

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

*Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) <sup>16</sup> Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need*

### The Source of Temptation – 1:12-14

**(James 1:12 NKJV) Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.**

### **Endures**

Endures – means to withstand, not to recede or flee. And so a “blessing” to the man or woman who when faced with a trial or temptation does not yield to it or flee from it into a defeat or being overcome by it (note - this verses ties trials and temptations together using the same word in the Greek that can be trial or temptation).

James mind you is writing in hindsight, hey saw his big-brother face trials and temptations, yet emerge victoriously and overcome all of them, without sin. Imagine all the things the devil would put before Jesus, all the world/people the devil would stir before Him, yet Jesus never yielded (nor fled to sin). James is writing in hindsight, of how Jesus handled them, and now we get a front row seat on how we too can live victoriously when temptation comes our way.

*Hebrews 4:15–16 (NKJV) <sup>15</sup> For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. <sup>16</sup> Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

### **Blessed**

Blessed – means oh how happy, and there is a greatness in that statement when we please the Lord, when we live for Him, at whatever the price.

There is a prayer the Lord will always answer, and that is the prayer, Lord I want to please You and honor You, with all of my life in all that I do, in whatever I do, may it bring glory to You, and He will answer that.

*1 Corinthians 10:31 (NKJV) <sup>31</sup> Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*

The other day I was going hunting, but in my prayer that morning I met with the Lord and (I know by His initiating – for the Lord is the initiator in prayer), I said Lord we know I don't have time for a hobby, I want my time with you to have purpose, to meet with You and be with You. That every time we go out, You will meet and speak to me, that Your presence would be with me.

Well many aspects of the story to be told you, but that day when I went out, I found an older somewhat feeble man in the bushes, he had driven off the path on his motorbike, stuck his head and had a concussion, and well the fact is he could have only been found by hunter, and no one else could have seen him, and I know those woods and I know this..... I was the only hunter in the woods that day. It was

in the mountains, it was wet, and had he remained in those woods overnight, he most likely would have died of hypothermia. So God answered my prayer, maybe this man too who prayed God save me, I don't know for he had a concussion and was out of it, but I know God answered my prayer to meet with Him and to be shown something of Him, and who He is.

So the image before my mind over the past days that the Lord speaks to me..... wrecked lives, sitting in a daze, minds so concussed from the blows of the world, and the Lord says Ray I want to put you on their path to rescue them, I want you to tell them how to live a victorious Christian live, and overcome all trials and temptation, and it by and through Me and the Word of Life I have and give to all who ask.

### **Approved**

Approved – as we said, this book is on testing, and the Lord is putting before us, how are we doing in this area and that area, and here particularly the test of temptation. The word approved means “to reveal as genuine”.

Because “real faith, shows up in real life”, and God provides a way, a means, of victory and overcoming, but it take great faith to receive it, and believe it, and exercise it.

### **Before – Let Look Again at Crown of Life**

Before we look at our first point, let us refresh ourselves on “The Crown of Life”.

The word used here in NKJV is temptation, but it is the same Greek word, and it can mean both temptation and trial. Next study we will look at the test of temptation. So it is interesting in that verse 12 can refer back to “trials” (2-11), or forward to “temptation” (13-18). In either case, enduring a trial or a temptation, comes with great reward, “The Crown of Life”.

### **Crown of Life - Twice in Bible**

crown of life – this phrase is only used one other place in the Bible, and it used for a group of people who are suffering and being persecuted:

**Revelation 2:8–10 (NKJV)** <sup>8</sup> “And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write, ‘These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life: <sup>9</sup> “I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and / know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but *are* a synagogue of Satan. <sup>10</sup> Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw *some* of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

### **Zoe / Life Intensive / Vines**

This Greek word for “life” (Crown of Life) is “zoe”, It has a very wordy definition in the Greek dictionary, it sums up to “life intensive, life vigorous”

Vines Dictionary describes it like this: **Life as God has it, that which the Father has in Himself, and which He gave to the Incarnate Son to have in Himself, which He gives to us to have in Ourselves.**

### **Zoe Early Church / That is the Crown of Life**

I like that, but I like how it has been summed up from the early Christian Church; “**Life emanating from God, manifested by Christ**”. We can only have this life through Jesus Christ. And Jesus is making you more like Him, as He manifest's (makes clear) Himself in you. That is the Crown of Life, it is the Life of Christ in me, in you, coming to the surface, emanating from us. And it takes trials to bring that about.

### **Ephesians 2:6-7**

Zoe Life is now, and it will be amazing for all of eternity, surely worth enduring our present trials or temptation, and hanging on to Jesus through it all. Look at verse 7, here is a promise, that He desires and will, spend all of eternity showing us His grace and kindness.

**Ephesians 2:4–7 (NKJV)** <sup>4</sup> But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, <sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), <sup>6</sup> and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, <sup>7</sup> that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

So now, our first point, “The Source of Temptation”.

Whether it is victory in a trial or temptation, to defeat either, we must have “wisdom” and the Lord told if we lack wisdom, ask for it and He will give it. Wisdom is “knowledge applied”. So He will teach us, give us both knowledge of Truths, and Wisdom on how to apply it in our temptation (and trials).

*James 1:5–8 (NKJV)* <sup>5</sup> *If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. <sup>6</sup> But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. <sup>7</sup> For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; <sup>8</sup> he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.*

**Can you make it one more day in your trial, temptation? It will be worth it!**

**(James 1:13 NKJV) Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone.**

### **When Tempted**

*When tempted* – we see the word “when”, which declares “temptations” will come.

*(1 Corinthians 10:13 NKJV) No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.*

### **God Allows Trials / Doesn't Bring Temptation / Encouraged Fallen Nature / Progression of Trial**

Regarding the entire arena of trials and temptations, understand this: God will allow a trial, but doesn't bring a temptation. Trials may be test sent by God, or they may be temptations sent by Satan and encouraged by our own fallen nature. We may ask why did James connect the two? What is the relationship between trials and temptations? When our circumstances/trials are difficult, we may find ourselves complaining against God, questioning His love, and resisting His will. At that point Satan provides our fallen nature an opportunity to escape the difficulty. This opportunity is a temptation/invitation to sin.

### **Not God's Sheltered People / Must Face to Grow**

Certainly, God does not want us to yield to temptation, yet neither can He spare us the experience of temptation. We are not God's sheltered people. If we are to mature, we must face tastings and temptations.

### **Who Blame**

Who do we blame in temptation when we fall to the sin that temptation brought. Do we blame ourselves, someone else, the world, Satan, or do we blame God?

We love to blame others, and make them the excuse of why we did what we did, and oh how so many people love to blame the church (and His people) as the reason they went off into sin, because the church wasn't there for me. . And/or we blame God, asking where were You, how could You, why didn't You.... Do something, or save me from. We blame others and we blame God, and that excuse is as old as the garden. It was the women, and on top of that the woman You gave me! And of course Eve then wants to blame the devil, and there we have, the devil made me do it.

*Genesis 3:11–13 (NKJV)* <sup>11</sup> *And He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?" <sup>12</sup> Then the man said, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate." <sup>13</sup> And the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."*

Because God is absolutely holy, He cannot be tempted with evil. Sometimes He tests believers, but He in no way tempts them to sin. In fact, God will not allow temptation that is greater than the believer can withstand and always provides a way of escape (1 Corinthians 10:13).

*(1 Corinthians 10:13 NKJV) No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.*

### **3 Forces at Work – But Only 1 Can Decide**

In every temptation to sin you must always recognize that there are three forces at work trying to lead us into sin. Our flesh, the world, and Satan. Three forces at work in a temptation, but only one can make the final decision, and that is our flesh.

The 3 forces at work in every temptation to sin:

### **Our Flesh**

**Galatians 5:19–21 (NKJV)** <sup>19</sup> Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, <sup>20</sup> idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, <sup>21</sup> envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

### **The World**

**(1 John 2:16 NKJV)** For all that is in the world; the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life; is not of the Father but is of the world.

The world continually bombards us. I think of righteous Lot in Sodom. The same word in 2 Peter 2:9 as here in James 1:13.

**2 Peter 2:7–9 (NKJV)** <sup>7</sup> and delivered righteous Lot, who was oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked <sup>8</sup> (for that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented his righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds)—<sup>9</sup> then the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment,

Martin Luther said, I cant keep birds from flying over my head, but I can keep them from building a nest.

### **Satan**

**(Ephesians 2:2 NKJV)** in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,

Oh yes the devil tries to tempt us, we saw him try with Jesus. The word for tempted in Matthew 4:1, is same word here in James 1:13.

**Matthew 4:1–3 (NKJV)** <sup>1</sup> Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. <sup>2</sup> And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry. <sup>3</sup> Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread."

### **The Forces / Verse 14 Makes it Clear – Blame Anyone Other Than Self and You Fail the Test**

Yes the world and Satan are at work trying to solicit us to sin, but verse 14 we see clearly that it "by his own desires". Blame anyone other than yourself and you have failed the test.

### **The 3 R's**

Know the 3 R's in every temptation - Recognize - Resist - Rejoice. The importance of this is that we must

- Recognize where the attack is from,
- Resist it by what we will learn today, and then
- Rejoice, for the victory over that temptation, and the goodness of God in our lives.

The Resist part is all up to us. But know the Sources in temptations, Recognize them so that you may Resist them, and have reason to Rejoice, not have to Repent!

### **The Conception of Temptation – 1:14-15**

We see the Sources of all Temptation, and now when that Source is yielded to.

**(James 1:14 NKJV)** But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed.

**(James 1:15 NKJV)** Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.

### **Has Conceived**

has conceived - The Greek words for "has conceived" and "brings forth" likens the process to physical conception and birth. It is conceived, then it grows, then it is birthed.

### **The Track in Our Mind / Then It's Birthed**

We have all been there, we play a track over and over in our mind. When I see that person again, I'm going to tell them a thing or two. Or we play it over and over what they did to us, how they wronged us; the thought has been conceived, and now it is just a matter of time before it is birthed – for the next time we see them, we play out what we have been thinking.

### **The Gatekeeper**

To be tempted is not sin. Our mind, if you would, is a gatekeeper in that we cannot stop who comes to the gate, but we do decide who we let in

### **Internet / Mags / TV / - Minds Like Computers**

The dangers that are around us every day. Thinking on the things of the Internet, images that come into the privacy of our bedroom, the magazines, the television shows, that co-worker. These images are planted into the mind, a person begin to think on them, and then when the time comes, a person plays them out. Our minds are like computers, and whatever you program them with, is how the computer will run.

### **Can't Dwell / Can't Entertain / Taking Captive – 2 Cor 10**

There is a process to saying I can't dwell on these things, I can't entertain these things, for the warfare rages in the mind, and we must take every thought captive:

*2 Corinthians 10:3-5 (NKJV)*<sup>3</sup> *For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. <sup>4</sup> For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, <sup>5</sup> casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,*

### **Play Over / Birthed / Satan Energized**

It is when we play with that thought, entertain that temptation, that it is conceived (planted in our mind), then it is birthed. Satan sits there all the while energizing that thought. The "prince and power of the air", it is like he is a radio station, and he is sending his signal out, and anybody that has their dial set to his station, receives his signal.

*Ephesians 2:1-2 (NKJV)*<sup>1</sup> *And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, <sup>2</sup> in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,*

### **Drawn Away / Enticed / Hidden Under the Bait**

Verse 14 says drawn away and enticed:

- *drawn away* – Greek word used to describe wild game being lured into a trap
- *enticed* – A fishing term that means to capture with bait.

The hunter and the fisherman use bait to attract and catch their prey. No animal is deliberately walks into an un-baited trap or hook, the idea is to hide the trap or the hook underneath the bait.

### **Brings Death / Relationships – Happiness – Health / Jesus Perfect Love**

*Verse 15 - when it is full-grown, brings forth death:* It may only start as a thought, seem ever so harmless, but if you let it dwell within you, it will be birthed, and grown, and bring forth death. Sin always brings forth death. Every time!

- Sin will kill relationships.
- It will destroy happiness.
- It will ruin health.

When you want to tell kids how serious sin is and what sin does, the best thing you can do is take them to the Cross of Calvary and say, "Look at this wonderful, perfect, loving Person and see Him on the Cross in agony and pain and blood. It was when Jesus became sin for us that He died, for sin always brings death."

*2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV)*<sup>21</sup> *For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

### **The Deception of Temptation – 1:16-17**

**(James 1:16 NKJV) Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.**

**(James 1:17 NKJV) Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.**

### **Sowing & Reaping**

do not be deceived - It is the Law of Sowing and Reaping, its that simple:

*Galatians 6:7–8 (NKJV)* <sup>7</sup> Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. <sup>8</sup> For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.

### **Deceived / The 3 R's**

And don't be deceived, deceived of what, that this temptation is of the Lord. This temptation that comes upon you is directly a result of your flesh, the world, and Satan. The 3 R's to every temptation - Recognize - Resist - Rejoice. The importance of this is that we must Recognize where the attack is from, Resist it by what we just discussed (taking every thought captive and asking the Lord for Wisdom), and then we Rejoice.

### **God Holding Back / Tactic in Garden / Only Good Gift**

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above - Satan and the world wants to deceive us into thinking that God is keeping something good from us, holding something back. That God doesn't really love or care for us because He is withholding something from us. That was Satan's tactic in the garden, yea Eve God doesn't want you to eat the fruit because when you do you will be like Him knowing good and evil. Don't be deceived – my beloved brethren, don't fall for this lie, God keeps nothing good back from us, only those things that will bring for death.

*Genesis 3:1 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?'"

### **The First Gift from Above**

If you ever think God is holding something back from you, then go back to the first gift that came from above, His only Begotten Son, and there you will see that God will not withhold anything good from you.

*John 3:16–17 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. <sup>17</sup> For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

### **No Variation / The Rock**

Not only is God good in the gifts He gives, but in who He is. In Him there is no variableness or shadow of turning. That is, He's not moody. He doesn't have bad days. He's not generous with me one day, but grouchy the next—as I can so often be. We're variable. We go up and down. God doesn't. He can be nothing but good. He doesn't react to me according to how I'm doing with Him. He is faithful when I am faithless (2 Timothy 2:13). He is good when I am grumpy. He doesn't change. He's locked into His nature. That's why I love the Lord so much. He's solid as a Rock. And I can just enjoy Him without worrying about Him being ticked with me or tired of me. He gives nothing but good gifts, for He is a good God.

*2 Timothy 2:13 (NKJV)* <sup>13</sup> If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.

*Hebrews 13:8 (NKJV)* <sup>8</sup> Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

### **The Deliverance of Temptation – 1:18**

We are never in this alone in our temptation (I will never leave you nor forsake you). God always gives us a way out.

*Hebrews 13:5 (NKJV)* <sup>5</sup> Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

**(James 1:18 NKJV) Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.**

Brought Us Forth – means to birth. God births something in us, we become a firstfruit in the manner that as Jesus overcame, we too can, and we see the way of that is through the "word of truth", His holy word that seaways us into our study next week (being doers of the word), but for now, the way out and deliverance from the trial, is the wisdom of the word applied.



Back to the fruit of the Spirit is what is produced when we endure, when we are squeezed:

**Galatians 5:22–23 (NKJV)** <sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

We are the Apple of His Eye:

**Psalms 17:6–8 (NKJV)** <sup>6</sup> I have called upon You, for You will hear me, O God; Incline Your ear to me, and hear my speech. <sup>7</sup> Show Your marvelous lovingkindness by Your right hand, O You who save those who trust in You From those who rise up against them. <sup>8</sup> Keep me as the apple of Your eye; Hide me under the shadow of Your wings,

## Outline

### The Test of Blame in Temptation (1:12-18)

- The Source of Temptation – 1:12-14
- The Conception of Temptation – 1:14-15
- The Deception of Temptation – 1:16-17
- The Deliverance of Temptation – 1:18

## Prayer

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

**Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV)** <sup>12</sup> For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

## In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

**Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV)** <sup>16</sup> Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need

**Passage:** James 1:19-27

**Title:** The Test of Response to the Word

**Summary:** Seems like we are moving into a new thought, but it really flows and applies to trials and temptations, our response to the Word, will determine our response to every trial and temptation. The test of the response to the Word, will determine how much, or how little we become like Jesus Christ. In this study we will look at three points that will help us see how we are “doing” regarding the Word of God, for verse 22 says for us to “be doers” of the word and not hearers only, deceiving ourselves:

- The Word as a Garden – 1:19-21
- The Word as a Mirror – 1:22-25
- The Word Reflected – 1:26-27

*James 1:19–27 (NKJV)* <sup>19</sup> So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; <sup>20</sup> for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God. <sup>21</sup> Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of 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 observing his natural face in a mirror; <sup>24</sup> for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. <sup>25</sup> But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does. <sup>26</sup> If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless. <sup>27</sup> Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

### **Written by James / Didn't believe – to Leader / Hindsight / Everyday Living**

The Book of James was written by none other than Jesus' brother James. James was a leader in the church, a pillar in the church (Acts 21). James didn't believe that Jesus was God when He walked this earth (John 7:5); but after the resurrection Jesus appears to him (1 Cor 15:4-7), and everything changed. James is going to write us this letter, he will talk about everyday practical stuff. He will talk about trials in life, our works, our tongue, prayer, and other things; as he writes these things, no doubt he will be remembering how Jesus handled them, reflecting back on watching situations, and watching his oldest brother. He will reflect on Jesus' life of love, and a life of sinlessness, in a world that can be so hateful at times, and so full of sin. James will write these things based on hindsight, based on first hand witnessing of how his older brother lived life, everyday. James watched Jesus handle everyday life, and that is what this book is about; it is about living everyday life as a Follower of God, in a fallen world.

### **Jesus Rubbed Off / Nature Illustrations / Favorite Teacher - Sermon on Mount**

We can see how much Jesus rubbed off on James, for James style resembles his brother so much. Like Jesus used nature as illustrations for His teaching points, so does James some 30 times. He uses nature analogies such as the sea, flowers, sun, fire, horses and ships to name a few). It is obvious who James favorite teacher was, because this epistle covers every topic that Jesus covered in the Sermon on the Mount. There is amazing parallelisms between the two; James does not actually quote the Lord's words, but he obviously had internalized Jesus' teachings and reproduced them with spiritual depth. Jesus covered about 30 topics in the Sermon on the Mount, and we will see that James touches on every one of them in this epistle. The Book of James is Sermon on the Mount 2. The Book is also very quick and concise, moving from thought-to-thought quickly. So the Book of James is the New Testament Version of the Old Testament Proverbs. It resembles Proverbs because it is very poetic the way it flows its thoughts using illustrations and analogies.

### **So We can Examine Self / How am I Doing**

Jesus gave the Sermon on the Mount so that we might examine ourselves and ask the question, “so how am I doing in each of these areas?” James writes to the church, to us, and as we read, we have to ask ourselves, “so how am I doing in these areas?” This book is practical and applicable for us living in the year 2022, and the ultimate goal of this epistle is giving to us in verse 4 of chapter 1, to bring us into maturity, perfect and lacking nothing.

As in school, we take tests to see how much of a handle and mastery we have on a subject, we will do the same in this book.

### **3 Key Verses**

Here are three key verses to get us going:

*James 2:20 (NKJV)* <sup>20</sup> But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?

*James 1:22 (NKJV)* <sup>22</sup> But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

*James 1:4–5 (NKJV)* <sup>4</sup> But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. <sup>5</sup> If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

## The Outline of the Book of James:

### Chapter 1

- Introduction (1:1)
- The Test of Perseverance and Suffering (1:2-12)
- The Test of Blame in Temptation (1:12-18)
- The Test of Response to the Word (1:19-27)

### Chapter 2

- The Test of Partiality (2:1-9)
- The Test of the Law (2:10-13)
- The Test of Faith and Works (2:14-26)

### Chapter 3

- The Test of the Tongue (3:1-12)
- The Test of Wisdom Applied (3:13-18)

### Chapter 4

- The Test of the World's Influence (4:1-12)
- The Test of Dependence (4:13-5:6)

### Chapter 5

- The Test of Endurance (5:7-12)
- The Test of Prayerfulness (5:13-20)

## **Flow From Trials / Response Determines How Much Like Christ / Man of the Word**

Seems like we are moving into a new thought, but it really flows and applies to trials and temptations, our response to the Word, will determine our response to every trial and temptation. The test of the response to the Word, will determine how much, or how little we become like Jesus Christ. At work year and years ago, one of my bosses always jokes and called me a man of the cloth. I always correct him (with a smile) and say I am not a man of the cloth, I am a man of the Word, big difference. The Word is what makes me a man of God, for it is what conforms me into the image of Jesus Christ.

## **Self-Deception / Written For Growth**

The emphasis in this section is on the dangers of self-deception, deceiving our own selves: *(James 1:22 NKJV) But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.*

This passage will have strong words for us, in some cases stinging words, but remember the whole purpose of James writing to us is so that we may grow and mature in our Christian walk. As for myself, I can never go back to this message enough, for I need to be reminded of this daily.

## **Deceived Salvation**

James will say don't deceive yourself, examine the Word, and let the Word examine you. Many people can deceive themselves into thinking they are saved when they really are not.

**Matthew 7:22–27 (NKJV)** <sup>22</sup> Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' <sup>23</sup> And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!' <sup>24</sup> "Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: <sup>25</sup> and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. <sup>26</sup> "But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: <sup>27</sup> and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall."

## **Deceived Believers / Spiritual Reality – Right Relationship w/the Word**

But there are true believers that are fooling themselves concerning their Christian walk. They think they are spiritual when they are not. God spoke against these types of people in Revelation 3:17, the church of the Laodiceans. We all can be this type of person, and must guard against it:

**Revelation 3:14–22 (NKJV)** <sup>14</sup> "And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, 'These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: <sup>15</sup> "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. <sup>16</sup> So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. <sup>17</sup> Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—<sup>18</sup> I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, *that* the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. <sup>19</sup> As many

as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. <sup>20</sup> Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. <sup>21</sup> To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. <sup>22</sup> "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." ' ' "

This church (of Laodicea), which can be any of us on any given day or season in our walk can say the same, I'm doing fine, my walk is great, I'm in need of nothing, but the Lord says you are deceiving yourself. It is a mark of maturity when a person faces himself honestly, knows himself, and admits his needs. Spiritual reality results from the proper relationship to God through His Word. God's Word is truth (John 17:17), and if we are rightly related to God's truth, we cannot deceive ourselves, nor be hypocritical. *John 17:17 (NKJV)* <sup>17</sup> Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

## Outline

### The Test of Response to the Word (1:19-27)

- The Word as a Garden – 1:19-21
- The Word as a Mirror – 1:22-25
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## Prayer

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

*Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV)* <sup>12</sup> For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

## In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
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Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

*Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need

## Verse 18

**(James 1:18 NKJV) Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.**

## Like Seed

Verse 18, "Of his own will, he brought us forth." That word there is a conception, a birthing; something is being birthed. And the means of the birthing is by the word of truth. God's word speaks to us, is scattered to us as a seed to bring forth, as we read the next part, a kind of first fruits of his creatures, his creation. Takes us back to Genesis as we read that every seed produced its kind, the seed of its kind, and there's a place that like seed produces like fruit. The apple seed will never produce a fig tree. It can only produce an apple tree. And an orange seed, an orange tree. Like seed always produces like fruit. And so we have us, and the word and the seed that God speaks to us is meant to produce the likeness of him. We are not the fruit, we are not the Christ, but we are the Christlike as we are the offspring of what is produced in likeness of him before all of creation.

*Genesis 1:11–12 (NKJV)* <sup>11</sup> Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth"; and it was so. <sup>12</sup> And the earth brought forth grass, the herb that yields seed according to its kind, and the tree that yields fruit, whose seed is in itself according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

So, how we respond to trials and temptations reveal the seed that is being planted, the seed that is germinating from what has been planted. And therefore, as we read and study today, we'll see the calling and we'll see the testing. What seed is being planted, the seed of the fruit and the spirit or the seed of the fruit of the flesh.

## **Ole Camel Knees**

And what I love about what we're reading is, I know it was steeped in prayer, as James was known as Ole-Camel Knees, because it was said of him that his knees were calloused because he spent so much time on his knees praying. Therefore, I know that this word we read is highly anointed. Yes, inspired, but highly anointed by prayer.

## **The Word as a Garden – 1:19-21**

**(James 1:19 NKJV) So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath;**

**(James 1:20 NKJV) for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.**

**(James 1:21 NKJV) Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.**

### **Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:**

*Matthew 5:21–22 (NKJV) <sup>21</sup> "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.' <sup>22</sup> But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!' shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell fire.*

### **Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:**

*Matthew 6:14–15 (NKJV) <sup>14</sup> "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. <sup>15</sup> But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.*

## **Garden / Weeds Overrun when Left to Self / Start Pulling Weeds**

*Verse 21 the implanted word* - James saw the human heart as a garden, and if it were left to itself weeds would overrun it. So he says here to prepare the soil to receive the "implanted" word. He is urging us to "lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness", in other words, start pulling weeds, prepare the soil so the seed of the Word can grow and not be choked out Remember Jesus' teaching on the soil and the seed in Mark chapter 4).

## **Meekness / Don't Argue the Word / Just Cultivates Weeds**

*Verse 21 - and receive with meekness the implanted word* - What does it mean to receive the Word with meekness, it means not to argue with the Word. The word was used in reference to the bringing and taming of a wild horse. Too many believers will read the word, hear a sermon from the word, and then say I really don't believe that. Meekness is the opposite of wrath. If we do not receive the implanted Word, then we are deceiving ourselves. Christians who like to argue various "points of view" may be only fooling themselves. They think their discussions are promoting spiritual growth, when in reality they may only be cultivating weeds. We recognize that these are weeds and they have to go, they must be rooted out.

## **Obey these Instructions**

If the seed of the Word is to be planted in our hearts, then we must obey the instructions James gives us here to 1.) Swift to hear 2.) Slow to Speak 3.) Slow to Wrath. Anything contrary to these three, then we need to pull some weeds:

## **Swift to Hear / Rarely Regret**

*Swift to Hear* - You know, I rarely regret the things, "I didn't say". But how many times I regret the things I did say. I find that I am rarely drawn into an argument for listening, but once my tongue engages, in I go. *(Proverbs 23:19 NKJV) Hear, my son, and be wise; And guide your heart in the way.*

## **Slow to Speak / 2 Ears – 1 Mouth**

*Slow to Speak* - Two ears, and one mouth, by design. Read Proverbs, and you will see all the wisdom given on this matter.

*(Proverbs 17:27 NKJV) He who has knowledge spares his words, And a man of understanding is of a calm spirit.*

## **Slow to Wrath / Do – Say Stupid things / God will Defend You**

*Slow to Wrath* – Wrath, to bring a judgment, decision of guilt, reaction to an offense. Temper is something we all struggle with. It causes us to say or do something stupid. People can and do lay all kinds of

charges and accusations against us, but if we remain silent, walk away, we give them nothing for their cause. React with wrath and we prove them right, we justified their attack - they say see, I told you that's how they were, and they go tell everyone how you blew up, and lost it.

*(Proverbs 14:29 NKJV) He who is slow to wrath has great understanding, But he who is impulsive exalts folly.*

Wrath often comes because we feel we have to defend a charge laid against us; some of the greatest advice one of the Pastors at Bible College gave me was: "You take care of your character, and God will take care of your reputation". Once you start defending yourself, then you have a lifetime career doing it, and guess what, then you waste all that time defending yourself when you could have been using that time to be God's Firstfruit of His Creation.

### **Read a Proverb a Day**

I challenge you, and encourage you to read a chapter of Proverbs everyday as we go through this book. You will be amazed how often that Proverb for the day will be the Word that will help you hold your tongue on a matter, and then keep it from igniting into wrath.

*Verse 20 - for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.* – Wrath is the opposite of righteousness. Wrath tears down, and righteousness builds up. There really is no in-between area, we are either building up or tearing down. Christian, are we building up, or tearing down. In our homes, at our church, in all the areas of our lives?

*(Proverbs 14:1 NKJV) The wise woman builds her house, But the foolish pulls it down with her hands.*

*(Luke 11:23 NKJV) "He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters.*

### **This What Saw Brother Do**

We have all kinds of perspectives as we read through the Bible. We have extensive listings of being and not being, doing right and the likes. Think of some of the books that we've read, like Romans and Ephesians. But I like it here, as I read James in that he's just really, in many ways, summarizing for us... This is what I saw my brother. I can reflect on it in hindsight now, and I can see how he was so guarded with his tongue. He was so swift to hear. You would think if anybody would be the volume of words, it would be Jesus. And yet, I think what James is telling us, my brother was very swift to hear. He was a listener. And that really connects with people when you stop to listen to them, rather than just speaking at them or to them. When people are heard, it makes all the difference.

You'll know who really cares and who's really interested by how long they listen. And there's a big difference between hearing and listening. We can hear all kinds of words, but are we really listening to what the person's heart is saying? And then this place with the tongue. How it wounds and bruises. And he'll talk more about the tongue. But I think chapter one here is just this beautiful introduction into some beautiful doctrine, into some beautiful real faith showing up in real life, and real faith in real life. Guards the tongue and uses it to lift up, rather than to tear down.

And then we see the heart of Jesus. One of my favorite passages, of course. When Jesus looked at them, he saw them as sheep without a shepherd and he had compassion on them. Then Jesus ministered to him. He taught them. He fed them. He listened to them. Just beautiful pictures. What a beautiful passage of scripture that we've studied here today. And I'm blessed by it, and warmed by it, and looking forward to more of it, and I know you are too.

*Mark 6:34 (NKJV) <sup>34</sup> And Jesus, when He came out, saw a great multitude and was moved with compassion for them, because they were like sheep not having a shepherd. So He began to teach them many things.*

### **How We Respond to Trials – By Word**

In all the trials and temptations in life, we are not to react outwardly in the flesh, but receive inwardly the "implanted" word. This implanted word brings forth eternal life, and then brings to work the fruit of God in our lives.

## **The Word as a Mirror – 1:22-25**

**(James 1:22 NKJV) But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.**

**(James 1:23 NKJV) For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror;**

**(James 1:24 NKJV) for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was.**

**(James 1:25 NKJV) But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.**

### **Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:**

**Matthew 7:24–27 (NKJV)** <sup>24</sup> "Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: <sup>25</sup> and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. <sup>26</sup> "But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: <sup>27</sup> and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall."

### **Garden to Mirror / 3 Ministries of the Word**

In the previous paragraph James compared the Word to seed in a garden; but here in this paragraph he compares it to a mirror. There are two other references in the Bible to God's Word as a mirror, and when we put all three together you discover the three ministries of the Word of God as a mirror:

- Examination
- Restoration
- Transformation

**James 1:23 (NKJV)** <sup>23</sup> For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror;

**1 Corinthians 13:12 (NKJV)** <sup>12</sup> For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.

**2 Corinthians 3:18 (NKJV)** <sup>18</sup> But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

### **Not Just Hearing / Doing brings the Blessing / Being Marked / Don't be Deceived**

Bible highlighters and memorizers, verse 22 should be engrained in all of us. It is not enough to hear the Word; we must do it. Many people have the mistaken idea that hearing a good sermon or Bible Study is what makes them grow and get God's blessings. It is not the hearing but the doing that brings the blessing. Too many Christians mark their Bibles, but their Bibles never mark them.. If you think you are spiritual because you hear the Word, then you are only kidding yourself, deceiving yourself, for it is hearing and doing.

Not a statement I want to state, but some of the meanest people I have ever met in my walk with the Lord as the most "bible knowing" people. They quote scripture, but they have no heart of the scripture.

### **Examination / Mirror shows What needs Fixed / The Real us**

**1.) Examination** - This is the main purpose of owning a mirror, to be able to see yourself and make yourself look as clean and neat as possible. After working on the car, I wash up and check the mirror to make sure I got all the dirt off my face. Or maybe you use the mirror to make sure that the make-up goes on in the right places. We look at the mirror to make sure the hair is in the right place. We don't rub the mirror on us to clean the dirt or fix the hair, the mirror is just there to show us what needs to be fixed. As we look into the mirror of God's Word, we see ourselves as we really are.

**(Hebrews 4:12 NKJV)** For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and **is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.**

**(Hebrews 4:13 NKJV)** And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

**(Psalms 139:23 NKJV)** Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties;

**(Psalms 139:24 NKJV)** And see if there is any wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting.

Now James mentions some mistakes people make as they look into God's mirror of the Word.

### **We Glance / Routine / Xray**

*Verse 24 -for he observes himself, goes away. A person merely glance at themselves. They do not carefully study themselves as they read the Word. Many sincere believers read a chapter of the Bible each day, but it is only a routine, and they fail to profit from it. A cursory reading of the Bible will never reveal our deepest needs. It is the difference between a candid photo and an X-ray.*

### **We Forget / Can't go Unchanged / John 1:1**

*Verse 24 - and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. They immediately forget what they see. If they/ I / we were looking deeply enough into their hearts, what they would see would be unforgettable. You can't look at the Word and go away unchanged. For: (John 1:1 NKJV) *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* The Word is God and every time we look at the Word, we are having a personal encounter with God Himself, that is why this Book is living and powerful.*

*John 1:1 (NKJV)<sup>1</sup> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*

We see people in the Bible that when they encountered Jesus Christ, they knew it (Isaiah, Job, and Peter):

*(Isaiah 6:5 NKJV) So I said: "Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips, And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, The LORD of hosts."*

*(Job 42:5 NKJV) "I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, But now my eye sees You.*

*(Job 42:6 NKJV) Therefore I abhor myself, And repent in dust and ashes."*

*(Luke 5:8 NKJV) When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!"*

### **Jesus Revolution**

There is a movie coming out called The Jesus Revolution, and it was the last probably truly great move of the spirit here in America. I personally did not witness it. I only hear about it and now will see the movie about it. But like all revivals, the biggest mark of them all is conviction of the Holy Spirit, conviction of sin and all of them, a great move and desire in people's heart to read the word and then to live it and apply it in their lives. To read the word.

For us today, does it take a revival? Only takes the word of God to breathe upon us conviction. Did I do what God called me to do in accordance with His word? I asked myself, "When was the last time you've been convicted by the Word of God?"

### **What did I Just Read**

We can read the Bible, close the cover, and forget what we just read. Every time, after you are done reading always ask the question, now what I just read. There is a time after you have read the Word, or heard the Word, to sit quietly and ask the Lord, "what does this mean to me?"

### **Hearer – Audio / College Credit**

*(James 1:22 NKJV) But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.*

So we are called not just to hear the Word, but to do the Word, apply the Word to our hearts and everyday lives. Hearer, is the word audio, and where we get our word "audit." In college you can take classes for credit, which can be applied to get your degree. Or you can audit a class, which is to sit in on the class, listen to everything the teacher says, but you don't have to take the tests, do the papers, and receive a grade. You would audit a class if you thought that sounds interesting, I'd like to know more about that subject, but I don't want the pressures and work that comes with taking it for credit. I just sit in and if it sinks in, great, if not, nothing lost. James says to take this class, the Word, for credit, and not for audit. Do the assignments, and work to pass the class. Don't glance at it, and don't forget it, apply it.

Are you a doer of the Word? What is the gospel according to you this week? If people were reading your life based on you application of the Word, what would have been communicated to them this week.

*2 Corinthians 3:2-3 (NKJV)<sup>2</sup> You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men; <sup>3</sup> clearly you are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart.*

As you will soon see, 5 minutes in the Word won't be enough.

### **A-S-K**

So, how we respond to trials and temptations reveal the seed that is being planted, the seed that is germinating from what has been planted. And therefore, as we read and study today, we'll see the calling and we'll see the testing. What seed is being planted, the seed of the fruit and the spirit or the seed of the fruit of the flesh.

We are told to ask for wisdom. And there's a place in every time that we open the word that we need to ask for the wisdom, not just the knowledge of the word, but the wisdom of the word. How to rightly apply it for the right situation in our marriage, in our relationships, in our parenting, in our singleness, in our trials, and in our temptation and all these things. But being doers of the word and this calling that brings us to looking in the mirror and walking away.

*James 1:5 (NKJV)* <sup>5</sup> *If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.*

It's easy to make the word and prayer something of routine and forget that this is supernatural. We can approach the word and prayer in the flesh and just make it the checklist and the duty that we go through, missing that it's supernatural. When we come to prayer, we read in Hebrews 4, it's a calling to boldly come, Matthew 7, that he provides an avenue to connect with him because he wants to hear our hearts. And this is an amazing gift and offering that's put before us.

*Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> *Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

*Matthew 7:7 (NKJV)* <sup>7</sup> *"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.*

But when I read the word, I need to read the word as in a relationship, not I speak to God in prayer. And then I walk away. And nor do I read the word as God simply speaks to me. God wants to interact with me. He wants to have a conversation with me, why I'm in the Word. And so many times we just read it and we miss the conversation that God wants to have with us. And you may recognize it or not, but we continually open and close all of our Bible studies here most all the time with these five things.

1. We're always asking who is God?
2. What does he think of me?
3. What does he want me to do?
4. What can I boldly ask of him?
5. And what do I need to be on guard of?

And if you recognize what those questions and points are, it's the Lord's prayer.

1. Who is God as we look? He's a father. He's holy. He's the king of the universe.
2. What does he think of me? Well, he's a father who therefore thinks of me as a son. You women as a daughter.
3. What does he want me to do? We read in the Lord's prayer that will be done. Lord, give us the will that you would want in this situation.
4. And what can I boldly ask as he'll say, Give us this day our daily bread, and what do we need to be on guard of?
5. We need to be delivered from the evil one and then delivered from the temptation.

*Matthew 6:9-13 (NKJV)* <sup>9</sup> *In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. <sup>10</sup> Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven. <sup>11</sup> Give us this day our daily bread. <sup>12</sup> And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors. <sup>13</sup> And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.*

And all these things, you can see how perfectly they wrapped together in this study in the book of James just here in chapter one. But it's continuing on because as we said, the book of James is a mini-Sermon on the Mount and the Lord's prayer and all these callings that he puts upon us, these imperatives, these to do in the Sermon on the Mount, we read them again here in the book of James. The book of James is a New Testament proverb and it's just beautiful. God giving us wisdom. But he says, anyone lacks, ask. And so we need to ask every time we open the word.

## **Restoration / Ex 38:8 / For Washing**

**2.) Restoration:** The second ministry of the Word as a mirror, is for restoration. We use it to examine ourselves and correct and adjust, but God also uses it for restoration, for cleansing. In Exodus 38:8 when Moses built the tabernacle, Moses took the metal looking glasses of the woman and from them made the laver. The laver was a huge basin that stood between the brazen altar of sacrifices and the Holy Place (Exodus 30:17-21). The basin was filled with water, and the priest would wash their hands and feet before entering into the Holy Place to minister.

*(Exodus 38:8 NKJV) He made the laver of bronze and its base of bronze, from the bronze mirrors of the serving women who assembled at the door of the tabernacle of meeting.*

## **The Cleansing Power / The Bar of Soap / Reflection of God's Love**

Water for washing is a picture of the Word of God in its cleansing power:

*(John 15:3 NKJV) "You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.*

*(Ephesians 5:26 NKJV) that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,*

*(Ephesians 5:27 NKJV) that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.*

1 John 1:9 is the Christians Bar of Soap:

*(1 John 1:9 NKJV) If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

The mirror of the Word not only examines us and reveals our sins and failings, but it helps cleanse us as well. As we look into it, the love and grace of God reflects back to us.

## **Transformation / 2 Cor 3:18 / Definition of 2 Cor 3**

**3.) Transformation** - As the Lord restores us, He wants to change us so that we will grow in grace and not commit that sin again.

*(2 Corinthians 3:18 NKJV) But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.*

You may explain 2 Corinthians 3:18 in this way: When the child of God looks into the mirror of the Word of God, he sees the Son of God, and he is transformed by the Spirit of God to share in the glory of God.

Back to our message last week, Oh Lord in all that I do, in trial or withstanding temptation, bring You glory! Regardless of the price or pain!

*1 Corinthians 10:31 (NKJV)<sup>31</sup> Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*

## **Metamorphosis / Inside Out**

The word "changed/tranformed" in the Greek gives us our English word "metamorphosis" which is a change on the outside that comes from the inside. When an ugly worm turns into a beautiful butterfly, that is a metamorphosis. When a believer spends time looking into the Word and seeing Christ, he is transformed; the glory on the inside is revealed on the outside.

*(Romans 12:1 NKJV) I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.*

*(Romans 12:2 NKJV) And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

## **Transformation Slow Process / All of God You Want**

Transformation is a slow process, and of course 5 minutes in the Word isn't going to get us there. As I have said so many times before, you can have all of Jesus Christ you want, but not one drop more.

## **The Word and Counseling**

Some people get so upset with us here, for when they come for counseling the first thing we ask is if they are in the Word, and in prayer with the Word - Jesus Christ. The Word is living and powerful able to divide spirit and soul. Are you depressed, upset, anxiety, marriage problems, in sin, then let the Word have its way with you. We believe, give a person Jesus, and we have given them everything they will need for life; not just this trial or temptation, but the next million trials and temptations that will come their way.

*(Jeremiah 33:3 NKJV) 'Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.'*

## **The Law of Liberty**

Verse 25 - But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does. – Liberty means Freedom. The more we bring our life in line with the word, the freer we are. We don't need the remedies of the world (booze, sex, drugs, etc) to get through the day for I have in all in Jesus. I am totally free when I live according to the Word, but when I live according to the world, then I am in bondage. I wake up everyday alive to Christ, and not dead to the world. I wouldn't trade my freedom in for anything.  
*(Psalms 119:45 NKJV) And I will walk at liberty, For I seek Your precepts.*

*(John 8:31 NKJV) Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.  
(John 8:32 NKJV) "And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."*

Our first responsibility is to receive the Word, then we must be doers of the Word, and then the Word is reflected from us onto the world around us.

## **Look – Stoop Down / What Word Saying to Me – Hearing is Only the Beginning**

Verse 25, the word look means to continually, constantly, intently stoop down to look and see. There's an action, there's an effort, there's an energy that's put into. There's not a passing glance as a looking in the mirror. Hey, my hair's good, I'm ready to go for the day. But there's a place of looking and examining deep, what is this word speaking to me? What is this word calling me to do? What is this word meaning to me for this moment? And how am I to respond to it? And the thing of the word is there's a response to the word. A hearing is not a response, it is a precursor, a starting. But it then has to come to what is and how do I respond to what I've just been told by the word of God, which is the heart of God, which is the spirit of God.

## **What is Law of Liberty / Love Produces a Reaction & a Response**

What is the law of liberty? It's the complete word of God, Old Testament and New Testament. And many people want to say that there's no law in the New Testament, but there is. It's the royal law that we know of. It's called love. And love reacts and behaves in accordance to the word of God. And hence we continue to build on, be doers of the word, not hearers only. Love produces a reaction. Love produces a response.

*James 2:8 (NKJV) <sup>8</sup> If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well;*

## **Often Limited – Protection Mechanism**

And I say this often, but I was reminded of it this week, the responding doers of the word, not just here. Many times, there isn't a doing of the word because there's a protection mechanism that we want to put up that we say, "If I do this, someone will take advantage of me. If I do this, someone's going to hurt me. If I do this, it's going to cost me something." Time, money, resources, reputation, whatever it is. And here's the law of love. And it's a law that cannot and will not be superseded. And it is you can only love to the degree that you're willing to be made vulnerable. And hence, we see the perfect love, the agape love, the unconditional love. Jesus was willing to be made vulnerable all the way to the point of humiliation and death.

So Jesus gives us the greatest example in illustration of the willingness to be made vulnerable so that unconditional love can be sent forth and declared upon all of his love and his intent, the degree in which he was willing to love, to the point to be made vulnerable.

And this is so applicable again. Many times we're afraid to be made vulnerable because we don't want to be hurt or to be harmed. And I get it and I understand it. But then there's this place that we have to recognize then we simply limit ourselves, the great limitation because we won't allow ourselves to be loved. And then by no means saying that someone should be opened up to be continually hurt and harmed with words or even physical actions. But there's definitely a place that God will speak in these trials and temptation that we need to have ears. How far are we willing to be made vulnerable so that we can love like Jesus?

## **The Word Reflected – 1:26-27**

**(James 1:26 NKJV) If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless.**

As we allow the mirror of the Word to examine us, restore us, and transform us, the Word – Jesus Himself is then reflected from us.

The word translated "religion" means, "the outward practice, the service of a god." In Verse 27 James is saying, In other words, Let your walk match your talk.

### **Bridle Tongue – Think Religious**

He says that any of you think you're religious, also known as spiritual, and yet you cannot bridle your tongue. You deceive yourself. From the mouth precedes the condition of the heart. If you ever wonder what's truly in your heart, just listen to how you speak. Because there's just something that declares and reveals what's in the heart of man by they speak. And though someone may say something, I know even afterwards I can take it and I can look and I go..... from the mouth precedes the condition of the heart. I know what's in their heart. Maybe not just for me, that I heard it once and say that's the condition of their heart. Because there's always the work of the flesh that is warring against us. But when there's this continual, habitual lifestyle of what comes out of the mouth, it pretty much declares what's the habitual, continual lifestyle that's in the heart.

*Matthew 12:34 (NKJV)<sup>34</sup> Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.*

*Luke 6:45 (NKJV)<sup>45</sup> A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.*

### **Same True When it is Beauty Blooming Forth / Pray Gracious Speech**

But the same is true when out of the mouth speaks words of love, words of compassion, words of encouragement, words of empathy, words of the Lord declaring the heart of the Lord. Something that's just birthed and blooming from the heart because from the mouth precedes the condition of the heart. And someone's heart is Christ like, agape like, royal love, law like. Their words are like manna from heaven. And I pray that we would be gracious in our speech to everybody, whether brother and sister in the body of Christ, or husband and wife, or among the children in the workplace, wherever it may be, just words seasoned with the grace and love of the Lord.

**(James 1:27 NKJV) Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.**

### **Doers Visit Orphans and Widows**

We live this verse here at Calvary Chapel of Anne Arundel County, we seek to minister in as many places where widows and orphans are. That is what doers of the word do, the visit orphans and widows.

I pray it is a practical mission statement for our own lives as well.

### **Summation of Religion**

Pretty amazing summation when you look at this James, that pure and undefiled religion is this. That you watch your tongue, you put some shoe leather to your faith as you love and serve others, and then you keep yourself unspotted. I think it's pretty easy to self-examine. "How am I doing? How's my tongue? How's my serving?" And, "how's my spot or spotless?"

### **Outline**

The Test of Response to the Word (1:19-27)

- The Word as a Garden – 1:19-21
- The Word as a Mirror – 1:22-25
- The Word Reflected – 1:26-27

## Prayer

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

*Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) <sup>12</sup> For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

## **In Every Study**

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

*Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) <sup>16</sup> Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need*

# Chapter 2

**Passage:** James 2:1-13

**Title:** The Test of Partiality

**Summary:** In our last study the Lord spoke to us about how we hear and listen to people (swift to hear and slow to speak and wrath); and in this study He will speak to us on “how we see people”. Jesus did not just see people with His eyes, but with His heart too, He looked past the outward appearances, and looked into the depth of the person. Today’s passage will speak to us on doing the same.

*James 2:1–13 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with partiality. <sup>2</sup> For if there should come into your assembly a man with gold rings, in fine apparel, and there should also come in a poor man in filthy clothes, <sup>3</sup> and you pay attention to the one wearing the fine clothes and say to him, “You sit here in a good place,” and say to the poor man, “You stand there,” or, “Sit here at my footstool,” <sup>4</sup> have you not shown partiality among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts? <sup>5</sup> Listen, my beloved brethren: Has God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him? <sup>6</sup> But you have dishonored the poor man. Do not the rich oppress you and drag you into the courts? <sup>7</sup> Do they not blaspheme that noble name by which you are called? <sup>8</sup> If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you do well; <sup>9</sup> but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors. <sup>10</sup> For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all. <sup>11</sup> For He who said, “Do not commit adultery,” also said, “Do not murder.” Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. <sup>12</sup> So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty. <sup>13</sup> For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.*

**Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:**

*(Matthew 7:12 NKJV) “Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.*

*(Matthew 5:3 NKJV) “Blessed are the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

## **Written by James / Didn’t believe – to Leader / Hindsight / Everyday Living**

The Book of James was written by none other than Jesus’ brother James. James was a leader in the church, a pillar in the church (Acts 21). James didn’t believe that Jesus was God when He walked this earth (John 7:5); but after the resurrection Jesus appears to him (1 Cor 15:4-7), and everything changed. James is going to write us this letter, he will talk about everyday practical stuff. He will talk about trials in life, our works, our tongue, prayer, and other things; as he writes these things, no doubt he will be remembering how Jesus handled them, reflecting back on watching situations, and watching his oldest brother. He will reflect on Jesus’ life of love, and a life of sinlessness, in a world that can be so hateful at times, and so full of sin. James will write these things based on hindsight, based on first hand witnessing of how his older brother lived life, everyday. James watched Jesus handle everyday life, and that is what this book is about; it is about living everyday life as a Follower of God, in a fallen world.

## **Jesus Rubbed Off / Nature Illustrations / Favorite Teacher - Sermon on Mount**

We can see how much Jesus rubbed off on James, for James style resembles his brother so much. Like Jesus used nature as illustrations for His teaching points, so does James some 30 times. He uses nature analogies such as the sea, flowers, sun, fire, horses and ships to name a few). It is obvious who James favorite teacher was, because this epistle covers every topic that Jesus covered in the Sermon on the Mount. There is amazing parallelisms between the two; James does not actually quote the Lord’s words, but he obviously had internalized Jesus’ teachings and reproduced them with spiritual depth. Jesus covered about 30 topics in the Sermon on the Mount, and we will see that James touches on every one of them in this epistle. The Book of James is Sermon on the Mount 2. The Book is also very quick and concise, moving from thought-to-thought quickly. So the Book of James is the New Testament Version of the Old Testament Proverbs. It resembles Proverbs because it is very poetic the way it flows its thoughts using illustrations and analogies.

## **So We can Examine Self / How am I Doing**

Jesus gave the Sermon on the Mount so that we might examine ourselves and ask the question, “so how am I doing in each of these areas?” James writes to the church, to us, and as we read, we have to ask ourselves, “so how am I doing in these areas?” This book is practical and applicable for us living in the year 2022, and the ultimate goal of this epistle is giving to us in verse 4 of chapter 1, to bring us into maturity, perfect and lacking nothing.

As in school, we take tests to see how much of a handle and mastery we have on a subject, we will do the same in this book.

### 3 Key Verses

Here are three key verses to get us going:

**James 2:20 (NKJV)**<sup>20</sup> *But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?*

**James 1:22 (NKJV)**<sup>22</sup> *But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.*

**James 1:4–5 (NKJV)**<sup>4</sup> *But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.* <sup>5</sup> *If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.*

### *Real Faith – Shows Up in Real Life*

#### The Outline of the Book of James:

##### Chapter 1

- Introduction (1:1)
- The Test of Perseverance and Suffering (1:2-12)
- The Test of Blame in Temptation (1:12-18)
- The Test of Response to the Word (1:19-27)

##### Chapter 2

- The Test of Partiality (2:1-9)
- The Test of the Law (2:10-13)
- The Test of Faith and Works (2:14-26)

##### Chapter 3

- The Test of the Tongue (3:1-12)
- The Test of Wisdom Applied (3:13-18)

##### Chapter 4

- The Test of the World's Influence (4:1-12)
- The Test of Dependence (4:13-5:6)

##### Chapter 5

- The Test of Endurance (5:7-12)
- The Test of Prayerfulness (5:13-20)

### **Intensely Practical / In Your Face / Hebrews / Earthly Scene**

This book is an intensely practical book that packs a powerful punch. James is the kinda book that is in your face, and get it right. In Hebrews we explored the heavenly scene, now James we explore the earthly scene. It was wonderful spending a few months in the heavenlies, I could have stayed in Hebrews for another year, but the fact is until heaven, we are living here (so the blessings of verse-by-verse studying). Studying this book will have a great effect on you, This book is that practical, God even promises us that as we saw last study:

**(James 1:25 NKJV)** *But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.*

In our last study the Lord spoke to us about how we hear and listen to people (swift to hear and slow to speak and wrath); and in this study He will speak to us on “how we see people”. Jesus did not just see people with His eyes, but with His heart too, He looked past the outward appearances, and looked into the depth of the person. Today’s passage will speak to us on doing the same.

#### Jesus looked at people, and He saw them!

#### Jesus looking upon them with love, desiring to set them free – from them!

**Mark 10:21–22 (NKJV)**<sup>21</sup> Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, “One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me.”<sup>22</sup> But he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

#### Jesus looking upon them with love, desiring to make them a rock, solid and sure in my faith!

**John 1:42 (NKJV)**<sup>42</sup> *And he brought him to Jesus. Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, “You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas” (which is translated, A Stone).*

#### Jesus looking upon them with love, desiring to dine with a sinner such as them, regardless of my past!

**Luke 19:5 (NKJV)**<sup>5</sup> *And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and saw him, and said to him, “Zacchaeus, make haste and come down, for today I must stay at your house.”*

Jesus looking upon them with love, desiring to teach them His Word, which is His very Heart. Jesus wants to give them His heart!

**Mark 6:34 (NKJV)** <sup>34</sup> And Jesus, when He came out, saw a great multitude and was moved with compassion for them, because they were like sheep not having a shepherd. So He began to teach them many things.

Jesus looking upon them with love, desiring them, before they ever even saw Him!

**John 1:48 (NKJV)** <sup>48</sup> Nathanael said to Him, "How do You know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you."

Jesus looking upon them with love, desiring to make them whole!

**John 5:5-6 (NKJV)** <sup>5</sup> Now a certain man was there who had an infirmity thirty-eight years. <sup>6</sup> When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he already had been in that condition a long time, He said to him, "Do you want to be made well?"

What we have before us is James, the half brother of Jesus. No one knew Jesus in these written forms that we call the Bible longer than this man James as he's the oldest brother of at least four that we know of for the family of Jesus and two sisters and James is going to write in a hindsight, no doubt, because he watched his brother handle all these things and today as we look at favoritism, we know it's in reflection of how he saw his brother handle favoritism and those with power, prestige, those with respect and authority, those who people looked up to and on the other side, those who people look down to and we see the heart of Jesus in this and so beautiful because it's God calling us to the heart of Jesus. Favoritism, partiality, God's reading through it all for us, leaving it all clearly before us, a call, a cry, a plea to have a heart for those who have and those who have not and I know we always say the ministry to the poor, but our heart should break to the ministry to the powerful and the proud because who will reach them? Who will pray for them? Who will have compassion on them if it's not us for their souls and their salvation.

Written by Ole Camel Knees, is a man who prayed, inspired by the Holy Spirit, lays out and pours out what's put before us.

What we have, as we always say for this book, a book on faith, real faith that shows up in real life.

What we'll see in our passage today is that faith loves.

### Prayer

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

**Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV)** <sup>12</sup> For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

### **In Every Study**

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

**Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV)** <sup>16</sup> Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need

**(James 2:1 NKJV) My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with partiality.**

Verse 1, Lord of glory and that's our whole purpose. Lord, what I'm doing right now, how can I do it that it brings You glory? 1 Corinthians 10, whatever we do, do it all for the glory of God. How can I bring You glory in the midst of this trial? How can I bring You glory in the midst of this temptation? How can I bring You glory as I serve widows and orphans? How can I bring You glory with my tongue and now how can I bring You glory by not showing partiality, favoritism.

Whatever we do, may we do it for the glory of God. Today's topic for glory to God is how we see other people and not showing partiality.

*1 Corinthians 10:31 (NKJV)* <sup>31</sup> *Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*

### **Sent to Finish**

He didn't win a medal. In fact, he came nowhere near. But, in defeat and in pain, he came to represent something much more profound and enduring than many sportsmen achieve in illustrious careers. John Stephen Akhwari was never likely to win the men's marathon, but his chances were wrecked when, perhaps because of the effects of the high altitude, he succumbed to cramps that slowed his progress. If that was painful, then worse was to come after he was involved in a melee of athletes jockeying for position.

Akhwari fell to the ground, gashing his knee and also causing a dislocation. He also smashed his shoulder against the pavement. Most observers, seeing his injuries, assumed he would pull out and go to hospital. Instead, he received medical attention and returned to the track to continue his race. His pace, of course, was now much lower, but his resolve to complete the event remained intact. Eighteen of the 75 starters had pulled out; he did now wish to add to that number.

And so, more than an hour after the winner, Tanzania's Akhwari crossed the line in last place, cheered home by a few thousand spectators who had remained in the stadium after the sun went down. The medals had already been awarded. By the time he reached the stadium, he was limping and the bandage around his leg was flapping in the breeze.

He was asked why he'd carried on, and his response has gone down in sporting history. "My country did not send me 5,000 miles to start the race," he said. "They sent me 5,000 miles to finish the race."

Christian, we may be exhausted, limping, or wounded right now from an earlier fall. We may feel like there's is no way we can go on to the end. But there are witnesses cheering us on...and God didn't send us this far just to begin -- He brought us here to run the whole race! So, let's get up! Brush off the dirt and keep going! He will give us the strength!

*Hebrews 12:1-2 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> *Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, <sup>2</sup> looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

### **Polarizing**

Although our topic may be speaking of rich and poor, the core context is looking at the outward and making determination of the inward. Thus this passage can easily cross over to the area of race, nationality, education, looks, age, and the likes. We live in some of the most polarizing times in the history of humanity, and I pray that we don't get swept away by it, but for every person we look at and we say how can I treat this person in the love of Christ, for the glory of God. Lord may we finish well in living to bring You glory.

While visiting in South Africa, Mohandas Gandhi became impressed with the teachings of Jesus and thought of converting to Christianity, until he attended church. He saw prejudice among its members, and concluded, "If Christian have caste differences of their own, I might as well stay a Hindu.

Once a street person went to join a church. The pastor wasn't sure if the church wanted "her type." He told her to give him a week to think it over, but the week went by, and still no decision. He then said he needed another week... and on and on this went. Finally, in prayer, the Lord spoke to the woman. "My child, don't worry about joining that church. I've been trying for twenty years, and they won't let Me in either."

**(James 2:2 NKJV) For if there should come into your assembly a man with gold rings, in fine apparel, and there should also come in a poor man in filthy clothes,**

**(James 2:3 NKJV) and you pay attention to the one wearing the fine clothes and say to him, "You sit here in a good place," and say to the poor man, "You stand there," or, "Sit here at my footstool,"**

There is something in us that we have to be aware of when it comes the rich and beautiful, famous and popular. God is no respecter of person, nor should we (as we see when Peter came to the Gentiles):

*(Acts 10:34 KJV) Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:*

*(Acts 10:34 NKJV) Then Peter opened his mouth and said: "In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality.*

Showing impartiality, we need to all be on guard. It's easy for all of us to do it. Look at Samuel there in Judges. He was one of the most godly, spiritual leaders in all of the Bible. Hard to find him doing anything wrong and yet we see when he came to anoint the king that God had to correct him ever so lovingly and say, "God doesn't look at the outward appearance, but He looks at the heart of man," as Samuel wanted to anoint the one that looked like someone, something of respect and authority and power. Whereas God would say, "No. I look at the heart," and that's really what the whole calling of partiality is, to be on guard. We're not looking at the heart of the man, the woman. We're looking at the outward and then we're tagging that to their heart and it's a disservice to them and of course it's a disservice to the church.

*1 Samuel 16:7 (NKJV) <sup>7</sup> But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."*

### **Youth / Peer Pressure / 2 Fold Danger**

You youth, this is a greater struggle for you as you are faced with peer pressure. If I can just be accepted by the Football Captain, or the Head Cheerleader. If I can just get in with the Cool Crowd, then life would be so much better. There is a two-fold danger there.

### **First / Compromise / Are They Doers of the Word / No Pedestal**

First, you may compromise your Christian values to be accepted by them. Well if I am going to hang with the cool crowd, then I'm going to have to do what they do. Well are they going to Youth Group or parties? Are they into being Doers of the Word, or Doers of the World? Don't compromise or abandoned the blessings of God to be accepted. They are not better than you, don't put them on a pedestal. You lift them up, and they will pull you down. Remember, you are sons and daughters of God, His own special people:

*(1 Peter 2:9 NKJV) But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;*

### **Secondly / Missed Blessing / The Beggar**

Secondly, seeking to be accepted and seen by them, can cause you to miss a blessing right before your eyes. Who am I talking about? I am talking about the kid in the corner, that nobody talks to, that other kids make fun, the unaccepted, the lonely, and possibly - the lost.

- The famous Russian author who wrote the novel, War and Peace, tells the story of walking down the street in Russia and a beggar asked him for change to buy bread. He truly didn't have any change, and he put his hand on the mans shoulder, looked him in the eye, and said, "friend, I am sorry I have nothing for you today." The beggar's eyes became filled with tears as he said, "you have given me more than a morsel, for you have given me a banquet, for you have called me friend." How long had it been for this man that someone had touched him in love, and someone called him friend?

### **Kids in School – Neighborhood / Want to Be Like Jesus**

There are kids in your school and neighborhood who are dying for someone to call them friend. You don't have to preach to the multitude, or raise the dead to be like Jesus, all you have to do is go find someone who is just looking to be accepted for who they are, and accept them:

**Luke 4:17–19 (NKJV)** <sup>17</sup> And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: <sup>18</sup> *“The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; <sup>19</sup> To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”*

### **Our Church**

It applies here, inside the walls of this church for all of us. I make this point over and over, this is OUR church. God puts structure and order to the church in order to meet His plans and purpose for the church, **people are at different levels of maturity, but there are no levels of saints.** God ranks no one over another, we are equally precious in God's eyes, no matter how well, or not so well we are doing spiritually. When you are not doing so well, don't let that lie of Satan keep you from coming – you know the one, ohh you are not worthy to fellowship.

### **Last Stop / My First Church / If They Only Knew**

As for those coming into the church, for many people, this church will be there last stop, their last shot with God. They have gone to churches and been rejected, blown-off, or equally as bad, unseen. They leave and say never-again, I will never again allow myself to be put in this position again, I will never be vulnerable again, and they never try church, or God again. I've told you before, when I got saved, I went to a Calvary Chapel, somewhat large (about 1,000), but nobody talked to me. I would walk up to a group of singles and they would blow me off. If only they knew what God had done in my life, what He had saved me from. They looked at me as immature and unstable, and of course I was, I just got saved with 27 years of the world deeply rooted in me. You never know when you may be someone's last stop, last try for someone to call them "friend".

### **(James 2:4 NKJV) have you not shown partiality among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?**

We all hate it when we are judged, but here the Lord says if you show partiality, your are actually judging, and therefore guilty of the very thing we all despise (judgment and criticality).

Many churches, they don't want to admit it, but how many churches, their elder board is filled with businessmen who are great businessmen? But I've seen it so many times. They might be great businessmen and have tremendous wealth, but their spirituality is about one inch thick. They're only on the business board because of their wealth and I think there's a place that every church needs to be on guard about things such as that. Business savvy doesn't make you spiritually deep. I've been pastoring a long time, and I have withstood my share of people who have tried to influence me with their money (rather than their spirituality), and a word to anyone in the ministry, God provides (trust in that He does), and don't be influenced by money.

Hey, just make a little point here that James is not a pastoral epistle. It's a Christian epistle on how Christians are to live and it says if anyone should come into your congregation that's important and relevant in that he's given ownership to the whole congregation to call it out when they see partiality and I know there's a place that people expect the pastor to lead and carry forth all discipline, but here is the discipline that is given the calling to all the congregation that when anyone sees partiality, it's to be confronted and I would say somebody in this church showing partiality, especially anything that we see that mirrors into racism, there's a place that anybody in the church to say, "Hey, that's not welcome here," or if anyone sees the partiality. Maybe it's somebody with a handicap. Maybe it's somebody with a hard time upon their life. Maybe it's somebody who is impoverished or poor and they're not being esteemed and valued in the church. It's a place for the church to call it out and tell the person who's the offender, "Not here, not ever. That needs to stop."

**(James 2:5 NKJV) Listen, my beloved brethren: Has God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?**

**(James 2:6 NKJV) But you have dishonored the poor man. Do not the rich oppress you and drag you into the courts?**

He says, "The poor, rich in faith," because you know what? When all that you have is Jesus, you'll find the depths of your faith that all that I have is Jesus and many poor will come and tell you that he was all that they needed. He had the deception of riches back in chapter one, talking about trials. If I just had money they could buy my way out. Not always, not always. But when they can, then people put their faith in their money, their insurance policy, their job, rather than put their faith in Jesus.

Verse five, totally crushes, dispels this prosperity doctrine, the American prosperity doctrine. If you're great in faith, you'll have wealth and health. James speaking, the heart of the Lord says, not so. Not so at all. I have a place that I always say as I'm preparing, as I'm studying, getting ready to deliver, one of my things is always, "So what?" I ask myself at the end, after I prepare, I ask myself most always as I'm stepping down, "So what?" So what if everybody took the word that you taught and declared as the minister of the gospel? So what would happen to their life?

Would their marriages be strengthened, protected? If they apply, would their faith grow? Would they raise their children in the way of the Lord, or would it be, "So what," they left, they felt good about the message. A little sermonette, maybe. A little light show with the worship, went and left here unchanged. That's always one of my reviews that I do.

But anytime I'm teaching, I always look at my teaching. I said, "Can I teach this anywhere and everywhere, in the county that we live, to the city 10 miles up the road? When I step into the pulpit in India? When I step in the mission field in Nicaragua, Mexico, and if I was to go to China, Pakistan, Afghanistan, could I still teach the same word?" Prosperity doctrine, it just doesn't fly. It's pretty much bound in the borders of the wealthy nations.

But.....Here's a place that it goes the other way too, in that we can see a partiality that if people have money, people look up to them like you can't be godly. You love your money, or you got your money through selfish means, oppression and the likes. Even the poor can show partiality to the rich. In both cases there's an errancy that God's displeased with.

Let's just look at the beauty and the heart of the Lord and the heart that he desires for us to have, as well as James looks at his brother's heart. Oh, what a heart Jesus had for the widows as he would know his mother would become a widow and yet he would care for her, even at the cross before death. All the way to sin and shame and nakedness laid bare before the world.

Yet he would say to his disciple, because his brothers were not yet believers and he would say, "Son, behold your mother. Mother, behold your son," as he would entrust Mary to John his care for the widow and his care and heart for the orphans that he tells us here in James 1, that's pure and undefiled religion. This type of word for religion isn't the worldly word as people come up with all kinds of ways to relink to God. That's literally what the word means in Latin, to relink. Yet people try to relink through their own efforts or their own ways.

But the word religion here is service unto God, reflecting the very heart of God. The very heart of God, care for the orphans. They're fatherless, they're motherless, they have no voice. Speak for them. Then here in verse five, his heart for the poor. He sees them. He says, "In this fallen world, you will have the poor among you," as we've talked, poverty truly comes through the fall.

It's not the fall as in earthquakes nor even famines, but the earthquake of greed. Man, not looking out for the poor. Man, more than enough food to take care of the poor, to house the poor, to educate the poor, and yet greed and oppression, votes and politics. Both sides of the aisle, both parties, all nations. But Jesus says to remember them, to minister to them, to serve them. What a calling for all of us. We don't have to go far. We don't have to go far, to honor and fulfill his word.

**(James 2:6 NKJV) But you have dishonored the poor man. Do not the rich oppress you and drag you into the courts?**

Verse six, they can take the poor to court, because they have the money to. They have the money to get the best lawyer. The poor doesn't. They have the money to show up. Well kept, best suit and then they oppress the poor who doesn't have the money to fight, because they can't afford the lawyer. God brings an indictment on the rich. Don't think that rags and holes in your clothes is the dividing line for poor. It's anyone who has the influence above another and uses it to wield to their advantage. I think all of us need to be on guard of that.

Best case in point I can give you, it was wealth and power that crucified the Lord. Those with the money wanted to protect the money. We see the religious with their wealth and power and they were going to go to all means to protect that wealth along with their pride, at whatever the cost.

**(James 2:7 NKJV) Do they not blaspheme that noble name by which you are called?**

**(James 2:8 NKJV) If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well;**

**Who is my neighbor, biblically speaking?**

Many Christians talk about the importance of loving God and loving others, and rightly so. Jesus declared these to be the greatest commandments (Mark 12:28–34; see Deuteronomy 6:4–5 and Leviticus 19:18). The idea that we are to love others is sometimes more specifically stated as the call to love one's neighbor as oneself. "Who is my neighbor?" becomes a natural question to ask.

**Mark 12:28–34 (NKJV)** <sup>28</sup> Then one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, perceiving that He had answered them well, asked Him, "Which is the first commandment of all?" <sup>29</sup> Jesus answered him, "The first of all the commandments is: 'Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God, the LORD is one. <sup>30</sup> And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment. <sup>31</sup> And the second, like it, is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." <sup>32</sup> So the scribe said to Him, "Well said, Teacher. You have spoken the truth, for there is one God, and there is no other but He. <sup>33</sup> And to love Him with all the heart, with all the understanding, with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself, is more than all the whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." <sup>34</sup> Now when Jesus saw that he answered wisely, He said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." But after that no one dared question Him.

**Deuteronomy 6:4–5 (NKJV)** <sup>4</sup> "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one! <sup>5</sup> You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.

The command to love one's neighbor as oneself comes originally from Leviticus 19:18, which says, "Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord." The Jews of Jesus' day would largely have understood their "neighbor" to be their fellow Israelites. But God has a broader definition in mind. Loving one's neighbor is more than simply loving those who are like us and who can love us in return.

**Leviticus 19:18 (NKJV)** <sup>18</sup> You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.

On another note of equal importance, to hold a grudge in Leviticus, to not forgive, to be resentful will hinder your prayers. Do you want your prayer life choked out? Then choke it out with unforgiveness, holding this grudge, not loving your neighbor.

**Mark 11:25 (NKJV)** <sup>25</sup> "And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses.

Luke 10 records an incident in which a scribe, an expert on the Jewish law, tested Jesus about what he must do to inherit eternal life. Jesus turned the question back to the scribe (Luke 10:25–37). The scribe responded with the command to love God with all of one's being and to love one's neighbor as himself. Jesus affirmed the response. But the lawyer, wanting to justify himself, asked, "Who is my neighbor?" Jesus replied with the Parable of the Good Samaritan.

**Luke 10:25–37 (NKJV)** <sup>25</sup> And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" <sup>26</sup> He said to him, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?" <sup>27</sup> So he answered and said, "'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,' and 'your neighbor as yourself.' "

*28 And He said to him, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live." 29 But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" 30 Then Jesus answered and said: "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. 31 Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. 32 Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. 33 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. 34 So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. 35 On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.' 36 So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?" 37 And he said, "He who showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."*

In this passage, the lawyer, he's trying to find a technicality, a loophole. He wants to be righteous in the works that he's done, measured up to the standard that he has set and yet when Jesus said to love your neighbor, he's looking for the loophole because truly he knows that he hasn't. That's why he asked. But he is looking for a loophole so that he can try to close it up and say that he's done all that needs to be done, nothing new under the sun. So many people looking for loopholes, looking for some type of legality that they can feel that they've checked off or can be excused from. But Jesus, as He tells the story, He leaves knowing in the ability that they can check it off or be excused from. He puts this right before this man, this lawyer who says, "Who is my neighbor."

In the parable (but can't say for sure as it could have been a true story), a man traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho is attacked and left for dead on the side of the road. A priest walking by sees the man but passes on the other side of the road. The same happens when a Levite travels through. In essence, two Jews, both of whom were from the priestly line of Israelites and should have known and followed God's law, failed to show love to their fellow Israelite in need. However, Jesus said, along came a Samaritan, a person generally disdained by the Jews because of cultural and religious differences. And it was the Samaritan who stopped to help the injured man. He cared for the man's wounds and paid for him to stay at an inn. In short, a person whom the Jews would have considered "unclean" and outside of God's covenant demonstrated compassion for one who would have considered him an enemy. Jesus asked the scribe which of the three passersby was a neighbor to the injured man. "The expert in the law replied, 'The one who had mercy on him.' Jesus told him, 'Go and do likewise'" (Luke 10:37).

Jesus in the story that's told, He makes the Samaritan the good guy, the hero of the story and the religious couldn't take it. They couldn't bring themselves to agree that a Samaritan who was looked down upon, was considered half pure, considered racial impurity, they just couldn't take it and they couldn't bring themselves to say the Samaritan did what was right and how fitting for us as we live in a day today of man and his look and his racial purity or impurity. We think the partiality is rich and poor. It's very clear in our passage, but it goes way beyond that. The point of the passage is showing partiality. In that day, the rich and the poor, clearly, but there was the partiality between the Jews and the Samaritans and here we are living today, the battle of the skin, showing partiality based on skin color and it goes both ways. It goes always, anytime anyone looks and makes a decision about another based on their skin color, whether it is white or whether it's black, whether it's brown, whether it's anywhere in between. That's this partiality that Jesus is saying. Check your heart. Determine your heart. I'm trying to show you your heart and that's the whole point of James, that we can have a heart examination and then get a heart and course adjustment by the Great Surgeon who can make this great change.

Who's my neighbor? Back to Jesus speaking to the lawyer, He's saying to him, "You know all this stuff. You just don't do." It takes us back to our passage last week. Be doers of the word not hearers only. You can have all the head knowledge in the word. But real faith shows up in real life and this is one of the greatest places that it shows up. It doesn't show partiality. It doesn't show favoritism. It respects and esteems all. It elevates and loves all and it calls out and calls down those that don't carry forth the royal law of loving the Lord thy God and loving thy neighbor as thyself.

Truly, our neighbor is thus anyone in our proximity with whom we can share God's love. We are called not only to love those who are similar to us or with whom we are comfortable, but all whom God places in our path. In fact, Jesus said, "I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are

not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew 5:44–48). God shows love to all people (John 3:16–18; Romans 1:19–20; 2 Peter 3:9). As His children (John 1:12), we are called to do the same.

*Matthew 5:44–48 (NKJV)* <sup>44</sup> But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, <sup>45</sup> that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. <sup>46</sup> For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? <sup>47</sup> And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? <sup>48</sup> Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

It is important to understand what true love is. We love people by genuinely seeking what is best for them. Loving others does not mean agreeing with everything they say or do, nor does it mean acting in ways that always gain their approval. Loving our neighbors means attending to their needs—both physical and spiritual. We love our neighbors when we, like the Samaritan in Jesus' parable, have compassion for them and help meet their needs as we are able. We love our neighbors best when we share God's truth with them. Jesus alone can save (John 14:6; Acts 4:12), and He alone can meet people's every need.

*John 3:16–18 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. <sup>17</sup> For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. <sup>18</sup> "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

*John 14:6 (NKJV)* <sup>6</sup> Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

*Acts 4:12 (NKJV)* <sup>12</sup> Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

We love our neighbors, including our neighbors who seem like enemies to us, when we act toward them with a heart that first loves God. If we are ourselves to love the Lord our God with all our heart, mind and soul, and to love our neighbors as ourselves..... I see that if we are to love (in regards to our love of God – with all our heart, mind, and soul), then that is how I am to love others, with all my heart, mind, and soul as well.

*Deuteronomy 6:4–5 (NKJV)* <sup>4</sup> "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one! <sup>5</sup> You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.

*Leviticus 19:18 (NKJV)* <sup>18</sup> You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.

We love our neighbors out of an overflow of God's love for us and as a way of demonstrating our love toward God (1 John 4:7–12; Colossians 4:5–6; 1 Peter 3:15–16).

*1 John 4:7–12 (NKJV)* <sup>7</sup> Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup> He who does not love does not know God, for God is love. <sup>9</sup> In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. <sup>10</sup> In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. <sup>11</sup> Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. <sup>12</sup> No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us.

*Colossians 4:5–6 (NKJV)* <sup>5</sup> Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time. <sup>6</sup> Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.

*1 Peter 3:15–16 (NKJV)* <sup>15</sup> But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; <sup>16</sup> having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed.

**(James 2:8 NKJV) If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well;**

**(James 2:9 NKJV) but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors.**

Then the Lord just draws arrow and releases and he puts into the category, those that show partiality are guilty of sin. He even goes to say, "And there's no grading on a curve when it comes to sin." Partiality joins the offense of adultery and murder. That's something for us to ponder on.

*James 2:10–13 (NKJV)* <sup>10</sup> For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all. <sup>11</sup> For He who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a

transgressor of the law. <sup>12</sup> So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty. <sup>13</sup> For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

## Conclusion

The royal law, love the Lord, your God. Love your neighbor as yourself. You know? What we can get ourselves all wrapped up on, "Okay, I got to remind myself to feed the poor, look out for the widows, not to oppress, not to elevate, not to show partiality. Oh don't forget bridle my tongue." All these things, again, they come down to, it's the Sermon on the Mount. In many ways, it's to reveal our heart and how well we're doing and it's to ask our question, "How well am I doing with the royal law?"

Because all I got to do is just treat people and love people as I desire. As I want to be treated, that's how I need to treat somebody. That's how I need to honor somebody. I want to be seen. I want to be heard. I want compassion. I want empathy. I want love. Okay, so now how do I give that to my wife, my children, the person to my left, to my right, the person I pass in the workplace, person behind the counter? You know what? I think one of the biggest things that Jesus did what he did, because yeah, He spent time with the Father in the morning. He got away so he could connect with the Lord for the day. He knew the word. The word was going through him.

One of the biggest things I see is he saw people. He didn't look past people. He stopped and looked and when he looked, he saw. Last week we talked about, you know how much someone cares by how long they hear, listen to you. As we were called to be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath. This week there's a calling for us to look and see. To see partiality sees all the outward, sees the clothing, the hair, the possessions, the car they drive, and all these things. There's a place, do we hear them, our neighbor? There's a place, do we see them, our neighbor?

## The Kid & The Elder

I am reminded of a story that I read some time ago. It was about a young man in college who had just gotten saved. He didn't have a car, didn't know anyone in the town, and all he wanted was to worship the Lord and learn the Bible. He finds this rather established church near the university, there was no youth his age by 20 years. He comes in that Sunday morning with his tattered blue jeans, wrinkled T-shirt, and flip-flops on. His hair not combed, nor face shaven. He comes a little late, they had already started worship, not knowing or just his style he walks all the way to the front of the sanctuary and sits down on the floor right in the front, closes his eyes and lifts his hands and begins to worship the Lord. The whole church sees him, and people are appalled by his attire and appearance, they mumble to each other, something must be done, we can't have this. He is a distraction, what if he stains the carpet. And then they see one of the elders making his way to the young man. The people are relieved that something is going to be done. It takes the elder a while to get there using his walking cane, but when he gets there all eyes are upon him, and they are amazed as they watch him work his way to the floor, and sits next to the young man, and lifts his arms and begins to worship the Lord. The Pastor gets up to preach, he says today I will give a sermon, but it will pale in comparison to the sermon you just saw.

So "The Test of Partiality", how are we doing?

Next, "the Test of the Law"; it is not just how we view people externally, but how we evaluate ourselves inwardly.

## Prayer

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

*Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) <sup>12</sup> For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

## In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?

- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

*Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) <sup>16</sup> Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need*

**Passage:** James 2:9-13

**Title:** The Test of the Law of God

**Summary:** As we continue our study in the book of James, a book with the theme of faith and the testing and proving out of our faith, where we see real faith showing up in real life; we come to the "Test of the Law of God". Man has their standards, but God has His, and in our passage, we will dig deep and answer three questions, "What is the Difference Between"

1. Sin and Transgression (2:9)
2. God's Standard and Religion's Standard (2:10-11)
3. Grace and Mercy (2:12-13)

**James 2:9–13 (NKJV)** <sup>9</sup> but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors. <sup>10</sup> For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one *point*, he is guilty of all. <sup>11</sup> For He who said, "*Do not commit adultery*," also said, "*Do not murder*." Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. <sup>12</sup> So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty. <sup>13</sup> For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

Outline: What is the Difference Between:

- Sin and Transgression (2:9)
- God's Standard and Religion's Standard (2:10-11)
- Grace and Mercy (2:12-13)

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**Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV)** <sup>16</sup> Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need

### What is the Difference Between:

- Sin and Transgression (2:9)

**(James 2:9 NKJV) but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors.**

Here we see in this one verse the word sin and transgression, so we ask ourselves, what is the difference between the two?

Simply put:

- Sin is to miss the mark, as to not hit the bullseye.
- Transgression is to cross the line (trespass).

In Psalm 32:5, the psalmist says, "I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the LORD.'" In this one verse, "sin," "iniquity," and "transgression" are all mentioned. Basically, the three words communicate the same idea: evil and lawlessness, as defined by God (see 1 John 3:4). However, upon closer examination, each word also carries a slightly different meaning.

The word sin and its cognates are used 786 times in the New International Version of the Bible. Sin means “to miss the mark.” It can refer to doing something against God or against a person (Exodus 10:16), doing the opposite of what is right (Galatians 5:17), doing something that will have negative results (Proverbs 24:33–34), and failing to do something you know is right (James 4:17). In the Old Testament, God even instituted sacrifices for unintentional sins (Numbers 15:27). Sin is the general term for anything that “falls short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23).

Sin leads to a downward progression that, without the restoring power of the Holy Spirit, we all tend toward. The sin nature is present in every human being born since the Fall of Adam (Genesis 3:6–7; Romans 5:12). If left unchecked, continual sin leads to a “reprobate mind,” spoken of in Romans 1:24. Our sin nature causes us to gravitate naturally toward selfishness, envy, and pride, even when we are trying to do good. The apostle Paul alluded to his propensity to sin when he wrote, “For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out” (Romans 7:18).

The sin nature leads to trespassing. A trespasser is someone who crosses a line or climbs a fence that he should not cross or climb. A trespass may be intentional or unintentional. Trespass can also mean “to fall away after being close beside.” Peter trespassed when he denied Jesus (Luke 22:34, 56–62). We all “cross the line” in thought, word, or attitude many times a day and should be quick to forgive others who do the same (Matthew 6:15).

Transgression refers to presumptuous sin. To transgress is to choose to intentionally disobey; transgression is willful trespassing. Samson intentionally broke his Nazirite vow by touching a dead lion (Numbers 6:1–5; Judges 14:8–9) and allowing his hair to be cut (Judges 16:17); in doing so he was committing a transgression. David was referring to this kind of sin when he wrote, “Blessed is the one whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered” (Psalm 32:1). When we knowingly run a stop sign, tell a lie, or blatantly disregard an authority, we are transgressing.

Also - Iniquity is more deeply rooted. Iniquity refers to a premeditated choice; to commit iniquity is to continue without repentance. David’s sin with Bathsheba that led to the killing of her husband, Uriah, was iniquity (2 Samuel 11:3–4; 2 Samuel 12:9). Micah 2:1 says, “Woe to those who plan iniquity, to those who plot evil on their beds! At morning’s light they carry it out because it is in their power to do it.” In David’s psalm of repentance, he cries out to God, saying, “Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin” (Psalm 51:2).

God forgives iniquity, as He does any type of sin when we repent (Jeremiah 33:8; Hebrews 8:12). However, iniquity left unchecked leads to a state of willful sin with no fear of God. The build-up of unrepentant sin is sometimes pictured as a “cup of iniquity” being filled to the brim (Revelation 17:4; Genesis 15:16). This often applies to nations who have forsaken God completely. Continued iniquity leads to unnatural affections, which leads to a reprobate mind. Romans 1:28–32 outlines this digression in vivid detail. The sons of Eli are biblical examples of reprobates whom God judged for their iniquities (1 Samuel 3:13–14). Rather than repent, Eli’s sons continued in their abominations until repentance was no longer possible.

The biblical writers used different words to refer to sin in its many forms. However, regardless of how depraved a human heart may become, Jesus’ death on the cross was sufficient to cover all sin (John 1:29; Romans 5:18). Psalm 32:5, quoted at the beginning of this article, ends with these words: “And you forgave the guilt of my sin.” The only sin that God cannot forgive is the final rejection of the Holy Spirit’s drawing to repentance—the ultimate fruit of a reprobate mind (Matthew 12:32; Luke 12:10). (GotQuestions).

## What is the Difference Between:

- God's Standard and Religion's Standard (2:10-11)

**(James 2:10 NKJV) For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.**

**(James 2:11 NKJV) For He who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law.**

### **Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:**

*(Matthew 5:17 NKJV) "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.*

*(Matthew 5:18 NKJV) "For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.*

*(Matthew 5:19 NKJV) "Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.*

*(Matthew 5:20 NKJV) "For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.*

### **No Partiality of People / Nor Sin / All Sin is Equal / The 10 Commandments**

Along the same thought of showing partiality among people, is selecting levels of sin, for God says all sin is equal before Him for He is a Holy God. God says if you are guilty of one of them, He considers equally guilty of all of them. The world and man-made religion want to grade on a curve, rack and stack them, so they can feel good about their sin, and falsely believe that God winks at their sin. They deceive themselves. And, whether a sin (missing the mark), or transgressing (willfully trespassing), all men/woman are guilty before God.

You remember the Law, the 10 Commandments, are recorded here in His Word the Bible:

*(Exodus 20:1 NKJV) And God spoke all these words, saying:*

*(Exodus 20:2 NKJV) "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.*

*(Exodus 20:3 NKJV) "You shall have no other gods before Me.*

*(Exodus 20:4 NKJV) "You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth;*

*(Exodus 20:5 NKJV) you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me,*

*(Exodus 20:6 NKJV) but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.*

*(Exodus 20:7 NKJV) "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.*

*(Exodus 20:8 NKJV) "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.*

*(Exodus 20:9 NKJV) Six days you shall labor and do all your work,*

*(Exodus 20:10 NKJV) but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates.*

*(Exodus 20:11 NKJV) For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.*

*(Exodus 20:12 NKJV) "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you.*

*(Exodus 20:13 NKJV) "You shall not murder.*

*(Exodus 20:14 NKJV) "You shall not commit adultery.*

*(Exodus 20:15 NKJV) "You shall not steal.*

*(Exodus 20:16 NKJV) "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.*

*(Exodus 20:17 NKJV) "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's."*

*(Exodus 20:18 NKJV) Now all the people witnessed the thunderings, the lightning flashes, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they trembled and stood afar off.*

*(Exodus 20:19 NKJV) Then they said to Moses, "You speak with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die."*

*(Exodus 20:20 NKJV) And Moses said to the people, "Do not fear; for God has come to test you, and that His fear may be before you, so that you may not sin."*

### **Guilty 1 – Guilty All / No Ranking / All Wretched**

God says if you can keep every one of them, yet stumble on one, then you are guilty of them. One lie, just one lie, makes you guilty of stealing, murdering, adultery, using the Lord's name in vain, and even bowing down to idols. Did you do those things, no, then what is God saying? He is saying that He doesn't rank sin. Before Him there are not different levels of sinners. He considers the liar as wretched a sinner as a murderer. The world and man-made religion want to grade on a curve, rack and stack them, so they can feel good about their sin, and falsely believe that God winks at their sin. They deceive themselves.

## Why – He is Holy / A Consuming Fire

Why, because God is perfect, and that is His standard, perfection:

*(Habakkuk 1:13 NKJV) You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, And cannot look on wickedness.....*

God is perfect and pure, so perfect and pure that anything imperfect that comes into His presence, His holiness consumes it:

*(Deuteronomy 4:23 NKJV) "Take heed to yourselves, lest you forget the covenant of the LORD your God which He made with you, and make for yourselves a carved image in the form of anything which the LORD your God has forbidden you.*

*(Deuteronomy 4:24 NKJV) "For the LORD your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.*

## Judges the Heart

And, Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount, even elevated this for us, in that He revealed that God doesn't just look at the outward actions, but the thoughts and intent of the heart. Of course He does (last week's study we saw looks at the inward, the heart, not the outward). Jesus said if you have hatred in your heart, He considers you guilty of murder, and if you have lust in your heart, He considers guilty of adultery. So here we all are, guilty before Him. And, for context of our study, if show partiality He considers us equally guilty before Him as the adultery and murder.

**Matthew 5:21–22 (NKJV)** <sup>21</sup> "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.' <sup>22</sup> But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!' shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell fire.

**Matthew 5:27–28 (NKJV)** <sup>27</sup> "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not commit adultery.' <sup>28</sup> But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

## We Can Forget

We who have been walking with the Lord for a while can forget that He is Holy, we can take His grace for granted, and forget that He is a Holy and Pure God. At the throne of heaven there are creatures who do nothing but all day and night exult His Holiness. The background music of heaven, twenty-four-seven, will be this song (holy, holy, holy), and we should make that the background music of our life today, holy, holy, holy!

*(Revelation 4:8 NKJV) The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to come!"*

## Jesus Calls Us to Perfection / Sermon on Mount

Jesus came in love, yet He still calls us to be blameless/perfect:

*(Matthew 5:48 KJV) Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.*

## Positionally

Now "Positionally" those who have received Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior; you are perfect and nothing you do can will affect your "right standing" with God. You are His child, His heir, and He will never leave you nor forsake you:

*(John 1:12 NKJV) But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:*

*(John 1:13 NKJV) who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*

## Relationally

But "Relationally", our day-to-day communion and fellowship with Him, sin soils and spoils that sweet fellowship. It must be put away from us, so that we can draw closer to God. Again, you can have all of God you want, but not one drop more. Get the Christian Bar of Soap out:

*(1 John 1:7 NKJV) But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.*

*(1 John 1:8 NKJV) If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.*

*(1 John 1:9 NKJV) If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

## Don't Stop Growing

Remember this book is written so that we might grow, and be mature. The Spirit is speaking to us right now and saying, "be ye perfect", don't think that because you have rooted out the "big" sins that you are to stop there. God standard is perfection, and that is what we are to be seeking:

*(Philippians 3:13 NKJV) Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead,*

*(Philippians 3:14 NKJV) I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*

### **Don't Rank / Root them All Out**

Don't rank your sins, and then think you are doing OK. God is saying all sin is wretched to me, allow no sin to be a part of your life. Be Ye Perfect! I encourage you to go back and study again last week's message in Being Doers of the Word, the Test of the Response to the Word.

### **The Message of Salvation / Sermon on Mount / Our Tutor**

But hear this, the Law was given first so that we might see our need for a Savior, that our sins might be blotted out before the Holy God, so that we might not be consumed by Holiness due to our impurity. We have to become children of God, come into right standing before Him, and that can only be done through Jesus Christ and His sacrifice for us on the cross.

The Sermon on the Mount was given by Jesus that we might examine ourselves, and His ultimate purpose was that we would see a need for a Savior. That is what the Law still does today, it shows us we are sinners and have offended the Holy God. Jesus Himself quoted the Law on the Sermon on the Mount so that we might see how we have violated God's Holy Standard:

*(Romans 3:19 NKJV) Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.*

*(Galatians 3:24 NKJV) Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.*

### **The Gospel**

What is the gospel? I will put it into 5 P's

**1. Personal** – God loves you and has a plan for your life

*(Jeremiah 29:11) For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.*

**2. Problem** – But there is a problem, and that is that your sin separates you from Him for He is Holy.

*(Isaiah 59:1-2) Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear.*

**3. Penalty** – You have offended the Holy God, broken His commandments, therefore you can not come into His presence or fellowship with Him, for He is a consuming fire.

*(Romans 6:23) For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

**4. Provision** – But God doesn't want to leave us separated from Him. God devised a plan that would allow Him to be merciful to us, while at the same time judging sin. Jesus Christ took our place, took our punishment.

*(John 3:16) "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

**5 Profession** – Our response, we make a profession of Faith.

*(Romans 10:9) That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*

**1. Recognize** – Recognize we have offended the Holy God, and Jesus is the only way.

**2. Repent** – Be willing to Turn from our sin, and follow the Lord and all His ways

**3. Receive** – Ask Jesus to come into your life and be your Lord and Savior.

## What is the Difference Between:

- Grace and Mercy (2:12-13)

**(James 2:12 NKJV) So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty.**

### **Law Liberty versus Royal Law**

The law of liberty, for who the Son sets free is free indeed. There is no other way to freedom except through the law of liberty and you are either under the law of liberty that you've been set free by the finished work of Christ or you are not under the law of liberty and you are a slave and you'll be a slave in this world and you'll be a slave in the next world to come, which will be the world separated from Christ forever lasting life called Hell. Let it be known. Every man lives forever. Death is just a passage into the next and final place of eternity, but every man will live forever. That's what the scripture says. But only on this side of the breath of life can a person make the decision of the next life and it will be through the freedom of the Son who sets free both sin and death through the finished work of the cross. Have you been set free by Jesus Christ who was crucified for you, for your sin that separates you from the holy God.

*John 8:36 Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.*

The royal law can't save you. The royal law is the response to the law of liberty being set free by Christ. But there's an expectation that comes and hence we come to this passage. The royal law will determine and show what's truly in your heart. Are you living by faith or are you living by flesh because it will show up how you treat others, especially this place that we study here today of partiality, showing bias towards one person or another, whether bias for the good or bias for the bad.

*James 2:8 (NKJV) <sup>8</sup> If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well;*

*James 2:12 (NKJV) <sup>12</sup> So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty.*

**(James 2:13 NKJV) For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.**

#### **Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:**

*(Matthew 5:7 NKJV) Blessed are the merciful, For they shall obtain mercy.*

#### **Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:**

*(Matthew 6:14 NKJV) "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.*

*(Matthew 6:15 NKJV) "But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.*

### **Celebrating Mercy**

Verse 13 - For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment. Once we see God's mercy, His forgiveness of our sins, we are to be merciful to others. You are to be celebrating and showing mercy. We have all heard:

*(Matthew 5:7 NKJV) Blessed are the merciful, For they shall obtain mercy.*

*(Luke 6:38 NKJV) "Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you."*

This is usually used when speaking about giving money, but that really isn't the context. The verse before it says to be merciful:

*(Luke 6:36 NKJV) "Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.*

*(Luke 6:37 NKJV) "Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven.*

If you want mercy, and you will someday, then you must be merciful yourself. James is saying don't be legalistic. If you are going to be legalistic, then be legalistic with yourself, and gracious with others. Celebrate the law of Liberty.

## What is the difference between mercy and grace?

Simply put:

- Mercy – not getting what we deserve (we deserve hell and judgment for breaking God’s holy Law, yet instead we get forgiveness), mercy!
- Grace – getting what we don’t deserve (God’s-Riches-At-Christ’s-Expense), we get eternal abundant life with God now and forever.

Mercy and grace are closely related. While the terms have similar meanings, grace and mercy are not exactly the same. Mercy has to do with kindness and compassion; it is often spoken of in the context of God’s not punishing us as our sins deserve. Grace includes kindness and compassion, but also carries the idea of bestowing a gift or favor. It may help to view mercy as a subset of grace. In Scripture, mercy is often equated with a deliverance from judgment (e.g., Deuteronomy 4:30–31; 1 Timothy 1:13), and grace is always the extending of a blessing to the unworthy.

According to the Bible, we have all sinned (Ecclesiastes 7:20; Romans 3:23; 1 John 1:8). As a result of that sin, we all deserve death (Romans 6:23) and eternal judgment in the lake of fire (Revelation 20:12–15). Given what we deserve, every day we live is an act of God’s mercy. If God gave us all what we deserve, we would all be, right now, condemned for eternity. In Psalm 51:1–2, David cries out, “Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.” Pleading for God’s mercy is asking Him to show kindness and withhold the judgment we deserve.

We deserve nothing good from God. God does not owe us any good thing. What good we experience is a result of the grace of God (Ephesians 2:5). Grace is simply defined as “unmerited favor.” God favors us—He shows us approval and kindness—in blessing us with good things that we do not deserve and could never earn. Common grace refers to the blessings that God bestows on all of mankind regardless of their spiritual standing before Him, while saving grace is that special blessing whereby God sovereignly bestows unmerited divine assistance upon His elect for their regeneration and sanctification.

Mercy and grace are evident in the salvation that is available through Jesus Christ. We deserved judgment, but in Christ we receive mercy from God and are delivered from judgment. In Christ we receive eternal salvation, forgiveness of sins, and abundant life (John 10:10)—all gifts of grace. Our response to the mercy and grace of God should be to fall on our knees in worship and thanksgiving. Hebrews 4:16 declares, “Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.” (GotQuestions)

**John 10:10 (NKJV)** <sup>10</sup> The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

## Abundant Life

Let me tell you why you can trust, rest, be assured of God’s promise of life and that more abundant... come with me to the Potter’s House, who says “I know the thoughts that I think towards you says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil to give you a future and hope.

**Jeremiah 29:10–14 (NKJV)** <sup>10</sup> For thus says the LORD: After seventy years are completed at Babylon, I will visit you and perform My good word toward you, and cause you to return to this place. <sup>11</sup> For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. <sup>12</sup> Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. <sup>13</sup> And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart. <sup>14</sup> I will be found by you, says the LORD, and I will bring you back from your captivity; I will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you, says the LORD, and I will bring you to the place from which I cause you to be carried away captive.

## Jeremiah 18 – Come to the Potter’s House

In the book of Jeremiah, chapter 18, we have a wonderful passage about the Potter and the Clay. Potter and Clay. The Bible uses symbolism to deepen the message God has for His people. One such symbol is that of potter and clay. The most detailed example is found in Jeremiah 18. God instructed the prophet Jeremiah to go to a potter’s house where God would illustrate His relationship with Israel. Verses 2–6 say, “So I went down to the potter’s house, and I saw him working at the wheel. But the pot he was shaping from the clay was marred in his hands; so the potter formed it into another pot, shaping it as

seemed best to him. Then the word of the Lord came to me. He said, 'Can I not do with you, Israel, as this potter does?' declares the Lord. 'Like clay in the hand of the potter, so are you in my hand, Israel.'" **Jeremiah 18:1–4 (NKJV)** <sup>1</sup> *The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying:* <sup>2</sup> *"Arise and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause you to hear My words."* <sup>3</sup> *Then I went down to the potter's house, and there he was, making something at the wheel.* <sup>4</sup> *And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter; so he made it again into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to make.*

If you went to the Potter's House, you would see four things:

1. The Clay (the object the potter shaped on the wheel)
2. The Potter (the artisan)
3. The Wheel (the instrument the potter worked from)
4. The Kiln (the fire, oven, the potter finished the clay in).

### **The Clay (the object the potter shaped on the wheel)**

Beloved, you are more than clay! The Potter's hand touches you, has a desire for you, vessels of honor (Rom 9), a future and a hope (Jeremiah 29), and a new heart (Jeremiah 31).

**Isaiah 64:8 (NKJV)** <sup>8</sup> *But now, O LORD, You are our Father; We are the clay, and You our potter; And all we are the work of Your hand.*

**Romans 9:20–21 (NKJV)** <sup>20</sup> *But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed say to him who formed it, "Why have you made me like this?"* <sup>21</sup> *Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor?*

**Jeremiah 29:10–14 (NKJV)** <sup>10</sup> *For thus says the LORD: After seventy years are completed at Babylon, I will visit you and perform My good word toward you, and cause you to return to this place.* <sup>11</sup> *For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.* <sup>12</sup> *Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you.* <sup>13</sup> *And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.* <sup>14</sup> *I will be found by you, says the LORD, and I will bring you back from your captivity; I will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you, says the LORD, and I will bring you to the place from which I cause you to be carried away captive.*

And He starts with a "new heart", that has God's Law written on it and in it, empowered by His very Spirit, so that we may be "doers of the Word", and there be "Real Faith, that shows up in Real Life".

**Jeremiah 31:31–34 (NKJV)** <sup>31</sup> *"Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah—* <sup>32</sup> *not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD.* <sup>33</sup> *But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.* <sup>34</sup> *No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."*

### **The Potter (the artisan)**

The Master Potter, our Father, is an artist.

### **We Are His Poem (Workmanship)**

Ephesians 2:10 says, "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them" (NASB). Other Bible versions use words such as masterpiece or handiwork instead of workmanship. In other words, we are wholly the result of God's creative, redemptive, and sanctifying work, and we belong to Him.

Workmanship refers to more than the product of creation; it also refers to the degree of skill with which the product is made. That degree of skill imparts value to the thing made. For example, we could say, "That vase is of excellent workmanship." The vase itself is lovely, but its value is derived from the talents of the one who designed and produced it. With that definition in mind, workmanship may be a more fitting term than either masterpiece or handiwork because of the emphasis it places on the Creator rather than the creation.

We are God's workmanship in that He created us. Everything God creates is of value, yet nothing in creation compares to His work in creating mankind (Genesis 2:7). From the sky to rivers to frogs, God merely spoke and they were (Genesis 1). For six days, God said, "Let there be," and it was so. But on the sixth day, He did something different. God reached down into the mud and formed a man. He then breathed "into man's nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul" (Genesis 2:7). That breath brought God's own life into His workmanship. The human being now possessed a spirit unlike the life of animals and plants. Psalm 139:13–16 gives us a peek into God's workshop, showing us that He is intimately involved in the creation of every human being.

We are God's workmanship in that He redeemed us. As God knew they would, mankind rebelled against His authority. They defiled God's workmanship and introduced sin into His perfect world (Genesis 3:11; Romans 5:12). From that very hour, God put into motion His plan to redeem them and restore them to their original design (Genesis 3:21–23). Before the foundation of the world, God had planned this redemption, which would ultimately result in the crucifixion of His Son as a final sacrifice for sin (2 Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 1:4; Revelation 13:8). His workmanship was costly, as we are redeemed "with the precious blood of Christ" (1 Peter 1:18–19).

We are God's workmanship in that He sanctifies us and fits us for service. He forms us the way He wants for His own pleasure and purposes (Philippians 2:13; Colossians 1:16). Despite the imperfections we find in ourselves and those we love, the clay cannot say to the potter, "Why did you make me like this?" (Romans 9:20; Jeremiah 18:5). God knows what He's doing. He uses the sculpting tools of adversity, relationships, challenges, and miraculous interventions to mold us into the image of Christ (Romans 8:28). And He promises to finish what He began (Philippians 1:6). The goal is "good works" (Ephesians 2:10).

The truth that we are God's workmanship is expressed in the context of our salvation: "By grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship" (Ephesians 2:8–10, NASB). The emphasis is on the grace and gift of God. We are not saved by our own works for the simple fact that we ourselves are God's work. God is the Designer and Builder of our faith; we cannot save ourselves.

The Church as a whole is also God's workmanship. He has given us gifts, Scripture, and His Holy Spirit to enable us to carry out His work in the world. (Romans 12:4–7; 1 Corinthians 12:4). As a lantern exists to shed light, so the Church exists to spread the light of the gospel to the lost and dying (Matthew 5:14; Acts 13:47). To the degree that we allow His light to shine through us, we display His workmanship. (GotQuestions).

*Ephesians 2:10 (NKJV)* <sup>10</sup> For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

*Ephesians 2:1–10 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, <sup>2</sup> in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, <sup>3</sup> among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. <sup>4</sup> But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, <sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), <sup>6</sup> and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, <sup>7</sup> that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. <sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, <sup>9</sup> not of works, lest anyone should boast. <sup>10</sup> For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

And let it not be missed, especially as the culture we live in no longer makes life sacred, that the Master Potter started his forming and shaping of you in your mother's womb.

*Psalms 139:14–16 (NKJV)* <sup>14</sup> I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well. <sup>15</sup> My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, And skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. <sup>16</sup> Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, The days fashioned for me, When as yet there were none of them.

## The Wheel (the instrument the potter worked from)

The wheel are the calling, circumstances, situations, divine appointments and interruptions, the trials, and the temptations, that God allows in our lives. First is to get our attention for salvation, then secondly for Him to make His vessel of honor:

*Philippians 1:6 (NKJV) <sup>6</sup> being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;*

The vessel of dishonor? It is the person (formed in the mother womb), who rejects the invitation to be made into the beautiful vessel of honor.

## The Kiln (the fire, oven, the potter finished the clay in).

And when the vessel is made, final shape, it goes into the kiln to be finished.

### Firing Clay Explained

Ever wonder why a clay vessel doesn't turn to mud when it holds liquid? Because after it is put in the fire, it changes properties. There is a transformation, material properties change of the clay. It is a fascinating phenomenon.

Ceramics must be fired to make them durable. Potters need to know the processes taking place in order to be able to control the outcome. As well as firing clay, the glaze must also be fired to maturity. It is important to match the firing temperature of the glaze to the maturing temperature for the particular clay body. The type of kiln used and the firing schedule will also have an effect on the color and texture of the glaze.

Clay goes through several physical changes when fired. The first step is the evaporation of water from between the clay particles. Pots must be completely dry before firing, otherwise the steam escaping could cause them to explode. Initially, the kiln should be heated very slowly to give time for all the water to evaporate. Drying can be speeded up by pre-heating the ware in the kiln to 176°F (80°C) for a few hours. This part of the firing, up to 212°F (100°C) is called water smoking, which causes the water in the pores between the clay crystals to evaporate. The next stage is to drive off the water which is chemically combined with the clay (remember the formula for clay is  $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3 \cdot 2\text{SiO}_2 \cdot 2\text{H}_2\text{O}$ ). This is known as dehydroxylation and occurs up to 1022°F (550°C). Once this chemical change has taken place, the process cannot be reversed and the clay cannot be returned to its plastic state.

At 1063°F (573°C), the crystalline quartz in the clay body increases in volume by 1% (see silica phases in chapter 6). This may cause cracking if the temperature in the kiln is increased too rapidly. Organic matter in the clay is burned and oxidized to carbon dioxide, and fluorine and sulphur dioxide from materials in the clay body are driven off at 1292–1652°F (700–900°C). At this point the biscuit firing is completed. The clay particles are sintered or welded together. The ware has undergone little shrinkage since the bone-dry stage, but it is durable enough to withstand handling and glazing.

Above 1652°F (900°C), the clay body begins to shrink and vitrify. The silica starts to melt, filling the spaces between the clay particles and fusing them together (8-1 and 8-2). The fired clay is known as metakaolin. At 1832°F (1000°C) the clay crystals begin to break down and melt. At 1922°F (1050°C), needle shaped crystals of mullite  $3\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3 \cdot 2\text{SiO}_2$  begin to form, giving the fired clay strength and hardness. When mullite forms from metakaolin  $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3 \cdot 2\text{SiO}_2$ , extra free silica is released. Above 2012°F (1100°C), any free silica (not chemically combined) in the clay changes to cristobalite, which has a different structure from that of quartz.

When the kiln is cooled down, cristobalite contracts suddenly by 3% at 439°F (226°C) (see silica phases in chapter 6). This can cause cracking if the kiln is cooled too rapidly by opening too soon, causing some areas to drop in temperature and stressing the ware. It is advisable not to open it until it has cooled down to below 212°F (100°C).

### 30 Pieces of Silver

As we think of pottery, how can't we think of the "potter's field", that was purchased with the 30 pieces of silver Judas was given (and later returned) for betraying Jesus.

In Hebrew culture, thirty pieces of silver was not a lot of money. In fact, it was the exact price paid to the master of a slave if and when his slave was gored by an ox (Exodus 21:32). The slave's death was compensated by the thirty pieces of silver. There are two other places in the Bible that specifically mention the amount of thirty pieces of silver, and they are directly linked. The first passage is in Zechariah, which contains a prophecy that is later fulfilled in the book of Matthew.

Leading up to the prophecy of the thirty pieces of silver is a description of a strange episode in Zechariah's life. God had the prophet Zechariah play the part of a shepherd and care for a flock "doomed to slaughter" (Zechariah 11:4–14). God used this to illustrate a prophetic judgment against Israel for crucifying Christ, predicting the fall of Israel in AD 70 and the subsequent scattering of the nation. There

are several elements in this passage that point to it as a prophecy about Jesus. First, Zechariah says he “got rid of the three shepherds” of the doomed flock (verse 8). The “three shepherds” are probably a reference to the three religious offices during Jesus’ day that worked to condemn Jesus: the elders, the scribes, and the chief priests (Matthew 16:21). Second, Zechariah breaks his two shepherding staffs. One is named Favor and is broken to symbolize the breaking of the Mosaic Covenant by the disobedient people and God’s setting aside His favor or providential care to allow judgment to come upon them (Zechariah 11:10). The second staff, named Union, is broken to represent the breaking up of the nation by the Romans.

Another prophetic reference is found in the thirty pieces of silver given to Zechariah after his work as a shepherd. He went to those he worked for and asked them to pay him what they thought he was worth. They gave him thirty pieces of silver, which he sarcastically calls a “handsome price” because it was such a small amount (Zechariah 11:13)—the price paid for a slave’s accidental death. The employers meant to insult Zechariah with this amount of money. Returning the insult, God tells Zechariah to “throw it to the potter,” and Zechariah tossed the money into the house of the Lord to be given to the potter.

These actions are a shockingly accurate and detailed prophecy, for when Judas Iscariot bargained with the leaders of Israel to betray the Lord Jesus, he asked, “What are you willing to give me if I deliver him over to you?” The murderous cabal then counted out for Judas “thirty pieces of silver” (Matthew 26:15). That’s all they considered Jesus to be worth.

Later, Judas was overcome with guilt for betraying Jesus, and, fulfilling Zechariah’s vivid prophecy, he threw the thirty silver coins into the temple (Matthew 27:3–5). The Jewish leaders used the thirty pieces of silver to buy a field from a potter, again as Zechariah had predicted (Matthew 27:6–10). It was in that field that Judas hanged himself. (GotQuestions).

**Matthew 26:14–16 (NKJV)** <sup>14</sup> Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests <sup>15</sup> and said, “What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you?” And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver. <sup>16</sup> So from that time he sought opportunity to betray Him.

**Matthew 27:3–10 (NKJV)** <sup>3</sup> Then Judas, His betrayer, seeing that He had been condemned, was remorseful and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, <sup>4</sup> saying, “I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.” And they said, “What is that to us? You see to it!” <sup>5</sup> Then he threw down the pieces of silver in the temple and departed, and went and hanged himself. <sup>6</sup> But the chief priests took the silver pieces and said, “It is not lawful to put them into the treasury, because they are the price of blood.” <sup>7</sup> And they consulted together and bought with them the potter’s field, to bury strangers in. <sup>8</sup> Therefore that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day. <sup>9</sup> Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, “*And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the value of Him who was priced, whom they of the children of Israel priced, <sup>10</sup> and gave them for the potter’s field, as the LORD directed me.*”

### **Broken Pieces**

What is a wonderful picture God gives us in the Potter’s Field, is that He can do the impossible, He can take the broken pieces, even if they were already fired (conformed to the world), and reverse the bake and the set, and redeem us and make us brand new. Oh how we were broken and cast off by the world, say they are set and can never be changed, yet our Potter Jesus Christ, bought us back, redeemed the field, so He can do the impossible and put us on the wheel and make us vessels of honor. Only a God could do that, and in His mercy and grace and love He does.

**Matthew 13:44 (NKJV)** <sup>44</sup> “*Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.*”

But the Potter first had to become a slave, for 30 pieces of silver, in order to buy us back and redeem us.

**Matthew 26:14–16 (NKJV)** <sup>14</sup> Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests <sup>15</sup> and said, “What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you?” And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver. <sup>16</sup> So from that time he sought opportunity to betray Him.

That is Grace and Mercy!

Outline: What is the Difference Between:

- Sin and Transgression (2:9)
- God’s Standard and Religion’s Standard (2:10-11)
- Grace and Mercy (2:12-13)

## Prayer

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

*Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) <sup>12</sup> For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

## **In Every Study**

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

*Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) <sup>16</sup> Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need*

**Passage:** James 2:14-26

**Title:** The Test of Faith and Works

**Summary:** James writes to us so that we might examine ourselves. James is going to make a clear case in this passage on what real faith looks like in real life. True faith will have the evidence of works to back it up. James shows us 3 types of Faith, and points out that only one is a saved faith:

- Dead Faith – 2:14-18
- Demonic Faith – 2:19
- Dynamic Faith – 2:20-26

**James 2:14–26 (NKJV)** <sup>14</sup> What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? <sup>15</sup> If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, <sup>16</sup> and one of you says to them, “Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,” but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? <sup>17</sup> Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. <sup>18</sup> But someone will say, “You have faith, and I have works.” Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. <sup>19</sup> You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble! <sup>20</sup> But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? <sup>21</sup> Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? <sup>22</sup> Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? <sup>23</sup> And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, “Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” And he was called the friend of God. <sup>24</sup> You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only. <sup>25</sup> Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way? <sup>26</sup> For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

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### **Written by James / Didn't believe – to Leader / Hindsight / Everyday Living**

The Book of James was written by none other than Jesus' brother James. James was a leader in the church, a pillar in the church (Acts 21). James didn't believe that Jesus was God when He walked this earth (John 7:5); but after the resurrection Jesus appears to him (1 Cor 15:4-7), and everything changed. James is going to write us this letter, he will talk about everyday practical stuff. He will talk about trials in life, our works, our tongue, prayer, and other things; as he writes these things, no doubt he will be remembering how Jesus handled them, reflecting back on watching situations, and watching his oldest brother. He will reflect on Jesus' life of love, and a life of sinlessness, in a world that can be so hateful at times, and so full of sin. James will write these things based on hindsight, based on first hand witnessing of how his older brother lived life, everyday. James watched Jesus handle everyday life, and that is what this book is about; it is about living everyday life as a Follower of God, in a fallen world.

### **Jesus Rubbed Off / Nature Illustrations / Favorite Teacher - Sermon on Mount**

We can see how much Jesus rubbed off on James, for James style resembles his brother so much. Like Jesus used nature as illustrations for His teaching points, so does James some 30 times. He uses nature analogies such as the sea, flowers, sun, fire, horses and ships to name a few). It is obvious who James favorite teacher was, because this epistle covers every topic that Jesus covered in the Sermon on the Mount. There is amazing parallelisms between the two; James does not actually quote the Lord's words, but he obviously had internalized Jesus' teachings and reproduced them with spiritual depth. Jesus covered about 30 topics in the Sermon on the Mount, and we will see that James touches on every one of them in this epistle. The Book of James is Sermon on the Mount 2. The Book is also very quick and concise, moving from thought-to-thought quickly. So the Book of James is the New Testament Version of the Old Testament Proverbs. It resembles Proverbs because it is very poetic the way it flows its thoughts using illustrations and analogies.

## So We can Examine Self / How am I Doing

Jesus gave the Sermon on the Mount so that we might examine ourselves and ask the question, “so how am I doing in each of these areas?” James writes to the church, to us, and as we read, we have to ask ourselves, “so how am I doing in these areas?” This book is practical and applicable for us living in the year 2022, and the ultimate goal of this epistle is giving to us in verse 4 of chapter 1, to bring us into maturity, perfect and lacking nothing.

As in school, we take tests to see how much of a handle and mastery we have on a subject, we will do the same in this book.

## 3 Key Verses

Here are three key verses to get us going:

*James 2:20 (NKJV)* <sup>20</sup> *But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?*

*James 1:22 (NKJV)* <sup>22</sup> *But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.*

*James 1:4–5 (NKJV)* <sup>4</sup> *But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.* <sup>5</sup> *If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.*

## The Outline of the Book of James:

### Chapter 1

- Introduction (1:1)
- The Test of Perseverance and Suffering (1:2-12)
- The Test of Blame in Temptation (1:12-18)
- The Test of Response to the Word (1:19-27)

### Chapter 2

- The Test of Partiality (2:1-9)
- The Test of the Law (2:10-13)
- The Test of Faith and Works (2:14-26)

### Chapter 3

- The Test of the Tongue (3:1-12)
- The Test of Wisdom Applied (3:13-18)

### Chapter 4

- The Test of the World's Influence (4:1-12)
- The Test of Dependence (4:13-5:6)

### Chapter 5

- The Test of Endurance (5:7-12)
- The Test of Prayerfulness (5:13-20)

## Intensely Practical / In Your Face / Hebrews / Earthly Scene /Promised Blessing

This book is an intensely practical book that packs a powerful punch. James is the kinda book that is in your face, and get it right. In Hebrews we explored the heavenly scene, now James we explore the earthly scene. It was wonderful spending a few months in the heavenlies, I could have stayed in Hebrews for another year, but the fact is until heaven, we are living here (so the blessings of verse-by-verse studying). Studying this book will have a great effect on you, This book is that practical, God even promises us that as we saw last study:

*(James 1:25 NKJV)* *But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.*

## Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:

*(Matthew 7:21 NKJV)* *"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.*

*(Matthew 7:22 NKJV)* *"Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?'*

*(Matthew 7:23 NKJV)* *"And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'*

## Great Controversy

This passage has caused great controversy in the church. Martin Luther said this book should be excluded from the Bible, and it should be thrown into the Rhine River. Why did he say this? Because

Martin Luther was the champion of "justified by faith". It was through Romans 1:17, that the just shall live by faith that started the Protestant Reformation.

*(Romans 1:17 NKJV) For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."*

### **Paul – James Contradiction / Balance of the Bible**

At first glance it appears as if the Apostle Paul's teaching on faith is contradicted by James, but we will see that they don't contradict, but compliment. Paul writes to dispel that a person can earn their salvation through works, and James writes to dispel that just saying "I believe" will assure a person's salvation. The wonderful balance of the Scriptures; this Bible will afflict the comfortable, and it will comfort the afflicted.

### **Paul's Teachings – Faith**

In Paul's teachings he makes it clear that salvation is by faith and not works:

*(Galatians 2:16 NKJV) "knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified."*

*(Ephesians 2:8 NKJV) For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, (Ephesians 2:9 NKJV) not of works, lest anyone should boast.*

Jesus even said:

*(John 6:28 NKJV) Then they said to Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?"*

*(John 6:29 NKJV) Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent."*

### **James Teachings – Works**

We start this study in James with him saying:

*(James 2:14 NKJV) What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him?*

### **31,102 / Faith Proven by Works / Examine Ourselves**

James appears to be saying that faith alone can't save, but as we have said many times, there are 31,102 verses in this Bible and they are a woven unity, and the best interpretation of the Bible is the Bible. What James is ultimately going to sum up for us in these verses today is Faith that is real faith will be shown, will be proven by your works. Remember James writes to us so that we might examine ourselves. James is going to make a clear case and warning to the reader, don't think you are saved just because of your words. True faith will have the evidence of works to back it up.

### **Check Ourselves Inside & Out**

Remember where we have been in this chapter, "The Test of Partiality", and the Test of the Law"; it is not just how we view people externally, but how we evaluate ourselves inwardly. And in this test, James is saying for us to check ourselves both internally, and externally.

### **Outline**

James shows us 3 types of Faith, and points out that only one Saves:

- Dead Faith – 2:14-18
- Demonic Faith – 2:19
- Dynamic Faith – 2:20-26

### **The 7 Churches / James / Jesus – He who has an Ear**

I think it necessary to point out to you just what God thinks of our works, as they go along with our faith. In Revelation, seven churches, and seven letters, and in every letter, God says to them, I know your works:

### **First Definition of Works:**

The word for work, in the Greek in our passage, is "ergon", and it is where we get our English word "energy". So there is an energy spent, to do an action. Work has an action behind that needs and uses energy, and thus well beyond just words.

### **Church of Ephesus -**

*(Revelation 2:2 NKJV) "I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars;  
(Revelation 2:3 NKJV) "and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name's sake and have not become weary.*

### **Church of Smyrna –**

*(Revelation 2:9 NKJV) "I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.*

### **Church of Pergamos –**

*(Revelation 2:13 NKJV) "I know your works, and where you dwell, where Satan's throne is. And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas was My faithful martyr, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.*

### **Church of Thyatira –**

*(Revelation 2:19 NKJV) "I know your works, love, service, faith, and your patience; and as for your works, the last are more than the first.*

### **Church of Sardis –**

*(Revelation 3:1 NKJV) ..... "I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead.  
(Revelation 3:2 NKJV) "Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before God.*

### **Church of Philadelphia –**

*(Revelation 3:8 NKJV) "I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name.*

### **Church of Laodiceans –**

*(Revelation 3:15 NKJV) "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot.  
(Revelation 3:16 NKJV) "So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.  
(Revelation 3:17 NKJV) "Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing'; and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked;*

James will close this subject out by saying;

*(James 2:26 NKJV) For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.*

Jesus would close every one of those letters with:

*(Revelation 2:11 NKJV) "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. ....*

## **Dead Faith – 2:14-18**

People with Dead Faith substitute words for deeds. They know correct vocabulary for prayer and testimony, and may even be able to quote a Scripture or two. But their walk does not measure up to their talk. They think their words are as good as works, what they have is only an intellectual experience. In his mind he knows the doctrine of salvation, but has never submitted himself and trusted Christ for salvation.

**(James 2:14 NKJV) What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him?**

### **The Question**

James asks the question, so that the hearer would consider, what is saving faith? What does saving faith look like?

Here's someone who professes faith, but there's no evidence of possessing faith. He talks a good talk. Isn't faith more than words? What about works? He's asking what constitutes true saving faith?

**(James 2:15 NKJV) If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, (James 2:16 NKJV) and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?**

**Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:**

*(Matthew 6:4 NKJV) "that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly*

### **Context of the Situation in Church**

2:15. The expression "brother or sister" has two implications. Christianity elevated the status of womanhood above that of the existing cultures. The needs of suffering women were recognized along with that of suffering men. It also emphasized the care believers should have for hurting members of the Christian community (Galatians 6:10).

2:16. The ill-clad and hungry brother or sister in James' illustration (2:15) seemed to make people uncomfortable if they had only a profession of faith. One of the group became the spokesman who tried to ease the embarrassment by urging the needy to leave the gathering rather than helping them. It was the common problem of not wanting to get involved.

"Depart in peace" was a customary Jewish parting expression. It had deep meaning when used sincerely, expressing a wish for total well-being. See Mark 5:34; Luke 7:50. When used as a formula for asking someone to leave it was hypocritical and in this case utterly heartless.

"Be ye warmed and filled" indicated an intentional decision not to do anything to provide help. It was expecting that someone else would respond to the need, making the destitute person responsible for finding such a generous person.

The change from the singular "one of you" to the plural "ye" indicates that the entire congregation was guilty of the action even though just one person was the spokesman.

"What doth it profit" indicates the uselessness of an empty profession of faith. When a selfish condition exists, the needy are not cared for, and the able but unwilling persons lose an opportunity to be a blessing and in turn to be blessed. See Psalm 112:9 with 2 Corinthians 9:6–11; Proverbs 19:17; 28:27. *Harris, R. W., ed. (1989). Hebrews–Jude (pp. 213–215). World Library Press.*

### **Letter to 7 Churches**

The letter to the 7 churches, I wonder if God wrote a letter to me today, what would it say.

### **James – Principle – Illustration**

James is great! He gives, first of all sort of a principle, and then he will illustrate the principle. Just like he gave you the principle that we are not to have respect of person. And then he illustrates it by saying, if a guy comes in loaded with rings, and so forth. And now he gives another principle of this business of faith.

### **Words can't Warm Them / Faith isn't In Word Only**

A person can't be warmed and filled by our words only, it takes action to make them warmed and filled. It takes me going to my closet to get a jacket for them; it takes me going to the cupboard to get them some soup and bread. Just words will still leave them cold and hungry. James is making the analogy that our faith must be backed by action, that it can't be in word only. We need to be Doers of the Word:

*(James 1:22 NKJV) But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.*

**(James 2:17 NKJV) Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.**

### **Spurgeon**

We believe that men are saved by faith alone, but not by a faith which is alone. They are saved by faith without works, but not by a faith which is without works. (Spurgeon)

### **Faith Shows Up – Shows Itself in Real Actions**

Jesus is the bread of life. You know what? You can hold up a loaf of bread to someone who's starving and say, "This is bread," and they can say, "I believe that. I know that. That is definitely bread." But until they eat and partake of the bread, they will continue to starve. The words in agreement are not enough to satisfy the necessity of the soul for salvation. You must take, eat the bread.

*John 6:35 (NKJV)<sup>35</sup> And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.*

Taste and see the Lord is Good:

*Psalm 34:8 (NKJV)* <sup>8</sup> *Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him!*

Real faith shows up in real life and that real life is going to look like something. Faith looks like something. It transitions. It transfers. It transacts something that's seeable, more than just hearable. Yes, we confess with our mouth the Lord Jesus, believe in our heart that God raised Him from the dead. We too shall be saved. Those words need to be spoken. But then there's a life that comes with it that proves that the living God has come up and taken residence in our very being as He promised that He would to all who would receive Him, that He would come and make a down payment. It'd be His very spirit inside of our very beings and you know what? People can argue it all they want. They can debate all they want. But I just have to say it is impossible for the living God to take up residence in someone's life and there be no difference. How could it possibly be God Himself, living in a person, living in us and yet we're not changed. The very word is we're told in Corinthians from glory to glory. It may be a slow process. But it's a process. It may be for some little steps. But it's steps nonetheless. He who began a good work will be faithful to complete it and I just hold that place. There's nothing being seen. There's no fruit that Jesus says to judge others by. May we first and foremost judge ourselves. Is their fruit that's evident of a life of salvation.

### **Charles Blondin**

And in verse 15 he tells us what true, saving faith looks like... "If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?" Your blessing was nothing but hollow words.

"Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead." In essence, real faith leaves tracks. A legitimate faith will leave an imprint. I'll act on what I believe.

Real faith - saving faith - the faith that gets you to heaven - is a commitment to the point of action! Charles Blondin was a famous acrobat. On June 30, 1859 he crossed Niagara Falls on a three inch rope - 1,100 feet across the falls and 160 feet above them. Over that summer Blondin did numerous stunts from the tightrope... he did a backwards somersault, crossed blindfolded, pushed a wheelbarrow across the rope, walked it on stilts, he crossed at night, he even cooked an omelet on a portable stove halfway across... But Charles Blondin's most amazing feat on the wire above Niagara Falls came on September 15, 1860. Before crossing that day, he turned to the crowd and asked, "Do you believe I can carry a man across the rope on my back?" The crowd roared, "Yes, we believe!" That's when Blondin asked for a volunteer... Yet of all the people who said they believed, none would climb on Blondin's back. Their talk was cheap.

Their lack of action betrayed their claim to faith.

Finally, one man stepped forward. The crowd didn't know it, but it was Blondin's manager, Harry Colcord. Harry had already tied his future to Blondin's daring, so why not go all out and trust him with his very life?

And this will be our reaction if we really trust Jesus. We'll climb on the Savior's back and let Him carry us. We'll tie every area of our life to Jesus. Real faith, saving faith, faith that gets you to heaven - is not a sideline faith. It's a faith that acts on what it believes.

**(James 2:18 NKJV) But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.**

### **Known by Fruit**

Jesus said you will know them by their fruit, he isn't talking about judging them, just examining them: *(Matthew 7:20 NKJV)* "Therefore by their fruits you will know them."

## **Way Beyond Feeding the Poor**

The test of faith here in this passage is in the context of not showing partiality (last study), but it goes way beyond that, it is this whole Epistle (see outline below), and how we are doing, applying faith (or not) in all these things of this mighty epistle on Faith (Real Faith Showing Up in Real Life):

### The Outline of the Book of James:

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- The Test of Response to the Word (1:19-27)

#### Chapter 2

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- The Test of Wisdom Applied (3:13-18)

#### Chapter 4

- The Test of the World's Influence (4:1-12)
- The Test of Dependence (4:13-5:6)

#### Chapter 5

- The Test of Endurance (5:7-12)
- The Test of Prayerfulness (5:13-20)

## **True Faith Produces a Changed Life / Don't be Deceived**

You can show your faith in the things that you do. They are a demonstration of your faith. If there is no evidence, if there is not demonstration of faith, then that kind of faith is to be sorely doubted. True faith, will produce a changed life. It will produce works of love, kindness, goodness. If a person said I am a Christian because I went forward at a Billy Graham Crusade, or raised my hand at a church, but they just continue to live the same life they lived before, James says you need to examine yourself for you may be deceiving yourself.

## **A Faith That Saves – Is Faith That Works**

It's true, faith is faith and works are works.

Don't turn faith into another work. You are made right with God not by what you do, but by what Jesus did, and your faith in His work. Salvation is by faith alone, but if you're really saved faith will never be alone...

It will be accompanied by works and loving action.

Some people point to a supposed contradiction between Paul and James. Especially in verse 24 where James says, "You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only." That seems opposed to Paul in Ephesians 2:8-9, "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast."

Martin Luther was so upset with the book of James he called it "a right strawy epistle..." He included it in the canon of Scripture, but failed to put it on the same level with the rest of the NT. It was strawy, not golden.

The so-called conflict between Paul and James clears up when you realize the vocation of the authors. Paul was a theologian. He was adept at breaking down abstract ideas. He deciphered steps and causes. James though was the son of a carpenter. He cared about the end result. The steps and procedures you followed while building a chair don't really matter if you end up with a handsome, sturdy piece of furniture.

And this is how these two men dealt with salvation.

Paul broke it down into cause and effect. Faith alone is the cause. Spiritual fruit and good works are results.

Whereas James had a more comprehensive view of salvation. He was so sure faith produced works, he saw salvation as a package deal. If a life didn't show good works, then it obviously didn't possess real faith.

Paul's letters are spiritual schematics. They break down the inner workings of faith. While James sees God's work as a building project. It's not over until the trim is finished, and the punch out list is complete. Paul x-rays the roots of faith... James eyeballs the fruits of faith... Paul says faith comes first and should never be confused with works. But James says works always follow faith. Works are the evidence of faith. Package them together and you see the complete picture... A faith that saves is a faith that works!

*Sandy Adams. (n.d.). James - Sandy Adams.*

### **Ephesians 2:8-10**

Ephesians 2-8-10, sums us for the three things God has done through saving faith, that works:

- v.8-9 – What God has done for us (saved by Grace)
- v.10 – What God has done in us (we are His Workmanship)
- v.10 – What God does through us (good works)

**Ephesians 2:8–10 (NKJV)** <sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is the gift of God,* <sup>9</sup> not of works, lest anyone should boast. <sup>10</sup> For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

### **Demonic Faith – 2:19**

James wanted to shock his readers, and he does. It comes to a shock to people that demons have faith. What do they believe, they believe that God exists, and they believe Jesus is God (Mark 3:11-12 & Mark 5:1-13). This faith is an intellectual faith, and it even has emotion along with it as we will see.

**(James 2:19 NKJV) You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe; and tremble!**

Faith is obviously more than an intellectual assent. Even the demons are orthodox in their doctrine. Just an agreement on the facts doesn't constitute real faith! Here's a side note, the demons "tremble." The word means "to bristle up." It's the idea of a hair-raising experience. A demon's faith in God doesn't save him, it scares him. He believes in God's judgment, and it causes the hair on the back of his neck to stand up.

### **The Words of the SHEMA**

James is banging on the Unbelieving Jews here a bit. The Jews would say what is called the "Shema" everyday, but they missed their Messiah:

*(Deuteronomy 6:4 NKJV) "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one!"*

### **Even the Demons Believe / Faith produces Righteousness**

James is saying that's great that you believe there is one God, even the demons believe that; in fact they go one step further - They tremble (they have emotion along with the knowledge)! So just to say you believe in God, doesn't save you. It is Demonic Faith for it is a lie straight from the pit of hell. Unless there is a changed life, there is no real evidence of salvation. There is no real evidence of faith. True faith will produce in your life, works of righteousness.

### **Works Don't Save**

Again, you are not saved by works of righteousness. People can do the work of righteousness and if they are trusting in those works of righteousness, they'll never be saved! You are saved by your faith in Jesus Christ, but a genuine faith in Jesus Christ, will produce works of righteousness in your life! You are not then looking to those for your salvation, but you're looking to them as the proof of your salvation:

*(Ephesians 2:8 NKJV) For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,*

*(Ephesians 2:9 NKJV) not of works, lest anyone should boast.*

### **My Life / Disobedience**

I make this point again, for this was my faith for 27 years of my life. I thought I was a good person, I went to church, I gave to the church, I never killed anyone. I said I believed in God, but besides a few crumbs here and there, there was no obedience to God. I lived as I chose, and mostly in rebellion to His Word: *(Titus 1:16 NKJV) They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work.*

*(1 John 2:3 NKJV) Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments.*

*(1 John 2:4 NKJV) He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.*

### **Dynamic Faith – 2:20-26**

Dynamic faith is faith that is real, faith that has power, faith that results in a changed life. Dynamic faith has the intellectual knowledge of God, attached with emotion, that is put into action.

James illustrates this dynamic faith in the lives of two well-known people of the Bible, Abraham and Rahab.

**(James 2:20 NKJV) But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?**

**(James 2:21 NKJV) Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar?**

**(James 2:22 NKJV) Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect?**

**(James 2:23 NKJV) And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And he was called the friend of God.**

**(James 2:24 NKJV) You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.**

**Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:**

*(Matthew 5:6 NKJV) Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled.*

Verse 2:22 Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? – James gives us the key to this whole passage, the works proved out Abraham's faith.

### **Genesis 15 / Paul Quoted Also**

Verse 23 - *Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness* - this passage (quoted from Genesis 15:6) is essential for understanding that it is faith that saves.

*(Genesis 15:6 NKJV) And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.*

Paul quoted this:

*(Romans 4:1 NKJV) What then shall we say that Abraham our father has found according to the flesh?*

*(Romans 4:2 NKJV) For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God.*

*(Romans 4:3 NKJV) For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness."*

*(Galatians 3:6 NKJV) just as Abraham "believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness."*

### **Abraham Righteous the Moment he Believed / 50 years Prior**

Abraham was declared righteous at that moment he believed God, not on Mount Moriah that day he was willing to offer Isaac. Abraham believed probably some 25 - 50 years before he went up to sacrifice Isaac. If you miss this point, then you will always be struggling with the faith and works argument:

### **Counted – Legal Term / Bankrupt / Justification**

The word "counted" is a legal or financial term; it means to "to put to one's account." As a sinner Abraham spiritual bankbook was empty, he was bankrupt! But he trusted God, and God put righteous on Abraham's account. Justification is an important doctrine in the Bible. Justification is the act of God whereby He declares the believing sinner righteous on the basis of Christ finished work on the cross. It is not a process but an act. It is not something a sinner does, it is something God does for the sinner when he trusts Christ. It is a once-for-all event. It never changes.

### **Transaction Completed / Withdrawals Being Made**

James is making the point, that you can tell that Abraham was justified, that the transaction (accounted) was completed, by his changed life. There was something in Abraham's account, in his check book, because he was making withdrawals from that account.

### **Ephesians 2:8-10**

Ephesians 2:8-10, sums us for the three things God has done through saving faith, that works:

- v.8-9 – What God has done for us (saved by Grace)
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**Ephesians 2:8-10 (NKJV)** <sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is the gift of God,* <sup>9</sup> not of works, lest anyone should boast. <sup>10</sup> For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

### **Mt Moriah Proved the Reality of Faith / Faith that Works**

Abraham by his works proved the reality of his faith. He proved God's work of grace took in his life. It is not **faith and works** that saves a person, but it is **faith that works**. All that Abraham did on Mount Moriah was prove what took place in his heart years earlier. Think about the day you gave your life to the Lord, what were you doing? You were looking at your own sin, and seeing a need for a Savior. You were not out doing any works, you were broken and humbled.

### **Faith Show in Your Works / True Faith Works / No Action without Faith**

Faith that is real faith will show up in your works. True faith works. No man will ever be moved to action without faith! And no man's faith is genuine, unless it moves him to action!

### **Faith – Do things World can't Understand / Doesn't Make Sense**

True faith will make you do things that people say are crazy. People must have asked Abraham, what were you thinking, why would you take your son up to Mount Moriah to plunge a knife through his heart? And Abraham would say God's Word and directing had been given, and I trusted He would work all things out, even raise Isaac from the dead if necessary. Abraham trusted God with what was most precious to him, Isaac; His faith took on action. That is when you know a person is saved, when they obey the Word of the Lord, and following the leading of the Lord, even when it doesn't make sense to them. Later on this would be proven to be a powerful picture of God sending His only Son to be offered as a sacrifice for the sins of the world.

**(James 2:25 NKJV) Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out another way?**

### **Story Rahab / Put Her Faith in Action**

God told Abraham that the iniquities of the Amorites were not full yet.

*(Genesis 15:16 NKJV) "But in the fourth generation they shall return here, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete."*

So God gave 400 years of grace for the people in the land to repent. Rahab had heard that this God of power, was also a God of love, a God so merciful, that He would accept her. And when it came time for God's judgement to come upon these people, he sent spies into the land, Rahab hid the spies of Israel. Rahab heard the word and was affected. Rahab responded with her mind and her emotions, but she also responded with her will, and she did something. She exercised Dynamic Faith. She proved her faith by her works, she hid the spies at the risk of her life, and she did not let her past (being a harlot) keep her from whom she knew God was (He was God, Mighty God, and a God who would receive her).

### **The Contrast / Rahab & Abraham**

James uses these two, and only these two for a specific reason. So that no one could deny that salvation was all the Lord. Abraham the great father of the Jews, Rahab was a harlot. Rahab risked life for her faith, Abraham risked his son. Abraham was called a friend of God, Rahab dwelled with the enemies of God. Abraham was a Jew, Rahab a Gentile, Abraham was a good man, Rahab was a bad girl, a harlot. Yet both were saved by faith, and that faith caused both of them to put that faith into action.

### **Not Just from Dead – but Ashes**

Abraham believed that God would raise Isaac not just from the dead, but from the ashes. Think about it. His body was going to be consumed. Here's the wood. Where's the fire? Here's the wood and the fire. Where's the sacrifice? Better said, he was going to be totally consumed by the fire after the sacrifice and yet Abraham believed that God would raise him out of the ashes. That's faith.

Isn't it interesting that God puts before us Abraham, the father of faith and Rahab, the harlot? He takes the best man and the worst woman in the Bible that we have and he holds them up both as trophies, pictures, illustrations of faith. Wow.

Our service to Christ animates our faith.

Rahab had greater faith than the children of Israel. When they came and knocked on her door, she was like, "We've been waiting for you. Where have you been? We've been watching you wander around that wilderness for all these years after knowing who your God is and the great defeats. What took you so long to get here?" Literally, she's saying, "I've been waiting for you." She had greater faith than they did in the God they claimed and the God she wanted. That's a beautiful picture. That's why she's in the lineage of Jesus Christ. That's an amazing thought and those buddies' past excludes them from coming to Christ today.

**(James 2:26 NKJV) For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.**

### **Death – Spirit Leaves Body**

Note the Bible's definition of death, it's when the spirit departs from the body. Once the spirit vacates, the body is an empty shell. It's dead.

### **Works brings Life to Faith / Abundant Life**

The Spirit enlivens the body, so works enlivens our faith. Faith with works is life, abundant life is what Jesus said:

*(John 10:10 NKJV) ..... I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly*

### **Ephesians 2:8-10**

Ephesians 2-8-10, sums us for the three things God has done through saving faith, that works:

- v.8-9 – What God has done for us (saved by Grace)
- v.10 – What God has done in us (we are His Workmanship)
- v.10 – What God does through us (good works)

**Ephesians 2:8-10 (NKJV)** <sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is the gift of God,* <sup>9</sup> not of works, lest anyone should boast. <sup>10</sup> For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

### **Works of Obedience / Works in Action / Only God can Tell You**

God demands our "works of obedience", we have covered that in the Test of the Word, and the Test of the Law. Obedience will set you free from the bondage's of sin so that you might have that abundant life of fellowshiping with your Creator. But your "works in action", only God can tell you those, therefore He must have your ear, he who has an ear, let him hear.

### **Abraham Saw**

Abraham was saved by his belief, but had he not put his faith in action, he would have missed out on seeing the preview of the greatest event that would happen in the history of man, God Himself sending His only Son to die for the sins of the world. God Himself becoming the Lamb. So too it is with you, let your faith lead you to action, and you will see and experience things that will make you fall deeper and deeper in love with your Savior. This sounds so simple, but it was so moving to me.

## Conclusion

The Test of Faith and Works, so how are we doing?

It isn't faith and works, but faith that works.

So, again, be ye doers of the Word and not hearers only, deceiving yourself. If you have faith, it will be demonstrated. And you can demonstrate that faith, and it is demonstrated in the works that do. It demonstrates that that faith is genuine and that you are genuinely saved in because you have the faith to be saved, is demonstrated in the works that you do. Doing the works without faith is invalid! Doing the works in order to save yourself will never make it! Looking to your works to save you, they can never do it!

But the faith that will save you, will bring forth fruit, the fruit of righteousness, in your life. Remember Jesus said, by their fruits, ye shall know them. What kind of fruit is my life producing? Is it the fruit of the flesh? The fruit that demonstrates the flesh is in control? Or is it the fruit of the Spirit, that demonstrates the Spirit is in control of my life?

Paul said, therefore, let a man examine himself, for if will judge ourselves, we will not be judged of God. It's important that our lives bear fruit! It proves your faith is genuine.

## If God Wrote a Letter about Me (or CCAAC)

The letter to the 7 churches, I wonder if God wrote a letter to me today, what would it say.

## Outline

James shows us 3 types of Faith, and points out that only one Saves:

- Dead Faith – 2:14-18
- Demonic Faith – 2:19
- Dynamic Faith – 2:20-26

## Prayer

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

*Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) <sup>12</sup> For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

## In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

*Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) <sup>16</sup> Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need*

## Chapter 3

**Passage:** James 3:1-12

**Title:** The Test of the Tongue

**Summary:** By just His words He (Jesus) spoke the universe into existence. Now in our study today He will tell us how we can use our tongue to build up, to create, to change things from darkness into light. Oh the power of the tongue!

*James 3:1–12 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment. <sup>2</sup> For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body. <sup>3</sup> Indeed, we put bits in horses' mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body. <sup>4</sup> Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires. <sup>5</sup> Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles! <sup>6</sup> And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell. <sup>7</sup> For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. <sup>8</sup> But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. <sup>9</sup> With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God. <sup>10</sup> Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so. <sup>11</sup> Does a spring send forth fresh water and bitter from the same opening? <sup>12</sup> Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Thus no spring yields both salt water and fresh.

### Joshua Chamberlain

Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain was an American college professor from Maine who volunteered during the American Civil War to join the Union Army.

Chamberlain's fame grew out of the Battle of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. On July 2, 1863 — the second day of the three-day campaign — the colonel's regiment had been ordered to occupy critical land between two hills, Big and Little Round Top. Their mission was to hold the far left flank of the Union line at all costs. If they didn't, the entire Union position was in jeopardy.

The Confederate soldiers knew that, too.

Soon after they got into a defensive position, the 20th was bombarded with attacks from the Confederacy's 15th and 47th Alabama regiments. They managed to fend off the enemy six times, but they were running low on ammunition.

Chamberlain knew the regiment wouldn't be able to withstand a seventh barrage, so he ordered the 20th Maine Infantry to go on the offensive. With bayonets drawn, the soldiers charged down Little Round Top, startling enemy forces so much that they were able to force the enemy back and capture hundreds.

Thanks to their charge, the Union's line, which had grown flimsy, was once again secure. A win at Gettysburg helped turn the tide of the war in the Union's favor.

### Joshua Chamberlain Quotes

One of things Chamberlain was known for, was his speech, to build and gather, rally and give courage to his soldiers under his command.

*But the cause for which we fought was higher; our thought wider... That thought was our power.*

*I knew I may die, but I also knew I would not die with a bullet in my back....in retreat. I am, at least, like the apostle Paul who wrote, "This one thing I do, I press towards the mark".*

### The Background

A decisive speech that made victory at Gettysburg had happened several days before.

- It's his fourth day on the job commanding the 20th Regiment of Infantry, Maine Volunteers. He is just a few short weeks from the Battle of Little Round Top, Gettysburg. After starting with 1,000 men he is down to 358 and anticipating the imminent arrival of additional troops. His aide awakens him and informs him that 120 additional troops from the 2nd Regiment of Maine have arrived. However, the troops are mutineers being delivered under Union guard because they are refusing to be reassigned. Because the troops are from Maine, Chamberlain has no choice but to accept them. In addition, he is told to force them into duty or shoot them.

His comments to the 120 mutineers are captured by Michael Useem in his book “The Leadership Moment” as quoted from Michael Shaara, “The Killer Angels” published in 1974. Below are his re-created comments from Michael Useem’s book, The Leadership Moment, p. 134.

*I don't know what I can do about it, I'll do what I can. I'll look into it as soon as possible. But there's nothing I can do today. We're moving out in a few minutes and we'll be marching all day and we may be in a big fight.*

*I've been told that if you don't come, I can shoot you. Well, you know I won't do that. Not Maine men..*

*Here's the situation. I've been ordered to take you along, and that's what I'm going to do. Under guard if necessary. But you can have your rifles if you want them. The whole Reb army is up the road a ways waiting for us and this is no time for an argument like this.*

*I tell you this: We sure can use you. We're down below half strength and we need you, no doubt of that..*

*This regiment was formed last fall, back in Maine....Some of us volunteered to fight for the Union. Some came in mainly because we were bored at home and this looked like it might be fun. Some came because we were afraid not to. Many of us came..because it was the right thing to do.*

*This is a different kind of army. If you look at history, you'll see men fight for pay, or women, or some other kind of loot. They fight for land, or because a king makes them, or just because they like killing. But we're here for something new...This hasn't happened much in the history of the world. We're an army going out to set other men free.*

*Here you can be something. Here's a place to build a home. It isn't the land – there's always more land. It's the idea that we all have value, you and me, we're worth something more than the dirt...What we're fighting for, in the end, is each other...*

*I think if we lose this fight the war will be over. So, if you choose to come with us, I'll be personally grateful. (Useem, 1998, p. 134).*

And so, most all but 6) of them joined Chamberlain. None of them were aware of the key battle just around the corner. They end up being a decisive factor in the victory, and the very Country we live in today. And..... it was by the power of the tongue,

### **The Power of the Tongue of God**

The power of the tongue of Jesus? By just His words He spoke the universe into existence. Now in our study today He will tell us how we can use our tongue to build up, to create, to change things from darkness into light!

**Hebrews 11:3 (NKJV)** <sup>3</sup> By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.

**Genesis 1:1–3 (NKJV)** <sup>1</sup> In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. <sup>2</sup> The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. <sup>3</sup> Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light.

### **Prayer**

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

**Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV)** <sup>12</sup> For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

### **In Every Study**

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

**Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV)** <sup>16</sup> Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need

### **Written by James / Didn't believe – to Leader / Hindsight / Everyday Living**

The Book of James was written by none other than Jesus' brother James. James was a leader in the church, a pillar in the church (Acts 21). James didn't believe that Jesus was God when He walked this earth (John 7:5); but after the

resurrection Jesus appears to him (1 Cor 15:4-7), and everything changed. James is going to write us this letter, he will talk about everyday practical stuff. He will talk about trials in life, our works, our tongue, prayer, and other things; as he writes these things, no doubt he will be remembering how Jesus handled them, reflecting back on watching situations, and watching his oldest brother. He will reflect on Jesus' life of love, and a life of sinlessness, in a world that can be so hateful at times, and so full of sin. James will write these things based on hindsight, based on first hand witnessing of how his older brother lived life, everyday. James watched Jesus handle everyday life, and that is what this book is about; it is about living everyday life as a Follower of God, in a fallen world.

### **Jesus Rubbed Off / Nature Illustrations / Favorite Teacher - Sermon on Mount**

We can see how much Jesus rubbed off on James, for James style resembles his brother so much. Like Jesus used nature as illustrations for His teaching points, so does James some 30 times. He uses nature analogies such as the sea, flowers, sun, fire, horses and ships to name a few). It is obvious who James favorite teacher was, because this epistle covers every topic that Jesus covered in the Sermon on the Mount. There is amazing parallelisms between the two; James does not actually quote the Lord's words, but he obviously had internalized Jesus' teachings and reproduced them with spiritual depth. Jesus covered about 30 topics in the Sermon on the Mount, and we will see that James touches on every one of them in this epistle. The Book of James is Sermon on the Mount 2. The Book is also very quick and concise, moving from thought-to-thought quickly. So the Book of James is the New Testament Version of the Old Testament Proverbs. It resembles Proverbs because it is very poetic the way it flows its thoughts using illustrations and analogies.

### **So We can Examine Self / How am I Doing**

Jesus gave the Sermon on the Mount so that we might examine ourselves and ask the question, "so how am I doing in each of these areas?" James writes to the church, to us, and as we read, we have to ask ourselves, "so how am I doing in these areas?" This book is practical and applicable for us living in the year 2022, and the ultimate goal of this epistle is giving to us in verse 4 of chapter 1, to bring us into maturity, perfect and lacking nothing.

As in school, we take tests to see how much of a handle and mastery we have on a subject, we will do the same in this book.

### **3 Key Verses**

Here are three key verses to get us going:

*James 2:20 (NKJV)*<sup>20</sup> *But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?*

*James 1:22 (NKJV)*<sup>22</sup> *But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.*

*James 1:4-5 (NKJV)*<sup>4</sup> *But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.* <sup>5</sup> *If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.*

### The Outline of the Book of James:

#### Chapter 1

- Introduction (1:1)
- The Test of Perseverance and Suffering (1:2-12)
- The Test of Blame in Temptation (1:12-18)
- The Test of Response to the Word (1:19-27)

#### Chapter 2

- The Test of Partiality (2:1-9)
- The Test of the Law (2:10-13)
- The Test of Faith and Works (2:14-26)

#### Chapter 3

- The Test of the Tongue (3:1-12)
- The Test of Wisdom Applied (3:13-18)

#### Chapter 4

- The Test of the World's Influence (4:1-12)
- The Test of Dependence (4:13-5:6)

#### Chapter 5

- The Test of Endurance (5:7-12)
- The Test of Prayerfulness (5:13-20)

## **Works & Words / But Words are Important**

In chapter 2, James stressed that mere words are not the issue. The proof of one's salvation is seen in works. Yet here in chapter 3, we'll see him plunge into a discussion about the tongue. Why? I suggest the reason is that, although it is true that it is our works and not our words that validate and verify our salvation, this does not mean words are not important in our spiritual life. The power of speech is one of the greatest powers God has given us. With the tongue man can praise God, pray to God, preach the Word of God, and lead a lost sinner to God. Yet with the same tongue a man can tell lies that ruin a man's reputation or break a person's heart. That takes us back to the theme of this book, the purpose of this book, that we might mature. In chapter 1 we were told to be Doers of the Word, and chapter 2 we saw that it is to be faith the works! Our words will affect our marriages, our families, and every relationship we have with another person. This study, this test, is vital to our Christian walk.

Mind you, James watched his big Brother Jesus, speak for a lifetime, and thus James very much is telling us how Jesus spoke (when others were blessing Him, when others were cursing Him, when others were gossiping and slandering, when other we friend on Sunday, and foe on Thursday), James watch and listened, and we are blessed to be given the specifics on how to use our tongue.

## **6 Pictures / Meaningful Classification**

In order to impress the importance of controlled speech, and the great consequences of our words, James gives us six pictures of the tongue; as a bit, as a rudder, as a fire, as an animal, a fountain, and as a tree. You can put these six pictures into three meaningful classifications that reveal the three powers of the tongue.

### Outline: The Test of the Tongue (3:1-12)

- Power to Direct: The Bit and Rudder - 3:1-5
- Power to Destroy: The Fire and Animal - 3:5-8
- Power to Delight: The Fountain and Tree - 3:9-12

## **Power to Direct: the Bit and Rudder - 3:1-5**

### **Symbol of Power – Controlled by Small thing / Never Underestimate Power of Words**

Our first two pictures of the tongue are a bit and a rudder. In those days horses were a symbol of power and strength. James is saying look at the powerful horse, so big, yet controlled by such a little thing - a bit. Look at huge ships, they are driven by fierce winds, but steered by such a small thing - a rudder. The bit and rudder have the power to direct, and James is making the analogy that the tongue effects the lives of others. Never underestimate the guidance you give by the words you speak, or do not speak.

**(James 3:1 NKJV) My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment.**

**(James 3:2 NKJV) For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body.**

**(James 3:3 NKJV) Indeed, we put bits in horses' mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body.**

**(James 3:4 NKJV) Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires.**

**(James 3:5 NKJV) Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. ....**

**(James 3:1 NKJV) My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment.**

## **Reproduce of It's Kind**

As we have studied, the seed is to reproduce to the same kind of the original. And so here we are, the word of God meant to replicate in us, the word of God that we speak as Christians. We represent him. I will go as far as to say, as Christians, as we are put out to be living epistles, we even speak for him. And so here our speech, the vitalness of it, the power of it, and hence why such a high degree of the calling that is before us in our passage today. Speaking of the tongue, I believe one of the most powerful

passages of the scriptures that is so much so powerfully overlooked, because it's hard for people to truly come and acknowledge every word that I say is measured, and every word that I say, as it replicated the image of Christ in my life, in my words, in my speech.

**James 1:18 (NKJV)** <sup>18</sup> Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.

**Genesis 1:11–12 (NKJV)** <sup>11</sup> Then God said, “Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth”; and it was so. <sup>12</sup> And the earth brought forth grass, the herb that yields seed according to its kind, and the tree that yields fruit, whose seed is in itself according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

### **Not Out of Context (Tongue & Teachers)**

It would seem almost out of context to talk about teachers in the stricter judgment but it's actually a tie-in purposefully that we see here as we weave these thoughts, these pearls together, here through the book of James. The tie in is direct, a warning. Don't become a teacher just because you're a gifted speaker, maybe a gifted orator, maybe a gifted communicator. It has to be a calling and it has to be a gifting as we read in Ephesians chapter four. And by all means, when the gifts have been given men, it needs to be used.

**Ephesians 4:11–16 (NKJV)** <sup>11</sup> And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, <sup>12</sup> for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, <sup>13</sup> till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; <sup>14</sup> that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, <sup>15</sup> but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—<sup>16</sup> from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

But the tie-in force is no one sitting here today would disagree with the statement that I make, that I must carefully study this word. I must sit before the Lord and prepare the vessel and then allow the vessel to be used by the Lord to speak and teach the word of the Lord,

- because marriages are on the line,
- because children are on the line,
- because addictions and the freedom from are on the line.
- because hearts are on the line,
- because death and hell are on the line,

All these things are on the line. And so every word that is to be spoken needs to be measured and it needs to be carefully thought through, and then carefully delivered that it reaches its mark like an arrow hitting the mark. A teacher must hit the bullseye. You cannot be happy with the American League baseball average of if you can bat 400, you're a great, great batter. No, you have to hit the bullseye. That means hit the mark. That means hit the heart so that lives can be changed, because it's the word of God that's living and powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword. It's the word of God in Romans 12 that transforms and changes people.

**Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV)** <sup>12</sup> For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

**Romans 12:1–2 (NKJV)** <sup>1</sup> I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. <sup>2</sup> And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

So again, the tie in is everyone would agree you need to measure your words and you can't just come and start speaking about what you feel like. You need to speak under the control of the Holy Spirit. You need to speak, that your words carry weight and your words matter. And that's what's being said here in our passage. Just as we would agree, a teacher needs to be careful and not careless with his words, they must hit the mark. Every one of us in every conversation, we represent Jesus Christ. We're a representation of him. And we have words that can be transforming. We can also have words that are destructive and deforming of relationships, of someone walking away feeling less and down. You never know the weight of your word. You might think that you were just speaking, but you don't know what's processing on the other side. That someone walks away and feel that they've been talked down to or critiqued or criticized, and they walk away and they're affected for life. And for you, for me, it was just a careless conversation. We really didn't even measure it. We must be careful with our words.

### Every Word (THINK before Speak):

- T – Is it Truthful
- H – Is it Helpful
- I – Is it Inspired
- N – Is it Necessary
- K – Is it Kind

### **A Person Discipline Tongue – Disciplined Life**

It's really simple and you'll see it, you'll agree with it, because you know when you know it, when see it or you are it. A person who has discipline over their tongue will have discipline over all the other areas of their life. And a person who has no discipline over their tongue, more times than not, they have no discipline over all the other areas of their life. And so there is a place here, the power of the tongue represented of the power that a person has over their whole being. What a passage we're studying today. And I pray that the Holy Spirit would stop us in our track and say this is more than just about speaking kind words. This is about godly Christian life inwardly and godly Christian life outwardly. And both are greatly affected. And our tongue, the control or lack of it, how the influence is and representation of who we truly are can be seen. And then we can say, Lord, I need help, or Thank you for your great power.

### Additional Notes on Teaching

#### **Impact of Teachers**

James begins his discussion by saying, "*let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment.*" Look at the influence and impact a teacher has in the lives of those they teach. Teachers are a gift to the church from God. We studied in Titus that God makes His Word clear to people through teaching/preaching:

*Ephesians 4:11–12 (NKJV)* <sup>11</sup> *And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,* <sup>12</sup> *for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,*

*(Titus 1:3 NKJV)* *but has in due time manifested His word through preaching, which was committed to me according to the commandment of God our Savior;*

#### **More Insight – More Accountability**

The more insight the teacher is given, the more accountability they have, they will have to give and account before God on every Word they said:

*(Hebrews 13:7 NKJV)* *Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of their conduct.....*

*(Hebrews 13:17 NKJV)* *Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.*

#### **Inevitable Offend / Sin in Multitude of Words**

Now, it is inevitable that sooner or later we will offend people with the words we say, the more a person says, the greater his chances of offending someone. I wish I could say that all of the problems teachers encounter is due to the powerful messages we bring and the conviction they cause in the hearts of people. But that's not the whole story—not by a long shot! You see, greater condemnation comes to teachers because in the multitude of words there lacketh not sin (Proverbs 10:19). We who are always speaking inevitably say things we wish we hadn't said or in a way we wish we hadn't said them:

*(Proverbs 10:19 NKJV)* *In the multitude of words sin is not lacking, But he who restrains his lips is wise.*

#### **Bema Seat / Judged for Every Word / Motive / Must Always be Prepared**

Thus, condemnation comes not only from other people, but from within our own hearts when we realize our inadequacy to communicate the Word properly. "Be careful," says James. "Don't be too eager to be a teacher, knowing that you'll receive greater condemnation from within and without than if you sat quietly in a pew, taking it all in." This isn't judgment in terms of salvation, but the "Bema Seat of Christ" (2 Cor 5:10) where he will reward us for our works here on earth. (Note: The judgment of the believer's works, not sins, is under discussion here. His sins have been atoned for and are remembered no more forever (Heb 10:17); but every work must come into judgment (Mat 12:36; Rom 14:10; Gal 6:7; Eph 6:8; Col 3:24 - 25). The result is reward or loss of the reward, but "He himself [the Christian] will be saved" (1 Cor 3:11 - 15). This judgment occurs at the return of Christ for His Church (1 Cor 4:5; 2 Tim 4:8; Rev 22:12). For

other judgments, see notes at Ezek 20:37; Mat 25:32; John 12:31; 1 Cor 11:31; Jude 6; Rev 20:12.). Teachers you are accountable for every word that you speak in the name of the Lord. We will be judged on the way we taught (in love or heavy-handed), our motive for wanting to teach (for mans applause or God's directing), and the content of what we taught (was it in spirit and truth). Teachers, we can never teach unprepared. James is making that point to us, be prepared before you teach so that you don't miss the mark, which may stumble or offend a brother.

### **Stay in Word / Stay in Book / How's the Bible Study / Teachers Here / Don't be Afraid**

That is why we need to stay in the word. I take consolation that I stay in this book. I will miss a verse here and there (I'm not perfect), but I stay in the book, and the Word speaks for itself. People ask me all the time, hey how's the church going. I say good for we study the Bible, and anytime you study the Bible it is a good thing. I make such a big point about this because there are so many of you that are here that teaches. It is a focus of our ministry. Probably over 50% of the people here teach, whether it be with the Youth Group, Children's Church, Assisted Living, or at home with your children, you guys teach - and Praise the Lord for that! May I note, we all get scared when we hear "judgement", but there is also rewards there, and we long to hear those words "well done", that is why we teach. Because we are becoming like Jesus and that makes us want to share His Word and love with others. Don't let the fear of making a mistake keep you from teaching. Remember Ephesians 4, you are a gift from God to the His Church. James is saying just make sure you are prepared to teach because the words from your tongue have a tremendous influence on those you teach. Just like steering a huge ship or powerful horse.

*(Matthew 25:21 NKJV) "His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'*

### **Being Lured / Never Go Beyond the Word / Giving a Piece of Jesus**

Be careful about being lured beyond God's Word, into the latest movements out there (Holy Laughter, etc). Never go beyond God's Word and you will be safe. Even days when you feel like that was a painful study, always remember, you just gave out a piece of God to the people, for God will never give Himself apart from His Word, for Jesus is the Word (John 1:1):

*(John 1:1 NKJV) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*

### **Represent Jesus / A Glimpse to Some**

You represent Jesus Christ, for some you are the glimpse of God to the people. We must never misrepresent Him. Remember Moses at the Rock

*Numbers 20:11-12 (NKJV) <sup>11</sup> Then Moses lifted his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod; and water came out abundantly, and the congregation and their animals drank. <sup>12</sup> Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not believe Me, to hallow Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them."*

*(Leviticus 10:3 NKJV) And Moses said to Aaron, "This is what the LORD spoke, saying: 'By those who come near Me I must be regarded as holy; And before all the people I must be glorified.' " So Aaron held his peace.*

### **Bad Teachers / The Fall of a Teacher**

When bad teachers come into the church, or people come in from a church of errant teaching, then that requires that all that errant teaching be corrected. The people are going back to zero, or fighting to get to zero, before they can grow in maturity. The fall of a teacher makes us feel greatly violated, for we put so much trust in them and then find that they didn't live the word they preached.

### **Good Bereans / Not a Challenge**

That is why we must be "Good Bereans"

*Acts 17:10-11 (NKJV) <sup>10</sup> Then the brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea. When they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. <sup>11</sup> These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.*

Don't ever feel like you can't approach me and ask me about a something I said. Don't think that I will be offended or feel challenged. That is what you are supposed to do, Acts 17:11. It blesses me that you are searching the Scriptures and thinking these things through for yourself. If I can't answer you on the spot, I will always get back to you, and many times I'll be giving you a homework assignment to read something, then come back and talk to me, that is discipleship.

**(James 3:2 NKJV) For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body.**

If you are not offensive with your mouth, then you are a mature person. Will the tongue direct you, or will you direct the tongue.

**Quotes:**

One of the first things that happens when a man is really filled with the Spirit is not that he speaks with tongues, but that he learns to hold the one tongue he already has. - J. Sidlow Baxter

The great test of a man's character is his tongue. - Oswald Chambers

**(James 3:3 NKJV) Indeed, we put bits in horses' mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body.**

**(James 3:4 NKJV) Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires.**

**(James 3:5 NKJV) Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. ....**

**Small In Themselves – Yet Powerful**

James presents two items that are small of themselves, yet exercise great power, just like the tongue. A small bit enables the rider to control the great horse, and a small rudder enables the pilot to steer the huge ship. The tongue is a small member in the body, and yet it has the power to accomplish great things.

**Words Direct / A Word in Season**

The words we speak affect the lives of others. How important it is that our tongues direct people in the right way. You have no idea what the right word, at the right time, does for a person who is hurting or discouraging. Maybe it is a dry season, a time of confusion, a point of quitting, and you come with a Scripture verse, or just a word of encouragement from the heart, and then everything changes. A simple hello, a thank you, a how are you doing, or you really bless me. You people bless me, you really do, I just want to say that so that you hear that from me:

*(Isaiah 50:4 NKJV) "The Lord GOD has given Me The tongue of the learned, That I should know how to speak A word in season to him who is weary. He awakens Me morning by morning, He awakens My ear To hear as the learned.*

*(Proverbs 15:4 NKJV) A wholesome tongue is a tree of life, But perverseness in it breaks the spirit.*

**DL Moody**

On April 21, 1855, Edward Kimbel went into a Boston shoe store and led young Dwight L. Moody to Christ. The result was one of the greatest evangelists that ever walked this earth. The tongue has the power to direct others lives that can affect the whole world.

**Power to Destroy: the Fire and Animal - 3:5-8**

**Tongue can be Wild / Just a Spark**

The tongue also has the power to destroy. James likens our tongue to a fire and an animal. Our tongue can be wild at times as a wild animal, and our tongue can be a spark that turns into a raging fire.

**(James 3:5 NKJV) Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles!**

**(James 3:6 NKJV) And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell.**

**(James 3:7 NKJV) For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind.**

**(James 3:8 NKJV) But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.**

### **Just a Spark / Chicago Fire**

It is only about 10 ounces of flesh, yet the tongue is capable of massive destruction. A fire can begin with just a small spark, but it can grow to destroy a city. On October 8, 1871, a fire started in a small barn in Chicago, by the time the fire was put out 100,000 people were left homeless, 17,500 buildings were destroyed, 300 people died, and 400 million dollars in damage. Just from one barn fire.

### **Repairing Damage / Heated Moments / Tempers Flare**

Our words start fire. We spend so much time repairing the damage the tongue has caused from gossip, hurting words in marriage, digging up the past, all to purposely hurt someone. Once the fire is lit, it is hard to put it out. It is in that "heated moment" of an argument or confrontation, that the tongue lets loose, and the words can never be returned. Then the pain and the hurt cuts and burns to the heart. Then later in the evening, when everything has cooled down, you your mind goes over everything you said, and everything said to you. The fire has been set. Run with the bucket of forgiveness, ask for forgiveness that the fire may go out. But many times, we know it is only the beginning.

### **Quotes:**

Some men's tongues bite more than their teeth. - Charles Spurgeon

People with sharp tongues often end up cutting their own throats. - Anonymous

People who can hold their tongues rarely have any trouble holding their friends. - Anonymous

### **Gossip / Nicaragua**

Then there is gossip, those of you going to Nicaragua will see a big sign with the word gossip on it, encircled with the line through it. It is that important to Pastor Dean, it has been that damaging, that he had to paint that on the wall, We can burn a brother or sister so subtly in the name of a sharing a concern, a prayer request, or giving background information - It is gossip. Gossip is the purposeful sharing of information, knowing that it will make the other person look bad. Gossip destroys people and even churches, we cannot have it. It must be crushed in its tracks, extinguished before the fire gets a chance to consume. I might note here that the truth can also be gossip if it is used to hurt or tear someone down. Someone may be struggling with this or that, that is the truth, but sharing it with others will do nothing to help them.

### **Gossip Here in this Church / No Wood – No Fire**

For those who like gossip, you won't like it here. For all that come into the church they have to know that whatever they share from their heart about what is going on in their lives, that it is safe, and it won't be spread throughout the body.

If you don't respond when someone is burning someone else, then the conversation flames out. The is true when they attack you:

*(Proverbs 26:20 NKJV) Where there is no wood, the fire goes out; And where there is no talebearer, strife ceases.*

For where there is no wood there is no fire. What do you do when someone starts to burn someone else or you, you can let the conversation end by not responding. Fire spreads, and the more fuel you give it, the faster and farther it will spread. Give it no fuel and it goes nowhere.

### **Why So Much Talk on Gossip / People get Hurt / Preconceived Ideas**

Why am I talking about this so much? Because people get hurt, you get hurt. If people are talking negatively about me, then when a person meets me for the first time, they have all these preconceived ideas about me already, I have become to that person, what they said I was, before they even met me.

In the book, Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire, Jim Cymbala writes about the importance of Christians holding each other accountable as they grow together in Christ:

About 20 years ago, I said something impromptu to the new members standing in a row across the front of the church.

As we received them, the Holy Spirit prompted me to add, "And now, I charge you that if you ever hear another member speak an unkind word of criticism or slander against anyone—myself, an usher, a choir member, or anyone else—that you stop that person in mid-sentence and say, 'Excuse me—who hurt you? Who ignored you? Who slighted you? Was it Pastor Cymbala? Let's go to his office right now. He'll apologize to you, and then we'll pray together so God can restore peace to this body. But we won't let you talk critically about people who aren't present to defend themselves.'" He adds, "I'm serious about this. I want you to help resolve this kind of thing immediately. And know this: If you are ever the one doing the loose talking, we'll confront you."

Cymbala added, "To this day, every time we receive new members, I say much the same thing. That's because I know what most easily destroys churches. It's not crack cocaine, government oppression, or even lack of funds. Rather, it's gossip and slander that grieves the Holy Spirit."

### **Know This / It is in Their Heart / Faith & Works**

Know this, if someone will talk about someone else to you, you can guarantee that they will be talking about you when you are not there (probably to the person they just told you about), why, because it is in their heart, it is who they are, and out of the mouth proceeds the condition of the heart.

**Matthew 12:33–34 (NKJV)** <sup>33</sup> "Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by *its* fruit. <sup>34</sup> Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.

**(Luke 6:45 NKJV)** "A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

**Matthew 15:10–11 (NKJV)** <sup>10</sup> When He had called the multitude to Himself, He said to them, "Hear and understand: <sup>11</sup> Not what goes into the mouth defiles a man; but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man."

James spoke of faith that works, he spoke of faith without works is dead, he spoke these things so that we might examine ourselves, for our tongues pour out what is in our heart. Your tongue gives you away.

**(James 3:6 NKJV)** And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell.

### **The Dump**

Gahanna is the word used here for hell. At the time of this writing that is what they called the garbage dump that burned outside the city walls to the south of the city. Isn't that the way the tongue can be, like a continual burning garbage dump?

### **Hell – Heinous Things / Hitler**

The tongue is set on fire by hell. The heinous things of hell are set in motion by the tongue.

In WW2, it is estimated that 50 million people died, and all of it was fueled by the demonic infused man Adolf Hitler. Hitler wrote a book, that sold millions, called Mein Kampf ([my struggle], filled with anti-Semitic outpourings, worship of power, disdain for civil morality, and strategy for world domination. It became the bible of National Socialism). Here is my (un-exact estimate); the book is about 600 pages long, and thus on the average of 325 words per page, close to 200,000 words. Thus, for every word in the book, it cost the average of 250 lives.

All Satan needs was a willing tongue, and he can promote these things.

### **But Look at Great Things / Your Family / Assisted Living**

But look at the great things it can do. Look at what it has done through Billy Graham, your family, at the Assisted Living, your marriage. It has the power to do great things. Ephesians 4, all the gifts given to the church are through the tongue. God knows the power of the tongue as it is fueled by the Spirit.

**(James 3:7 NKJV)** For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind.

**(James 3:8 NKJV)** But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.

## **Shamu / Caged Lion**

The guy who tamed Shamu the Killer Whale at Sea World with his tongue, takes that same tongue and goes home and gets in an argument with his wife. He can tame a killer whale with it, but can't tame himself.

A caged lion can't hurt you, but once you let it out you're in trouble. Keep the tongue caged. You would never let a tiger loose in your home or Children's Church, but the unruly tongue will do the same.

## **Unruly / Poisonous / God can Tame**

Verse 8 - the tongue is Unruly: it is a restless evil, it just wants to get out there and shoot itself off.

Verse 8 - the tongue is Poisonous: used in reference to a virus or infection that would eat away at something. The deceptive thing about poison is that it usually works secretly and slowly. And then it kills. How many times has a malicious person injected a bit of poison into the conversation, hoping that it would spread and finally get to the person he or she wanted to hurt.

Verse 8 - But no man can tame the tongue - No man can, but God can.

Remember James is saying you need to show some evidence of the change God has made in your life. Is it Dead Faith, Demonic Faith, or is it Dynamic Faith. Your tongue will be one of your greatest indicators of your spiritual growth. Your tongue will define you.

## **Remember – Real Faith, Shows Up in Real Life**

### **Tongues of Fire - Peter**

That very same tongue that can burn someone down, can also "catch them on fire". Look at the fire that was kindled by Peter's tongue on the Day of Pentecost. It says tongues of fire fall upon them, and 3000 were saved that first day, and then we read a chapter later that 500 were saved:

*Acts 2:1-4 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. <sup>2</sup> And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. <sup>3</sup> Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. <sup>4</sup> And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

### **Power to Delight: the Fountain and Tree - 3:9-12**

#### **Life Giving / Build Up - Fruit**

James uses two more pictures for the tongue, a fountain and a tree. Water is life giving, and our words can give life. Water is cleansing and our words can refresh someone else and restore them. Trees are used to build structures and to provide shade, and produce body nourishing fruit, our words can build another up, comfort them, and nourish them. This is what Jesus has given us through His words:

Jesus said:

*(John 6:63 NKJV)* "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.

**(James 3:9 NKJV)** With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God.

**(James 3:10 NKJV)** Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so.

**(James 3:11 NKJV)** Does a spring send forth fresh water and bitter from the same opening?

**(James 3:12 NKJV)** Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Thus no spring yields both salt water and fresh.

James is saying what is true in nature should also be true in the human. Once we are born of the Spirit we should produce the things of the Spirit. But we know that doesn't happen overnight does it.

### **2 Sources in Us**

There are two sources going on in us, the flesh and the Spirit. That isn't the case with nature, they only have one source to deal with.

## People in My Life

Don't become a woodbin for someone else's fire. For where there is no wood there is no fire. Rather use your tongue for healing, for refreshing. Use your tongue for delight, let your tongue to bring forth grace, mercy, and truth – things that delight. There are certain people that I have in my life that when I know I am going to spend time with them I get excited, why, because I know their tongue, the words that will come from their mouth will refresh me, encourage me, and give me a fresh perspective on whatever is going on in my life at that time. However, there are those that I really don't look forward to seeing (and I'm talking Christians right here), that I just know I am going to be drained, sometimes even feel soiled, after spending time with them. Why because their whole conversation is destruction and tearing down of others, and never of delight, of building up.

## You've Grown / Still need Growth

Now, I examine myself, and I ask myself how about me? And in all honesty, I have to say I am not where I want to be. I look at this teaching from James and it brings me to the remembrance of you have a long way to go, but it also shows me, look how far you have come. Therefore, I can encourage you personally if you are struggling in this area, and I can tell you from personal experience that God is able. But I can also tell you don't ever settle and get comfortable in this area, for one slip, one spark, with the tongue can start a forest fire that can destroy.

## Be Thankful for the Battle

Be thankful that there is a battle going on. As Spurgeon said, "dead men don't wrestle." I never saw my tongue and temper as a problem (for I always thought it was the other person who the problem) until I got saved. But now that there is a new fountain flowing in me, a new source, I wrestle, and I am thankful of that, for dead man don't wrestle.

## Delight / Life

Again, James is a mini Book of Proverbs, and we see in Proverbs this picture of a fountain. We see the tongue has the power to bring life:

*(Proverbs 18:21 NKJV) Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit.*

*(Proverbs 10:11 NKJV) The mouth of the righteous is a well of life, But violence covers the mouth of the wicked.*

*(Proverbs 13:14 NKJV) The law of the wise is a fountain of life, To turn one away from the snares of death.*

## Give Tongue to God / Morning Time

No man can tame the tongue, but God can. Give God your tongue and your heart each day and ask Him to use your tongue as a blessing to Him and others. One reason our Lord was able to say the right word at the right time was because He communed with the Father and heard from heaven every day.

*(Mark 1:35 NKJV) Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed.*

Again, listen to what Jesus said was His source for the tongue:

*(Isaiah 50:4 NKJV) "The Lord GOD has given Me The tongue of the learned, That I should know how to speak A word in season to him who is weary. He awakens Me morning by morning, He awakens My ear To hear as the learned.*

## Recap

Outline: The Test of the Tongue (3:1-12)

- Power to Direct: The Bit and Rudder - 3:1-5
- Power to Destroy: The Fire and Animal - 3:5-8
- Power to Delight: The Fountain and Tree - 3:9-12

The Test of the Tongue, so how are we doing?

## Prayer

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

*Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) <sup>12</sup> For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

### **In Every Study**

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

*Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) <sup>16</sup> Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need*

**Passage:** James 3:13-18

**Title:** The Test of Wisdom Applied

**Summary:** In Chapter 2 James told us that real faith is a faith that works. But good works need to be accompanied by wisdom! You can do the right thing the wrong way, or at the wrong time – and you can undermine the good you're trying to do. In our study today we will look at "rightly applying wisdom"; another vital study for us as we seek to grow in our reflection of Him.

*James 3:13–18 (NKJV)* <sup>13</sup> Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom. <sup>14</sup> But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. <sup>15</sup> This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. <sup>16</sup> For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. <sup>17</sup> But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. <sup>18</sup> Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

### Exposed to the Son

Some years ago, on returning from a business trip, a man brought his wife some souvenirs. Among them was a Treasure Box that would glow in the dark. After giving it to her, he turned out the light, but the object was not visible. "This must be a joke!" she said. Disappointed, the husband commented, "I've been cheated!" Then his wife noticed some French words on the box. Taking it to a friend who knew the language, she was told that the directions read: "If you want me to shine at night, keep me in the sunlight all day." So she put her gift in a south window. That evening when she turned out the light, the Treasure Box had a brilliant glow. The surprised husband asked, "What did you do?" "Oh, I found the secret," she said. "Before it can shine in the dark, it must be exposed to the light."

Just as the Treasure Box, having been exposed to the sun, took on the nature of the sun and began to shine, so Christians should constantly expose themselves to the Son, that they may take on his nature and shine as lights in a dark world.

*Michael P. Green. (2000). 1500 illustrations for biblical preaching (p. 397). Baker Books.*

For we are firstfruit, and His Seed (Word) is designed to change us into His image, glory, ways, and will:

**James 1:18 (NKJV)** <sup>18</sup> Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.

*Genesis 1:11–12 (NKJV)* <sup>11</sup> Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth"; and it was so. <sup>12</sup> And the earth brought forth grass, the herb that yields seed according to its kind, and the tree that yields fruit, whose seed is in itself according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

### Prayer

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

**Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV)** <sup>12</sup> For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

### In Every Study

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
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**Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV)** <sup>16</sup> Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need

### Written by James / Didn't believe – to Leader / Hindsight / Everyday Living

The Book of James was written by none other than Jesus' brother James. James was a leader in the church, a pillar in the church (Acts 21). James didn't believe that Jesus was God when He walked this earth (John 7:5); but after the resurrection Jesus appears to him (1 Cor 15:4-7), and everything changed. James is going to write us this letter, he will talk about everyday practical stuff. He will talk about trials in life, our works, our tongue, prayer, and other things; as he writes these things, no doubt he will be remembering how Jesus handled them, reflecting back on watching

situations, and watching his oldest brother. He will reflect on Jesus' life of love, and a life of sinlessness, in a world that can be so hateful at times, and so full of sin. James will write these things based on hindsight, based on first hand witnessing of how his older brother lived life, everyday. James watched Jesus handle everyday life, and that is what this book is about; it is about living everyday life as a Follower of God, in a fallen world.

### **Jesus Rubbed Off / Nature Illustrations / Favorite Teacher - Sermon on Mount**

We can see how much Jesus rubbed off on James, for James style resembles his brother so much. Like Jesus used nature as illustrations for His teaching points, so does James some 30 times. He uses nature analogies such as the sea, flowers, sun, fire, horses and ships to name a few). It is obvious who James favorite teacher was, because this epistle covers every topic that Jesus covered in the Sermon on the Mount. There is amazing parallelisms between the two; James does not actually quote the Lord's words, but he obviously had internalized Jesus' teachings and reproduced them with spiritual depth. Jesus covered about 30 topics in the Sermon on the Mount, and we will see that James touches on every one of them in this epistle. The Book of James is Sermon on the Mount 2. The Book is also very quick and concise, moving from thought-to-thought quickly. So the Book of James is the New Testament Version of the Old Testament Proverbs. It resembles Proverbs because it is very poetic the way it flows its thoughts using illustrations and analogies.

### **So We can Examine Self / How am I Doing**

Jesus gave the Sermon on the Mount so that we might examine ourselves and ask the question, "so how am I doing in each of these areas?" James writes to the church, to us, and as we read, we have to ask ourselves, "so how am I doing in these areas?" This book is practical and applicable for us living in the year 2022, and the ultimate goal of this epistle is giving to us in verse 4 of chapter 1, to bring us into maturity, perfect and lacking nothing.

As in school, we take tests to see how much of a handle and mastery we have on a subject, we will do the same in this book.

### **3 Key Verses**

Here are three key verses to get us going:

*James 2:20 (NKJV) <sup>20</sup> But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?*

*James 1:22 (NKJV) <sup>22</sup> But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.*

*James 1:4-5 (NKJV) <sup>4</sup> But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. <sup>5</sup> If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.*

### The Outline of the Book of James:

#### Chapter 1

- Introduction (1:1)
- The Test of Perseverance and Suffering (1:2-12)
- The Test of Blame in Temptation (1:12-18)
- The Test of Response to the Word (1:19-27)

#### Chapter 2

- The Test of Partiality (2:1-9)
- The Test of the Law (2:10-13)
- The Test of Faith and Works (2:14-26)

#### Chapter 3

- The Test of the Tongue (3:1-12)
- The Test of Wisdom Applied (3:13-18)

#### Chapter 4

- The Test of the World's Influence (4:1-12)
- The Test of Dependence (4:13-5:6)

#### Chapter 5

- The Test of Endurance (5:7-12)
- The Test of Prayerfulness (5:13-20)

### **Works & Words / But Words are Important**

In chapter 2, James stressed that mere words are not the issue. The proof of one's salvation is seen in works. Yet here in chapter 3, we'll see him plunge into a discussion about the tongue. Why? I suggest the reason is that, although it is true that it is our works and not our words that validate and verify our

salvation, this does not mean words are not important in our spiritual life. The power of speech is one of the greatest powers God has given us. With the tongue man can praise God, pray to God, preach the Word of God, and lead a lost sinner to God. Yet with the same tongue a man can tell lies that ruin a man's reputation or break a person's heart with harsh words. That takes us back to the theme of this book, the purpose of this book, that we might mature. In chapter 1 we were told to be Doers of the Word, and chapter 2 we saw that it is to be Faith the Works! And here in chapter 3, watch our words. Our words will affect our marriages, our families, and every relationship we have with another person. This study, this test, is vital to our Christian walk, our spiritual growth.

### **Tests Tied Directly Together / Chapter 3 flows Together**

The Test of the Tongue is tied directly to the Test of Wisdom Applied. Chapter 3 just flows together, as it should, for it is only the Wisdom from above that can control our tongue. The outlines for these two tests are nearly identical, because they are nearly identical:

#### Outline: The Test of the Tongue (3:1-12)

- Power to Direct: the Bit and Rudder - 3:1-5
- Power to Destroy: the Fire and Animal - 3:5-8
- Power to Delight: the Fountain and Tree - 3:9-12

#### Outline: The Test of Wisdom Applied (3:13-18)

- Wisdom that Directs: 3:13
- Wisdom that Destroys: 3:14-16
- Wisdom that Delights: 3: 17-18

### **Wisdom Falls into 2 Categories Only**

The wisdom that directs us will fall into two categories, and two categories only, there is no gray area; it will be wisdom that destroys or wisdom that delights, and that will result in a tongue that destroys or a tongue that delights. Although the tongue is specific, it reflects my life in general. We will look at these verses specifically in terms of the tongue, and generally in terms of our lives.

Mind you – James watched his Brother Jesus, and he speaks from watching close to 30 years how his Brother, spoke, and spoke in wisdom – and now he shares what he learned by watching, so we too can walk and talk in wisdom. And, I might add, James watched the world, and saw their destruction and delight.

**(James 3:13 NKJV) Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom.**

**(James 3:14 NKJV) But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth.**

**(James 3:15 NKJV) This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic.**

**(James 3:16 NKJV) For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.**

**(James 3:17 NKJV) But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.**

**(James 3:18 NKJV) Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.**

### **Wisdom that Directs: 3:13**

**(James 3:13 NKJV) Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom.**

#### **What is Meekness**

Meekness, means “power under control”, it carries itself in the sense of “gentleness”. So we see the calling that wisdom, carries itself as gentle. I like the adjective form, as it conveys “gentle, of a soothing disposition”. Jesus had the power of the universe at His disposal, yet we see Him carrying Himself in gentleness and humility.

*Here is the word as used as an adjective: praus or praos (πραῦς, 4239) denotes "gentle, mild, meek"; for its significance see the corresponding noun, below. B. Christ uses it of His own disposition, Matt. 11:29; He gives it in the third of His Beatitudes, 5:5; it is said of Him as the King Messiah, 21:5, from Zech. 9:9; it is an adornment of the Christian profession, 1 Pet. 3:4. ¶ Cf. epios, "gentle, of a soothing disposition," 1 Thess. 2:7; 2 Tim. 2:24. ¶*

*Vine, W. E., Unger, M. F., & White, W., Jr. (1996). In Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words (Vol. 2, p. 401). T. Nelson.*

In the four Gospel accounts given to us in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—eighty-nine chapters of biblical text—there's only one place where Jesus tells us about his own heart, and it is Matthew 11:29 (for I am gentle and lowly in heart):

*Matthew 11:28–30 (NKJV)*<sup>28</sup> *Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* <sup>29</sup> *Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.* <sup>30</sup> *For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."*

*Matthew 5:5 (NKJV)*<sup>5</sup> *Blessed are the meek, For they shall inherit the earth.*

*Matthew 21:5 (NKJV)*<sup>5</sup> *"Tell the daughter of Zion, 'Behold, your King is coming to you, Lowly, and sitting on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey.'*"

*1 Thessalonians 2:7 (NKJV)*<sup>7</sup> *But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing mother cherishes her own children.*

So, by looking at Jesus we have baseline to hold how we should be carrying ourselves in our conversations and dealings with one another and our personal decisions we make in life.

### **Balanced**

Although Jesus was gentle, lowly, humble – there was and is times He needed to make the whip to protect His Sheep. But it was always in the balance of what we will read next. I think Christians and the Church can go too far and exchange truth for compromise. Jesus lived the perfect balance, and our passage today gives the "filter/checklist" on how to sort through why we do what we do, and how we do it.

Jesus gentle and lowly, but as nursing mother protecting the sheep (same Spirit given to Apostle Paul – see 1 Thess 2:7). We are to live peaceably if at all possible, and if the day comes that we can't it can only come after running through our passage before us today:

*Romans 12:18–21 (NKJV)*<sup>18</sup> *If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.* <sup>19</sup> *Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord.* <sup>20</sup> *Therefore "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head."* <sup>21</sup> *Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.*

*John 2:15–17 (NKJV)*<sup>15</sup> *When He had made a whip of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the changers' money and overturned the tables.* <sup>16</sup> *And He said to those who sold doves, "Take these things away! Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise!"* <sup>17</sup> *Then His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for Your house has eaten Me up."*

I had a squirrel take residence in my deck. I tried to rid the squirrel with 50 bucks of nonlethal ways, all to no avail. At times it would charge me as I would stand over its home. I thought it rabid, until I "heard them", the purr of newborn babies, then I realized I was dealing with a mother.... And I went from war with the little critter, to protecting the little critter, because I was in such respect of the heart of that mother willing to fight me to protect her babies. Small picture of our Lord, yet a good one for me.

### **Wisdom Directs Everything / Abundant Life – Wash Cycle / Life Today**

My source for wisdom will direct my thoughts, my tongue, and my actions.

- *Wisdom is knowledge applied.*

*First, a word about wisdom. What is it? We must not confuse it with knowledge. Knowledge is information; wisdom is application. Knowledge is comprehending facts; wisdom is handling life. Knowledge is theoretical; wisdom is practical.*

*Ellsworth, R. (2009). Opening up James (p. 27). Day One Publications.*

Even the most "mature, aged, seasoned" Christians can make the mistake that "their biblical knowledge", equates to "spiritual wisdom". It simply is not so. We must learn the word of God (knowledge), and equally so ask the Lord "how to apply that knowledge" (wisdom), in every situation.

Spurgeon puts it a little sharper, it seems we can ready his passion into the point:

- Wisdom is the right use of knowledge. To know is not to be wise ... There is no fool so great as a knowing fool. But to know how to use knowledge is to have wisdom. (Charles Haddon Spurgeon)

*Manser, M., ed. (2016). Christian Quotations. Martin Manser.*

RC Sproul gives a good summary:

- One can have knowledge without having wisdom, but one cannot have wisdom without having knowledge. (R.C. Sproul)

*Water, M. (2000). The new encyclopedia of Christian quotations (p. 1120). John Hunt Publishers Ltd.*

Wisdom is taking all the things I have learned and applying them to my life. It will determine if I live the “abundant” life Jesus spoke of in John 10:10. Or the “Romans 7 Wash Cycle” as I call it. I’m up and I’m down, I succeed and then I fail (Romans 7:15). Wisdom takes the knowledge I have learned and puts it into action in my life so I might live the abundant Christian life that Jesus so desires for me. Jesus didn’t just die for my salvation upon death, but he died so that I might live here and now. There are too many people alive today who are not living:

*(John 10:10 NKJV) "The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.*

*Romans 7:15–25 (NKJV) <sup>15</sup> For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do. <sup>16</sup> If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that it is good. <sup>17</sup> But now, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. <sup>18</sup> For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. <sup>19</sup> For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice. <sup>20</sup> Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. <sup>21</sup> I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. <sup>22</sup> For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. <sup>23</sup> But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. <sup>24</sup> O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? <sup>25</sup> I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.*

### **Who is Wise / Demonstrate It**

Who is the one who has true wisdom and knowledge? He said, let him show (demonstrate or show it) out of a good conduct/conversation of his works. Let him demonstrate it or show it out of his manner of living. Let it be demonstrated! True wisdom has one of its characteristics of meekness. It doesn’t boast! It doesn’t parade itself! It is always concerned with the others well-being. True Wisdom just does it, it isn’t looking for recognition.

### **True Wisdom – False Wisdom / Destined to Fail**

True wisdom comes from above, but false wisdom comes from below. In other words,

- there is a “heavenly wisdom” that comes from God,
- and there is a “man made wisdom” that does not come from God.

Whatever does not come from God is destined to fail, no matter how successful it may seem at the time.

### **Examples of Man’s Wisdom / Babel – Hagar - Loaves**

The Bible contains many examples of the folly of man’s wisdom.

- The building of the Tower of Babel seemed like a wise enterprise, but it ended in failure and confusion (Genesis 11:1-9).
- It seemed wise for Abraham to take his handmaiden Hagar to bear a child, but that ended in heartache and suffering (Genesis 16) and the pains of that wisdom are still seen today in the Mid-East turmoil.
- The disciples thought it wise to dismiss the great crowd and let them find their own food; but Jesus took a few loaves and fishes and demonstrated the power and glory of God (Mark 6).

### **Determines My Life**

\*\*\*\*\*Where my wisdom comes from, which wisdom I apply to my life will determine my life.\*\*\*\*\*

### **God – Wisdom World**

I’m always interested in what God thinks of something. God says the wisdom of this world is foolishness, and comes to nothingness:

**(1 Corinthians 1:19–21 (NKJV)** <sup>19</sup> For it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, And bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent." <sup>20</sup> Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? <sup>21</sup> For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.

### **God – His Wisdom**

But God says His wisdom is mighty and nothing is stronger:

**1 Corinthians 1:22–25 (NKJV)** <sup>22</sup> For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; <sup>23</sup> but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, <sup>24</sup> but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. <sup>25</sup> Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

### **How do I get Wisdom**

Before we even get going into this study it is important to know "How do I get this wisdom"? James makes it so clear and easy, just ask the Father:

**James 1:4–5 (NKJV)** <sup>4</sup> But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. <sup>5</sup> If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

### **Now the Contrast / Context of Tongue**

Now James is going to show the contrast of these two wisdom's, and we see also it is in the context of the use of the tongue. That is why the outline is the same as the outline we had for the tongue. Wisdom, like the tongue, directs, and it will direct unto destruction or delight.

#### Outline: The Test of the Tongue (3:1-12)

- Power to Direct: the Bit and Rudder - 3:1-5
- Power to Destroy: the Fire and Animal - 3:5-8
- Power to Delight: the Fountain and Tree - 3:9-12

#### Outline: The Test of Wisdom Applied (3:13-18)

- Wisdom that Directs: 3:13
- Wisdom that Destroys: 3:14-16
- Wisdom that Delights: 3: 17-18

### **The Grid for Every Conversation - Action**

I have these verses underlined because it is a grid (rule of thumb) through which I can run any conversation, teaching, or any word of instruction, and action for my life. If there is envy and strife, tension and confusion in what I hear, then I know it's from hell. But if there is purity and peace, righteousness and mercy in what I hear, I embrace it as being from the Lord.

### **Why So much Time / Stamp these Verses / As a man Thinks**

Why have we spent so much time on this subject, of the tongue, our conversation, our actions? First because it is right here in the verse-by-verse so we know it is God's perfect timing for all of us. But also, because these next 5 verses are life to any marriage, to any family, and to any church. If every believer could just stamp these verses on their mind, pull out these verses before every conversation, action, or thought, then the church and family would be ever so different. I say thought because as a man thinks, therefore he is. We must take every thought into captivity, so it doesn't take us into captivity:

**(Proverbs 23:7 NKJV)** For as he thinks in his heart, so is he.....

### **Marriages- Ministries / Memorization / Not a Favorite Study – But Written to Examine Ourselves**

I have watched it over and over in relationships, ministries, churches, mission trips, of ministries and relationships dying from within, and nobody can see the problem. We always have to be examining ourselves and asking why am I doing what I am doing, or saying what I am saying. Remember this book was written so that we might examine ourselves. These verses are vital for memorization. I know these types of studies are never a favorite. I notice that when we study passages like these, no one ever says to me, wow that was awesome, you could really feel the Spirit moving. I'd much rather be teaching a passage of God's grace and love, but these passages, these studies are ever so vital for our Christian maturity. We must ask the Lord to search us and show us what is in our heart.

So.....

## **Wisdom that Destroys: 3:14-16**

Wisdom that Destroys: My tongue specific, my life in general.

**(James 3:14 NKJV) But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth.**

**(James 3:15 NKJV) This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic.**

**(James 3:16 NKJV) For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.**

True wisdom doesn't lead to envying and strife, but confusion and troubles – evils.

### **In Your Heart**

Verse 14 - But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts - Again come to terms with the fact that if your words are bitter, then it is because your heart is bitter:

*Matthew 12:33-34 (NKJV)* <sup>33</sup> "Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by its fruit. <sup>34</sup> Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.

*Matthew 15:17-19 (NKJV)* <sup>17</sup> Do you not yet understand that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and is eliminated? <sup>18</sup> But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man. <sup>19</sup> For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.

### **Out of My Mouth / Someone Else / Not of the Lord / Grid of the Heart**

If I open my mouth and any of these things come out of mouth, or if any of these things are stirring in my heart and thoughts, (bitter envy, self-seeking) then I know they are being energized by Satan. If someone opens their mouth and these things come out, then I know they are being energized by Satan. Then I know, this is not of the Lord, this is not where I am supposed to be. I can quickly gauge every conversation or action in my life based on these verses, they are a perfect grid to examine the heart.

Verse 14 – do not boast and lie against the truth - Anyone who shows bitter envy and self-seeking should not deceive anyone—especially themselves—about how wise they are. (Guzik)

### **3 Sources / Ephesians**

Notice the three sources here:

Verse 15 - This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic.

These are the three agents at work against, these are the three agents that we must battle every day.

We studied this in Ephesians 2:

*Ephesians 2:1-3 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, <sup>2</sup> in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, <sup>3</sup> among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.

### **Definitions**

- Earthly - The World: man's philosophies that are void of God's moral standard and Laws. Having this life only in view.
- Sensual – The Flesh: our flesh wanting to be satisfied
- Demonic – Satan, the prince and power of the air trying to energize to submit to these agents that want to destroy us.

### **Easy to be Drawn In / See it all Around Us / FM 66.6**

It is so easy to be drawn into these things. We see it in the world every turn we make. Reality shows that are filled with man's wisdom and the works of the flesh – me, my way, I. Our old nature is always ready to feed off these things. And then there is Satan, he has his radio station FM 66.6, and for 24/7 he is sending the signal out, saying receive ye these things. Anyone, who is tuned into his station, receives his signal, and the battle is on.

## The Outcome

The outcome, bitter envy, self-seeking, confusion, and every evil thing:

### Bitter / Undrinkable Water

Bitter – Greek term for undrinkable water. I have been served this drink many a times, and have served it many a times. God help me to change the menu.

### Envy

Envy – a harsh resentful attitude, a greedy or prideful longing for something that belongs to another.

### Self-seeking / Selfish Ambitions / Politics / 7 Things / Rom 14

Self-seeking – also translated “strife”. It is selfish ambition, for personal gain, regardless of the expense to others. The Greek word was used to describe someone who had entered politics for selfish reasons and sought to achieve his agenda at any cost (even if it meant trampling on others). This is very applicable in the area of gossip, gossip is the tearing down of others to build up oneself. Self-seeking causes divisions in the church and relationships. Proverbs and Romans have some clear words on God’s position on these things. The combination of the three and how they come together for the harm or destruction of another. God says it is wrong, even if it is true. God says don’t judge my servant, for I will deal with him, I will take care of him:

*Proverbs 6:16–19 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> *These six things the LORD hates, Yes, seven are an abomination to Him: <sup>17</sup> A proud look, A lying tongue, Hands that shed innocent blood, <sup>18</sup> A heart that devises wicked plans, Feet that are swift in running to evil, <sup>19</sup> A false witness who speaks lies, **And one who sows discord among brethren.***

*Romans 13:10–14 (NKJV)* <sup>10</sup> *Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law. <sup>11</sup> And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. <sup>12</sup> The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. <sup>13</sup> Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. <sup>14</sup> But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.*

*Romans 14:1–4 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> *Receive one who is weak in the faith, but not to disputes over doubtful things. <sup>2</sup> For one believes he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats only vegetables. <sup>3</sup> Let not him who eats despise him who does not eat, and let not him who does not eat judge him who eats; for God has received him. <sup>4</sup> **Who are you to judge another’s servant? To his own master he stands or falls. Indeed, he will be made to stand, for God is able to make him stand.***

### Confusion, and Every evil thing / It will Fail

Confusion, and every evil thing - The outcome of these things will be confusion and result in evilness. Evil here means “worthless”. Man’s wisdom energized by Satan causes confusion and chaos in our lives and the lives of others, and it ends in things that are worthless. Christian, even if it makes sense it is not going to work, it will fail.

### Win-Win

God’s wisdom and earthly wisdom differs. Earthly wisdom divides, and pits people against one another. Its envious, self-seeking, and egotistical. Earthly wisdom creates factions and friction. Man’s wisdom is always a win - lose deal. Someone ends up on the top, and someone ends up on the bottom. Whereas, God’s wisdom is a win - win proposition. Both parties benefit from the proposal, or the solution. (Sandy Adams)

### 3 R’s

It is back to the three R’s: Recognize, Resist, and Rejoice.

1. We must recognize this wisdom that destroys, that it comes from the world, the flesh, and Satan.
2. Then we must resist it, we can not let it into our mind so that it may start working within us, energized by Satan.
3. Then we can rejoice for we did not allow it to destroy us or others.

### Check the Grid / the Blessings

Ohh that we might check this grid, this rule of thumb, every time we are faced with an attack, or making a decision for an action to take, or getting to unleash the tongue, and our thought life. Your marriage will be blessed, your family will be blessed, your ministry will be blessed, and most importantly – God will be blessed. He would say, well done my child, you have grown so much, you are becoming just like Jesus.

You are a man/woman of integrity, and that blesses me. That Delights me. Christian grab on to these things, take this study straight into your heart.

### **Wisdom that Delights: 3: 17-18**

My tongue specific, my life in general.

**(James 3:17 NKJV) But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.**

**(James 3:18 NKJV) Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.**

### **God's Wisdom - Unity**

Man's wisdom looks out for self-interest. God's wisdom looks beyond selfishness to what brings harmony and unity. (Adams)

### **Back to Chp 1 / Good & Perfect**

The wisdom from above, from the Lord. This takes me back to chapter 1:

*(James 1:17 NKJV) Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.*

### **Good things will Result / Apply Them**

Everything that comes from the Lord is good, it is perfect, it is Wisdom that Delights. Look at God's wisdom, look at what comes from Him to us. Apply these things to every conversation in your marriage, in your family, in your workplace, in the church, and not only imagine, but know the good things that will result. The Wisdom from Above is a mirror of the Sermon on the Mount.

The wisdom from above is:

### **Pure / undefiled / Clean to Enjoy / Wisdom Below Drains Life**

*Pure* – means free from defilement. I am clean, I am free to enjoy my relationship with the Lord and not have guilt or shame about the things I have said or did. The Wisdom that Destroys, leaves me dirty. I walk away after I let my tongue loose on someone, or entered into gossip, and I feel defiled, dirty, for the Holy Spirit is convicting me. The wisdom from below sucks the life right out of me.

**Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:**

*(Matthew 5:8 NKJV) Blessed are the pure in heart, For they shall see God.*

### **Peaceable / Peace with Fellow Man / Wisdom Below cause Wars**

*then peaceable* – Purity and Holiness lead me to peace with God and peace with my fellow man.

Whether that be my wife, child, brother in the Lord, or unsaved neighbor or co-worker. The wisdom from below causes competition, rivalry, and wars (as we will see in chapter 4).

**Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:**

*(Matthew 5:9 NKJV) Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God.*

### **Gentle / Sweet Reasonableness / No Compromise / Not Revile Back**

*Gentle* – gentleness has been called “sweet reasonableness”. It carries the meaning of moderation without compromise. The gentle person does not cause fights, but nor does he compromise the truth in order to keep peace. A gentle person will take all kinds of mistreatment (like Jesus did) without reviling back, seeking revenge, getting the last word in, without hatred in his heart.

**Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:**

*Matthew 5:10–11 (NKJV) <sup>10</sup> Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. <sup>11</sup> "Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake.*

### **Willing to Yield / Easy to Live With / Wisdom below Difficult / Lay Down Right to be Right**

*willing to yield* – God's wisdom makes the believer agreeable and easy to live with and work with. Man's wisdom makes a person hard and stubborn. The person who is willing to yield is willing to listen, think,

pray, and then obey whatever God reveals to them. As we have seen in the Sermon on the Mount cross-references, God asks us to lay our rights, and wants down, for the sake of the kingdom.

**Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:**

**Matthew 5:3–5 (NKJV)** <sup>3</sup>“Blessed are the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. <sup>4</sup> Blessed are those who mourn, For they shall be comforted. <sup>5</sup> Blessed are the meek, For they shall inherit the earth.

**God’s Economy on Yielding**

Christian, let me share a truth that I have learned from being willing to yield. The more I yield to others, the more I lay down my right to be right even when I am clearly right, the more I bite my tongue when I am reviled and attacked by others, and the more I let go my ministries, I find the result is the more God adds to me. It results in more insight He gives me into His Word, into the things of the Lord, and ultimately it all adds up to more peace in my life and a more intimate relationship I have with Him. I know this sounds crazy, but I actually get excited when a person slams me, and I remain silent, cause I truly expect God is going to bless me cause I was willing to yield. So I wait, anticipating, a blessing. I sit wondering ohh what is He going to do to bless me this time, I can’t wait, it is like Christmas time for me. However, I watch people who do the opposite, I watch Christians who apply the Wisdom from Below, wisdom that destroys, I watch them gossip, attack, be self-seeking, and I watch their lives dry up – spiritually. I watch their relationship suffer with the Lord, and it carries over into their marriage, their family, and the ministries they are involved in. It is sad to watch. Be willing to yield, be an Abraham and say you take the left and I’ll take the right, or you take the right and I’ll take the left, and watch God bless you, just like he blessed Abraham (Genesis 13).

**Full of Mercy / Controlled By / Ability to Forgive Quickly**

full of mercy – to be “full” of something means to be “controlled” by. The person who follows God’s Wisdom is controlled by mercy. Mercy is showing concern for those who suffer pain and hardship. Mercy is the ability to forgive quickly.

**Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:**

**(Matthew 5:7 NKJV)** *Blessed are the merciful, For they shall obtain mercy.*

**Good Fruits / Full Life / John 15 / Wisdom Below Empty**

and good fruits – to be full applies to good fruits. We are to be controlled by good works. The Wisdom from Above does not make a life that is empty, it makes it full. We quickly reflect back to Jesus teaching in John 15:1-16, and the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5. These are the things we are to be controlled by: **(John 15:5 NKJV)** *“I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.*

**John 15:12–13 (NKJV)** <sup>12</sup> *This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.* <sup>13</sup> *Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends.*

**Galatians 5:22–23 (NKJV)** <sup>22</sup> *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,* <sup>23</sup> *gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.*

**Partiality & Hypocrisy / Only Found Once / Unwavering / No Negotiations on Wisdom Below**

without partiality and without hypocrisy – This Greek word for partiality is only found once in the whole New Testament, right here in this verse. It denotes a consistent, unwavering person who is undivided in his commitment and conviction and does not make unfair distinctions (remember our test of Partiality). This is how we must be about applying Wisdom from Above, the Wisdom that Delights against the Wisdom from Below, the Wisdom that Destroys. We must be unwavering, there must be no negotiations with the Wisdom of the World, the Flesh, and the Devil. To profess Christ, and submit to the Wisdom of the World is hypocritical, and Christian and Non-Christian will be able to tell the difference.

**(James 3:18 NKJV)** **Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.**

**Fruit of Righteousness – Seed After It’s Own Kind**

The Wisdom from Above, produces the fruit of righteousness within us, and peace among us.

This fruit is like a seed that will bear fruit as it is sown by those who make peace.

- “The fruit of righteousness; either the fruit we bring forth, which is righteousness itself, Luke 3:8, 9; Romans 6:22; Philippians 1:11; or the fruit we reap, which is the reward of righteousness, viz. eternal life.” (Poole)

Christian, scatter your seed well, and in due season you shall reap a harvest. Like a farmer, it may take much time, as seed sown in spring may not see fruit until the fall, but the seed will do what it was designed to do.... It will reproduce in the likeness it was divinely and genetically design to bear:

**James 1:18 (NKJV)** <sup>18</sup> Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.

**Genesis 1:11–12 (NKJV)** <sup>11</sup> Then God said, “Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth”; and it was so. <sup>12</sup> And the earth brought forth grass, the herb that yields seed according to its kind, and the tree that yields fruit, whose seed is in itself according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

### Interesting Word for Righteousness in Chinese

The Chinese character for “righteousness” is most interesting. It is composed of two separate characters—one standing for a lamb, the other for me. When “lamb” is placed directly above “me,” a new character—“righteousness” is formed.

This is a helpful picture of the grace of God. Between me, the sinner, and God, the Holy One, there is interposed by faith the Lamb of God. By virtue of his sacrifice, he has received me on the ground of faith, and I have become righteous in his sight. 1147

*Michael P. Green. (2000). 1500 illustrations for biblical preaching (p. 307). Baker Books.*

### Conclusion:

#### The Grid / Who is Wise Among You

So again, I have these verses underlined because it is a grid (rule of thumb) through which I can run any conversation, teaching, or any word of instruction. If there is envy and strife, tension and confusion in what I hear, then I know it's from hell. But if there is purity and peace, righteousness and mercy in what I hear, I embrace it as being from the Lord. It is so easy to get involved in the conversation, but when we lay it against this test of wisdom, we know whether to walk away or not. If you can do these things, then God considers you a wise person:

**(James 3:13 NKJV)** *Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom.*

#### Theme of The Book / Satan wants to Divide

Remember the theme of this book that we might mature, and grow in wisdom. Satan wishes to divide the church, divide the body, divide the marriage, divide the family, so that he can get us alone, and when he does he can rip us to shreds and destroy us:

**(1 Peter 5:8 NKJV)** *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.*

#### Outline: The Test of Wisdom Applied (3:13-18)

- Wisdom that Directs: 3:13
- Wisdom that Destroys: 3:14-16
- Wisdom that Delights: 3: 17-18

#### How do I get Wisdom

How do I get this wisdom? James makes it so clear and easy, just ask the Father. I take a study like this, lay these things out before the Lord, let Him examine us, and then ask for the wisdom to apply them to our lives:

**James 1:4–5 (NKJV)** <sup>4</sup> *But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.* <sup>5</sup> *If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.*

#### Power of Life / Power of Death

The power of life and death is in the tongue, and may there be life in all that we say. Wisdom from Above, the power of life in all we say and do, may there be life in our families, friendships, and all we do.

## Prayer

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

*Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) <sup>12</sup> For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

## **In Every Study**

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

*Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) <sup>16</sup> Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need*

## Chapter 4

**Passage:** James 4:1-12

**Title:** The Test of the World's Influence

**Summary:** James is an in-your-face type teaching, he doesn't mix words, rather he just comes right to the punch. The book of James is a no time to waste type book, let's get growing, and let's get maturing, let's be doers of the Word. James is not interested in how great we talk, but how straight we walk, and that is the message all the way through this book. In chapter 1 it was be doers of the Word, in chapter 2 it was faith that works, chapter 3 it was our words are important for they show what is in our heart. Now chapter 4, no mixing of words, are you drawn to God, or to the things of the world? The simplest definition of worldliness is, anything that draws you away from God.

**James 4:1-12 (NKJV)** <sup>1</sup> Where do wars and fights *come* from among you? Do *they* not *come* from your *desires* for pleasure that war in your members? <sup>2</sup> You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. <sup>3</sup> You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend *it* on your pleasures. <sup>4</sup> Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. <sup>5</sup> Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, "The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously"? <sup>6</sup> But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "*God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.*" <sup>7</sup> Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. <sup>8</sup> Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse *your* hands, *you* sinners; and purify *your* hearts, *you* double-minded. <sup>9</sup> Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and *your* joy to gloom. <sup>10</sup> Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up. <sup>11</sup> Do not speak evil of one another, brethren. He who speaks evil of a brother and judges his brother, speaks evil of the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge. <sup>12</sup> There is one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy. Who are you to judge another?

### Written by James / Didn't believe – to Leader / Hindsight / Everyday Living

The Book of James was written by none other than Jesus' brother James. James was a leader in the church, a pillar in the church (Acts 21). James didn't believe that Jesus was God when He walked this earth (John 7:5); but after the resurrection Jesus appears to him (1 Cor 15:4-7), and everything changed. James is going to write us this letter, he will talk about everyday practical stuff. He will talk about trials in life, our works, our tongue, prayer, and other things; as he writes these things, no doubt he will be remembering how Jesus handled them, reflecting back on watching situations, and watching his oldest brother. He will reflect on Jesus' life of love, and a life of sinlessness, in a world that can be so hateful at times, and so full of sin. James will write these things based on hindsight, based on first hand witnessing of how his older brother lived life, everyday. James watched Jesus handle everyday life, and that is what this book is about; it is about living everyday life as a Follower of God, in a fallen world.

### Jesus Rubbed Off / Nature Illustrations / Favorite Teacher - Sermon on Mount

We can see how much Jesus rubbed off on James, for James style resembles his brother so much. Like Jesus used nature as illustrations for His teaching points, so does James some 30 times. He uses nature analogies such as the sea, flowers, sun, fire, horses and ships to name a few). It is obvious who James favorite teacher was, because this epistle covers every topic that Jesus covered in the Sermon on the Mount. There is amazing parallelisms between the two; James does not actually quote the Lord's words, but he obviously had internalized Jesus' teachings and reproduced them with spiritual depth. Jesus covered about 30 topics in the Sermon on the Mount, and we will see that James touches on every one of them in this epistle. The Book of James is Sermon on the Mount 2. The Book is also very quick and concise, moving from thought-to-thought quickly. So the Book of James is the New Testament Version of the Old Testament Proverbs. It resembles Proverbs because it is very poetic the way it flows its thoughts using illustrations and analogies.

### So We can Examine Self / How am I Doing

Jesus gave the Sermon on the Mount so that we might examine ourselves and ask the question, "so how am I doing in each of these areas?" James writes to the church, to us, and as we read, we have to ask ourselves, "so how am I doing in these areas?" This book is practical and applicable for us living in the year 2022, and the ultimate goal of this epistle is giving to us in verse 4 of chapter 1, to bring us into maturity, perfect and lacking nothing.

As in school, we take tests to see how much of a handle and mastery we have on a subject, we will do the same in this book.

### 3 Key Verses

Here are three key verses to get us going:

**James 2:20 (NKJV)** <sup>20</sup> *But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?*

**James 1:22 (NKJV)** <sup>22</sup> *But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.*

**James 1:4–5 (NKJV)** <sup>4</sup> But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. <sup>5</sup> If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

### The Outline of the Book of James:

#### Chapter 1

- Introduction (1:1)
- The Test of Perseverance and Suffering (1:2-12)
- The Test of Blame in Temptation (1:12-18)
- The Test of Response to the Word (1:19-27)

#### Chapter 2

- The Test of Partiality (2:1-9)
- The Test of the Law (2:10-13)
- The Test of Faith and Works (2:14-26)

#### Chapter 3

- The Test of the Tongue (3:1-12)
- The Test of Wisdom Applied (3:13-18)

#### Chapter 4

- The Test of the World's Influence (4:1-12)
- The Test of Dependence (4:13-5:6)

#### Chapter 5

- The Test of Endurance (5:7-12)
- The Test of Prayerfulness (5:13-20)

### **Statement / The Weighty Things**

In Ezekiel 43, we see the glory (kabod – meaning “weighty of substance”) coming from and at the throne of God, where God dwells and reigns. In my 30+ years of walking with the Lord, and 20+ years of serving in pastoral ministry, I have seen this passage before us today as the either (make or break) between those that go deep in the Lord, and those that are shallow, both saved, that I am mostly sure, but those that are deep, have a weighty, full of substance faith..... the difference between, real faith that shows up in real life, or faith that is mostly light, and never goes deep. We will see in just these short verses, what I call some of the most quoted, memorized verses in our faith, and all applied together (or not), will determine the weight and depth of faith, or the lightness and shallowness of a person’s faith.

- V1a – Where do wars and fights come from among you?
- V3a – You have not, because you ask not (KJV)
- V6 – God resist the proud and gives grace to the humble
- V7 – Therefore submit to God, Resist the Devil and he will flee from you
- V8 – Draw near to God and He will draw near to you
- V10 – Humble yourself in the sight of the Lord and He will lift you up

**Ezekiel 43:1–5 (NKJV)** <sup>1</sup> Afterward he brought me to the gate, the gate that faces toward the east. <sup>2</sup> And behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east. His voice was like the sound of many waters; and the earth shone with His glory. <sup>3</sup> It was like the appearance of the vision which I saw—like the vision which I saw when I came to destroy the city. The visions were like the vision which I saw by the River Chebar; and I fell on my face. <sup>4</sup> And the glory of the LORD came into the temple by way of the gate which faces toward the east. <sup>5</sup> The Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the LORD filled the temple.

### **Living Water**

In Ezekiel 47, there is a beautiful picture and illustration of the last days in the millennial Kingdom when the temple is rebuilt that water we'll bring forth from the temple and flow all the way down to the Dead Sea and turn all that has been dead into a wondrous garden teeming with life in the waters. It has so many spiritual pictures and applications intended for us and so much so more than I could present and develop for us if I had a whole month to do so; but the core spiritual picture can clearly be seen living waters flowing from the throne of God and turning that which was dead into life. Maybe you need that today, and need to ask the Lord to do a work of healing before we even begin this study. Maybe your heart is dry and barren because what someone did you in a times past, and you are still hurt and wounded and bitter by it. Maybe it was you doing, and things have never been the same since. Maybe you just feel distant and dry

(to which God wants you to know that today He desires to draw you near), and you just need to take a step of faith and believe God will bring healing, and with that a “drawing” of you to Himself. So let’s pray.

**Ezekiel 47:1–12 (NKJV)** <sup>1</sup> Then he brought me back to the door of the temple; and there was water, flowing from under the threshold of the temple toward the east, for the front of the temple faced east; the water was flowing from under the right side of the temple, south of the altar. <sup>2</sup> He brought me out by way of the north gate, and led me around on the outside to the outer gateway that faces east; and there was water, running out on the right side. <sup>3</sup> And when the man went out to the east with the line in his hand, he measured one thousand cubits, and he brought me through the waters; the water came up to my ankles. <sup>4</sup> Again he measured one thousand and brought me through the waters; the water came up to my knees. Again he measured one thousand and brought me through; the water came up to my waist. <sup>5</sup> Again he measured one thousand, and it was a river that I could not cross; for the water was too deep, water in which one must swim, a river that could not be crossed. <sup>6</sup> He said to me, “Son of man, have you seen this?” Then he brought me and returned me to the bank of the river. <sup>7</sup> When I returned, there, along the bank of the river, were very many trees on one side and the other. <sup>8</sup> Then he said to me: “This water flows toward the eastern region, goes down into the valley, and enters the sea. When it reaches the sea, its waters are healed. <sup>9</sup> And it shall be that every living thing that moves, wherever the rivers go, will live. There will be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters go there; for they will be healed, and everything will live wherever the river goes. <sup>10</sup> It shall be that fishermen will stand by it from En Gedi to En Eglaim; they will be places for spreading their nets. Their fish will be of the same kinds as the fish of the Great Sea, exceedingly many. <sup>11</sup> But its swamps and marshes will not be healed; they will be given over to salt. <sup>12</sup> Along the bank of the river, on this side and that, will grow all kinds of trees used for food; their leaves will not wither, and their fruit will not fail. They will bear fruit every month, because their water flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food, and their leaves for medicine.”

**John 7:37–39 (NKJV)** <sup>37</sup> On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. <sup>38</sup> He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.” <sup>39</sup> But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

### Prayer

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

**Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV)** <sup>12</sup> For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

### **In Every Study**

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

**Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV)** <sup>16</sup> Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need

### Outline: The Test of the World’s Influence (4:1-12)

- The World’s Influence – Watching Ourselves (4:1-3)
- The World’s Influence – Watching Satan (4:4-7)
- The World’s Influence – Watching God (4:8-12)

### **The World’s Influence – Watching Ourselves (4:1-3)**

First we will see how we are to examine ourselves, and how we can approach things just like the world does, and the results are always bad.

**(James 4:1 NKJV)** Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members?

They are fighting “among” each other. James isn’t writing some broad theory, but a known fact that was happening among them, they were fighting among each other. How amazing, as we started this Book we read that they were scattered abroad, from what we can tell was probably because of religious persecution. So they are under attack, a war has been declared upon them as believers, yet we read that they attacking each other, dividing and destroying each other, and well the enemy against the church was being greatly aided in their purpose of (scattering) by the church themselves fighting among each other.

**James 1:1 (NKJV)** <sup>1</sup> James, a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad: Greetings.

The preceding study in chapter 3..... because we/they need healing, because there is, there are, things blocking and choking us, our/their hearts need healing, our hearts need this Living Water, and it can only come from the throne of God, from His throne of grace (come to the throne of grace and find help – Hebrews 4:16). We have to recognize the within the church/believers and the scattering it produces through division.

**James 3:13–18 (NKJV)** <sup>13</sup> Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom. <sup>14</sup> But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. <sup>15</sup> This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. <sup>16</sup> For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. <sup>17</sup> But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. <sup>18</sup> Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

**James 4:1 (NKJV)** <sup>1</sup> Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members?

**Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV)** <sup>16</sup> Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

#### **Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:**

(Matthew 5:21 NKJV) "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.'

(Matthew 5:22 NKJV) "But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!' shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell fire.

#### **Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:**

(Matthew 5:38 NKJV) "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.'

(Matthew 5:39 NKJV) "But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also.

#### **Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:**

(Matthew 5:43 NKJV) "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'

(Matthew 5:44 NKJV) "But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,

**(James 4:2 NKJV) You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask.**

Were they actually murdering one another? Of course not, but what do they have.... Hatred in their heart for one another.

**Matthew 5:21–26 (NKJV)** <sup>21</sup> "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.' <sup>22</sup> But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!' shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell fire. <sup>23</sup> Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, <sup>24</sup> leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. <sup>25</sup> Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are on the way with him, lest your adversary deliver you to the judge, the judge hand you over to the officer, and you be thrown into prison. <sup>26</sup> Assuredly, I say to you, you will by no means get out of there till you have paid the last penny.

#### **Why We Fight / Still Flowing Chp 3 / Going About it All Wrong – Like the World**

Lust (wanting something we do not have) - What causes wars and fights between nations, marriages, families, brothers and sisters? Listen the reason we fight amongst ourselves is because we want something from that person. We want something whatever it may be; I lust/desire something for myself. Remember there really are no chapter breaks so we are still flowing from chapter 3 and the "Test of the Tongue", and the "Test of Wisdom Applied". James is saying if you use your tongue to destroy, or wisdom from below that causes bitter envy, or strife, which then causes wars amongst you. James is saying you are going about it all wrong, and it will end all wrong, because you are doing things as the world does them, and that is a guarantee to fail,

**James 3:13–18 (NKJV)** <sup>13</sup> Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom. <sup>14</sup> But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. <sup>15</sup> This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. <sup>16</sup> For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and

*every evil thing are there. <sup>17</sup> But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. <sup>18</sup> Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.*

**(James 4:3 NKJV) You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.**

The abundant, spirit-filled life the Lord wants to give us, now, not in the next life, not something to wish for tomorrow, but to have today. But our passage today... you have not because you ask not, and that you ask amiss.

*John 10:10 (NKJV) <sup>10</sup> The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.*

### **You Ask Amiss / James 3:17**

The things you want, you are going about them all wrong, "you are asking amiss". This all ties into verse 17 of chapter 3:

*(James 3:17 NKJV) But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.*

### **God's Economy on Yielding / Wisdom Below Destroys**

Again, Christian, let me share a truth that I have learned from being willing to yield. The more I yield to others, the more I lay down my right to be right even when I am clearly right, the more I bite my tongue when I am reviled and attacked by others, and the more I let go my ministries, I find the result is the more God adds to me. It results in more insight He gives me into His Word, into the things of the Lord, and ultimately it all adds up to more peace in my life and a more intimate relationship I have with Him. I know this sounds crazy, but I actually get excited when a person slams me, and I remain silent, cause I truly expect God is going to bless me cause I was willing to yield. So I wait, anticipating, a blessing. I sit wondering ohh what is He going to do to bless me this time, I can't wait, it is like Christmas time for me. However, I watch people who do the opposite, I watch Christians who apply the Wisdom form Below, wisdom that destroys, I watch them gossip, attack, be self-seeking, and I watch their lives dry up – spiritually. I watch their relationship suffer with the Lord, and it carries over into their marriage, their family, and the ministries they are involved in. It is sad to watch. Be willing to yield, be an Abraham and say you take the left and I'll take the right, or you take the right and I'll take the left, and watch God bless you, just like he blessed Abraham (Genesis 13).

### **Fear Behind Anger**

Also, understand this, most every fight has anger behind in it (some more clearly to see than others – but anger still there); but what is really behind anger, is fear. That person who fights, and has anger, they fear something. They may fear that they aren't in control of the situation, that you want do it their way, or they may fear the lost of possessions which can be materially or a person. But behind anger is fear. This is where the power of willing to yield comes in, when you can be peaceable, gentle, when you can recognize that they fear something, so how can I calm their fear. How can I bring assurance that they have nothing to fear. That is what wisdom from above does, it is so opposite the worlds "I'll yell back at your face twice as loud and long.

Look at verse 3 again:

**(James 4:3 NKJV) You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.**

### **Tired of Complaining/Fighting?**

Are you tired of complaining, tired of fighting, tired of trying to manipulate the situation? Then ask the Father:

*(James 1:4 NKJV) But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.*

*(James 1:5 NKJV) If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.*

## **Prayer Reporting for Duty / Seeking Direction**

Praying is not giving the orders, but reporting for duty. Prayer isn't you giving God directions, but you seeking direction from the Lord. Lord what is it that you want me to do in this situation, in my life, in my family. Lord I know this is how the world handles these things, but how do you want me to handle it: (Matthew 6:10 NKJV) Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven.

*(Matthew 26:39 NKJV) He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will."*

## **God's Will Always Verse 17**

God's will, will always, always be verse 17 of chapter 3:

*(James 3:17 NKJV) But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.*

## **Selfishness**

All these things tie back to our study last week, bitter in being self-seeking and the things that are done that are not in accordance of the peace of God and the things of the righteousness of God, which produces peace with God and each other, but rather they produce wars. And all of it really boils down to this one thing and its selfishness. And I believe we live in a culture, a time like no other time, at least in our modern time that we know, and it's called the word selfish, but today nobody ever sees themselves as selfish, that people are not selfish, and no one's ever called selfish. In fact, even selfishness can be confused and substituted for righteousness or spirituality. And yet God right here, He is speaking, He's being clear, these things that you do out of selfish reasons, they cause all these problems in your marriage, in your relationship, in your church, in your friendships. And it gives us then the calling of how to live in the unselfish way and how to handle such things as He is teaching us. Because He wants to give us knowledge and then give us the wisdom of how to apply this knowledge in all of our dealings.

*James 3:14–16 (NKJV)<sup>14</sup> But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. <sup>15</sup> This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. <sup>16</sup> For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.*

And so if you are wrong, you've been selfish and God has convicted you and I pray, church, that this study, our studies that we do here on Sunday, midweek, radio, podcast, that they're not just for the moment. That if you should walk away and not feel that you were convicted or not feel that you had anything worthy of to respond, that you were in the right and you were just listening to a sermon about the need for somebody else. I always pray that you would take the word and take it into the quietness of your personal prayer time and ask the Lord and say, "So according to Titus, you say that the word is made manifest through the preaching." What that means is that God will speak in a special way that maybe we can't hear because of our selfishness or because of our distraction or because of the moment, whatever it may be.

And so then we hear it, it doesn't hit us in the moment and we walk away and like the scripture says it's like looking in the mirror and we forget what we see. And so I pray that again in your prayer time that you would take Sunday messages, midweek messages, podcasts, radio messages, say, Lord, this is what I heard through the preaching of the word. And now I sit in quietness, I sit with a pen in hand, a piece of paper, my journal, and I say, Lord, is there anything more you want to speak to me personally in the quietness of this prayer time? And I believe, church, you'll find power. Because it's so easy to not receive it and hear it the first round. But when you get into the quietness, that God would lay the word before you and make open your heart and lay your very being bare that he can start doing what a master potter does with his clay as he shapes and molds.

But again, what if you are right, even after you examine yourself and you come, but I am right. Now how do I exercise that I'm right in a righteous way without burning down the whole house or the whole church or the whole relationship? Well, God here in our passage gives us the way. And it's through, again, prayer. He gives us an avenue, he gives us a mean, he gives us a power of how we can take his holy word in righteousness when we're right before him, right in his word, but we need it applied across others personal free will. And he says right here, "You have not because you asked not." And so he'll speak to us and develop how we're to ask and how we can have.

Jesus said, Sermon on the Mount, remember the Book of James is a New Testament, the epistle, which correlates greatly to the Sermon on the Mount. And of course it would because Jesus's half brother James would've heard and knew this Sermon on the Mount. And now he's coming, he's putting it into real life application. And you know what the greatest application is? He's telling us details even greater than we read in the gospels of Jesus' prayer life.

Jesus tells us in the Sermon on the Mount to go into our closet and close the door and pray to our heavenly Father. And we know that Jesus did that as we see here in the gospels that early in the morning he would go away to seek his father, get his instructions and directions for the day. But here, James under inspiration of the Holy Spirit and James under insider information and knowledge that few had, he gets to tell us, and this is what Jesus did when he was faced with these internal conflicts. When he was faced with these type of challenges, he didn't burn the house down. He didn't blow up the relationship.

He went into his prayer closet and sought his father for him to intervene and do the work that words many times can't do. That takes a supernatural move of God's spirit in that person's life to give them ears to hear that they may see how to have and handle the situation that they're in. This is amazing passage before us. It's literally an amazing epistle in its entirety. Because again, it's a Sermon on the Mount inspired by God, recorded with insider information of the half brother of Jesus who watched how he handled every situation.

And so the Lord goes on to say, "If you ask and you ask amiss, I'm going to say no because you're asking for the wrong motives." And there's a place for us to understand that, that sometimes God will say no and we'll go, I don't understand why you're saying no. And what he wants to take us to in the depths of our study is because we're asking for the wrong motives. We're asking in selfish reason. You know can ask for right things in the wrong way. And God says, "I'm not going to give it to you because you know what it will produce? It will produce a continual selfishness that you're only asking for your means and your motives, and you're not asking for the biggest picture, the greatest reason in the deepest depths, so that others may be blessed, others may have wellbeing." Whether that's individually or corporately as a church or nationally as a country and even internationally as a society of humans. Our prayer life needs to be in alignment with God's will.

From the beginning of the war in Ukraine and Russia. I've continually said the same things to you. It's not possible for me to pray against the destruction of Russia because I've been to Russia, 1993. I've been to the Ukraine in 1995, and I don't see two international powers. I don't see two military mights. I see the faces of the people that I minister to. I see the faces of people who grew and raised in communism, atheism, emptiness, and the vanity of those ideologies. Even military people that I would see, my heart would go out to because of the deception. And so I can't pray, God get Russia. What I pray is God, that you would intervene and bring a peace to both nations. And Lord, that your spirit would move among both of these nations.

That there would be a peace that would pass understanding and arms can be laid down and weapons could be put back on the shelf. And that a peace could come and that both nations could prosper. And I think there's a danger that's been touted of the prayer life for one and a prayer life against another. Whereas God's will is that men would live peaceably with one another, whether that be individuals with each other or nations.

The heart of God is peace and not war. Love, brotherly love, agape love, an unconditional love and a care and concern as humanity, one for another. And hey, let me say, it is great to say not God will, but your will be done Lord. But I think God wants to speak to us and say, this is why it's not my will. Sometimes we can feel that we've done well by saying, but Lord, let your will be done. But I think there's a place that God wants to bring us to, because he's speaking it very deeply here in our passage, that he wants us to know why it's not his will. He wants us to understand, because we're asking selfishly.

Now, sometimes God's will isn't meant for us to know. Sometimes it's called faith and we just have to go, I don't know why this is happening, but Lord not thy will, but your will be done. And that releases us. That gives us the peace that God's heard and that he sees and that we've asked in the right manner, in the

right way. We weren't seeking selfish ambition, we weren't in bitter envy. We weren't creating a war. We weren't burning down relationships and houses. That we asked rightly and that he said no. And we can go, I rest in that. So just remember, sometimes God's will isn't for us to know, but sometimes his no as in the spelling of N-O has a reason behind it that he wants us to know, K-N-O-W, that we're asking out of selfish reasons. And it's not for the good of everybody, it's merely for the good of us personally.

This sounds so simple, but it was so moving to me. My first mission trip was to Russia and we were doing a seminar, and while everybody was at lunch, we tidied up the room and put candy on everyone's desk. When everyone came back in, they got all excited because the candy on their desk. Sounds trivial to us, but the walls had just fallen, these people lived paycheck to paycheck. I remember this older man, 70 years old, I remember watching him look at his candy, then look up to the heavens and raise his hands in praise.

You may say, Ray, what does that have to do with prayer? To me, everything. Because it's been 30 years since I've been to Russia and that man, his face still before my mind and memory in crystal clarity. Even as I speak to you right now, I can tell you which way of the room he was facing. I can tell you what he looked like. I can tell you how his hands were raised and I can even tell you how his hands were moving as if I was there and just as yesterday. And as I'd look at those people, Lord, this man, he only wants you. He doesn't want war. He doesn't want all these things. He just wants you. And so I pray, Lord, for peace to come in the midst of this war.

#### **What If they Are Verse 14 / Intercede / Imagine if Both Applied**

What if the other person is the complete opposite of verse 17, what if they are verse 14:

*(James 3:14 NKJV) But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth.*

Then pray for them, intercede on their behalf, and be that light to show them out of their darkness. You will at least have peace that you are in God's will. And next study we will look at the "Test of Endurance" and God's Word will encourage you greatly if you are struggling in this area. Imagine if two Christians, whether is be brothers in the Lord, husband and wife, of parent and child, applied this wisdom at the same time, fights would be very short, if at all, and peace would reign.

#### **The World's Influence – Watching Satan (4:4-7)**

Secondly, we need to watch Satan's influence in our lives as he tries to draw us into the things of the world. We must watch for him, and then resist him

**(James 4:4 NKJV) Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.**

What is being said here? Real simple, you can't live one foot in the world, and one in the Lord. God is giving a clear calling, choose this day who you will serve, just like we saw with Joshua and his calling to the children of Israel when they came into the Promised Land. You cant live in Promised Land and Egypt at same time, choose this day he said. And what he was calling them to was..... War, you will have to fight to take this land. And so too is the call for us, and the rest of this passage we will study today. Hey dads..... let that be a battle cry you ware willing to die for, "as for me and my house we will serve the Lord".

*Joshua 24:14–15 (NKJV) <sup>14</sup> "Now therefore, fear the LORD, serve Him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt. Serve the LORD! <sup>15</sup> And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."*

#### **Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:**

*(Matthew 5:27 NKJV) "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not commit adultery.'*

*(Matthew 5:28 NKJV) "But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.*

*(Matthew 5:29 NKJV) "If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.*

*(Matthew 5:30 NKJV) "And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.*

**Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:**

*(Matthew 6:24 NKJV) "No one can serve two masters; for either 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.*

**Not Messing Around / Where do you Fall / The World is Contrary**

Verse 4 - Adulterers and adulteresses! The adultery spoken of here is not marital adultery but spiritual adultery. James isn't mixing words here, he is saying God isn't messing around, you need to examine yourself and see where you fall in at. The things of the world are so contrary to the things of the Lord. And if I am intrigued with the things of the world, then I am on a different side of where the Father is:

*(1 John 2:15 NKJV) Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. (1 John 2:16 NKJV) For all that is in the world; the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life; is not of the Father but is of the world.*

*(1 John 2:17 NKJV) And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.*

Spiritual adultery is just putting something else greater than the Lord. That's all. It's not complicated.

**How Much Does God Have of You**

The "Test of Worldliness" is how much of the world has you, or how much does God have you.

**(James 4:5 NKJV) Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, "The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously"?**

**Spirit is Jealous / We can Grieve Him**

Verse 5 – the Spirit yearns jealously – The Spirit guards us jealously, the Spirit wants the very best for me, for you. We can grieve the Holy Spirit:

*(Ephesians 4:30 NKJV) And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.*

**He is God – not Mystical Power / Vulnerable / Grieves Over Our Pains**

The Holy Spirit is a person, not some mystical power, for you can not grieve a mystical power, only a person. He is the third person of the Trinity, He is God. God has put His Spirit in us, He has taken up residence within us, and that makes God vulnerable. God puts Himself in a place, in a position, where He can be hurt. The Spirit hurts for us, not because of us. The Spirit doesn't say, "ohh you didn't call me today", "you went to the picnic without me", my feelings are hurt. Rather the Spirit hurts/grieves because He knows the actions we are taking or following will lead us into an area that will hurt us, and that hurts Him. Seeing us suffer, suffers Him.

**Parents Grieve / Holy Spirit – Formed You – Walk with You – PLEASE Don't**

Parents you know the story as you see you child heading towards danger (by the way kids, that is why your parents gets so angry, because of Fear, they fear what can or could of happened to you). My heart breaks when I see someone going the way of the world. It grieves my heart because I know the world will chew them up. The Holy Spirit grieves, you are my child, I formed you in your mothers womb (Psalm 139), I have been with you every step you have taken, please please, don't do this. I love you, I can't bear to see the pain that this will cause you, yes sin is fun for a season, but like summer gives way to fall so will the fun give way to the pain and hardship.

**(James 4:6 NKJV) But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble."**

**Go Not Mad – But Hurting / Pours His Grace Out**

God isn't mad at you, but is hurting for you, yet even when we are veering off, asking amiss, God gives us grace, more grace to be specific. He gives us grace to resist temptation, and/or recover from the situation;

*(Romans 5:20 NKJV) Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more,*

### **Resist the Proud – Free-will / Can't Change Heart Until you Change your Mind**

God gives grace to those who are humble, but God resist the proud, the person who says I can take care of it myself, I'll figure the way out, I am fine on my own – just like the world that says we have no need for you here God, move along. Pride is your free-will, and God will never violate your free-will. God can't change your heart until you change your mind about that something. The humble person says I need you Lord, help me. Humility submits to God, Pride submits to the Devil.

### **Humility So Opposite the World**

God gives grace to the humble. As we discussed, Jesus comes gentle and lowly and it brings the connotation of humbly. Even though he has total power at his disposal, as he would say, "I could call legion of angels down right now if I so chose, to fight for me," and yet we see him continually in that lowly gracious power, under control. And everything that he's telling us in this passage, literally the whole book Epistle is totally foreign to the way the world operates. The world doesn't operate in grace. The world operates in power, yielding, wielding power to get their way. And if you get in the way, they will roll over you. And imagine here the world going, "Yes, let's pray about this." Imagine going into work in a meeting tomorrow and the whole workplace says, "Yes, let's pray about this," or the managers say, "Tell me your thoughts."

And yet so much of the way the world is anything but lowly and humble, anything but gracious. And yet God gives grace to the humble, and God honors the prayer that's asked in accordance to his will and the prayer that's willing to be examined if there's any selfishness, self-righteousness, any envy, strife, confusion and emptiness of vanity. Totally foreign, and yet that's what makes everything so powerful. Because a king would never come to die, a king comes to bring death to others to secure his kingdom. Yet we live in a kingdom, but the king was willing to die because he could die and rise again on the third day. And he gives us that same power in our lives that declare my kingdom will come and nothing can stop my kingdom because I have the power to lay my life down. I have the power to pick it up.

And when we live in that type of power, that I can lay my life down and know that God has the power to pick it up in this situation and that he sees me and he is pleased with me because I am being gracious and lowly and humble, he gives us this pure power. And the power comes in the form of grace because God is for us and therefore God is going to go and work for us in this situation.

### **(James 4:7 NKJV) Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.**

You will never defeat the devil without submitting (yielding, humbling thyself) to God. How do we submit, is all these points in this study.

### **Satan Watching You – What Works Against You / work – gal – kids – wife / Thursday Bible Study**

We are told to "Resist the Devil", and he will flee from you – Satan is watching you, and he watches what it is that works against you. What is it that keeps you out of the Word, out of fellowship, out of prayer, and then that is what he will continually come with against you. It has to be something of the things of the world, Is it more money? If so you can be sure the Prince and Power of the Air will energize the world around you to make it happen. Is it that guy or gal? Then you can be sure they will be calling you at church time or prayer time, just about anytime to draw you away. Do the kids act up right before church and then you say that's it we are staying home. Do you and your wife get into fights right before church and say we are staying home. Whatever it is, Satan always goes to the well, he always grabs that things that has worked in the past against you. Christian it is not until you resist him that it will stop. When Renee and me first got married, and we had the Thursday night Bible Study in the house, I dreaded Wednesday nights in our house. I mean it never seemed to fail that something would come up in the house that night, and the tension in the house would be unbearable. This went on for weeks until we realized this is Satan working us, we must resist him. Once we did, the same things would happen, but we would both just go, its Wednesday night, and eventually the Word came to pass – Satan fled.

### **The 3R's Again / Test of the World**

Again that brings us back to those 3 R's, Recognize, Resist, and Rejoice. Gang, many people are bringing unnecessary spiritual warfare upon themselves because they won't resist the devil, they won't

battle him, they won't deal with these things. The test of the world is do I live and go along in the world, or do I rise up and out and live in the spiritual realm:

*(Ephesians 6:12 NKJV) For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.*

*(Ephesians 6:13 NKJV) Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.*

### **Ultimate Test / Playground or Battleground / Will Change Forever**

Christian, the ultimate "Test of the World's Influence" is do I see that the earth is not a playground, but a battle zone. We are battling the Prince of Darkness as he tries to draw us away from God, as he is trying to draw our children, coworkers and neighbors away into the world, and then into destruction. When we do see and realize that, your life will be changed forever. For me, I must be reminded of this daily for it is so easy to get distracted from this.

### **Resist him / Keep Dad Between Us**

Resist the devil, but first have to submit. As long as I am close to my Dad, I don't have anything to worry about with Satan. Keep Dad between us and the enemy and everything will be fine.

### **The World's Influence – Watching God (4:8-12)**

We must just keep our eyes on our Dad, and everything will be fine. We must draw near to God and He will draw near to us.

**(James 4:8 NKJV) Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.**

**(James 4:9 NKJV) Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom.**

**(James 4:10 NKJV) Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.**

#### **Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:**

*(Matthew 5:3 NKJV) "Blessed are the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

*(Matthew 5:4 NKJV) Blessed are those who mourn, For they shall be comforted.*

*(Matthew 5:5 NKJV) Blessed are the meek, For they shall inherit the earth.*

I think sometimes all we give God is the leftovers when he wants to present us a bountiful meal to sup and dine on. And the greatest meal is the ones that we have with him just sitting in his presence where there's the fullness of joy. He says, "Draw near to me and I'll draw near to you. I'm ready, but it's up for you to come to the table. The table's prepared. The meal has been cooked, but it's up to you to come taste and see that the Lord is good. And I'll give you more than in leftovers. I'll give you more than morsels. I'll give you life and that more abundant, overflowing." And that's a promise that he gives us today, tomorrow, this Christmas season, and into a new year.

### **Draw Near is an Invitation**

Draw near to God and He'll draw near to you, that's an invitation. That's not a condemnation, it's an invitation to intimacy with the one who created us. "And all these things," he says, "I can take you above all these things." And he wants to just make the point, "I am all things. These things, they're not the summation of your life. They're not the ultimate purpose and destination of your life. I am. And you can draw near to me and we can have an intimacy and a oneness. You can see my face. When you see my face, you'll know my heart."

Maybe that needs to be your prayer today. And you start praying your New Year's today, so you don't have to miss the greatness of the season that we're in. You can have your New Year's today, and I pray that it spills over into your family and every relationship that you have, your marriage and your children. As you draw near to God, you'll find yourself being full with each other because you're full with him. And he's overflowing your heart and that overflows into every other detail of your life.

## **Lament & Mourn**

Verse nine, lament and mourn. God wants to speak to you now, but I pray followed up tomorrow. He wants to show us the state of our heart because he wants to give us something so great, so deeper. He wants to give us himself. That's why he says, "Draw near to me." Sometimes I have to lament and mourn in order to be able to draw near to the fullness of God.

And he will lift you up. There's just a beautiful place in humility. And when we come in humility, God speak and I'm quick, I'm ever so quick to respond in forgiveness and graciousness and restoration. Let that board be spoken to anyone here today that there's a beauty in being broken. We like to sing songs about being broken vessels, but do we really mean that or are we just singing it as in we're broken vessels and you saved us and now I'll have salvation. But there's a beauty in just being broken before the Lord, saying, "Lord, I'm lamenting. I'm seeing my selfishness, my enviousness, my bitterness and the division that I've caused, and my heart not being right. You're breaking me down. You're convicting me and I feel a lamenting in my heart. You're being set free, that's what's happening right now.

You're being made whole and you're given power. Because he says, "Humble thyself in the sight of the Lord and I'll lift you up like any father." What he's inviting us to is restoration of lifting up, a oneness. And I pray our hearts would be drawn. Lord, I just want to be humble and lowly and gentle, riding lowly on a donkey as you came into Jerusalem. That's how I just want my heart to be. I don't want to lift myself up or my pride, but Lord I see my need. I humble myself. And God says, "I'll lift you up, fill the restoration. Don't feel condemnation because the devil will come. This is where now you have to resist him because he's going to say, "I don't forgive. I'm not gracious." And you're going to have to resist him to have this restoration, to have this oneness, to have this beauty of being drawn into his presence.

## **Sit and Rewind this Study**

And so if you are wrong, you've been selfish and God has convicted you and I pray, church, that this study, our studies that we do here on Sunday, midweek, radio, podcast, that they're not just for the moment. That if you should walk away and not feel that you were convicted or not feel that you had anything worthy of to respond, that you were in the right and you were just listening to a sermon about the need for somebody else. I always pray that you would take the word and take it into the quietness of your personal prayer time and ask the Lord and say, "So according to Titus, you say that the word is made manifest through the preaching." What that means is that God will speak in a special way that maybe we can't hear because of our selfishness or because of our distraction or because of the moment, whatever it may be.

And so then we hear it, it doesn't hit us in the moment and we walk away and like the scripture says it's like looking in the mirror and we forget what we see. And so I pray that again in your prayer time that you would take Sunday messages, midweek messages, podcasts, radio messages, say, Lord, this is what I heard through the preaching of the word. And now I sit in quietness, I sit with a pen in hand, a piece of paper, my journal, and I say, Lord, is there anything more you want to speak to me personally in the quietness of this prayer time? And I believe, church, you'll find power. Because it's so easy to not receive it and hear it the first round. But when you get into the quietness, that God would lay the word before you and make open your heart and lay your very being bare that he can start doing what a master potter does with his clay as he shapes and molds.

## **Draw Near – Get Serious / Cut Loose the Distraction**

Notice that it says He will draw near to you, not that He might. The moment you draw near, there He is. Cleanse your hands, purify your hearts, means get serious about drawing near to Him. You can't be double-minded. James is saying turn off the television, logoff the computer and take the time to meet with Him. We clean ourselves up in that we cut loose the distractions of the world and focus our attention solely upon Him, so that we may be properly tuned into the right frequency. God loves you, He yearns jealously for you, he is always sending out His waves of love to us, but it is the things of the world that disrupts our radio frequency.

## **Cleanse – Purify - Lament**

Cleanse your hands, you sinners: - The OT priest had to ceremonially wash their hands before approaching God (Exodus 30:19-21)

and purify your hearts – refers to inner thoughts and motives of the heart.

Lament and mourn and weep – be broken over your sin, be serious about your sin:

*(Psalms 51:16 NKJV) For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering.*

*(Psalms 51:17 NKJV) The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart; These, O God, You will not despise.*

## **No Casual Attitude / God is Holy / Careless about Sin – Offensive – Tremendous Love / Robs Us**

The whole point was not to have a casual attitude about God and sin, but to be serious about God's Holiness. Again I must say this, Christians can not have a lack of reverence of God's Holiness, His awe, His majesty. For if we do then that leads to a careless attitude about sin, sin loses its seriousness, its offensiveness to God, which in turn diminishes Christ's work upon the cross. That robs us of greatly, for we then lose sight of His tremendous love for us. How precious we are to Him, so much so that He would send His Son as to cover our guilt and shame.

## **Nothing Can Touch Me / Tongue**

Bring me into a clear focus on that, and nothing, but nothing, can touch me nor draw me away from my Lord. Nothing in this world can even get my attention, everything pales in comparison to His love for me:

- My tongue will always have a word of love for all seasons.
- The Wisdom from above will be preeminent in my mind.
- I'll have faith that works, for love will be my motivation factor.
- I will be a Doer of the Word, because I will be in the Spirit, and the Spirit reigning in me.

**(James 4:11 NKJV) Do not speak evil of one another, brethren. He who speaks evil of a brother and judges his brother, speaks evil of the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge.**

**(James 4:12 NKJV) There is one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy. Who are you to judge another?**

**Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:**

*(Matthew 7:1 NKJV) "Judge not, that you be not judged.*

*(Matthew 7:2 NKJV) "For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you.*

We covered this subject in chapter 3. Our job is to love people, not judge people. God will do the judging we are just to love them. We are to be Doers of the Word, not a doer of the Law as a judge. Judging others takes the life of Christ right out of us, it truly quenches the Spirit of God in us.

Who are we to judge another man's servant:

**Romans 14:4 (NKJV) <sup>4</sup> Who are you to judge another's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. Indeed, he will be made to stand, for God is able to make him stand.**

## **The Peg**

I came across a powerful parable written by a Haitian pastor illustrating to his congregation the need for total commitment to the Lord. A certain man wanted to sell his house for two thousand dollars. Another man wanted very badly to buy it but couldn't afford the full price the owner was asking. After much bargaining, however, he agreed to sell the house to the poor man for half the original price -- along with just one stipulation: He would retain ownership of one small nail protruding from just over the door. After several years, the original owner wanted the house back, but the new owner was unwilling to sell. So the first owner went out, found the carcass of a dead dog and hung it from the single nail he still owned. Soon the house became unlivable and the family was forced to sell the house to the owner of the nail. The Haitian pastor concluded that "If we leave the Devil with even one small peg in our life, he will return to hang his rotting garbage on it, making it unfit for Christ's habitation." The devil has only come to steal, kill and destroy. He can be very crafty and he would love nothing more than to steal from us our very

inhabitation in the Lord. Let's ask the Lord to reveal any pegs we may be leaving for the devil today and take back all that belongs to us!

### **The World's Way is to Judge**

And yet I think we live in a day and a time we feel justified in judging because that's all the world wants to do is judge, social media, the news outlets, the elections. Oh, the destruction of the judging, open publicly. And it can just wear on us that we think it's all natural. And yet God speaks, "You judge your brother, you put yourself upon the law of God. The law of God will judge a man's heart. And the law of God will judge a man's ways. God himself will judge." And we're not called to be the judge. Oh, we judge false fruit, we judge false prophets, people who want to profess, but there's no fruit in their life. But let's not deceive ourselves that that's what we're doing the majority of the time. We go all the way back to chapter three with the test of the tongue and its destruction and the power of the tongue. It just shows the weakness of the heart when we judge one another.

And God puts it into this context because what he's saying is, "You're not going to see my face. You won't draw near to me because you'll be asking amiss. You'll think you're in a conversation with me, but if you're asking amiss as we started this chapter four and you're causing wars. And I think there's a place ever so fitting, Jesus says in the last days there will be wars and rumors of wars. I think the church and Christians can be so great in producing the rumors of war, it's called gossip. And they're just tearing people down and they're telling people how to watch out for them. You know what? That will rob, quench and destroy. It'll never bring us into the sweetness that God wants as we draw near to him and draw near into his presence and see his face, seek his face. And there we'll find everything in our place.

It takes us all the way back to where we started our study.... Where do wars come from?

*James 4:1 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members?*

### Outline: The Test of the World's Influence (4:1-12)

- The World's Influence – Watching Ourselves (4:1-3)
- The World's Influence – Watching Satan (4:4-7)
- The World's Influence – Watching God (4:8-12)

We will see in just these short verses, what I call some of the most quoted, memorized verses in our faith:

- V1a – Where do wars and fights come from among you?
- V3a – You have not, because you ask not (KJV)
- V6 – God resist the proud and gives grace to the humble
- V7 – Therefore submit to God, Resist the Devil and he will flee from you
- V8 – Draw near to God and He will draw near to you
- V10 – Humble yourself in the sight of the Lord and He will lift you up

### Prayer

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

*Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) <sup>12</sup> For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

### **In Every Study**

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

*Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) <sup>16</sup> Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need*

**Passage:** James 4:13 – 5:12

**Title:** The Test of Dependence & Endurance

**Summary:** The Book of James, this epistle speaks clearly of the things that get the Christian distracted, off course, and how to get back on course and head in the direction God has willed for our lives. In our passage today we have a clear call of God to examine our dependence (do we plan our day or allow God to plan our day), and secondly..... when life gets tough do we endure, or check-out. Join us as we dig into another passage of how we can live the victorious Christian life.... Today!

*James 4:13–17 (NKJV)* <sup>13</sup> Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit"; <sup>14</sup> whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. <sup>15</sup> Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that." <sup>16</sup> But now you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil. <sup>17</sup> Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.

*James 5:1–6 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon you! <sup>2</sup> Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. <sup>3</sup> Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have heaped up treasure in the last days. <sup>4</sup> Indeed the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out; and the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. <sup>5</sup> You have lived on the earth in pleasure and luxury; you have fattened your hearts as in a day of slaughter. <sup>6</sup> You have condemned, you have murdered the just; he does not resist you.

*James 5:7–12 (NKJV)* <sup>7</sup> Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain. <sup>8</sup> You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. <sup>9</sup> Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door! <sup>10</sup> My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience. <sup>11</sup> Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful. <sup>12</sup> But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath. But let your "Yes" be "Yes," and your "No," "No," lest you fall into judgment.

## Illustration

Maybe you heard or read the story, as we here in our region live in what is known as the Chesapeake Bay. A large container ship, carrying close to 5,000 cargo containers, ran aground because it veered off course, and was stuck in the mud of the Bay for over a month. The reason being..... the pilot was on his cellphone and simply missed his turn. What is equally interesting is that one of the officers knew they were going off course, announced the errant direction (161 degrees), he did it three times, but did not say clearly to the distracted pilot, that 180 degrees was the correction heading. So 19 degrees off was all it took to run aground.

Coast Guard: Ever Forward Pilot Distracted By Cell Phone Prior to Grounding

Mike Schuler

December 7, 2022

U.S. Coast Guard Sector Maryland-National Capitol Region completed its marine casualty investigation into the incident on Tuesday.

Coast Guard investigators found that the embarked Maritime State Pilot was relying solely on his Portable Pilot Unit (PPU) to navigate the vessel as it departed Seagirt Marine Terminal in Baltimore, Maryland en route to Norfolk, Virginia, with 4,964 containers aboard.

During the course of the outbound transit, investigators discovered the pilot made a series of five phone calls amounting to over 60 minutes. He also sent two text messages and began drafting an email immediately before the grounding occurred regarding issues he experienced with line handlers back at the terminals—issues that slightly delayed the vessel's departure. A few minutes before the grounding took place, the pilot had also exited the active navigation of his PPU to view a previous transit.

The Hong Kong-flagged ship grounded a little after 8:18 p.m. local time outside the Craighill Channel, east of Lighted Buoy 16, after failing to turn at its charted waypoint, while traveling at a speed of approximately 13 knots.

Ever Forward's Master was not on the bridge at the time of the grounding, as he had departed more than a half hour before to get dinner. On the bridge at the time was the Third Officer, Deck Cadet, and an Able Bodied Seaman, who was at the helm, along with the pilot.

"At approximately 2017, the Third Officer announced on the bridge that the vessel's heading was 161 degrees and speed was approximately 13 knots. Pilot 1 verbally acknowledged the Third Officer and took no action. The Third Officer stated that the Pilot was still looking at his phone at this time," the report said in a timeline of events. The ship ran aground the next minute, at 2018.

The Report of the Investigation determined the incident's causal factors to be the pilot's failure to maintain situational awareness and attention while navigating, and inadequate bridge resource management.

The Ever Forward was eventually refloated with the help of two anchor barges, five large tugboats, and a full moon on April 17, following dredging of more than 200,000 cubic yards of material from around the vessel and the removal of 505 containers.

Based on the finding of facts, the Coast Guard is recommending that marine operators develop and implement effective policies outlining when the use of cell phones and other portable electronic devices is appropriate or prohibited, and that vessel owners and operators ensure and promote crew awareness of policies regarding the duties and obligations of officers on watch for the safety of the ship, even when a pilot is embarked.

### **The Test of Dependence and Endurance**

I love the Book of James, as this epistle speaks clearly of the things that get the Christian distracted, off course, and how to get back on course and head in the direction God has willed for our lives. In our passage today we have a clear call of God to examine our dependence (do we plan our day or allow God to plan our day), and secondly..... when life gets tough do we endure, or check-out. Join us as we dig into another passage of how we can live the victorious Christian life.... Today!

### **Written by James / Didn't believe – to Leader / Hindsight / Everyday Living**

The Book of James was written by none other than Jesus' brother James. James was a leader in the church, a pillar in the church (Acts 21). James didn't believe that Jesus was God when He walked this earth (John 7:5); but after the resurrection Jesus appears to him (1 Cor 15:4-7), and everything changed. James is going to write us this letter, he will talk about everyday practical stuff. He will talk about trials in life, our works, our tongue, prayer, and other things; as he writes these things, no doubt he will be remembering how Jesus handled them, reflecting back on watching situations, and watching his oldest brother. He will reflect on Jesus' life of love, and a life of sinlessness, in a world that can be so hateful at times, and so full of sin. James will write these things based on hindsight, based on first hand witnessing of how his older brother lived life, everyday. James watched Jesus handle everyday life, and that is what this book is about; it is about living everyday life as a Follower of God, in a fallen world.

### **Jesus Rubbed Off / Nature Illustrations / Favorite Teacher - Sermon on Mount**

We can see how much Jesus rubbed off on James, for James style resembles his brother so much. Like Jesus used nature as illustrations for His teaching points, so does James some 30 times. He uses nature analogies such as the sea, flowers, sun, fire, horses and ships to name a few). It is obvious who James favorite teacher was, because this epistle covers every topic that Jesus covered in the Sermon on the Mount. There is amazing parallelisms between the two; James does not actually quote the Lord's words, but he obviously had internalized Jesus' teachings and reproduced them with spiritual depth. Jesus covered about 30 topics in the Sermon on the Mount, and we will see that James touches on every one of them in this epistle. The Book of James is Sermon on the Mount 2. The Book is also very quick and concise, moving from thought-to-thought quickly. So the Book of James is the New Testament Version of the Old Testament Proverbs. It resembles Proverbs because it is very poetic the way it flows its thoughts using illustrations and analogies.

### **So We can Examine Self / How am I Doing**

Jesus gave the Sermon on the Mount so that we might examine ourselves and ask the question, "so how am I doing in each of these areas?" James writes to the church, to us, and as we read, we have to ask ourselves, "so how am I doing in these areas?" This book is practical and applicable for us living in the year 2022, and the ultimate goal of this epistle is giving to us in verse 4 of chapter 1, to bring us into maturity, perfect and lacking nothing.

As in school, we take tests to see how much of a handle and mastery we have on a subject, we will do the same in this book.

### **3 Key Verses**

Here are three key verses to get us going:

*James 2:20 (NKJV)<sup>20</sup> But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?*

*James 1:22 (NKJV)<sup>22</sup> But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.*

**James 1:4–5 (NKJV)** <sup>4</sup> But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. <sup>5</sup> If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

### The Outline of the Book of James:

#### Chapter 1

- Introduction (1:1)
- The Test of Perseverance and Suffering (1:2-12)
- The Test of Blame in Temptation (1:12-18)
- The Test of Response to the Word (1:19-27)

#### Chapter 2

- The Test of Partiality (2:1-9)
- The Test of the Law (2:10-13)
- The Test of Faith and Works (2:14-26)

#### Chapter 3

- The Test of the Tongue (3:1-12)
- The Test of Wisdom Applied (3:13-18)

#### Chapter 4

- The Test of the World's Influence (4:1-12)
- The Test of Dependence (4:13-5:6)

#### Chapter 5

- The Test of Endurance (5:7-12)
- The Test of Prayerfulness (5:13-20)

### **Their Going Through It / A Message to Endure**

We started this book out with:

*(James 1:1 NKJV) James, a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad: Greetings.*

*(James 1:2 NKJV) My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials,*

These people are going through it, no doubt many are ready to hang it up. Have you, or are you there? Well this is a message, a passage, for us to endure, to continue on, to hold on to the promises that God has given us. In this passage of James God gives encouragement, and a promise to hold on to.

### Prayer

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

**Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV)** <sup>12</sup> For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

### **In Every Study**

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

**Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV)** <sup>16</sup> Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need

### The Test of Dependence (4:13-5:6)

**(James 4:13 NKJV)** Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit";

**(James 4:14 NKJV)** whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.

**Life is a Vapor**

Have you ever noticed how rapidly vapor vanishes? Next time you get out the vaporizer, as the steam comes off the vaporizer or you put on the teakettle and the steam comes out, notice how quickly the steam evaporates into the air—five seconds, seven seconds? What is life? It's like a vapor, it's just there for a moment and then vanishes. Seven seconds compared with eternity! It's just as there, we're us here just a moment. But then there's eternity

## Vapor

Life is a vapor we're told and the word is then back to our study last week and why are you warring with each other why are you at war with each other your life is so short why do you waste it selfish reasons **James 4:1–3 (NKJV)** <sup>1</sup> Where do wars and fights *come* from among you? Do *they not come* from your *desires for pleasure that war* in your members? <sup>2</sup> You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. <sup>3</sup> You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend *it* on your pleasures.

**(James 4:15 NKJV) Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that."**

**(James 4:16 NKJV) But now you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil.**

### Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:

*(Matthew 6:9 NKJV) "In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name.*

*(Matthew 6:10 NKJV) Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven.*

*(Matthew 6:11 NKJV) Give us this day our daily bread.*

*(Matthew 6:12 NKJV) And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors.*

*(Matthew 6:13 NKJV) And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.*

## Arrogance

Arrogance - This attitude overlooks the simple fact that we don't even know what will happen tomorrow; we are like 'a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes'. It is hard to see how anybody could be dominated by self-interest and self-assertion when Scripture says, 'You're like a mist'! Instead of this arrogant, self-sufficient, self-assertive, self-interested lifestyle, which is the antithesis of a humble dependence on God and obedience to his commands, we ought to be saying, 'If this is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that' (verse 15). And if you persist in arrogance and refuse to humble yourself, you're not just creating all kinds of division and tension in your marriage, family and church; to put it bluntly, you're sinning. Because if you know the way to go, and you won't do it, that's rebellion. (Briscoe)

## If the Lord Will

So we ought to say, if the Lord wills, we shall live and we'll do this or that—if the Lord wills! And we should always take that factor into all of our planning. If this is the will of God, this is what we hope to accomplish. These plans are subject to the will of God. My life is subject to the will of God—if the Lord wills.

## DV

The writer emphasized the need for considering the will of God in making plans. At one time when Christians wrote of future plans in correspondence they used the letters D.V. They stand for the Latin words Deo volente, that is, "God willing."

*Harris, R. W., ed. (1989). Hebrews–Jude (p. 239). World Library Press.*

## Proper Planning / Life is a Vapor

There is definitely a place for proper planning, the Book of Proverbs teaches us that, but trusting in my planning is evil. Our hope must be in the Lord, we are not to have tremendous confidence in the things we are planning for it can, like life, be a vapor. To watch people invest their whole life into something that is apart from the Lord, and then to watch it, or their marriage, go down into a vapors is such a waste of life:

*(Matthew 6:19 NKJV) "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal;*

*(Matthew 6:20 NKJV) "but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.*

*(Matthew 6:21 NKJV) "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

## Cliché

If the Lord will has become such a cliché now among the body of Christ and the church becomes kind of a caveat that no one truly really believes or yields to. Because the most part people determine this is my plan and this is what I'm going to do and that's the direction I'm going and then if for some reason it doesn't play out I'll say OK the Lord's will. But there is a total power if we wake up and say Lord what is your will I want to do your will please direct me in your will and let's go and carry forth the will that you have for me on this day and see the difference is we're starting the day or we're processing and heading in the direction that in our heart mind and soul we're saying I'm doing what is the will of God and I'm going to ask him to come alongside me and be part of his will and his desire or maybe better said I'm coming alongside the Lord to do and fulfill what his will and his desire is for that person place or thing as I am just a vessel for the Lord to flow through. Oh Lord may we live lives that in all of our doing and dealings we say Lord what is your will give me the wisdom of your will and give me the power to carry forth your will which comes straight from the heart of God.

## What Have Me Do

A power start of any day and every day is "Lord what will you have me do today.... So that I might bring You glory!".

And living in brevity, that life is a vapor, but God holds my very breath in His hand, therefore "He (GOD) is holding me right now. I rest in the sweetness that my life rests in Him.

[Daniel 5:22–23 \(NKJV\)](#) <sup>22</sup> "But you his son, Belshazzar, have not humbled your heart, although you knew all this. <sup>23</sup> And you have lifted yourself up against the Lord of heaven. They have brought the vessels of His house before you, and you and your lords, your wives and your concubines, have drunk wine from them. And you have praised the gods of silver and gold, bronze and iron, wood and stone, which do not see or hear or know; and the God who *holds* your breath in His hand and owns all your ways, you have not glorified.

[Job 12:10 \(NKJV\)](#) <sup>10</sup> *In whose hand is the life of every living thing, And the breath of all mankind?*

**(James 4:17 NKJV) Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.**

## Not Optional

To do good, to do the right thing, is not optional

There are those who say, "I'm going to do this. I'm going to retire there. I've got my future all worked out." But when asked if they're going to church on Sunday or if they'll have devotions tomorrow, they say, "If the Lord wills." Do you see the irony? "I'm going skiing next week, or on vacation in July," we say. But regarding church tomorrow night, we say, "We'll see what God has in store." We have it backward! We should be saying, "I may go skiing next week if God wills. Or, I may take a vacation in July if that's what the Lord has for me. But as for going to church on Sunday? I'll be there absolutely!" That's why James says, "If you know what's right, but hide behind the excuse of waiting for God's leading before doing it, it's sin."

This is what we call the sin of omission. Now there are many sins of commission. I commit an evil. But there are also many sins of omission. Things that I should do that I don't do are just as sinful as things that I do that I shouldn't do. And as a child of God, there are many things that are required of me. And if I know to do good and I have the opportunity to do good, and I don't do it, it is just as sinful as doing something I should not have done—sins of omission. And we're all of us, guilty of both. Sins of omissions, sins of commission

## Love Lord – Love Neighbor

Mind you, verse 17 (to know to do good), wraps tightly around the Royal Law, which is love the Lord your God, and love thy neighbor. So to know a neighbor in need, and not respond is sin; to know the heart and will of God (whether sin, or any command) is sin.

[James 2:8 \(NKJV\)](#) <sup>8</sup> *If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well;*

[Matthew 22:37–40 \(NKJV\)](#) <sup>37</sup> *Jesus said to him, " 'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' <sup>38</sup> This is the first and great commandment. <sup>39</sup> And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' <sup>40</sup> On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."*

**(James 5:1 NKJV) Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon you!**

**(James 5:2 NKJV) Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten.**

### **40yrs God Kept Them**

I am reminded of the children in their wilderness wandering, yes because of lack of faith, but nonetheless the 40 year circle they walked was still walking where God had purposed and willed for them. And we know the story, their shoes and garments didn't wear out or rot, for it was supernatural. Yet, our our purposed will, or seeking and trusting in riches, rot, fade, or are stolen.

*Deuteronomy 8:4 (NKJV) <sup>4</sup> Your garments did not wear out on you, nor did your foot swell these forty years.*

*Deuteronomy 29:5 (NKJV) <sup>5</sup> And I have led you forty years in the wilderness. Your clothes have not worn out on you, and your sandals have not worn out on your feet.*

**(James 5:3 NKJV) Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have heaped up treasure in the last days.**

### **Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:**

*(Matthew 6:19 NKJV) "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal;*

Interestingly, gold doesn't corrode, and it takes a lot of time and certain conditions for silver to corrode.

**(James 5:4 NKJV) Indeed the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out; and the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.**

No doubt, referencing the Lord of the Sabbath, is making an indictment against the cruel and greedy business people who overworked their employees, and worked every possible day they could, giving no day off to worship the Lord and fellowship among the saints.

God is not condemning wealth, but if giving the warning to each person (remember this written to the believers), you wealth came by

- What means (harsh business, shady business, cruel business).
- What attitude (proud and take credit for it all, not God).
- And how is it utilized, used (for self only or others).

**(James 5:5 NKJV) You have lived on the earth in pleasure and luxury; you have fattened your hearts as in a day of slaughter.**

Jesus gave a picture of this in His teachings:

*(Luke 12:16 NKJV) Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully.*

*(Luke 12:17 NKJV) "And he thought within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?'*

*(Luke 12:18 NKJV) "So he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods.*

*(Luke 12:19 NKJV) 'And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry."*

*(Luke 12:20 NKJV) "But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?'*

### **The Great Tribulation**

Revelation 18, shows the ultimate culmination of this on the earth, and God judges swiftly, in one hour, he crushes man's economic center, and man's self-dependence, He leaves them weeping:

*(Revelation 18:1 NKJV) After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated with his glory.*

*(Revelation 18:2 NKJV) And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird!*

*(Revelation 18:3 NKJV) "For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury."*

*(Revelation 18:4 NKJV) And I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues.*

*(Revelation 18:5 NKJV) "For her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities.*

*(Revelation 18:8 NKJV) "Therefore her plagues will come in one day; death and mourning and famine. And she will be utterly burned with fire, for strong is the Lord God who judges her.*

*(Revelation 18:9 NKJV) "The kings of the earth who committed fornication and lived luxuriously with her will weep and lament for her, when they see the smoke of her burning,*

*(Revelation 18:10 NKJV) "standing at a distance for fear of her torment, saying, 'Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! For in one hour your judgment has come.'*

*(Revelation 18:11 NKJV) "And the merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her, for no one buys their merchandise anymore:*

God says to rejoice, for man's self-dependence on riches has lead many to the pit of hell:

*(Revelation 18:20 NKJV) "Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you holy apostles and prophets, for God has avenged you on her!"*

*(Revelation 18:21 NKJV) Then a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, "Thus with violence the great city Babylon shall be thrown down, and shall not be found anymore.*

### **Remember Abraham and Lot / Destruction of Sodom**

Refer back to our studies on the life of Abraham and Lot (Genesis 19). Lot and wife were devastated over the destruction of Sodom, but as for Abraham I am sure He was sad for the people, but not for the material loss, for Abraham's life was defined by two things, he pitched tents and built altars. Abraham had not invested a dime in Sodom, and when judgement came it did not disturb him because there was nothing in Sodom that attracted him.

**(James 5:6 NKJV) You have condemned, you have murdered the just; he does not resist you.**

This epistle is written to believers, so they are not murdering physically (else the call for justice), but they are murdering (as we studied last week), by having hatred in their hearts, for Jesus said in Matthew 5 if you have hatred towards a brother/sister you are guilty of murder:

*Matthew 5:21–26 (NKJV) <sup>21</sup> "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.' <sup>22</sup> But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!' shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell fire. <sup>23</sup> Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, <sup>24</sup> leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. <sup>25</sup> Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are on the way with him, lest your adversary deliver you to the judge, the judge hand you over to the officer, and you be thrown into prison. <sup>26</sup> Assuredly, I say to you, you will by no means get out of there till you have paid the last penny.*

It is a small "h" for "he" does not resist you. These greedy people were dependent on their wealth, and ran their workers into the ground, many who were their own brothers and sisters in the Lord.

But other translations make it a capital "H", He as in God, does not resist you. This passage grips me greatly, because I see in it, regardless which "h/H" it is..... that a person (that means it could be me – or you), could be so induced by their sin (condemning/murder)

So, the Test of Dependence (do we plan our day and dealings, or do we let God), so how are we doing?

### **The Test of Endurance (5:7-12)**

**(James 5:7 NKJV) Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain.**

### **Perspective – King is Coming**

Verse 7 – until the coming of the Lord: the Lord coming is the perspective of all of this and it should be the center of every test that's soon and very soon we're going to see the king.

Hebrews 10:25, why we need and should be in fellowship, to remind each other the King is coming. It is part of communion, the reminder that the Lord is returning.

**Hebrews 10:25 (NKJV) <sup>25</sup> not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.**

**1 Corinthians 11:22–26 (NKJV)** <sup>22</sup> What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise *you*. <sup>23</sup> For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the *same* night in which He was betrayed took bread; <sup>24</sup> and when He had given thanks, He broke *it* and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." <sup>25</sup> In the same manner *He* also *took* the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink *it*, in remembrance of Me." <sup>26</sup> For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

### **The Farmer & Seed**

The farmer has to trust the seed, to do what it was designed to do. So too for us, as we are firstfruits of His creation:

**James 1:18 (NKJV)** <sup>18</sup> *Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.*

**(James 5:8 NKJV)** **You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.**

### **Establish – the Weighty Things**

Establish means "strengthen", and there is something that can only come and be done in the struggle, the hard things, the waiting..... last weeks message, the "kabod – glory", the weighty things.

### **Illustration**

An amazing story is told of our 1<sup>st</sup> President George Washington. I find it a great reminder and application, for all of us, that God has a plan, and most all times they take time to come to fullness, but nothing nor no one can stop God's plan for our lives. Maybe that Word is very, very, very a word some young people need to hear as they are waiting and wondering what God is doing in their lives.

*The French and Indian War: Account of a British Officer - JULY 9, 1755*  
*The American Indian chief looked scornfully at the soldiers on the field before him. How foolish it was to fight as they did, forming their perfect battle lines out in the open, standing shoulder to shoulder in their bright red uniforms. The British soldiers—trained for European warfare—did not break rank, even when braves fired at them from under the safe cover of the forest. The slaughter at the Monongahela River continued for two hours. By then 1,000 of 1,459 British soldiers were killed or wounded, while only 30 of the French and Indian warriors firing at them were injured.*

*Not only were the soldiers foolish, but their officers were just as bad. Riding on horseback, fully exposed above the men on the ground, they made perfect targets. One by one, the chief's marksmen shot the mounted British officers until only one remained.*

*"Quick, let your aim be certain and he dies," the chief commanded. The warriors—a mix of Ottawa, Huron, and Chippewa tribesmen—leveled their rifles at the last officer on horseback. Round after round was aimed at this one man. Twice the officer's horse was shot out from under him. Twice he grabbed a horse left idle when a fellow officer had been shot down. Ten, twelve, thirteen rounds were fired by the sharpshooters. Still, the officer remained unhurt.*

*The native warriors stared at him in disbelief. Their rifles seldom missed their mark. The chief suddenly realized that a mighty power must be shielding this man. "Stop firing!" he commanded. "This one is under the special protection of the Great Spirit." A brave standing nearby added, "I had seventeen clear shots at him . . . and after all could not bring him to the ground. This man was not born to be killed by a bullet."*

*As the firing slowed, the lieutenant colonel gathered the remaining troops and led the retreat to safety. That evening, as the last of the wounded were being cared for, the officer noticed an odd tear in his coat. It was a bullet hole! He rolled up his sleeve and looked at his arm directly under the hole. There was no mark on his skin. Amazed, he took off his coat and found three more holes where bullets had passed through his coat but stopped before they reached his body.*

*Nine days after the battle, having heard a rumor of his own death, the young lieutenant colonel wrote his brother to confirm that he was still very much alive.*

*As I have heard since my arrival at this place, a circumstantial account of my death and dying speech, I take this early opportunity of contradicting the first and of assuring you that I have not as yet composed the latter. But by the all-powerful dispensations of Providence I have been protected beyond all human probability or expectation; for I had four bullets through my coat, and two horses shot under me yet escaped unhurt, although death was leveling my companions on every side of me!*

*The battle on the Monongahela, part of the French and Indian War, was fought on July 9, 1755, near Fort Duquesne, now the city of Pittsburgh. The twenty-three-year-old officer went on to become the commander in chief of the Continental Army and the first president of the United States. In all the years that followed in his long career, this man, George Washington, was never once wounded in battle.*

*Fifteen years later, in 1770, George Washington returned to the same Pennsylvania woods. A respected Indian chief, having heard that Washington was in the area, traveled a long way to meet with him.*

*He sat down with Washington, and face-to-face over a council fire, the chief told Washington the following:*

- *I am a chief and ruler over my tribes. My influence extends to the waters of the great lakes and to the far blue mountains. I have traveled a long and weary path that I might see the young warrior of the great battle. It was on the day when the white man's blood mixed with the streams of our forests that I first beheld this chief [Washington].*
- *I called to my young men and said, "Mark yon tall and daring warrior? He is not of the red-coat tribe—he hath an Indian's wisdom and his warriors fight as we do—himself alone exposed. Quick, let your aim be certain, and he dies."*
- *Our rifles were leveled, rifles which, but for you, knew not how to miss—'twas all in vain, a power mightier far than we shielded you.*
- *Seeing you were under the special guardianship of the Great Spirit, we immediately ceased to fire at you. I am old and shall soon be gathered to the great council fire of my fathers in the land of the shades, but ere I go, there is something bids me speak in the voice of prophecy:*
- *Listen! The Great Spirit protects that man [pointing at Washington], and guides his destinies—he will become the chief of nations, and a people yet unborn will hail him as the founder of a mighty empire. I am come to pay homage to the man who is the particular favorite of Heaven, and who can never die in battle.*

*This story of God's divine protection and of Washington's open gratitude could be found in many school textbooks until the 1930s. Now few Americans have read it. Washington often recalled this dramatic event that helped shape his character and confirm God's call on his life.*

- *Though a thousand fall at your side,  
though ten thousand are dying around you,  
these evils will not touch you.*  
PSALM 91:7 NLT

*Tait, M. with TobyMac. (2004). Under God. Bethany House.*

**(James 5:9 NKJV) Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door!**

**Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:**

*(Matthew 7:1 NKJV) "Judge not, that you be not judged.*

*(Matthew 7:2 NKJV) "For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you.*

**Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:**

*(Matthew 5:12 NKJV) "Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.*

**Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:**

*(Matthew 7:15 NKJV) "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves.*

*(Matthew 7:16 NKJV) "You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles?*

*(Matthew 7:17 NKJV) "Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit.*

*(Matthew 7:18 NKJV) "A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit.*

*(Matthew 7:19 NKJV) "Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.*

*(Matthew 7:20 NKJV) "Therefore by their fruits you will know them.*

**Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:**

*(Matthew 5:6 NKJV) Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled.*

*(Matthew 5:7 NKJV) Blessed are the merciful, For they shall obtain mercy.*

Those who judge, critic, slander, takedown, gossip another..... will face the Judge (God), for God looks out for those who are being mistreated.

See people judge complain and war against others but really it is against God because they don't trust God can do or will do what they desire.

I think of Sarah and Abraham where she says take my handmaiden Hagar we're going to birth something even if it means birthing by some other means than God's way and sadly we see so many people birthing things that are anything but God's will and God's way.

**(James 5:10 NKJV) My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience.**

**(James 5:11 NKJV) Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord; that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.**

## **Devil Fueled**

Job we know the story of his perseverance, but let us not forget the fueling behind it, all the turmoil and torment that came upon, was fueled by devil. Remember that, that many of your struggles against you is because of spiritual warfare. Be encouraged in your struggle that God sees you, counted you worthy to represent Him before the world, that is my champion who endures, and doesn't quit. And be warmed, that in your struggle, hardship, long wait..... that God sees and His heart is moved towards you, and (verse 11), is "very" not just a little, compassionate and merciful, for what you are going through.

*James 3:15 (NKJV) <sup>15</sup> This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic.*

*James 4:7 (NKJV) <sup>7</sup> Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.*

## **Wait Beloved – It Shall Come to Pass**

### **Empty Promise / Hasn't Happened / Strength Just to Take It**

Initially it takes all the faith in the world just to hold on to it, its empty, it's just a promise, it isn't real, it hasn't happened, we are so far from it in a matter of fact that just to believe that it could ever be so takes all the strength in us just to claim it. Just to take that verse and put it in our pocket, or post it on the refrigerator, or tack it to the mirror and say I believe it God. It almost seems ludicrous to even claim it for it seems so unattainable. Just to believe it and hold it out for a few moments at a time takes all we got.

### **Learn Twice / 1<sup>st</sup> Hear it's a Wonderful Concept / Now Try It Out**

So often that is how God works, for everything we learn, we have to learn twice. The first time we hear it we say ohh yes, that is wonderful, it rings true in our hearts once we read it, or hear it preached. We say yes, this is true. But it isn't yours yet for you haven't learned it yet, for all you got was the concept. God has a way of giving something to us and then he comes and says do you believe it? Then let's try it out. That is when we so often say ohh no Lord, not me, I just wanted to subscribe to it, I don't actually want to try it. I don't want to endure all that comes with it, all that it is going to take to make it come to pass. I just want it to come to pass, I don't want to go through the testing and endurance it will take to get there.

### **Sharing with Others / Words Mock Us / Trouble Holding on to them Myself**

How many times in our lives we have preached or shared things with others, things I believe theologically to be true, but experientially I am still struggling with personally. At the very same time I am sharing these things with others, those very promises are mocking me for they have not yet be fully claimed by me. I am having trouble holding on to these things myself, they are just empty potato bags.

### **God gives and Says Hold on to Them / But They seem so Far Away**

God has a way that He works with us; He gives us a promise about our marriage, finances, children, health, or ministry where He calls us and gives it to us and says claim these as your own. But at the time it is given to us it may be far far away.

## **Our Family**

He gives us a word for our family like:

*(Psalms 128:3 NKJV) Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine In the very heart of your house, Your children like olive plants All around your table.*

*(Isaiah 44:3 NKJV) For I will pour water on him who is thirsty, And floods on the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, And My blessing on your offspring;*

*(Isaiah 54:13 NKJV) All your children shall be taught by the LORD, And great shall be the peace of your children.*

*(Isaiah 54:14 NKJV) In righteousness you shall be established; You shall be far from oppression, for you shall not fear; And from terror, for it shall not come near you.*

### **Israel in Shambles / Empty Sacks / Maybe That's You**

When these promises were given to the people of Israel their nation was in shambles and chaos. Yet these promises were given to be claimed. Imagine what it must have been for Isaiah to have to preach this promise. It was like an empty potato sack, it was just a promise, the people would want to claim it, but how. Maybe that is your family today, God has given you a promise about your family, but it is in shambles and you ask how could that be God, it seems so far away. Yet God says take these sacks and hold on to them.

## **Our Salvation**

He gives us a word about our salvation:

*(James 5:7 NKJV) Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain.*

*(James 5:8 NKJV) You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.*

## **People Dispersed / Empty Sacks / Maybe that's You**

These people James was writing to were dispersed, they were spread out from family and home, everything seemed so far away, especially the coming of the Lord. But the Lord says hold on to your sack, hold on to these promises. Maybe your walk has become dry, lifeless, like the Lord seems so far away, God says hold on to your promise, hold on to your sack, it will come to pass

## **Our Provisions**

He gives us a word for our daily provision:

*(Psalms 147:14 NKJV) He makes peace in your borders, And fills you with the finest wheat.*

*(Joel 2:26 NKJV) You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, And praise the name of the LORD your God, Who has dealt wondrously with you; And My people shall never be put to shame.*

## **Making Ends Meet – How / God says Claim It**

You are just trying to make ends meet and you hear this word and you say Lord how could it ever be. Yet God gives us a promise and says claim-it. Now I'm not talking name it claim it, you know that. But we are to take God at His word, His promise, and know they will come to pass.

## **Our Marriage**

He gives us a word for our marriage:

*(Genesis 2:24 NKJV) Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.*

*(Proverbs 5:18 NKJV) Let your fountain be blessed, And rejoice with the wife of your youth.*

## **Not Much Rejoicing / Not Much Unity**

You may say there isn't much rejoicing going on in our marriage, there isn't much unity, but God says claim this, take it, trust and rely on me and me only.

## **Our Protection**

He gives us a word for His protection upon us:

*(Psalms 27:1 NKJV) The LORD is my light and my salvation; Whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; Of whom shall I be afraid?*

## **David in a Cave**

David at the time he writes this was in a cave surrounded by 3,000 men of Israel, no way out, waiting to kill him, yet he writes you light and my protection. Is there is something you are afraid of today? Has God given you a word and a promise not to fear, then He says hold on to your promise.

## **Our Ministry**

He gives us a word for our ministry:

*(Acts 9:15 NKJV) But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel.*

## **To Use You**

Maybe God has given you a word, a Scripture, a Vision of using you for His glory, but right now you seem to be stuck in neutral, or maybe you have blown it and you question if that was really from the Lord. That the promise seems so impossible that it couldn't be from the Lord.

**(James 5:12 NKJV) But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath. But let your "Yes," be "Yes," and your "No," "No," lest you fall into judgment.**

Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:

*(Matthew 5:33 NKJV) "Again you have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform your oaths to the Lord.'*

*(Matthew 5:34 NKJV) "But I say to you, do not swear at all: neither by heaven, for it is God's throne;*

*(Matthew 5:35 NKJV) "nor by the earth, for it is His footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King.*

*(Matthew 5:36 NKJV) "Nor shall you swear by your head, because you cannot make one hair white or black.*

*(Matthew 5:37 NKJV) "But let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No.' For whatever is more than these is from the evil one.*

Not only are we to be doers of the word (and not hearers only), but we need to be doers of our word, and do what we said we were and would do.

**James 1:22 (NKJV)** <sup>22</sup> But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

### **Slipped in Here**

This verse is kind of slipped in here between the Test of Endurance and the Test of Prayerfulness. But it is really something that we need to have consistency and endurance in, and we need to continually be praying that the Lord would make us man and woman of our Word. We need the power of God to do that.

### **But Above All**

Interesting, all the things that James has said (glance at the book outline), yet he says "but above all", let your yes be yes. Why, because our words are important, as we have studied they either delight or they destroy, they communicate what is truly in our hearts, what type of person we really are.

### **In Accordance of All we have Studied**

James says do what you say, say what you will do, all in accordance with what we have studied, in the integrity of what we have studied, do it in accordance to what we have studied and you will never have to promise, just says what you are going to do and people will believe that is what you will do, you will never have to promise because your words are promise enough.

### **Teaching Our Kids This**

Letting your yes be yes, and your no, no, is one of the most powerful witnesses a Christian has. I go through this a lot with my 10 year old. He will say something to a friend, but then a better deal comes along in the meantime and he wants to change. I tell him that he has to let his yes be yes, for even at 10 your friends will see it. Parents develop this in your child, let them see the importance of their words, and their promises.

### **God Honors Your Yes**

Know this believer, God honors your yes - yes. He will bless it because you submitted to His Word, and not your emotions or flesh.

The Test of Endurance, so how are we doing?

### **Prayer**

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

**Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV)** <sup>12</sup> For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

### **In Every Study**

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

**Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV)** <sup>16</sup> Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need

**Passage:** James 5:13-20

**Title:** The Test of Prayerfulness

**Summary:** We close this wonderful book with the “Test of Prayerfulness”. Prayer is our power source. The disciples came to Jesus and said teach us to pray. I find that so interesting that they didn’t say master teach us how to preach, teach us how to perform miracles, teach us how to walk on water, but they asked, teach us to pray. They knew the power in it, for they observed by personal observation that Jesus power came through His prayer time with the Father. They saw it in His preaching, evangelism, miracles, loving on the kids to the compassion on a sick woman. They could see that all those things tied back to His prayer and commune with the Father. That all success and fruit flowed from His prayer life. And now we get practical guidance and application for our prayer lives as we close this wonderful epistle out.

*James 5:13–20 (NKJV)* <sup>13</sup> Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms. <sup>14</sup> Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. <sup>15</sup> And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. <sup>16</sup> Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. <sup>17</sup> Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. <sup>18</sup> And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit. <sup>19</sup> Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, <sup>20</sup> let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.

### Prayer

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

*Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV)* <sup>12</sup> For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

### **In Every Study**

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

*Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV)* <sup>16</sup> Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need

### **Written by James / Didn’t believe – to Leader / Hindsight / Everyday Living**

The Book of James was written by none other than Jesus’ brother James. James was a leader in the church, a pillar in the church (Acts 21). James didn’t believe that Jesus was God when He walked this earth (John 7:5); but after the resurrection Jesus appears to him (1 Cor 15:4-7), and everything changed. James is going to write us this letter, he will talk about everyday practical stuff. He will talk about trials in life, our works, our tongue, prayer, and other things; as he writes these things, no doubt he will be remembering how Jesus handled them, reflecting back on watching situations, and watching his oldest brother. He will reflect on Jesus’ life of love, and a life of sinlessness, in a world that can be so hateful at times, and so full of sin. James will write these things based on hindsight, based on first hand witnessing of how his older brother lived life, everyday. James watched Jesus handle everyday life, and that is what this book is about; it is about living everyday life as a Follower of God, in a fallen world.

### **Jesus Rubbed Off / Nature Illustrations / Favorite Teacher - Sermon on Mount**

We can see how much Jesus rubbed off on James, for James style resembles his brother so much. Like Jesus used nature as illustrations for His teaching points, so does James some 30 times. He uses nature analogies such as the sea, flowers, sun, fire, horses and ships to name a few). It is obvious who James favorite teacher was, because this epistle covers every topic that Jesus covered in the Sermon on the Mount. There is amazing parallelisms between the two; James does not actually quote the Lord’s words, but he obviously had internalized Jesus’ teachings and reproduced them with spiritual depth. Jesus covered about 30 topics in the Sermon on the Mount, and we will see that James touches on every one of them in this epistle. The Book of James is Sermon on the Mount 2. The Book is also very quick and concise, moving from thought-to-thought quickly. So the Book of James is the New Testament Version of the Old Testament Proverbs. It resembles Proverbs because it is very poetic the way it flows its thoughts using illustrations and analogies.

### **So We can Examine Self / How am I Doing**

Jesus gave the Sermon on the Mount so that we might examine ourselves and ask the question, “so how am I doing in each of these areas?” James writes to the church, to us, and as we read, we have to ask ourselves, “so how am I doing in these areas?” This book is practical and applicable for us living in the year 2022, and the ultimate goal of this epistle is giving to us in verse 4 of chapter 1, to bring us into maturity, perfect and lacking nothing.

As in school, we take tests to see how much of a handle and mastery we have on a subject, we will do the same in this book.

### **3 Key Verses**

Here are three key verses to get us going:

*James 2:20 (NKJV)*<sup>20</sup> *But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?*

*James 1:22 (NKJV)*<sup>22</sup> *But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.*

*James 1:4–5 (NKJV)*<sup>4</sup> *But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.* <sup>5</sup> *If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.*

### The Outline of the Book of James:

#### Chapter 1

- Introduction (1:1)
- The Test of Perseverance and Suffering (1:2-12)
- The Test of Blame in Temptation (1:12-18)
- The Test of Response to the Word (1:19-27)

#### Chapter 2

- The Test of Partiality (2:1-9)
- The Test of the Law (2:10-13)
- The Test of Faith and Works (2:14-26)

#### Chapter 3

- The Test of the Tongue (3:1-12)
- The Test of Wisdom Applied (3:13-18)

#### Chapter 4

- The Test of the World's Influence (4:1-12)
- The Test of Dependence (4:13-5:6)

#### Chapter 5

- The Test of Endurance (5:7-12)
- The Test of Prayerfulness (5:13-20)

### **Intensely Practical / In Your Face / Hebrews / Earthly Scene /Promised Blessing**

This book is an intensely practical book that packs a powerful punch. James is the kinda book that is in your face, and get it right. In Hebrews we explored the heavenly scene, now James we explore the earthly scene. It was wonderful spending a few months in the heavenlies, I could have stayed in Hebrews for another year, but the fact is until heaven, we are living here (so the blessings of verse-by-verse studying). Studying this book will have a great effect on you, This book is that practical, God even promises us that as we saw last study:

*(James 1:25 NKJV)* *But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.*

### **Test of Prayer / Power Source / Disciples Ask Teach us to Pray**

We close this wonderful book with the “Test of Prayerfulness”. Prayer is our power source. The disciples came to Jesus and said teach us to pray. I find that so interesting that they didn't say master teach us how to preach, teach us how to perform miracles, teach us how to walk on water, but they asked teach us to pray. They knew the power in it, for they observed by personal observation that Jesus power came through His prayer time with the Father. They saw it in His preaching, evangelism, miracles, loving on the kids to the compassion on a sick woman. They could see that all those things tied back to His prayer and commune with the Father. That all success and fruit flowed from His prayer life. And now we get practical guidance and application for our prayer lives as we close this wonderful epistle out.

*(Luke 11:1 KJV) And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.*

We said this epistle is about “Real Faith that shows up in Real life”, and prayer is becomes that ultimate place of faith..... do I trust You enough to come to You and ask. Do I believe in prayer enough that I will dedicate and commit to it, that I believe (by faith), that prayer matters. I believe we end here in our study of this epistle, in prayer, because it truly is the avenue and means that all other places of faith will either be solidified or not. Prayer is where Jesus solidified, entrenched, did not faint and we too have the same opportunity for this “POWER”. We are called to have the mind of Christ, and we will obtain for the majority, through intimacy of prayer. As Jesus would know and learn the will of the Father through prayer, so we shall know and learn the mind of God (Father – Son – Holy Spirit) and receive faith and power for what is before us as we walk in the world.

*Luke 18:1 (NKJV) <sup>1</sup> Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart,*

*Philippians 2:5 (NKJV) <sup>5</sup> Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,*

## **Outline**

Outline: The Test of Prayerfulness (5:13-20)

- The Prayers for the Mind – (5:13)
- The Prayers for the Body – (5:14-15)
- The Prayers for the Soul – (5:16)
- The Prayers of the Righteous – (5:16-20)

## **The Prayers for the Mind – (5:13)**

**(James 5:13 NKJV) Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms.**

### **Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:**

*(Matthew 6:6 NKJV) "But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.*

*(Matthew 6:7 NKJV) "And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words.*

*(Matthew 6:8 NKJV) "Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him.*

### **Sermon on Mount Cross-Reference:**

*(Matthew 6:17 NKJV) "But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face,*

*(Matthew 6:18 NKJV) "so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.*

## **Emotional Troubles**

Verse 13 - Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Suffering - other translations say afflicted or tormented. It is speaking of emotion troubles, not physical ailments (that's next verse). Is there something troubling your emotions, then pray! Go to the Lord first:

*(Jeremiah 33:3 NKJV) 'Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.'*

## **Go to the Lord First**

Don't turn on the television, or go to the bar, but pray. Also, don't go tell everyone; don't email everyone on your distribution list; those things are fine; don't do them until after you pray. We have a tendency to pray after we have done all the other things.

## **Matthew 11:28-30**

Jesus declares Himself gentle and lowly, absolute invitation to “come”., He offers us rest! And the only requirement we need to fulfill as those who are heavy laden..... is to “come”. If you want your prayer life to ignite, remember the nature of Jesus, gentle and lowly, who says.....come. If you want your prayer life to fizzle, forget his nature, that He is gentle and lowly, for His invitation because He cares for you, and think He is distant, unconcerned, or worse that you are in this alone because of your personal failings, and your prayer life will be faithless and empty, and you will continue to live in lacking peace and joy in your life and those personal situations.

*Matthew 11:28–30 (NKJV)*<sup>28</sup> Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup> Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup> For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

### **God Who Sees Me – Me Who Sees God**

I am reminded of the story in Genesis 16 where Abraham is being mistreated afflicted suffering greatly and she goes on the run fleeing. And the Lord appears before her engages her in conversation and Christian what is conversation between the Lord it's simply prayer what is prayer its conversation with the Lord too often we make it more complicated than that in prayer is conversation between two people who love each other the Lord and you. God hears her heart she pours her heart out before Him God speaks a word of strength of comfort of assurance a word of compassion a word of understanding she shares her heart and He understands her heart He meets her in her heart's pain. And this place becomes known as "the well of the living one who sees me", as verse 13 gives us a name and attribute of our heavenly father our God and that is the God who sees (El-Roi). but it doesn't end there and so often we just say (El Roi) the God who sees but Hagar will go over and say something mighty that all of us should lean into and say what is it and that is that she says and I also seen Him who sees me. Beloved not only does He see you in your pain and affliction, but ..... He shows Himself in such a way that we "see Him". I also find it significant that is a well, for wells tap into an underground unseen source, many into underground rivers, or caverns, and I think of the invitation from the Lord today to come all who are thirsty and drink from the well of life, and that He is the Living water, and He promises rivers of living water. Yes, even when we are hurting and suffering and afflicted.

*Genesis 16:1–12 (NKJV)* <sup>1</sup> Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. And she had an Egyptian maidservant whose name was Hagar. <sup>2</sup> So Sarai said to Abram, "See now, the LORD has restrained me from bearing children. Please, go in to my maid; perhaps I shall obtain children by her." And Abram heeded the voice of Sarai. <sup>3</sup> Then Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar her maid, the Egyptian, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan. <sup>4</sup> So he went in to Hagar, and she conceived. And when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress became despised in her eyes. <sup>5</sup> Then Sarai said to Abram, "My wrong be upon you! I gave my maid into your embrace; and when she saw that she had conceived, I became despised in her eyes. The LORD judge between you and me." <sup>6</sup> So Abram said to Sarai, "Indeed your maid is in your hand; do to her as you please." And when Sarai dealt harshly with her, she fled from her presence. <sup>7</sup> Now the Angel of the LORD found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, by the spring on the way to Shur. <sup>8</sup> And He said, "Hagar, Sarai's maid, where have you come from, and where are you going?" She said, "I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai." <sup>9</sup> The Angel of the LORD said to her, "Return to your mistress, and submit yourself under her hand." <sup>10</sup> Then the Angel of the LORD said to her, "I will multiply your descendants exceedingly, so that they shall not be counted for multitude." <sup>11</sup> And the Angel of the LORD said to her: "Behold, you are with child, and you shall bear a son. You shall call his name Ishmael, because the LORD has heard your affliction. <sup>12</sup> He shall be a wild man; His hand shall be against every man, and every man's hand against him. And he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren."

*Genesis 16:13–14 (NKJV)* <sup>13</sup> Then she called the name of the LORD who spoke to her, You-Are-the-God-Who-Sees; for she said, "Have I also here seen Him who sees me?" <sup>14</sup> Therefore the well was called Beer Lahai Roi; observe, it is between Kadesh and Bered.

*John 7:37–38 (NKJV)* <sup>37</sup> On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. <sup>38</sup> He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water."

### **Only God can Straighten Out / Always Point People to Jesus**

God is the only one that can straighten it out, go to Him first. Here is an important ministry key, always point people to the Lord. Never try to be their sole place of comfort, let's face it we can't stand seeing our loved ones suffer, and we want to fix it, and get them out of their pain. Again that is fine, but only as an extension of God's love and comfort. This is important for you parents, start early and start young, bringing your kids to Jesus for their comfort. Teach them to come to Jesus, teach them to seek their Heavenly Father in times of needs, so that when they grow and mature it will be a way of life for them. That is hard for a parent because a parent wants to be wanted and needed.

### **We are so Complicated / God not a Force – Shepherd – Father – Groom - Savior**

Here is what I have come to realize after years of ministry, human beings are so complicated, who can understand them. How can I fully understand someone when emotions come into play. I even don't understand myself a lot of times, but God always does, and He will speak to me, and minister to me. Emotions sometimes affects our health, or sometimes health effects our emotions, or the weather, lighting in a room, we are so complicated, so dynamic, that I cannot understand all that is going on, all the questions, but I do understand the answer - Jesus Christ. He is not a cosmic-force, He is the Shepherd, a Father, the Groom, He is the living Savior and He calls us who are afflicted into fellowship with Him. It

is by His power we are or will be comforted, delivered, and given peace. Call unto Me and I will show you great and mighty things which you do not know.

*Jeremiah 33:3 (NKJV)* <sup>3</sup> *Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.'*

*Philippians 4:6-7 (NKJV)* <sup>6</sup> *Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;* <sup>7</sup> *and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

Verse 13 - Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray.

Is there? Let him pray – I think right now would be a good time, for if not now, when? I think the best prayers are the now prayers.

- *Lord I am suffering, I am suffering from \_\_\_\_\_, I pray Lord, for I know You see me, please minister to me right now like You did Hagar.*

### **Sing Psalms / Valleys and Mountains**

Verse 13 - Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms. Are things going well for you, then sing unto the Lord, give Him praise. When you are in the valley seek God, when you are on the mountain sing to God. In either case God has allowed the situation for you. Why did James put this here? Because when we are afflicted in the valley we pray with fervency for the Lord's presence, but on the mountaintop we so easy forget Him.

### **Worship is Prayer**

Do you realize that worship is also prayer? If you haven't realized this, or haven't tried this, then take your praise and make it a prayer form your heart. Think of a worship song, then think of it as a prayer unto God:

- *More Love: More love, more power, more of you in my life, and I will sing your praise, with all of my heart*
- *Simple Song of Love: My heart is glad, that you call me your own, there is no place I'd rather be, than in your arms of love, holding me close, holding me near, in your arms of love.*
- *Your Love oh Lord: And I will lift my voice, to worship you my king, and I will find my strength, In the shadow of your wings*

### **Worship vs Song**

Please let me make a clarity that robs worship, and that is who the “audience is”. God is the audience of worship, not man. Absolutely fine listening to songs on radio and podcast, that minister to your soul.... Absolutely. But when it comes to worship, man, congregation, are not the audience.... God is. Worship is to go before Him, because He is worthy.

### **4 Areas of Prayer – Worship Too**

Prayer falls into one of these four areas, and all worship songs will too (See Study – Acts the Prayer):

- Acknowledgment - Acknowledging Him for all that He is, Creator, Savior, all-powerful, all loving.
- Confession - confessing all things that beak and disrupt our commune and fellowship with him
- Thanksgiving - thanking Him for all that He has done for us, from salvation to daily provisions.
- Supplication - Coming to Him as our Father, seeking Him to supply all our needs and the needs of others.

*Matthew 6:7-15 (NKJV)* <sup>7</sup> *And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words.* <sup>8</sup> *Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him.* <sup>9</sup> *In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name.* <sup>10</sup> *Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven.* <sup>11</sup> *Give us this day our daily bread.* <sup>12</sup> *And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors.* <sup>13</sup> *And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.* <sup>14</sup> *For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.* <sup>15</sup> *But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.*

### **Your Worship Will never be the Same**

Pray you worship, in good times and hard times, all the time, and your worship will never ever be the same.

## **The Prayers for the Body – (5:14-15)**

**(James 5:14 NKJV) Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.**

**(James 5:15 NKJV) And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.**

*v. 14 - Is anyone among you sick?* Sick - astheneo, as-then-eh'-o; to be feeble (in any sense):--be diseased, impotent folk (man), (be) sick, (be, be made) weak. This sickness means to be laid down and unable to get up.

We see this word used in the following Scriptures;

### **Lazarus**

*(John 11:1 NKJV) Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.*

### **Sick man at pool of Bethesda,**

*(John 5:5 NKJV) Now a certain man was there who had an infirmity thirty-eight years.*

*(John 5:6 NKJV) When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he already had been in that condition a long time, He said to him, "Do you want to be made well?"*

### **Dorcas (Tabitha) in Acts that peter came to:**

*(Acts 9:36 NKJV) At Joppa there was a certain disciple named Tabitha, which is translated Dorcas. This woman was full of good works and charitable deeds which she did.*

*(Acts 9:37 NKJV) But it happened in those days that she became sick and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room.*

### **Person Without Strength / Request Elders / Humble Thyself – Lay down Pride**

This is a situation where the body is without the strength or response to move on its own. These people are to request the elders (plural) and the elders are to come to them. Notice it is the responsibility of those who are sick to call upon the elders, not the elders to call upon them. People say I was sick and nobody came to visit me, possibly nobody knew. But what the Lord is saying here is that the sick person is to call for prayer, because asking for prayer is a very humbling thing, it is a place of I can do nothing in and of myself, I need help:

*(James 4:10 NKJV) Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.*

A person who won't call for prayer, isn't humble, but proud

*(James 4:6 NKJV) But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble."*

### **Elders Plural**

*V. 14 - Let him call for the elders of the church -* Notice that it is elders plural. It is plural so that if God should heal, no one person can take the credit. God is protecting the elder from their flesh and ego. God is so wise.

### **Oil Symbolic of Holy Spirit**

*Verse 14 - anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:* They are to anoint the sick person with oil. Oil in the Scriptures is symbolic of the Holy Spirit, God Himself coming upon the person. In Mark 6 we saw the disciples anointed with oil before they were sent out for ministry, it was symbolic of being empowered by God for the work of the ministry. In Luke 10 we see oil was used medicinally to heal the sick. In both cases it represents God moving and working in the person's life. God empowering, or God healing, for He is a God that is personally and intimately involved in every persons life whether they are doing miracles in His name, or need a miracle in His name.

The woman with the issue of blood for 12 years, if I can only touch the hem of His garment. There was no power in the hem of the garment, the power was in Him, but to the woman the hem of the garment was symbolic of Him. So too the oil. It is just symbolic.

**(James 5:15 NKJV) And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.**

### **Sick – Everyday / Repercussion of Sin**

Verse 15 - And the prayer of faith will save the sick - This word for sick is different from the one in verse 14, it is your everyday illness. kamno, kam'-no; appar. a prim. verb; prop. to toil, i.e. (by impl.) to tire (fig. faint, sicken):--faint, sicken, be wearied.

Verse 15 - And the prayer of faith will save the sick – In a moment we will talk more about the prayer of faith when we talk about the prayers of the righteous.

### **Why Doesn't God Heal All The Time**

The question has to be asked, why doesn't God heal all the time, and for that I do not know the answer, other than His ways are above my ways.

*(Romans 11:33 NKJV) Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!*

*(Romans 11:34 NKJV) "For who has known the mind of the LORD? Or who has become His counselor?"*

### **Don't Rely on Miracles / Finite Mind / Forget God / Word Endures Forever**

One thing I have recognized over the years of walking with the Father is that he doesn't want people relying on the miracles, but His Word. Line by line, here a little, there a little, and it will change us. The miracles may change the circumstance, but it the Word that changes our lives. My finite mind cannot comprehend a miracle, but my mind can comprehend His Word, and it is through His word that I come to know Him, and be transformed into His image. I've watched people get miraculously healed, and then walk away from the Lord. I watched people cling to God during the hard times, eventually have victory over that disease, to get healed through modern medicine, only to walk away from the Lord. Miracles wear off, but His Word endures forever

*(1 Peter 1:25 NKJV) But the word of the LORD endures forever." Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.*

### **Pray Believing / Remember the Ultimate Healing**

There is no reason not to pray believing God will close the heavens up, or open them up. But if God chooses not to heal, never forget His ultimate healing, the wiping away of sin and eternal death from you through the cross. If you ever doubt God's love, then look to the cross.

*(Romans 5:8 NKJV) But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

So we enter into the place of the position that is said, "then everyone should be healed", and if they are not, then it was because of their lack of faith, or unrepentant sin.

And... if we are a person of faith, then we should be healed. Does everybody get healed? Should everybody be healed. Well let's just look at Paul for that answer, who said he fasted and prayed for healed (that was for a period over 12 years). God did not heal him, yet we know the story.... My strength (dunamis – power) is made perfect in weakness!

*2 Corinthians 12:7-10 (NKJV)* <sup>7</sup> And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. <sup>8</sup> Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. <sup>9</sup> And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. <sup>10</sup> Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Did you catch that, for it is the only place I have found in all the scriptures, "perfect power". Wow perfect power found in ..... unhealed. Could you handle perfect power?

The root of this word perfect (teleioo), can be found in Gospel of John in the form (teleo), when He said "It is Finished", in Jesus saying work is done, in perfection.

*John 19:30 (NKJV)* <sup>30</sup> So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

So if God doesn't heal you, and you can receive that "by faith", as Job said though you slay me yet will I trust Him, could He trust you with this "perfect power".

**Job 13:15 (NKJV)** <sup>15</sup> *Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him. ....*

Can God trust you with this power this perfect power yes He can because when you come to this point you came to the point that you said that your will be done not my will and this just doesn't apply to physical but all the way back up the first 13 the emotional, the afflicted those in tribulation because you come to the place that you believe Jeremiah 29 thoughts of peace, a great future and hope

**Matthew 6:9-13 (NKJV)**<sup>9</sup> *In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. <sup>10</sup> Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven. <sup>11</sup> Give us this day our daily bread. <sup>12</sup> And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors. <sup>13</sup> And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.*

**Jeremiah 29:11-13 (NKJV)** <sup>11</sup> *For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. <sup>12</sup> Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. <sup>13</sup> And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.*

Jesus sweat drops of blood, but his healing came through resurrection power, because he yielded to the will of the father.

**Luke 22:44 (NKJV)** <sup>44</sup> *And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.*

Verse 15 - And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. - the idea here is if that the sickness could be a repercussion of a sinful lifestyle. STD, Drugs, Alcohol. But the God of grace says He will forgive their sins. We can all find ourselves saying, my illness is because of my sin, and I am reaping what I have sown, and thus no need to ask for healing. God in His great grace, still says bring it to me. Forgiveness before The Holy God will always trump anything else on this earth.

We are told in 1 Corinthians 11 that some people were sick, even unto death, because of sin. But still yet God will and wills to forgive our sin when we confess.

**1 Corinthians 11:27-32 (NKJV)** <sup>27</sup> *Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. <sup>28</sup> But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. <sup>29</sup> For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. <sup>30</sup> For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep. <sup>31</sup> For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged. <sup>32</sup> But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world.*

Job wasn't in sin yet he suffered greatly.

### **Wrong to Put Trip on People / We Live in a Fallen World**

Now all sickness is not the result of sin. We live in a fallen world and it is wrong to put that trip on someone with cancer, leukemia, blindness, etc, that they are sick because there is an unrepentant sin in their life. People thought this in Jesus day, but Jesus set them straight in John 9:

**(John 9:1 NKJV)** *Now as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth.*

**(John 9:2 NKJV)** *And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"*

**(John 9:3 NKJV)** *Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him.*

Because sin came into the world with Adam and Eve, we are all subject to it's effects. It has been said that "Time is the rate of decay, and the clock started ticking in the garden". We live in a world that has rejected Christ as Supreme Ruler, and this world will continue to pass away until Jesus comes back to establish His Kingdom forever. Beloved, if you have an illness such as cancer, blindness, etc, don't beat yourself up and think it is something you have done, or that God doesn't love you, rather know that we live in a fallen world and are subject to the circumstances of living in a fallen world. (Also, if life just seems to be a constant trial or suffering, don't think it is because God is mad at you and punishing you, just know you live in a fallen world.).

### **The Prayers for the Soul – (5:16)**

**(James 5:16 NKJV)** **Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.**

### **Not Telling Everyone Our Sin / Accountability**

Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another – Now I do not see this verse meaning that we are to go tell everyone in the congregation our sins. What I believe we have here is

accountability. I read this more as share your faults one to one. Sharing with everyone, leads to too much gossip. We saw in chapter 3 that people this letter was written to had to be rebuked for their tongue, so be careful who you share your secrets with.

I believe this passage is regarding choking your prayer requests out because of unforgiveness, in that we have offended our brother/sister and not made reconciliation with them. We read of this calling in the Sermon on the Mount, and in Peter's epistle husbands are giving command that rough treatment of their wives will hinder their prayers before God.

**Matthew 5:21–26 (NKJV)** <sup>21</sup> "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.' <sup>22</sup> But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!' shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell fire. <sup>23</sup> Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, <sup>24</sup> leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. <sup>25</sup> Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are on the way with him, lest your adversary deliver you to the judge, the judge hand you over to the officer, and you be thrown into prison. <sup>26</sup> Assuredly, I say to you, you will by no means get out of there till you have paid the last penny.

**1 Peter 3:7 (NKJV)** <sup>7</sup> Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.

### **The Prayers of the Righteous – (5:16-20)**

**(James 5:16 NKJV)** ..... The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.  
**(James 5:17 NKJV)** Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months.  
**(James 5:18 NKJV)** And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.

I like the NIV translation better:

**(James 5:16 NIV)** ..... *The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.*

### **Count Me Out / Righteous in Christ**

Right away we can say this counts me out, I can't measure up to this, the fervent prayers of a "righteous man" avails much. I'm not very righteous; I've blown it too many times. Remember as we have studied we are no more righteous today, then the day we first got saved. We may be more spiritually mature, but not more righteous. Do you believe that your sins separated you from God, and that Jesus took your place of guilt and shame, the punishment that was due you, have you professed Him as Lord and Savior and repented (turned) from a life of habitual sin? If so then you are righteous because of Jesus, not anything you can do:

**(2 Corinthians 5:21 NKJV)** *For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

If you still question that I point you to righteous lot as he's called in Peters epistle:

**2 Peter 2:6–8 (NKJV)** <sup>6</sup> and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned *them* to destruction, making *them* an example to those who afterward would live ungodly; <sup>7</sup> and delivered righteous Lot, *who* was oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked <sup>8</sup> (for that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented *his* righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing *their* lawless deeds)—

Genesis 19:16 (CACOTV1GJ): Wilt Thou destroy the righteous with the wicked?" Abraham had asked the Lord (18:23). The answer, as illustrated here, is "No"—for before judgment could be poured out upon Sodom, before fire and brimstone would come down to destroy Gomorrah, God rescued Lot and those of his house; He rescued the righteous. Lot righteous? A guy who calls perverted people his brothers? A guy who offers his daughters to a homosexual mob? A guy who lingers when angels tell him to leave? Lot righteous? Yes, for that is what Peter calls him (2 Peter 2:7). How can Lot possibly be considered righteous? Because righteousness is imputed solely on the basis of simple faith. I am righteous and so are you if you have confessed with your mouth that Jesus is who He claimed to be, and believed in your heart that God raised Him from the dead (Romans 10:9, 10).

So, I don't have to fall for the lies of the devil that God wont hear my prayers because I am wretched and sinful (as the accuser of the brethren loves to whisper to us), but I am righteous because God makes me

so, and therefore I can bold come to the throne of grace and find mercy and grace and help in my time of need.

**Revelation 12:10–11 (NKJV)** <sup>10</sup> Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. <sup>11</sup> And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.

**Hebrews 4:14–16 (NKJV)** <sup>14</sup> Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* confession. <sup>15</sup> For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all *points* tempted as *we are*, yet without sin. <sup>16</sup> Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

### **Prayer From the Heart / Elijah Our Proof / Bible Guy**

Verse 16 – effective fervent prayer - means sincere prayer, The prayer that's from the heart. The prayer that often rises out of desperation, out of tremendous need. We don't have to be perfect for God to hear our prayers, and James uses Elijah as proof of that. He points out to us that Elijah was a man with a nature just like ours. You remember his story (1 Kings 17-19), he prayed that it would not rain for 3 1/2 years, and it didn't. Yet afterwards he had periods where he was a big wimp, hiding from a woman Jezebel in a cave. Elijah was just a plain, ordinary person like us. He wasn't anything special. He was just an ordinary person, like passions that we have. Christian, Elijah never knew he was going to be a Bible guy (well I am a Bible Guy therefore I know my prayers are special), no he was just like us, and when he prayed, God worked.

You are a Bible Guy because you are in the Bible.... Saved by faith!

### **Prayer Closet Not in Vain / Rev 5:8 / G Morgan**

Verse 17-18 are for us, God is saying your prayers in the prayer closet are not in vain, that things do change and things are effected, look at Elijah, he was just a person of flesh and blood like you, yet God answered his prayers. Christian not one prayer ever goes unheard before God; believe that (Rev 5:8).

- Some woman said to G Campbell Morgan, I only bring the big things to God for prayer. He said, ma'am, nothing you bring to God is a big thing, to Him all things are little. Nothing is too difficult for Him, so bring everything to Him:

**(Revelation 5:8 NKJV)** *Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.*

**(Jeremiah 32:27 KJV)** *Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me?*

### **Pray So Satan can Feel It / Why it is a Struggle to Pray**

NIV translation, powerful and effective. Christian Pray so that Satan feels the pressure. Satan will let you get away with a lot of things, but one things he hates, and that is when you pray, because he knows the power behind it, he knows it changes things. That is why there is always a struggle for us to pray, a distraction, because he doesn't want us in contact with the power source, God the Father. I think, quite often, we're rather cavalier in our prayer; ok I said it, that's it for that prayer. But it's the effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man, availeth much! Read the story of Elijah and we see he prayed seven times before the rain came:

**(1 Kings 18:44 NKJV)** *Then it came to pass the seventh time, that he said, "There is a cloud, as small as a man's hand, rising out of the sea!" So he said, "Go up, say to Ahab, 'Prepare your chariot, and go down before the rain stops you.'"*

**(1 Kings 18:45 NKJV)** *Now it happened in the meantime that the sky became black with clouds and wind, and there was a heavy rain. So Ahab rode away and went to Jezreel.*

I might also point out that prayers that are in accordance to the Word are always powerful, for they are backed by the breath of God. Elijah could pray that it would not rain, because God's Word backed that. God said if the nation would turn from Him and follow after false idols, God would bring a drought:

**(Deuteronomy 11:16 NKJV)** *"Take heed to yourselves, lest your heart be deceived, and you turn aside and serve other gods and worship them,*

**(Deuteronomy 11:17 NKJV)** *"lest the Lord's anger be aroused against you, and He shut up the heavens so that there be no rain, and the land yield no produce, and you perish quickly from the good land which the LORD is giving you.*

Pray the Scriptures, and you pray the most powerful prayer (again, read the study- Acts: the prayer).

**(James 5:19 NKJV) Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back,  
(James 5:20 NKJV) let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.**

### **Go to that Brother**

Don't be afraid to go to that brother or sister and seek to turn them away from their sin. This verse is still flowing from the previous verses, and I believe it is a reference to saving them from a physical death that sin will bring them. This isn't about saving their soul from damnation, for Jesus covers all of our sins with one drop of His precious blood, but here it says from a multitude of sins, so it can't be referring to salvation.

How should we minister to others?

*Matthew 11:28-30 (NKJV)<sup>28</sup> Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. <sup>29</sup> Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. <sup>30</sup> For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."*

That will be no easy task being like Jesus, gentle and lowly as we live in such a selfish, self-righteous, aggressive world and culture. But, the God who sees us, and the God we see, when we meet Him at the well, can and will give us His mind and heart.

### **No Ending – it Never Ends**

I like how this book ends, no closing, no benediction, no closing prayer and farewell, it just ends. James is pretty much saying, now go and do it, continue doing it, for these things never end, we are to keep doing all of them.

So how are we doing?

### The Outline of the Book of James:

#### Chapter 1

- Introduction (1:1)
- The Test of Perseverance and Suffering (1:2-12)
- The Test of Blame in Temptation (1:12-18)
- The Test of Response to the Word (1:19-27)

#### Chapter 2

- The Test of Partiality (2:1-9)
- The Test of the Law (2:10-13)
- The Test of Faith and Works (2:14-26)

#### Chapter 3

- The Test of the Tongue (3:1-12)
- The Test of Wisdom Applied (3:13-18)

#### Chapter 4

- The Test of the World's Influence (4:1-12)
- The Test of Dependence (4:13-5:6)

#### Chapter 5

- The Test of Endurance (5:7-12)
- The Test of Prayerfulness (5:13-20)

### **Our Hope**

We look at the world around us, those who are hurting, the spiral decay of the world, the hopeless they have. But we have hope, hope in him, and hope in His soon return. That soon we will see and be in His presence, beholding His beauty, enraptured in His love. The world can offer us no remedy to the ails of this world, our only hope is in the Lord, and while we wait, may we pass all these tests.

### Prayer

The Word of God is Living and Powerful, and is ready, and will do a mighty work in our lives.

*Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV)<sup>12</sup> For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

### **In Every Study**

- Who Is God? (How Great is He?)
- What Does He Think of Me? (How Wonderful Are His Thoughts Towards Me?)
- What Does He Want Me to Do?
- What Can I Boldly Request of Him?
- What Do I Need to Be on Guard of When I Leave Here Today?

Boldly come to the throne of grace, ask God to reveal Himself in a mighty way to you, and to do I might work in you, and through you.

*Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) <sup>16</sup> Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need*