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# A STUDY OF JAMES

AN INDEPTH LOOK AT THE BOOK OF JAMES

DR. GARY S. LINTON, PHD

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# Introduction

This is a verse by verse commentary on the book of James. Attempting to give the best interpretation possible of each verse and passage context is always imperative. We prioritize the context of both the time in which it was written and all the surrounding context.

I recall when first attending Bible college hearing a quote from a professor that I've never forgotten. He said, "There's only one proper interpretation of scripture but there are many applications." While giving the best possible interpretation of each verse and passage, I'm convinced, to give a good exegesis, there must be ample time given to application.

The writers of scripture did no less. They always had as their focus application and an exhortation to put what they had learned into practice. "Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip" (Hebrews 2:1). "But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves" (James 1:22).

This commentary is unique, in that, each verse and passage being studied is accompanied with a video teaching embedded within it. I know it may take considerable more of the student's time but watching the video teaching along with reading my comments on each passage or verse will be well worth your time. Though most of the content in the commentary is covered in the video, there's often much more.

Before each lesson or message much time was spent saturating it in prayer. Seeking the face of God for the guidance and anointing of the Holy Spirit. I for one know that I can do nothing apart from the unction and anointing of the Holy Ghost. During each session the Holy Spirit frequently led me to speak directly to particular needs and apply it in ways that are not covered in the commentary.

I frequently give a Word from the Lord directly to pastors and the church. It's often encouraging but also, at times, in the form of rebuke to the church of our day that has gone drastically astray. May God richly bless you as you study this wonderful book!

# An Overview of James

This is an overview of the book of James paying special attention to the portions of scripture where James addresses them as “my brethren,” “my beloved brethren,” or “brethren.” A great sermon outline for you preachers and teachers. It’s significant that James chooses to address these believers as brethren. He could have asserted his authority as the brother of the Lord, the pastor of the mother church in Jerusalem, and the one who was used in the gift of wisdom at the first church counsel to settle a division and dispute that had risen (Acts 15:29).

## Watch the Message (40 Minutes)

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Instead of asserting his authority and position over them he places himself on their level. Those who have been called of God in full time ministry must understand we are taken from among men and have the same weaknesses and frailty of the flesh as everyone else (Hebrews 5:1-2). Therefore, we must relate to those to whom we are ministering on their level.

On the other hand, we must look to those who are ministering to us with reverence and respect. Not that they are better than us or somehow have a more direct connection with God than us but because of their calling and office. “We beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake” (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13). “Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour” (Romans 13:7). “No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God” (Hebrews 5:4).

## References to My Brethren or Brethren

1. **Trials and testings.** “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations” (James 1:2). We may or rather will experience various trials and testing in this life of faith. When we do fall into a trial or test, we must count it all joy.
2. **Error and deception.** “Do not error (be deceived), my beloved brethren” (James 1:16). The devil is a deceiver and has been from the very beginning (Genesis 3:1-

7). His efforts of deception are escalating in these last days, to deceive the very elect if possible (Matthew 24:24). It is, therefore, imperative that we “search the scriptures daily whether those things are so” (Acts 17:11).

Additional scriptures: 2 Corinthians 4:4-6, 2 Corinthians 11:3-5, 2 Corinthians 11:13-15, Galatians 1:6-9, Galatians 3:1-3, 1 John 2:18-27, 1 John 4:1-6.

3. **Listening verses speaking.** “Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath” (James 1:19). It’s interesting that we have two ears and only one mouth. It would do most of us good if we would listen twice as much as we talk.

a. **Communication** (Proverbs 18:13).

b. **Teachable spirit** (Proverbs 9:8-9).

c. **Anger** (James 1:20; Proverbs 29:11, Ephesians 4:26).

4. **Partiality.** “My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons” (James 2:1). “For there is no respect of persons with God” (Romans 2:11).

a. **Racial partiality** (Numbers 12).

b. **Religious snobbery** (Acts 10).

c. **Diversity in fellowship** (James 2:1-9, 1 Corinthians 11:17-22).

5. **Hearken.** “Hearken, my beloved brethren” (James 2:5). This has to do with listening and giving heed to what we hear. We must have an attentive and listening ear to the voice of God. We must position ourselves thus when hearing the Word of God preached and proclaimed, when reading and studying His Word, and when listening to the voice and leading of the Spirit. Additional scriptures: Matthew 23:29, John 7:17, Hebrews 3:7-13.

6. **Works verses faith.** “What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him” (James 2:14).



a. **Context** (James 2:14-26).

b. **James verses Paul.** Paul claimed we are saved by faith alone apart from works and here James seems to claim the opposite. They weren't contradicting each other but rather were back to back fighting opposite foes.

c. **John Calvin** – "It is faith alone that saves but faith that saves is not alone."

7. **Teachers.** "My brethren, be not many masters (teachers), knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation" (James 3:1). He was not saying we shouldn't have teachers. God has given teachers to the church "for the equipping of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4:11-12).

James is saying we must take our responsibility as teachers seriously. We will one day give an account for what we teach, therefore, as teachers we must "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15).

"Greater Condemnation" or judgment not only refers to being held to a higher standard for what we teach but also the scrutiny of men. Men will critique and criticize every thing we say and teach. When we take on the mantle of a teacher we must be prepared to be judged and condemned by man. Not every voice will be encouraging. Many voices will be discouraging rather than uplifting.

8. **The use of the tongue.** In addressing the misuse of the tongue and what comes out of our mouths James writes, "My brethren, these things ought not so to be" (James 3:10).

a. **Offense** (James 3:2).

b. **Untamed tongue** (James 3:3-8).

c. **Blessing and cursing** (James 3:9-10, Ephesians 4:29).

d. **Source** (James 3:11-12, Luke 6:45).

9. **Speaking evil of one another.** “Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge” (James 4:11). Additional scriptures: Matthew 7:1-3, Romans 14:4, 10-12.

10. **The Coming of the Lord.** “Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh” (James 5:7-8).

a. **The return of the Lord is nigh!** “And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed” (Romans 13:11).

b. **The end time harvest is nigh!** “Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month” (Joel 2:23). The former rain is what germinates the seed and the latter rain is what brings in the harvest.

The farmer waits patiently for the harvest to come in, but Joel tell us that there’s coming a time when the former and the latter rain will both come in the first or same month. From the time the seed is planted to the time the harvest comes in will take place all at once. Praise the Lord!

11. **Don’t hold grudges.** “Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door” (James 5:9). Never hold a grudge! All bitterness must be eradicated from our lives (Hebrews 12:15; Colossians 3:13; Ephesians 4:31-32).

12. **Endurance in affliction.** “Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience” (James 5:10). If we’ll be patient the Lord will bring us through every time of affliction with overcoming victory (James 5:11 and Job 42:10).

13. **Forbear swearing.** “But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation” (James 5:12). Be a man of your

word! If you say something, do it. If you make a promise, keep your promise. Simply, do what you say.

14. **Converting the sinner.** “Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins” (James 5:19-20).

a. **The lost** (Matthew 18:3, Acts 3:19, 26).

b. **The backslider and wayward** (Matthew 9:36-39, Luke 15:1-32).

c. **Those in doctrinal error** (Acts 20:29-30, 2 John 7-11, Romans 16:17).



# James 1:1 – The Lord’s Servant

We’re beginning a verse by verse study of the book of James, beginning with an in-depth look at James 1:1. James, the Lord’s servant, is writing to those who were rejected and scattered abroad, living outside their homeland. Special attention is given to the words “doulos” and “diaspora.”

**Watch the Message** (56 Minutes)

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## Four Concepts in James

There are four basic concepts covered in James’ letter to the Jews who had been scattered abroad.

1. **Conversion** – James 1:18, John 3:3, Matthew 18:3, 1 Peter 1:3 and 23, 2 Corinthians 5:17.
2. **Service** – Luke 14:26-33, Matthew 20:26-28; Philippians 2:3-11. Absolute loyalty, obedience, surrender and abandonment is required.
3. **Fellowship** – James 2:1-9, 1 John 1:3; Hebrews 10:24-25. God has called us into fellowship and not isolation. All barriers to fellowship must be removed (Acts 15:29).
4. **Sent** – John 17:17-18; Acts 8:1 and 4. God has sent us into the world to make an impact for Christ and the kingdom of God.

## Greetings

“James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting” (James 1:1). In Paul’s letter to the Romans Paul uses the word salute instead of greeting.

“Salute one another with an holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you” (Romans 16:16). This may be a tad warmer than need be in our churches today. A warm and appropriate hug or hand shake is sufficient. Greetings in our churches must be warm, caring and welcoming. That’s why having trained greeters in our churches is imperative, though all our people should be well equipped in greeting people, especially visitors.

## James

This is not the Apostle James. He was martyred in Acts 12:1-2. This was James the brother of the Lord (Galatians 1:19, Acts 15:29).

## A Servant of God

- **Humility** – He could have boasted that he was the half brother of the Lord, pastor of the Jerusalem church, used in the word of wisdom (Acts 15:29), but instead he refers to himself as the Lord’s *doulos*.

- **The Greats** – This was a term used of all the greats who had been used mightily of the lord. It was used of Moses, Elijah and Elisha, Ezekiel, the Apostle Paul and many more. When we become His *doulos*, we also are numbered among the greats in the Kingdom of God.

- **Doulos** – Servant here is *doulos*. A slave, originally the lowest term in the scale of servitude. It came to mean, “one who gives himself over to the will of another.” James is saying he has given himself over to the will of the Lord. A *doulos* is one by choice, not constraint. Have we so chosen to give ourselves over to the will of the Lord (Exodus 21:1-6; Matthew 26:38-45; Acts 21:8-14)?

This, however, doesn’t adequately convey the full weight and meaning of a *doulos*. To understand it fully we must go to the opposite of a *doulos* which is *kurios* translated lord or master. A *kurios* was “one who has the undisputed possession of a person or a thing.” Therefore, a *doulos* is “one who is the undisputed possession of a person or a thing.” We are the undisputed possession of Jesus Christ.

**1 Corinthians 6:19-20** – “What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price.”

Alexander the Great was on his final conquest. His scouts told him about one city he had to conquer if his conquest was to be successful. It was a small city and very fortified. It was built with high walls and surrounded by three cliffs approximately one hundred feet high. He left for the city with one hundred of his personal guards. Approaching the city, he demanded its immediate surrender. From the top of the wall, the king responded saying they were well fortified and had enough provision to withstand an attack for months if necessary.

Alexander said nothing but simply motioned to his guards. They immediately lined up single file toward one of the cliffs. He gave them a second signal and they started marching toward the cliff. One marched off the cliff to his death, then two, three, four, five, six and finally with one swoop of his hand, they stopped prior to the final one going off the cliff. Without saying a word, Alexander looked up at the king. The king came off the wall, opened the gate and surrendered. When asked why he surrendered, he said he knew there was no way he could withstand an attack with such dedicated and committed soldiers.

## Of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ

- **Jesus Christ.** Jesus was our Lord's earthly name and Christ is who He was or is. Christ means messiah or anointed one, savior, “the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:16). He is the savior of the world.

- **Lord Jesus Christ.** It's important to note that, though he had been Jesus' half brother according to the flesh, he addresses Him as “the Lord Jesus Christ.” We must take care not to get caught up in using His name flippantly. There must be a reverence and respect when referring to Jesus our Lord. Jesus desires to be our Lord and not simply our savior. Peter said, “God hath made the same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ” (Acts 2:36). He desires to be “both Lord and Christ,” of our lives, not just savior but Lord as well.

- **Combination denotes equality.** James declares himself to be “a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ.” The combination of the two denotes equality. Jesus

was or is coequal with the Father, the second person of the Godhead. He is no less God than God the father is.

**Scripture:** Matthew 1:23; John 1:1 and 14; 5:18; 8:56-59; 10:30-33; 14:8-9; 20:24-28; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 2:9; 1 Timothy 3:16; Hebrew 1:8; Revelation 1:8.

## Scattered

The word for scattered in this verse is diaspora and means “to sow through.” This was a technical term for those residing outside of Jerusalem. After accepting Jesus, many Jews were ostracized by their families, the religious community, and society in general. This has a number of pertinent applications for us as believers. You’re not in the place and situation you are in by accident. You have been sown where you are for a purpose!

### **Four-fold application of scattered or diaspora:**

1. **Strangers and Aliens.** The Jews living outside of Jerusalem were residing as aliens in a foreign land, away from their homeland. We as Christians are away from our homeland as well.

“For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ” (Philippians 3:20).

“Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims” (1 Peter 2:11).

We are strangers here in this world. This world is merely our pilgrimage until we return home where we belong – heaven!

2. **Rejection.** Those James is referring to had been rejected by their families, religious community to which they had belonged and society in general. We will be rejected and often hated by the world.

“Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you” (1 John 3:13).

Sadly, far too often, it's our brothers and sisters in Christ who seem to come against us the hardest and reject us. Let me encourage you, God has a special place in His heart for outcasts. His heart goes out to you.

**Isaiah 16:4** – “Let my outcast dwell with you, be a shelter from them from the face of the spoiler.”

This is what the church should be for people. Those who have been beat down by the world, the enemy and the circumstances of life need a place of refuge and sanctuary. This is God's design and mandate to the church. It is to be a spiritual hospital for the wounded and fallen among us.

Church, let's be that hospital, sanctuary, place of protection and refuge for those who come to us bruised, beaten and battered. Let's stop beating up the wounded and fallen among us but rather restore and heal them. We never know when it might be us.

“Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, you who are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering yourself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ” (Galatians 6:1-2).

We also never know what they may become. When David was fleeing from Saul, “David departed from there and escaped to the cave of Adullam; and when his brothers and all his father's household heard of it, they went down there to him. Everyone who was in distress, and everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was discontented gathered to him; and he became captain over them” (1 Samuel 22:1-2). These became David's mighty men when he entered his reign as King.

God likes taking the most unlikely candidates from among us and raising them up for His glory. Let's be the agents of restoration and healing to the wounded and fallen, those whose lives may be all messed up. They just might become the mighty among us.

“For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, and the base things of the world and the

despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, so that no man may boast before God” (1 Corinthians 1:26-29 ).

3. **The Wayward.** Scattered can also refer to those who could potentially be lost from our churches and even fallen away from the Lord and even fallen away from the Lord. How many have slipped through the cracks, stopped going to church, slipped away from their relationship with Jesus and no one has gone after them? I would much rather have people complain because we loved them too much, by constantly reaching out to them, then to have them complain that when they stopped going to church no one called or reached out to them.

Jesus in referring to “sinners” or those who have gone astray gives us three parables: A lost sheep, lost coin and lost son (Luke 15). In each case, the premise was of looking for and going after what was lost until they were found and brought home where they belonged. They weren’t condemned or given a good talking to but simply loved and brought back into the fold where they belonged.

Pastors, it’s incumbent upon us to keep a close eye out for those that may be missing from among our flock. We will one day give an account of our shepherding. This is an integral part of our job as pastors, just as much as preaching is and even more so. Remember, the first parable Jesus told was of the shepherd going after the one sheep that was missing and bringing it back home where it belonged (Luke 15:1-7).

I know we can’t always do everything ourselves, especially as our church and ministry grows. This is why we need to train our people to help us in this much needed task and ministry. Leaders, help your pastor in following up on those who are missing from your midst. If someone misses two, three weeks or more we should be following up on them. E-Mail or text them, call them on the phone or perhaps even pay them a home visit or at least meet them out somewhere. You never know what they may be going through.

“When He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth labourers into His harvest” (Matthew 9:36-38).

YOU are the one HE has sent!

“For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls” (1 Peter 2:25).

4. **Witnesses.** We have been sown where we are to be witnesses for Christ. Jesus said, “follow me and I will make you fishers of men” (Matthew 4:19). This is emphatic, if we are followers of Jesus He will make us soul winners and fishers of men. If we are not fishing then we inevitably are not truly following Him.

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There is a story I heard long ago used to illustrate this point. This man moved into a new area. He wanted to find the best fishing spot. After asking around he was told by all that he needed to talk to a man named Zeek. Well, he contacted him and they arranged to go fishing together. As they headed toward the boat he began wondering where Zeek’s fishing pole was. They got into the boat and went out into the deep water.

Zeek gets into his bag and quietly pulls out a stick of dynamite, lights it, throws it into the water and begins reaching out and picking up the fish and putting them into his net. The man totally shocked looks at Zeek and says, I guess you didn’t know that I was the new game warden for this area.

Zeek doesn’t say a word, calmly gets into his bag, drags out another stick of dynamite, lights it and hands it to the man. He then says, “are you going to fish with me or not?” This is the question Jesus is posing to us, are we going to fish with Him or not? We have been sown where we are to be His witnesses – Fishers of men. Let’s start fishing with Him.

“Go therefore, and teach (make disciples of) all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost” (Matthew 28:19).

“And He said to them, Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15).

“But you shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and you shall be witnesses unto me” (Acts 1:8).



“I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes” (Romans 1:14-16).

“The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God” (1 Corinthians 1:18).

“Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asks you a reason of the hope that is in” (1 Peter 3:15).

“Having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace” (Ephesians 6:15).

“And that day a great persecution began against the church, and they were all scattered throughout the regions, except the apostles” (Acts 8:1).

“And the Lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges – byways, and compel them to come in, that My House may be filled” (Luke 14:23).

What will it take to get us out into the highways and byways preaching the gospel? The early church was actively preaching the gospel, but only in Jerusalem. They were stuck in a certain local, in a comfortable place, and it took persecution to get them out of their comfort zone and sow them where the Holy Spirit had actually called them to be witnesses for Christ.

It is interesting to note, “they were all scattered, except the apostles” (Acts 8:1). The apostles stayed in Jerusalem, praying, studying and teaching the Word while everyone else was scattered. The pastor is called to remain at the church devoting himself “to prayer and to the ministry of the Word” (Acts 6:4), while the rest are scattered throughout region preaching the gospel (Mark 16:15-20).

# James 1:2-4 – Count it All Joy

All of us encounter trials in life. James admonishes us to consider it all joy when we fall into “diverse” or various trials and testings. The key to being able to count it all joy is knowing that God will ultimately work it out for our good.

**Watch the Message** (37 Minutes)

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**James 1:2-4** – “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith works patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.”

## Diverse Temptations

Literally, many colored or many kinds. The trials and testing of life come in many different forms and types, from financial, to physical, to relationship problems, emotional distress, mental anguish, spiritual attacks and even going through a spiritual drought or dry spell.

It is best exemplified in Joseph’s coat of many colors. Joseph’s coat was a picture of the testings he was about to encounter (Genesis 37-50). He was attached and rejected by his brothers because of their jealousy, sold into slavery, falsely accused by Potiphar’s wife who tried to seduce him and thrown into prison. His early life was a difficult one, but God ultimately turned it to good (Romans 8:28).

## When You Are Tempted

The question is not if we fall into divers temptations or trials but when. They will come. You can count on it. If haven’t fallen into a time of trial and testing, be patient it will come. The good news is that there is a duration to most trials we will encounter. Peter said,

“Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though NOW FOR A SEASON, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 1:6-7).

It will come to an end sooner or later. Joseph’s time of testing eventually came to an end and the result was his elevation to second command of all Egypt. He answered to Pharaoh and him alone. “God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive” (Genesis 5:20). Likewise, the Lord will turn our every testing into good account if we will but give it into His hands, trust Him, and remain faithful.

## Count it all Joy

This is best exemplified in the life of Paul and Silas in the Philippi (Acts 16:16-40). How were they able to count it all joy? Can we learn anything from their experience? They no doubt were not thrilled with or in their situation. It wasn’t a joyful. They had to “count it all joy.” There was no reason whatsoever in the natural to be joyful. To have any kind of joy we must in faith consider it joy, even though seeing no cause to be joyful.

## Knowing

Knowledge brings power over and in every situation of life. In the most devastating of circumstances, what we know can determine our ultimate experience and outcome. Paul, I’m sure writing out of his own experience said,

“And not only so, but we glory (boast, exult) in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us” (Romans 5:3-5).

# Things We Must Know

1. Healing to the soul – Proverbs 17:22.
2. Comfort in our waste place – Isaiah 52:9.
3. Cleansing and forgiveness – Psalms 32:10-11.
4. Fellowship with God – Isaiah 35:10.
5. See Jesus – 1 Peter 1:6-8.
6. Well of salvation – Isaiah 12:3.
7. Enemies scattered – Psalm 68:1-3.
8. Ultimate outcome – James 1:2-4.

• **Knowing.** – Knowing is “ginosko” and refers to experiential knowledge not simply knowing facts. Paul said, “That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death (Philippians 3:10). It’s our personal, deep rooted, experiential knowledge of Jesus that enables us to “count it all joy when we fall into divers temptations.” It’s because of our personal relationship with Him we are able to experience joy in adversity.

• **Patience.** – Patience is “hypomone.” It doesn’t mean patiently taking everything that life throws at us as a victim of our circumstances, simply allowing things to beat us down. Rather, it’s an endurance that causes us to continue pressing on with undaunted determination in spite of what life throws at us. Never giving in to or buckling under our test, but plowing through it.

• **Lacking nothing.** – The confidence that the end product will be that we are “perfect and entire, wanting nothing.” Conformity to Christ is the goal! The end result of our trial will be that we are more like Jesus.

“For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren” (Romans 8:29).

# James 1:5-8 – If You Lack Wisdom

If we lack wisdom, James instructs us to ask God and He will give us all we need to deal with the circumstances of life. However, we must ask in faith, nothing wavering, trusting that God has given us the wisdom, knowledge, and understanding we have sought from Him.

**Watch the Message** (43 Minutes)

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**James 1:5-8** – “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.”

## Scriptures on Wisdom

Study and meditate on the following scriptures. They'll give you much insight on obtaining wisdom.

1. 1 Kings 3:1-15
2. Psalm 90:12
3. Proverbs 9:10
4. Proverbs 9:8-9 (Ecclesiastes 5:2)
5. Proverbs 8:11
6. Proverbs 11:2
7. 1 Corinthians 1:30

8. Ephesians 1:8-9
9. Colossians 2:3
10. James 3:17-18 (Romans 14:18-19)
11. Hebrews 12:14
12. Matthew 5:9
13. Colossians 3:16

## Knowledge Verses Wisdom

There's a vast difference between knowledge and wisdom. Wisdom is the application of knowledge. There are a lot of people who have plenty of knowledge but lack wisdom. In contrast, there are those who don't have a lot of book knowledge etc. but who seem to be very wise.

Knowledge sees a skunk and sees how pretty it is with its shiny black coat and white stripe down its back. Wisdom knows it can release a deadly stench and screams out loudly, "Don't you dare touch it or even go near it. If you do you'll surely regret it."

### **Scripture comparing the two:**

1. 1 Corinthians 3:19
2. James 3:17
3. Psalm 14:1
4. Romans 1:22

# Context

The context deals with the need for wisdom when going through a test or trial (James 1:2-4). It's easy to go off half cocked in desperation and make poor choices we'll later regret and that very well might make things worse. It's in these times we need wisdom from God.

It's usually best not to make rash decisions when in the midst of a trial or trouble. Take your time and proceed slowly. Seek the Lord and act only after He has given you clear direction.

There's a vast difference between being tempted and tested. God never tempts us to evil (James 1:13-14). God only tests us to reveal where we're at in our faith and walk. God tested Abraham (Genesis 22). Thus, proving his faith. If we pass a test there's no need to take it again; If we fail a test, we must take it over again until we have passed it.

## Obtaining Wisdom

The following is a clear cut outline one how to obtain wisdom. If we will heed the Word of God concerning wisdom we'll receive the wisdom of God when lacking earthly and human wisdom. And let's face it we all lack wisdom at times. The person who doesn't think so is the one who's truly lacking.

1. **The fear of the Lord** – Proverbs 1:7.
2. **A Teachable Spirit** – Proverbs 9:8-9 (Ecclesiastes 5:2).
3. **Abiding in Christ** – John 15:5; 1 Corinthians 1:30; Ephesians 1:8-9; Colossians 2:3.
4. **Wisdom From Above** – James 3:17-18 (Romans 14:18-19; Hebrews 12:14; Matthew 5:9); 1 Corinthians 3:19; Psalm 14:1; Romans 1:22; Psalm 1:1.
5. **Making the Most of Your Days** – Psalm 90:12; Ephesians 5:16.



6. **Humility** – Proverbs 11:2; James 4:9-10.
7. **Headship** – 1 Peter 5:5-6; Hebrews 13:17; Acts 15:29.
8. **God's Word** – Psalm 1:1-3; Colossians 3:16.
9. **Filled with the Spirit** – Ephesians 5:18-21 and Colossians 3:16; Acts 4:23-31.
10. **Ask of God** – 1 Kings 3:1-15; James 1:5.

## Ask in Faith

How do we receive anything from God? It's always by faith. We ask but we must also believe and receive in faith the petition we have desired of Him. James makes it abundantly clear that we must ask in faith. If we don't ask in faith we can't expect to receive a thing. Ask God then move forward making the best decision you can trusting that because you asked He is granting you the needed wisdom.

1. James 1:6a
2. Matthew 21:18-22
3. Mark 11:22-24
4. Proverbs 3:5-6

## Driven With the Wind and Tossed (James 1:6-7)

We're often like the waves of the sea that go up and down. When things look good we're filled with faith. When things aren't looking so good our faith plummets. It's incumbent on us to simply believe God no matter what our situation looks like.

Too frequently the church and believers are the same doctrinally (Ephesians 4:14). Every new teaching that comes along we bite hook line and sinker. This shows instability in our faith. We need to be sure and confident in what we believe based

on the solid teaching of scripture. We must know what we believe and why we believe it based on scripture.

## A Double Minded Man

Literally a man with two souls. Double mindedness can never expect to receive anything from the Lord. We're unstable spiritually in our faith and belief. When we ask God for wisdom we must simply take Him at His Word that because we asked Him He will grant us our request.

1. James 1:7-8
2. Matthew 6:24
3. 1 Kings 18:21

# James 1:9-11 – Reason for Rejoicing

Rich and poor, affluent and impoverished, influential and insignificant all have reasons for rejoicing in the kingdom of God. The poor in that he is exalted, and the rich in that he is made low. Both have their standing with God on the same basis – a sinner saved by grace.

**Watch the Message** (43 Minutes)

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## The Brother of Low Degree

**James 1:9** – “Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted.”

The poor, impoverished and seemingly insignificant in the eyes of the world has reason for rejoicing “in that he is exalted.”

### He is exalted:

1. **He is a child of God** “But as many as received Him, to them gave he power (the authority) to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name” (John 1:12). You are God’s child, adopted into the family of God. “Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God” (Ephesians 2:19). We are no longer homeless and as those who do not belong “but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.” We now belong to the family of God. Praise the Lord!

2. **He has been made a king and priest of the Most High.** “And hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen” (Revelation 1:6). “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light” (1 Peter 2:9). What a reason for rejoicing! We who once beggars and paupers in this world system are now Kings and priest in the kingdom of God. Royalty flows through our veins.

3. **He is seated in heavenly places.** “And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 2:6). How awesome is that? We are actually seated in the heavens, far above the trials and battles of this life. God’s intention is that we begin to see with spiritual eyes, seeing ourselves above the things of this life. If somehow we could begin to see the things of this earthly realm from a heavenly perspective, we’d see the victorious outcome God has planned for us. Oh, the joy, excitement and rejoicing that would fill our hearts.

## The Rich

**James 1:10** – “But the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away.”

The person who is poor, impoverished, and insignificant can rejoice in that he is exalted and the affluent and influential can likewise rejoice in that he has been made low. No matter how successful, affluent, and influential we might be, we still come to God on the same basis, a sinner in need of salvation. We both rejoice in the same standing before God, that He has washed us clean in the blood of Christ and we’ve been declared righteousness of God in Him (2 Corinthians 5:21).

## The Uncertainty of Riches

There is a warning in these verses against trusting in riches. It’s easy for those who have an abundance in this life to trust in what they have. It is likewise easy for those who have not to long for and covet what the affluent and influential have. The warning for both is clear. The things of this life and life itself will soon pass away, “because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away. For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways” (James 1:10-11). In the end, the only thing that will matter is our relationship with God and what we’ve invested in eternity.

## Scriptures Dealing With Riches

1. Matthew 6:19-33

2. Matthew 19:16-29
3. Mark 8:36
4. Luke 12:13-21
5. Luke 16:1-13
6. 1 Timothy 6:5-10; 17-19

## Unity in Diversity

Jesus prayed, "That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me" (John 17:21). We are fulfilling Jesus' prayer when we come together in unity despite our economic, social, cultural or ethnic standing and differences. Unity of this nature has nothing whatsoever to do with programs, legislation, or any man made system and structure. Anything man made is merely a false and fake facade doomed to crumble.

What James is referring to is unity derived solely from our standing in the gospel and in Christ. When all is stripped away, we all stand before God on the same basis, blood washed sinners in need of grace. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28). We can add to that rich and poor, affluent and impoverished, influential and insignificant, white, black, Asian, etc. "for ye are all one in Christ Jesus."

True Unity in diversity is found in Jesus alone. He's our common denominator that brings us together as one. John wrote, "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ" (1 John 1:3). This is true unity in diversity. Any other type of unity is man made and doomed to fail. Authentic unity is when we find our unity in Him and Him alone. Therein is reason for rejoicing!

# James 1:12 – The Crown of Life

There are five crowns mentioned in scripture given as reward at the Judgment Seat of Christ. All five crown are covered in this teaching.

**Watch the Message** (60 Minutes)

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**James 1:12** – “Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.”

## Temptation or Test

A test is only an enticement to evil if we respond wrongly. God never tests us or entices us to wrong doing. He never tempts us to evil or to sin. The devil tempts us in our areas of weakness to entice us to evil. God tests us in order to reveal to us what our strengths and weaknesses are.

We see this exemplified in the lives of both Abraham (Genesis 22) and Joseph (Genesis 37-50). Both were tested in the area of their strengths and they passed the tests. Once we have passed a particular test we typically don't have to take it again. However, if we fail a test, we usually will have to retake it until we have passed it.

## Endures

This is the Greek word “hupomone.” This does not refer to one who sits back and takes all that life throws at them until it is finally over. Rather, it is one who with undaunting perseverance and determination continues pressing forward undeterred by all life throws them (Hebrews 12:1 and Acts 20:24).

# The Crown of Life

There is nothing that is endured by a believer that God will not abundantly and adequately compensate. This is the promise of the Lord to all those who love Him. The Apostle Paul said,

**Romans 8:18** – “I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”

**1 Corinthians 2:9** – “As it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.”

## The Judgment (Bema) Seat of Christ

The Judgment (Bema) Seat of Christ is a judgment for believers and believers only. This is to be distinguished from the White Throne Judgment in Revelation 20:11-15. The Judgment (Bema) Seat of Christ is a judgment to determine reward, whereas, the White Throne Judgment is a judgment for all who have rejected Christ as Lord and Savior, where they will be judged for their sins and cast into the lake of fire. The believer's sins have already been judged at the cross.

### Scriptures:

1. 2 Corinthians 5:10-11
2. Romans 14:10-12
3. 1 Corinthians 3:9-15



# Five Crowns Mentioned in Scripture

1. **The Incorruptible Crown** – 1 Corinthians 9:24-27.
2. **The Crown of Rejoicing** – 1 Thessalonians 2:19-20.
3. **The Crown of Righteousness** – 2 Timothy 4:6-8.
4. **The Crown of Glory** – 1 Peter 5:1-4.
5. **The Crown of Life** – James 1:12.

It's important to know salvation is a free gift, "not of works lest any man should boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9). On the other hand, reward is earned. Reward is based on our faithful service to the King. Motive is also taken into account. What is done before man to be seen of them will be burned up, whereas what is done before God will pass through the fire of the Judgment Seat of Christ and reward will be given based on our faithful service to the Master (Matthew 6:1-6).

# James 1:13-15 – The Battle Within

In James 1:13-15, James deals with temptation. Where does temptation come from? What is the origin of evil? Did evil originate with God? Satan? The fallen angels?

**Watch the Message** (55 Minutes)

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## Background

The Jews had a problem with the origin of evil. Where did it come from? They saw each person as having a civil war going on inside of them, two natures contending with one another simultaneously pulling him in opposite directions. They said, these two natures were like two dogs, a good one and a bad one constantly at one another's throats.

As they attempted to solve the problem of the origin of evil several theories developed: 1. Evil originated with Satan. 2. Fallen Angels were responsible. 3. Man himself alone was responsible. They were close to the truth here, however, they examined these theories they decided none were correct. They took a bold and irrational step and said that God alone could have created the evil tendency within man. By so doing they made God Who is absolute purity the author of evil.

Thus, James rebuttal to their conclusion, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man" (James 1:13). Man's tendency is to blame everyone but himself, even God for his sin. Instead, we ought to take personal responsibility for our sin. That's why John wrote, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). God is incapable of evil of any kind, including enticement to sin.

# When Tempted

“But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed” (James 1:14). Temptation is faced by all. “When he is tempted” (James 1:13). It’s not a matter of if we will be tempted or not but “when.” Temptation will come, you can depend on it. Each of us will face times of temptation. “Every man is tempted.” The question is, how will we respond to temptation when it comes our way? All temptation falls under one of three areas:

**1 John 2:16** – “For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.”

1. The lust of the flesh
2. The lust of the eyes
3. The pride of life

Every temptation we will ever face will fall under one of these categories. That’s how Jesus “was in all points tempted like as we are” (Hebrews 4:15). Adam and Eve, Jesus, and all of us, when tempted were tempted in one of the areas. Eve, when tempted, “saw that the tree was good for food – lust of the flesh, and that it was pleasant to the eyes – lust of the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise – pride of life” (Genesis 3:6). Jesus also was tempted in each of these three areas (Matthew 4:1-11).

## The Source of Temptation

The devil is the tempter but his tempting would have no effect on us if our want to or desire was not in the wrong place. Man is tempted when he is “drawn away of his own lust (desire), and enticed.” This can be likened to a fish swimming in a definite direction and is led out of the way to something that’s inviting, he’s drawn away by desire and enticed. Only to find that the very thing that looked good and inviting led to its demise. The shiny object had a hook in it.

# Temptation's Fruit

"Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1:14-15). Temptation comes, we are drawn away by our own lustful or sinful desire and enticed, sin is the result, and the result of sin is death. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezekial 18:20). "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). The four-fold aspect of death:

1. **Physical death.** Before the fall death never existed. Had Adam and Eve never sinned man would have lived forever in blissful paradise. Since original sin, "it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27).
2. **The second death.** At the White Throne Judgement everyone who have rejected Christ will be judged for their sin (Revelation 20:11-15). This is an eternal judgment. "In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power" (2 Thessalonians 1:8-9).
3. **Separation from God.** Adam and Eve had enjoyed God's presence prior to the fall. This is in part because of our shame. When they heard God approaching, "Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God" (Genesis 3:8). Ultimately, man was thrust out of God's presence because of his sin. "So He drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life" (Genesis 3:24).

This was actually an act of mercy to keep man from eating of the tree of life and living forever in his sinful state. Because of sin, man will be eternally separated from the presence of the Lord. This began in the garden. Every since that time man has been running from God and trying to fill the void that was left in his life. He was left with a hole in his soul that can only be satisfied with God Himself. He attempts to fill this void with everything imaginable, but nothing satisfies.

Jesus came to bridge the gap between God and man and reconcile the two. He, being very God and man, could lay his hand upon God and lay His hand upon man and bring the two together again. It's possible to have this void filled but it can only be filled through the person of Christ. You can be reconciled to the Father through

the substitutionary sacrifice of His Son. Our sins have been atoned for. A relationship with God can now be restored.

**2 Corinthians 5:19** – “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.”

**1 Peter 3:18** – “For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.”

**Romans 5:9-11** – “Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom we have now received the reconciliation.”

**4. Death in life's experience.** Sin can and will bring death into our experience in this life whether we are lost or saved. Death is its sure fruit. You can “enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season” (Hebrews 11:25). But be assured it won't last. There is a price tag for sin! We will reap what we sow (Galatians 6:7). It does pay wages (Romans 6:23). It will bring forth the fruit of death in life. It might be enjoyable for a time but it will bring forth death in our experience.

## Battle with Two Natures

The Jews had at least part of it right. A civil war going on inside of us, two natures contending with one another simultaneously pulling him in opposite directions, two dogs, a good one and a bad one constantly at one another's throats. This part they had correct.

**Romans 7:15-18** – “For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.”

**Galatians 5:17** – “For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.”

**Jeremiah 17:9** – “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?”

I have discovered that the closer I seem to get to the Lord the more my flesh fights me. There is a battle going on inside each of us. The Spirit is warring against the flesh and the flesh against the Spirit. I can honestly say I'm one of the most spiritual men you will ever meet and at the same time the most carnal man you will ever meet. The older I get the more this seems to be a reality in my life. When I first got saved this battle didn't appear to be nearly as strong as it is now. The closer we draw near to God the greater the battle within us rages.

When we first get saved the Holy Spirit unites with our human spirit that was dead in trespasses and sin and it is brought to life (Ephesians 2:1). We are born again or have receive a birth from above (John 3:3). We have become partakers of the divine nature and the Holy Ghost indwells us (2 Peter 1:3-4; 1 Corinthians 3:16) and the battle begins. Just because we've been born again doesn't mean our sinful nature has been eradicated, on the contrary, it now begins to fight.

We actually have two natures within us contending with each other, the old sinful nature inherited from Adam (Romans 5:12-19) and God's divine nature, the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:3-4). When tempted we have a choice, we can yield our will to the old nature and sin or we can yield our will to our new divine nature (the Holy Spirit) and overcome. From one life ensues and from the other death ensues (Deuteronomy 30:15 and 19; 2 Peter 1:3-4).

## Dealing With Temptation and Sin

1. Be on your guard (1 Corinthians 1:12-1). Temptation will come. Foolish is the one who thinks he's beyond being tempted.
2. Deal with it in the heart before becoming an outward reality (Luke 6:45; Proverbs 23:7; Matthew 5:28).

3. Resist (James 4:7).
4. Flee (2 Timothy 2:22).
5. Run to God not away from Him (Genesis 3:8).
6. Take personal responsibility (1 John 1:9).
7. Confession (James 5:16).
8. No condemnation (Romans 8:1; Revelation 12:10).
9. Cover (Proverbs 17:9).
10. Reconcile and restore (2 Corinthians 5:18-21; Galatians 6:1).
11. Don't give up (Philippians 1:6; 1 Thessalonians 5:24; 2 Thessalonians 3:3; Hebrews 12:2).

**1 Corinthians 10:13** – “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.”



# James 1:16 – Do Not Be Deceived

James warns us not to be deceived. The Bible makes it clear that there will be a proliferation of false teachers, antichrists, and erroneous doctrine in the last days. There is a deception over the world today like at no other time. We must take every precaution not to be deceived.

**James 1:16** – “Do not err (be deceived), my beloved brethren.”

There is a deception over our world today like at no other time in history. We must take every precaution not to be deceived.

**Watch the Message** (52 Minutes)

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## Scriptural Warnings

**Acts 20:28-30** – “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.”

**2 Corinthians 4:4-6** – “In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, Who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus’ sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”

**2 Corinthians 11:3-4** – “But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not

preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.”

**2 Corinthians 11:13-15** – “For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds.”

**Galatians 1:6-9** – “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.”

**1 Timothy 4:1-3** – “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.”

**1 John 2:18-27** – “Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth. Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also. Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father. And this is the promise that He hath promised us, even eternal life. These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you. But the anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the

same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him.”

**1 John 4:1-6** – “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.”

## Primary Ways Deception Comes

1. **Inconsistent with the entirety of scripture.** Any and all teaching, preaching, and doctrine must be consistent with the entirety of scripture. It can not be based on some scripture that is pulled out of context to simply support what they are saying. It must be what God’s Word teaches as a whole.

**Acts 20:27** – “For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.”

The best way to accomplish this is expository preaching and teaching. Going verse by verse through books of the Bible. Topical is good and has its place but teaching through the Word is the only way to be sure you are declaring the whole counsel of God.

**Acts 2:17** – “But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel.”

We must be able to direct people to God’s Word for all faith, doctrine, and experience. On the day of Pentecost Peter was quick to point the people to scripture to validate the experience they heard and saw. Any experience that can’t be backed up by the Word of God must be rejected.

**1 John 4:5-6** – “They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.”

If what is being taught is merely concerning this world and this world's system we must make a point to dig deeper to see what they actually believe concerning the foundational principles of scripture and the gospel. I've found if you dig deep enough you'll find something is desperately wrong. God's Word does apply to the things of this life but it ultimately direct us heavenward.

**Romans 8:5-6** – “For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.”

**Colossians 3:1-2** – “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.”

**2. The divinity of Christ.** If anyone denies the divinity of Jesus that are propagating a false doctrine. Jesus is the object of our faith. If we have the wrong Jesus, we have the wrong gospel, and are deceived (2 Corinthians 11:3-4 and Galatians 1:6-9). This is where “the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them” (2 Corinthians 4:4).

This is one of the most important doctrines of the Christian faith. Jesus was and is more than a good teacher, prophet, and high priest. He is all of those things and much more. He was and is very God. Be sure to study and examine the following scripture closely and carefully concerning the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ. I would even encourage you to put them to memory.

**Matthew 1:23** – “Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.”

**John 1:1 and 14** – “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and

we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”

**John 5:18** – “Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill Him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.”

**John 8:56-58** – “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day: and he saw it, and was glad. Then said the Jews unto Him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am. ” (Cross reference with Exodus 3:14)

**John 10:30-33** – “I and My Father are one. Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him. Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do you stone Me? The Jews answered Him, saying, For a good work we stone Thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that Thou, being a man, makest Thyself God.”

**John 14:8-9** – “Philip saith unto Him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?”  
Read also John 20:19-28

**Acts 20:28** – ” Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood.”

**Colossians 2:9** – “For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.”

**Philippians 2:6-11** – “Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men.”

**1 Timothy 3:16** – “Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh.”

**Hebrews 1:8** – “Unto the Son He saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.”

**Revelation 1:8** – “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.”

John gives a very stern warning concerning any who do not hold this doctrine. We are to withdraw ourselves from them and have nothing to do with them. He says we must not let them into our home or bid the godspeed. When we do we are partaking in their evil deeds.

**2 John 7-9** – “Many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.”

3. **Salvation by works.** Salvation by works or the law is a false gospel. If we could have been good enough we would not have needed Jesus. It means we are trusting in the flesh rather than Christ. We are either saved by works or grace one or the other. It can't be both. If we trust in a works salvation, we must never fall short. If we fall short in one area we stand condemned before God.

**James 2:10** – “For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.”

**Romans 11:6** – “And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.”

**Galatians 2:21** – “I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.”

**Galatians 3:1-3** – “O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?”

**Galatians 5:4** – “You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.”

**4. Jesus is the only way.** If anyone is teaching that there is any way to heaven and to be saved other than Jesus and Him alone, they are a false teacher and propagating a false gospel. “He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber” John 10:1).

Jesus is the narrow gate through which we must enter, all other ways lead to destruction (Matthew 7:13-14). All religions are not the same. If they preach another Jesus and another gospel then it is a false one. You have to be very narrow minded to be a Christian. JESUS IS THE ONLY WAY!

**John 14:6** – “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.”

**Acts 4:12** – “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”

**1 Corinthians 2:2** – “For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.”

**1 Corinthians 15:3-4** – “For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the scriptures.”

**2 Corinthians 11:3-4** – “But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not

preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.”

**Galatians 3:1** – “O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?”

Our sufficiency is in Christ and in Him alone!

**Jude 1:3** – “Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.”

## Sound Doctrine

The teaching of doctrine is imperative! Without this our people will be easily led astray. Sound doctrine is sorely lacking in the church today. Along with good expository preaching and teaching there also needs to be the teaching of solid doctrine otherwise our people will be tossed here and there by every new and often dangerous teaching coming into the church.

**Ephesians 4:14** – “That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.”

**2 Timothy 4:2-4** – “Preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.”

**Titus 2:1** – “But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine.”

**Hebrews 9:13** – “Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines.”



# James 1:17 – The Goodness of God

James tells us all that is good and perfect is from above and comes solely from God. We serve a God who is pure, unadulterated goodness. There's not even a shadow in His goodness. When we receive anything good in life, it comes down from the Father of lights..

**James 1:17** – “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.”

**Watch the Message** (38 Minutes)

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## Mankind is a Beneficiary of God's Goodness

We all benefit from the goodness of God, the evil and the good, the just and the unjust. In a general sense, God is good to all mankind. There are aspects of His goodness that is bestowed upon us all.

**Matthew 5:45** – “He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.”

## Evil Does Not Come From God

To say that “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above” makes it clear that anything that is not good and perfect is not from Him. Evil does not originate with God (James 1:13). Anything and everything bad in life does not come from above. It does not come from God. It's interesting to me that when a tornado, hurricane, tsunami, earthquake or any natural disaster happens it's labeled an “Act of God.” How is it that we blame God for the bad things in life and so frequently fail to give Him credit for the good in life?

All that God does is good. In the record of creation in Genesis 1, all that God created, He saw that it was good. Then why is there evil? Why do bad things

happen? Jesus referring to the devil said, “The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly” (John 10:10). Instead of calling natural disasters an “Act of God” we should more rightfully label them an “Act of Satan.” That said, we do live in a fallen world. The earth was originally created perfect and as the result of sin our world is in a fallen state. Paul referring to the fallen world in which we live said,

“For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now” (Romans 8:20-22).

God’s goodness is displayed to all mankind, however, His goodness is manifest to His people in a special way. His favor and goodness is bestowed upon those who trust in, follow, are committed to Him in ways that it isn’t bestowed on those who don’t serve Him. Jesus was anointed to release the favor of God to His people (Luke 4:18-19).

## Scriptures on the Favor of God

**Exodus 33:14** – “And He said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.”

**John 3:27** – “A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.”

**Isaiah 41:10** – “Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness.”

**Isaiah 44:3** – “I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour My Spirit upon thy seed, and My blessing upon thine offspring.”

**Isaiah 66:** – “For My hand made all these things, Thus all these things came into being, declares the Lord. But to this one will I look, To him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My Word.”

**Luke 4:18-19** – “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 preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach THE FAVORABLE YEAR OF THE LORD.”

**Numbers 6:24-26** – “The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: The Lord make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.”

**Deuteronomy 15:6** – “For the Lord thy God blesseth thee, as He promised thee: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, but thou shalt not borrow; and thou shalt reign over many nations, but they shall not reign over thee.”

**1 Chronicles 4:10** – “Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that Thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that Thine hand might be with me, and that Thou wouldest keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me! And God granted him that which he requested.”

**Jeremiah 29:11-13** – “I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil (not of calamity), to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon Me, and ye shall go and pray unto Me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart.”

**Isaiah 14:24 and 27** – “The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand: For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? And His hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?”

**Jeremiah 29:11 NIV** – “For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

**Zephaniah 3:17** – “The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty – A victorious warrior; He will save, He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will quiet you in His love, He will joy over thee with singing – with shouts of joy.”

**Joel 2:20, 23 and 25** – “I will remove far off from you the northern army, and will drive him into a land barren and desolate, with his face toward the east sea, and his hinder part toward the utmost sea, and his stink shall come up, and his ill savour shall come up, because he hath done monstrous things. Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for He has given you the former rain moderately, and He will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month. And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, My great army which I sent among you.”

**Romans 15:13** – “Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.”

**2 Chronicles 16:9** – “The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him – completely His.”

**Revelation 3:8** – “Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it!”

**Isaiah 43:19** – “Behold, I will do something new, Now it will spring forth; Will you not be aware of it? I will even make a roadway in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.”

## Scriptures on the Goodness of God

**Psalms 27:13-14** – “I would have lost heart, unless I had believed That I would see the goodness of the Lord In the land of the living. Wait on the Lord; Be of good courage, And He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the Lord!”

**Exodus 33:19** – “And He said, I Myself will make all My goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy.”

**Deuteronomy 30:5** – “The Lord thy God He will do thee good, and multiply thee.”

**Deuteronomy 30:9** – “The Lord thy God will make thee plenteous – prosper you abundantly in every work of thine hand, for good: for the Lord will again rejoice over thee for good.”

**Psalms 34:7-10** – “The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them. O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in Him. O fear the Lord, ye His saints: for there is no want to them that fear Him. The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing.”

**Psalms 84:11** – “For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.” It should be noted, that though we are called to live uprightly, any uprightness we have is of Him and Him alone (Isaiah 64:6 and Philippians 3:7-9).

**Psalms 103:5** – “Who satisfieth thy mouth (years) with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle’s.”

**Romans 11:22** – “Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness.”

**James 1:17** – “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.”

**Hebrews 9:11** – “Christ being come an high priest of good things to come.”

# Financial Blessings

**Philippians 4:19** – “My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”

**2 Corinthians 9:8** – “God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance for every good work.”

**Isaiah 60:5** – “Then you will look and be radiant, your heart will throb and swell with joy; the wealth on the seas will be brought to you, to you the riches of the nations will come.”

**Proverbs 10:22** – “The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and He addeth no sorrow with it.”

**Proverbs 13:22** – “A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children’s children: and the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just.”

**Psalms 35:27** – “Let them shout for joy, and be glad, which favor My righteous cause: yea, let them say continually, Let the Lord be magnified, Who hath pleasure in the prosperity of His servant.”

**Deuteronomy 8:18** – “It is He that giveth thee power to get wealth.”

**Isaiah 48:17** – “Thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am the Lord thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go.”

# James 1:18 – Born of God

In this verse James deals with the new birth. The Bible makes it clear that we were set apart and chosen by the Lord, born again, and adopted into the family of God of His own choosing. He sought after us, not us after Him. It was only by the exercise of His own will that we were brought forth, born of Him, and are living for Him today.

**Watch the Message** (54 Minutes)

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**James 1:18** – “Of His own will begat He us with the Word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.”

**John 3:1-8** – “There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto Him, Rabbi, we know that Thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that Thou doest, except God be with Him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto Him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother’s womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.”

## Of His Own Will

**Romans 3:11** – “There is none who understands, there is none who seeks after God.”

**John 6:44** – “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.”

**Jeremiah 1:5** – “Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee.”

**John 15:16** – “You did not choose Me, but I chose you and ordained you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should remain.”

**Ephesians 1:4-6** – “According as He has chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved.”

**Romans 9:15-16** – “For He saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.”

**John 1:12-13** – “As many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name. Who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”

Is that great? He chose us before the foundation of the world, before the world ever existed or was created to be His own, the first-fruits of His creation. God, in His infinite wisdom, foreknowledge, election and predestination, looked through the corridors of time, saw us, chose us to be His own and adopted us into His family. Glory be to God!

God sought after and chose us and not the other way around. He pursued us until He had apprehended us. Much like Paul described Jesus' apprehension of himself saying, “I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:12). Someone may say, “But that's not fair, God didn't choose me.” Well, if you accept Jesus, you'll discover that you were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world. But you say, “I don't want to accept Jesus into my life.” Well, I guess you weren't chosen then!

In other words, God votes for us, the devil votes against us and we cast the final ballot. I'm not sure that adequately explains it, but it's something to consider. The whole thing dealing with election, predestination and man's free will can be baffling



to many or if we are honest, it perplexes most of us with our limited, finite understanding. Many claim they understand it but that is merely pride talking.

None of my children chose to be born prior to their conception. They literally had no choice in the matter. They had nothing whatsoever to do with their birth or to whom they would be born. It is parents who choose to have children and not children who choose to have parents. Paul spent two chapters in Romans 9 and 11 explaining God's sovereignty, predestination and election. In Romans 10, right in the middle of explaining it, Paul throws man's free will into the mix and totally confuses everything. In Romans 11:33 he says, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" He is basically saying, "I just thoroughly explained it all to you, but I'm here to tell you I really don't get it."

God is God! God's total sovereignty, predestination and election are true and man's free will is absolutely true as well. Both are true! When dealing with an infinite God, some things simply boggle our finite minds. Let's just rejoice in the fact that God chose us. It was in the exercise of His will that we were born again into His family. When we receive Jesus we discover that He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world. We have been chosen by God! God is even now, through the Holy Spirit, calling you to come to Christ. Will you accept Jesus and invite Him into your life? He's standing at the door of your heart, knocking and anxiously waiting for you to invite Him in.

## With the Word of Truth

The Word of God is the means by which one is born again. We must never shy away from using the Word when endeavoring to win souls and lead someone to Christ. To assure a person has a true born again experience God's Word must be utilized.

It's when the scripture is used that one is convicted of sin, their need of a Savior and turn to Jesus for forgiveness. The Holy Spirit takes the Word, convicts of sin, and convinces a person of their need of salvation. Jesus said, "When He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on Me" (John 16:8-9).

It's the preaching of the Word that brings the lost to Christ. "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on Him in Whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him of Whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher" (Romans 10:13-14)?

**1 Peter 1:23** – "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."

Once the Word is proclaimed, whether through one on one soul winning or by the corporate preaching of the gospel, then the hearers must be given the opportunity to respond and surrender to Jesus. On the day of Pentecost while Peter was preaching,

**Acts 2:37-38** – "They were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

**Hebrews 4:2** – For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it."

It's the proclaimed Word that gives the hearers faith to believe.

**Romans 10:17** – So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God."

No new birth is legitimate apart from the Word of the Lord!

## First-fruits of His Creatures

Every Israelite was to bring to the Lord the firstfruits of the harvest and present it to God in hope of a full and plenteous harvest (Deuteronomy 26:1-11). This was to be done with all they received, grain, corn, fruits, cattle, and even their first-born children, showing their consecration, commitment and trust in the Lord with all they

had and would yet receive (Exodus 22:29, 34:19). Consecration, is however, the first in priority.

This is the same as the tithe. Whatever we possess, receive and earn must be given to the Lord revealing we trust Him with all that we have and we are therefore consecrating it to Him. We are to “Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase: So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine” (Proverbs 3:9-10). We consecrate it to Him!

First-fruit and firstborn is also applied to Jesus as being the first to rise from the dead never to die again. Paul wrote concerning Jesus, “Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: And He is the head of the body, the church: Who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things He might have the preeminence” (Colossians 1:15 and 18).

Firstborn was a title of preeminence and first in order or sequence. Firstborn here does not refer to Jesus as being the first created being as some cults would have you believe. Context is always imperative. Verse 18 defines firstborn as the first to rise from the dead. He was the first to rise from the dead never to die again. He is the first-fruits afterwards those who belong to Him at His return.

**1 Corinthians 15:20-23** – “But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at His coming.”

### **Three-fold observation of first-fruits:**

1. **Consecration.** This has to do with self-surrender, dying to self at the altar of the Lord. Surrendering fully to Him of all that we are. This has to do with the surrendering of our total self to Him, our plans, goals, personal ambition, self will, and in His service (Luke 14:25-33; Romans 12:1; Philippians 2:17).

2. **Expectation of the harvest to come.** When they gave the first-fruits to the Lord, it was in anticipation of what was to come, an even greater harvest. There’s a great harvest on the horizon. We must expect that when one gives their life to Christ,

more are yet to come. This was so with the woman at the well. She came to the Lord, then those from the town she lived in, then Jesus turned to His disciples and said,

**John 4:35** – “Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.”

When we lead someone to Christ, we must expect an even great harvest yet to come. Acts 2 was the first-fruits of the church where 3,000 were saved, and it continued to snowball until what we have today. I’m here to tell you, that if 3,000 were saved then, at the beginning of the last days, as we rapidly approach the end of the last days, we should expect an even greater harvest in our day (Joel 2:28-32). Praise the Lord!

**3. Participants in the harvest.** First-fruits suggests multiplication. When we surrender to Christ, we are the first-fruits of what is to come. Multiplication is a given. Once we have committed our life to Jesus, we should go on to bring others to Him, train them, and they in turn would to the same (Mark 16:15; Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8; 2 Timothy 2:2). This was the New Testament norm and should be for us as well.

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, thank You for reaching out to me and choosing me to be Your own. Please come into my life and heart, forgive me of all my sins, and help me to live for You. I choose to surrender all of myself to You and ask You to make me merely the first-fruits of the harvest to come. In Jesus’ name, Amen!

# James 1:19-21 – Swift to Hear

In James 1:18, the apostle challenges us to be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to anger. It's interesting that we have been given, by our creator, two ears and only one mouth. Which suggests, we should spend twice as much time listening as we do speaking.

**Watch the Message** (51 Minutes)

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**James 1:19-21** – “Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted Word, which is able to save your souls.”

## Context of the Scripture

“Wherefore” points to the previous verse dealing with our new birth through the Word of Truth. Since we have been born again by the Word of God, given a spiritual birth from above, adopted into the family of God, and have become the firstfruits of God's own possession, there are certain things that are expected of us.

## Who James is Addressing

“My beloved brethren” refers to his fellow believers as brothers, fellow members of the body of Christ and family of God. This is an expression of endearment and love. We must love one another as endeared family members (John 13:34-35; Romans 5:5; 1 John 4:11).

“Every man” is all inclusive. He's addressing every born again believer, every one who has been born of God and adopted into His family. This refers to every family member, none is excluded. It refers to the rich and poor, the wise and simple, the influential and seemingly insignificant in the eyes of the world. God includes us all, regardless of our ethnic, social, or economic standing.

**Romans 2:11** – “There is no respect of persons with God.”

We must have the same attitude toward all of our brothers and sisters in the Lord as that of the Lord Himself and as James does here.

**James 2:1** – “My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons.”

Paul takes it a step further saying, “Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind (attitude) be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 2:3-5).

## Applications of James 1:19

“Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.”

1. **Have a teachable spirit.** We must all have a teachable spirit, ready to learn from anyone. It shouldn't matter who it's coming from. We must be willing to learn from every man, even if it's from someone less educated, younger in the Lord, and even when it's in the form of a rebuke (Proverbs 9:8-9).

2. **Be ready and eager to learn.** Everyone should have a thirst for spiritual knowledge and insight and be ready and eager to learn from all. I don't understand believers who don't have a hunger for the Word (Psalms 119:103; Jeremiah 15:16; Romans 10:14-17; 1 Peter 2:2).

3. **Learn from the circumstances and battles of life.** The context deals with having a listening ear and learning in all situations of life. It deals with the trials of life (James 1:2-4; 1:12), gaining and seeking wisdom from above (James 1:5-8), the temptations of life (James 1:13-15), and when deception is coming at us on every front (James 1:16). We must ask the Lord to teach us and show us what He wants us to learn from these things. We must also be open to learn from our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ, even those of “low degree” (James 1:9-10).

4. **Listen to the views of others.** This can easily apply in a myriad of relationship scenarios, marriages, friendships, fellow believers and church members, pastors, leadership, and church members, offenses between brethren, etc. We're typically eager to tell our side of an issue but unwilling to listen to the views of others. Extreme tensions can arise when we only want to speak and express our opinions and views and not listen with an open mind to the views and opinions of others (Proverbs 15:1; 18:13; Matthew 5:23-24; 18:15).

"Seek first to understand then to be understood." – Stephen Covey

5. **Listen before giving advice.** I'm a solution person. It's easy for me to want to dive right in and give someone a solution to their problem before I've adequately heard all they have to say. There's wisdom in thoroughly listening to someone before speaking. We should only answer after having a full understanding of the problem and/or situation (Proverbs 18:13).

6. **Be trained before teaching or preaching.** We must be thoroughly trained and taught before speaking. Often those with a call of God want to jump right into ministering the Word before being adequately trained. This can lead to teaching things we will later regret. This is why being taught theologically sound doctrine prior to beginning our ministry is of utmost importance (2 Timothy 2:15; Titus 2:1). It's imperative we seek to be taught before teaching.

Moses was trained for eighty years prior to God using him. The disciples spent three years being trained directly by Jesus before entering into their ministry. Paul spent three years in the Arabian desert receiving revelation directly from the Master. How much more should we be adequately prepared?

This can also apply to seasoned ministers of the Word. Time in our study and prayer, seated at the Master's feet is a must before ever sharing the Word. Commit yourself to studying commentaries and theological works on whatever topic or passage you're planning to speak on.

Seek the Lord, and ask the Holy Spirit to speak to you, and give you what He wants you to share before stepping behind the pulpit (Luke 10:38-42; Acts 4:13; Matthew 10:19-20). Then and only then can we be confident we are speaking "Thus saith the Lord."

# Subduing Our Passions

We must subdue our passions, be slow to speak, and slow to anger. “For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God” (James 1:20). “He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls” (Proverbs 25:28). Bringing our passions under subjection to the Spirit of God is imperative in all relations of life and particularly in the ministry (Proverbs 15:1; 29:11; Ephesians 4:26-27, 29-32; Colossians 3:8).

Anger must be subdued! I’ve noticed that the majority of times when I’ve gotten angry or allowed my anger to get out of control that I have done something stupid or messed something up. Seldom does anything good come from anger or rage. Moses lost it with the children of Israel and struck the rock twice destroying God’s type and picture of Christ and was not allowed to enter the promise land (Numbers 20:11; 1 Corinthians 10:4). Nothing good comes from losing control of our passions.

That said, there is a time and place for anger. It’s possible to be angry and sin not (Ephesians 4:26). Moses got mad and broke the Ten Commandments which God wrote with His own hand (Exodus 32:19). Jesus turned over the money changer’s tables in the temple and the seats of those who sold doves (Matthew 21:12). There is a place for righteous and godly indignation!

**James 1:21a** – “Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness.”

“Laying apart” has to do throwing aside a filthy garment or article of clothing, casting it aside with disgust. Peter said, “Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby: If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious” (1 Peter 2:1-3). Notice he ends with “evil speakings” which is how it applies in our passage.

“Superfluity of naughtiness” has to do with our anger and speech or “evil speakings.” Some translations translate this “overflow of wickedness” and should be applied to anger and wickedness of speech. “Superfluity” is superfluous or a surplus of anger and speech, more than what is needed.



**Proverbs 29:11 (KJV)** – “A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards.”

**Proverbs 29:11 (NKJV)** – “A fool vents all his feelings, But a wise man holds them back.”

**Proverbs 29:11 (NASB)** – “A fool always loses his temper, But a wise man holds it back.”

## Salvation and Sanctification Through the Word

“Receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls” (James 1:21b). This has to do with sanctification. Our salvation comes in three stages:

1. Instant or positional salvation (Hebrews 10:14).
2. Progressive salvation or sanctification (James 1:19b; Romans 8:29; Philippians 2:12-13).
3. Final or complete salvation (Romans 8:29-30; 1 John 3:2).

Our spirit is saved instantaneously when we are born again (Ephesians 2:1). Our soul, on the other hand, is not. Our soul, which encompasses our mind, will and emotions, needs a lot of work. Most of what James is talking of this passage has to do with our soul and passions, which needs to be crucified and brought under the control of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:19-24).

There's cleansing and sanctifying virtue in the Word of God. Jesus said, “You are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you” (John 15:3). He prayed, “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth” (John 17:17). Paul wrote concerning Jesus' sacrifice of Himself, “Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it; That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word” (Ephesians 5:25-26).

**James 1:21** – “Receive with meekness the engrafted Word, which is able to save your souls.”

**Micah 6:8** – “He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?”

# James 1:22-25 – Doers of the Word

Are we doers of the Word? Do we put into practice what we hear and read from God's Word? What's our response when we hear the Word of God preached? Do we implement the Word into our life?

**James 1:22** – “But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.”

**Watch the Message** (42 Minutes)

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How many of us remember, at one time or another, hearing the Word preached from the pulpit and saying, “Amen, I really hope brother or sister so and so was listening. They really needed to hear that.” We often think the Word applies to everyone but us. Let's maintain the attitude, “Lord, Is there something you want me to get from this? Is there something you want me to do?”

I'm reminded of a story I heard of a young minister just starting out. He took his first pastorate. On his first Sunday he preached a really powerful sermon. The people were so excited. The leadership of the church thought, we made the right decision choosing him to be our pastor. His second Sunday service came around and the people were excited as to what they would hear this Sunday. He stood in the pulpit and began to preach the same message he had preached the previous Sunday.

The people and leadership in particular were a bit perplexed but thought it was surely an oversight on the pastor's part. His third and fourth Sunday sermons turned out to be exactly the same. Being a bit frustrated, the leadership asked to meet with the pastor. In their meeting, they confronted him that he had preached the same message at each service. The young pastor looked intently at them and said, “Have you put it into practice yet?” They were pierced to the heart and convicted by the young pastor. They had not been doers of the Word.

The Word of God only benefits us if we put it into practice in our daily lives. The writer of Hebrews said, “For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the Word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it” (Hebrews 4:2). The Word of God only profits us if we mix it with faith,

“Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone” (James 2:17). Jesus said, “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven” (Matthew 7:21).

I remember a story I heard of a businessman who went on an extended journey. He left one person in charge and said he would be sending him daily instructions on what he was to do. He did as he had said and sent regular directives. He expected responses and updates on how things were going but heard nothing. This went on for some time. Finally, he decided he had better return and find out what was going on. When he arrived back at his business, he saw people at their leisure and hardly doing anything. As you can imagine, he was not only extremely frustrated but very angry. He approached the man he had placed in charge and immediately began to vent his frustration toward him. The man looked at him as if to say, “What is wrong? Why are you so upset?” The businessman asked, “Did you not receive all the instructions I sent you?”

The man replied, “Yes we did. They were wonderful. Each set of instructions were read over and over, I even put portions to memory. Once I had thoroughly studied them, I shared them with the rest of our employees. In fact, we took time daily to study and discuss them together. We all really enjoyed your directives.” The businessman looked at him and said, “If you thought so much of the directives I sent, why didn’t you do what I told you?”

Isn’t that like many of us? We study God’s Word regularly and have Bible studies on a weekly basis, but do we give heed to what God says? Like the businessman, the Lord is going to return one day and we will have to give an account for what we did with God’s directives. He will ask, “Why didn’t you do what I told you?”

**James 1:23-24** – “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, for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was.”

He gives us an analogy of a person looking in a mirror. We see ourselves clearly while gazing at ourselves in the mirror but as soon as we walk away we forget what we saw. Try it some time. Look at yourself in the mirror, walk away, and try to remember exactly what you saw. It’s really hard to do. We can look at someone else and after they are gone we can remember specifics about what we saw when we looked at them.

We can remember exactly what they looked like. Yet, we can hardly remember a thing about ourselves. What a spiritual truth! It's so easy to see and remember imperfections in others but how easily we forget the imperfections we see in ourselves. We can hear a message preached from the Word, God clearly speaks to us and we walk away and so easily forget what He revealed to us.

The word "observes" or "beholds" in verse 24 refers to a glancing look. To best understand this, let's illustrate it with a picture of a young boy out playing. He's playing as hard as a boy can, goes inside briefly for something, looks in the mirror and sees the reflection of himself. He notices dirt all over himself. His face is filthy and his clothes are a mess.

Does he get all concerned about what he looks like? Do you imagine him getting in a frenzy trying to clean himself up? No, of course not. He's a young boy. All he wants to do is hurry up, get back outside and play more. Yes, he saw he was caked with dirt all over but he hardly flinched over it. It was just a glancing look in the mirror and right back out to play.

Isn't that like most of us? We see ourselves in the mirror of God's Word, we see the imperfections, we may see something God is requiring of us but it's just a glancing look and we are quickly back out to play forgetting all about it or we simply rationalize it away. We never get around to putting into practice the revelation God has given us. We are forgetful hearers.

**James 1:25** – "But whoever looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues therein, he being not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in all he does."

The word for "looks into" is *parakypso* in the Greek which means to stoop over and look into, to gaze carefully by the side of, to peer or to peep into, to bend over for closer look, investigation and examination of something. This is not a passing glance as in verse 24. Unlike verse 23 and the illustration of the young boy who simply made a passing glance of himself in the mirror and quickly runs back out to play, this can be illustrated by the boy a few years later, a teenager about to go on his first date. While preparing for his date, he looks into the mirror and sees a pimple on the end of his nose.

Do you think he gives a mere glance at what he sees in the mirror as he did when he was a young boy? I think not. Worried about his upcoming date, he picks at it and covers it with makeup so it's not as noticeable. There's no way he gives this a passing glance. On the contrary, he gazes carefully at the imperfection he sees in the mirror, bends over for a close look, investigation and examination in hopes of finding a remedy before his date.

This can also be illustrated with the story of the disciple's investigation into Jesus' empty tomb. There are three words in the original language which will give us tremendous insight. One of those words has a similar meaning to our word *parakypso*. Mary went to Jesus' tomb early Sunday morning and saw the stone had been rolled away. She quickly ran to tell Peter and John. They ran to see what had taken place. John being a little younger and faster arrived at the tomb first. Peter followed closely behind.

John, "stooping down and looking in, saw the linen cloths lying there yet he did not go in" (John 20:5). The word used here is *blepo* and means to glance at something and indicates only that the object impressed itself on John's eyes. He didn't examine what he had seen or quite grasp what had happened. It goes on to show how Peter looked at everything in the empty tomb, the linen clothes, the handkerchief that had been around Jesus' head, and he even noticed how it had been neatly folded, in a place by itself.

**John 20:6** – "Peter came, following him, went into the tomb and saw."

The word used in verse six is *theoreo* and means to take careful notice, to contemplate, to behold with intelligence, to scrutinize over. Something caused Peter to puzzle over what he had seen (like an empty cocoon retaining the shape or contour of Jesus' body). How could the body get out of the clothes without unwrapping them?

Then John, "went in also and he saw and believed" (John 20:8). The word used here is *Noida* which means to see with understanding and believe, to get a mental picture of, to realize what has taken place. John now understood the meaning of what he saw, that Jesus was alive and therefore believed that He was risen from the dead.

John initially looked in the empty tomb first, but only glanced at what was inside. It merely made an impression on his eyes. Peter went in afterward scrutinizing and puzzling over all he saw. Because Peter so pondered over all he saw, John went in the second time, saw and believed. If we will look into (parakypso), stoop over for a closer look, gaze carefully into, and investigate the Word of God, we will pave the way for others to see and believe. Let's not simply give God's Word a passing glance. When we look intently into the Word of God and put it into practice, we will be blessed in all we do. We will also pave the way for others to see as well.

**Joshua 1:8** – “This book of the law shall not depart out of your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it, for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.”

**Psalms 1:2-3** – “But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law does he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth his fruit in his season, his leaf also shall not wither and whatsoever he does shall prosper.”

**Luke 11:28** – “Blessed are those who hear the Word of God and keep it.”

# James 1:26-27 – Pure Religion

I've never liked using the term religion or religious, but this is one of the few places this word is used in scripture. I prefer referring to believers as disciples or followers of Christ. True Christianity is about having a relationship with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Religion is typically associated with outward form and is equated with rules and regulations.

**Watch the Message** (47 Minutes)

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Nonetheless, James uses it here. Probably because he is dealing with those who merely give an outward appearance of religiosity. As we apply it here to believers, what does it mean to be truly religious? What is pure religion in the eyes of our heavenly Father? How can we discern if one is truly religious as God sees it?

**James 1:26-27** – “If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridled his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain. Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.”

## Any Man Among You

This suggests they are a part of the church or fellowship. This is not speaking of those outside the body but those among its ranks. It applies to pastors, elders, deacons, worship leaders or those on the worship team, ushers, sound men or women and anyone who is a member or in regular attendance at church gatherings.

## Seem to be Religious

This one gives the appearance of being religious or spiritual. On the surface they appear very religious, but are they really? They behave in such a way so as to make people think they are religious, at least outwardly they seem to be so.



**Matthew 6:1** – “Take heed that ye do not your alms (righteous deeds) before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.”

The operative words here are “to be seen of them.” Anytime we do our righteous deeds for the express purpose of being noticed we are forfeiting our heavenly reward and the blessing of God. We don’t necessarily have to hide everything we do but we must never flaunt it to receive the praise of men. Jesus goes on to specify ways in which this is often done. I will include worship to the list as well.

1. **Giving.** “Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly” (Matthew 6:2-4).

2. **Praying.** “And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. Be not ye therefore like unto them” (Matthew 6:5-6, 8).

3. **Fasting.** “Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly” (Matthew 6:16-18).

4. **Worship.** Samuel had anointed Saul king of Israel and sent him to destroy the Amalekites. He was to destroy all they had as well. When Saul returned from battle, as he approached Samuel and said, “Blessed be thou of the Lord: I have performed the commandment of the Lord” (1 Samuel 15:13). But he had spared Agag the king and also kept back the best of their flocks “to sacrifice unto the Lord” (1 Samuel 15:21). Samuel’s response was,

“Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness (insubordination) is as iniquity and idolatry” (1 Samuel 15:22-23).

How often do we cover up our disobedience with superficiality. The appearance of worship but our heart is far from Him. We lift our hands during worship in just the right way so as to seem spiritual. We weep at the altar and do all the right things. We may even dance before the Lord in worship and even minister through the gifts and manifestations of the Spirit. All these things are wonderful expressions of worship in and of themselves but are we doing it in the service and worship of God or to be seen of men?

## An Unbridled Tongue

**James 1:27** – “If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man’s religion is vain.”

James deals a lot with the tongue in James 3:3-12 which we’ll cover more in-depth later. The emphasis is on controlling our tongue or a tongue out of control. It’s sad to even mention of how much destruction has taken place as a result of the unbridled and uncontrolled tongue. It has destroyed good churches and I can’t count how many people have been deeply hurt by the destructive words that have come out of the mouths of “God’s people.”

1. **Gossip.** “He that covereth a transgression seeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter separateth very friends” (Proverbs 17:9).
2. **Judgment and criticism.** “Who art thou that judgest another man’s servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand. But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother (Romans 14:4 and 10)?
3. **Evil speaking.** “Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge” (James 4:11).

4. **Words spoken in anger.** “Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God” (James 1:19). “A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger” (Proverbs 15:1).

5. **Words that don’t edify.** “Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers” (Ephesians 4:29).

## Self Deception

“Deceiveth his own heart.” This is set in the context of and side by side with being doers of the Word. “But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves” (James 1:22). Not actually as spiritual and religious as you think, self-deluded, you think and act as if you’re much more spiritual than you really are.

**1 Corinthians 2:14** – “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”

## Vain religion

“This man’s religion is vain.” Vain here is the Greek “mataios” and means void of results, useless, empty. What he has is not doing himself any good nor anyone else. They are not dealing with their unbridled tongue and become truly spiritual before God. Nothing they do is doing themselves any good, nor anyone in the body, and even useless to the kingdom. No fruit is coming from their life.

## Pure Religion

**James 1:27** – “Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.”

1. **Pure** is the Greek “katharos” and literally means “as being cleansed.” Behaving as one who has been truly cleansed of their sins and made the righteousness of God in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:21). When we have truly been made clean by the blood of Jesus we will have hearts of love and compassion for our brothers and sisters and seek nothing but that which will build them up.

2. **Undefiled** is the Greek “aniantos” and means free from contamination. Both clean and uncontaminated. Serving God with singleness of heart. “The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light” (Matthew 6:22). Hearts and spirits set on the building up of the body of Christ and the kingdom of God.

3. **Before God and the Father.** What a stark contrast to the previous verse. Those whose religion is vain seek to do their righteous deeds before man. The one who has experienced “pure religion” do what they do before God. Their sights are set on pleasing God, not man. They seek only the praise and approval of God and not man. They are not trying to prove how spiritual they are. They are only interested in how God sees them. Their only desire is to please God, not man.

**Galatians 1:10** – “For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.”

**Matthew 5:16** – “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”

## Visiting the Afflicted

**Psalms 68:5** – “A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation.”

Welfare was originally the job of the church and not the government. The church should today be reaching out to all who are suffering affliction of any sort. If we're not reaching out to those going through difficulties and hardship our so called religion or spirituality is vain, empty, useless, fruitless and void of results.

The Fatherless and widows can be broadly applied to all who are afflicted. Pastors, you and your church should be in the visitation business. If you're not everything else you're doing is vain, empty, useless, fruitless and will be void of results. You should be personally involved in visiting the afflicted and you should be training your people in visitation ministry.

**Matthew 25:34-36, 40** – “The King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me in: Naked, and ye clothed Me: I was sick, and ye visited Me: I was in prison, and ye came unto Me.”

**Matthew 25:41-43, 45-46** – “Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was an hungred, and ye gave Me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me not in: naked, and ye clothed Me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited Me not. Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to Me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.”

**Micah 6:8** – “He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?”

### **Those to visit:**

1. Widows
2. Divorced
3. Orphans (Includes children who have only one parent at home.)
4. The Lost
5. Absentees
6. Prisoners

7. Nursing Homes

8. Hospitals

9. Homeless Shelters

10. Local News (Keeping an eye out for those who may be in need.)

## Unspotted by the World

We are to keep ourselves unspotted by the world. Jesus said of his disciples, “They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world” (John 17:16). We are in the world but not of it. We use the things of this world and even must partake of much of it, but we must have a different mind set and philosophy than that of the world.

Sadly, much of the church has brought the world in. Every new fad that comes down the pike the church latches onto. It began with departing from the Bible’s precepts and bringing psychology into the church, the recovery movement and the 12 Steps, the self-help movement, and now creating the specific ambiance the world and church world says we must have.

It used to be when you entered church and it was well lit. People were gathered around the altar praying and seeking the face of God. Now we arrive at church to find the lights dimmed, with black or blue lights, and eating doughnuts and drinking coffee. Much of the worship is what you hear on Christian radio. Everything is designed to make people comfortable.

Most of our messages are not a lot different than what you’d hear at a motivational seminar, with some Bible stories added in to make it spiritual. We’ve stripped away anything that might offend. We want people to be comfortable and encouraged but that cannot be our primary focus. Our major focus must be the worship of the one true God and teaching and preaching the Word of God.

**Titus 2:1** – “But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine.”

**1 Timothy 4:13** – “Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.”

**2 Timothy 4:2-4** – “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.”

**2 Corinthians 6:14** – “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?”

**James 4:4** – “Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.”

**1 John 2:15** – ” Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”

**Colossians 3:1-2** – “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.”

# James 2:1-9 – Respect of Persons

In our passage James is dealing with showing respect or partiality of persons. He equates partiality with evil thoughts and calls it sin (James 2:4 and 2:9). We humans often show partiality. God, on the other hand, does not. “For there is no respect of persons with God” (Romans 2:11).

## Watch the Message (50 Minutes)

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**James 2:1-9** – “My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons. For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts? Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him? But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats? Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called? If ye fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.”

## Who James is Addressing

“My brethren” refers to his fellow believers as brothers, fellow members of the body of Christ and family of God. This is an expression of endearment and love. We must love one another as endeared family members (John 13:34-35; Romans 5:5; 1 John 4:11).

However, here James is giving these believers a loving rebuke. “But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ” (Ephesians 4:15). “Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful” (Proverbs 27:6). Every good minister and pastor will at times see the necessity to lovingly chastise his people for the greater good.



# The Faith of Our Lord Jesus Christ

1. **Jesus Christ.** Jesus was our Lord's earthly name and Christ is who He was or is. Christ means messiah or anointed one, savior, "the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:16). He is the savior of the world.

2. **Lord Jesus Christ.** It's important to note that, though he had been Jesus' half brother according to the flesh, he addresses Him as "the Lord Jesus Christ." We must take care not to get caught up in using His name flippantly. There must be a reverence and respect when referring to Jesus our Lord. Jesus desires to be our Lord and not simply our savior. Peter said, "God hath made the same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36). He desires to be "both Lord and Christ," of our lives, not just savior but Lord as well.

3. **The faith of.** It's the faith of Jesus that we possess. It's not our own faith but His that we are stewards over. We have nothing of our own. All we have is from Him and is a work of His grace in and upon our life. This should strip us of all glorying and boast of anything in ourselves and cause all glory to go to Him.

1. **Faith for salvation.** "Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference" (Romans 3:22).

2. **Faith for service.** "And His name through faith in His name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by Him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all" (Acts 3:16).

## The Lord of Glory

What a beautiful description of our Lord. He was the Lord of glory prior to His incarnation, He was so while He walked on earth, and His full glory was restored after His ascension to the right hand of the Father.

**Hebrews 1:3** – "Who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the Word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."

**John 1:1-2, 14** – “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”

**John 17:5** – “And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was.”

**Revelation 1:10-18** – “I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea. And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and His hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and His eyes were as a flame of fire; And His feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and His voice as the sound of many waters. And He had in his right hand seven stars: and out of His mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and His countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength. And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. And He laid His right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.”

## With Respect of Persons

We should not have personal preferences of one person above another and particularly in the church. We must not favor one over another for any reason. “For there is no respect of persons with God” (Romans 2:11).

1. **Partiality in judgment.** We must never pervert justice and judgment. We must not show partiality, giving favor to the mighty or great. Our judgment should be the same to all without respect of persons. Any and all forms of bribery shall never be considered to blind our eyes and pervert justice.

**Leviticus 19:15** – “Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour.”

**Deuteronomy 1:17** – “Ye shall not respect persons in judgment; but ye shall hear the small as well as the great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man; for the judgment is God’s: and the cause that is too hard for you, bring it unto me, and I will hear it.”

**Deuteronomy 16:19** – “Thou shalt not wrest (pervert) judgment; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous.”

**Proverbs 24:23** – “These things also belong to the wise. It is not good to have respect of persons in judgment.”

**Proverbs 28:21** – “To have respect of persons is not good: for for a piece of bread that man will transgress.”

**2. Religious partiality.** How often is religious partiality shown today? If people are part of our religious group that are favored more than those outside of our group. This is not a reference to those who are embracing and propagating false doctrine and heresies. All heretics must be rejected (2 John 7-9).

**Acts 10:34** – “Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons.”

Peter who was still holding onto his Jewish traditions not to have anything to do with Gentiles. God gives him a vision and shows him not to call anything or anyone unclean who God has cleansed. This is verified to him by the Holy Spirit being poured out on Cornelius’ household (Acts 10).

**Galatians 2:6, 11-12** – “God accepteth no man’s person. But When Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision.”

Peter didn't learn his lesson but he pulled away from the Antioch believers when the Jewish believers arrived from Jerusalem. Prior to their arrival he ate and drank with the Gentile believers. Afterwards, he separated himself, fearing the Jewish believers. After which time Paul rebuked him to his face for his hypocrisy.

**1 Corinthians 1:10-17** – “Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name. And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other. For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel.”

The Corinthians were also having trouble falling into sectarianism. They were making a distinction as to what group they were part of and who had baptized them. How often do we do the same in our denominational sects? I'm Baptist, Methodist, Pentecostal, non-denominational, so forth and son on, as if one were better than the other. If we are all saved and blood washed, we should be united in Christ and not what group we're associated with.

**3. Racial partiality.** Racial partiality and discrimination of any kind should not be tolerated. We are all humans beings and part of the same biological family Adam and Eve. We must all be viewed the same. None of us should be looked down on as a lower class of person than the other.

Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because he was married to an Ethiopian woman. Their claim was, does the Lord speak through Moses only? Does He not also speak through us. This angered the Lord to the extent He departed from them and Miriam was left leprous, white as snow. She apparently was the one who instigated it all. In essence God said, you like white, have at it.

**Numbers 12:1, 8-11** – “And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married: for he had married an Ethiopian woman. Wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses? And the anger of the Lord was kindled against them; and He departed. And the

cloud departed from off the tabernacle; and, behold, Miriam became leprous, white as snow: and Aaron looked upon Miriam, and, behold, she was leprous.

4. **Cliques in church.** The Corinthians were having love feasts. They probably began well but as time went on those who could afford to bring a good meal ate and drank while leaving those didn't have the means to bring their own food and drink were left out. They had formed cliques within the church.

**1 Corinthians 11:20-22** – “When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord’s supper. For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken. What? Have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? Or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I praise you not.”

There are many such cliques in the church today which God loathes. We are to leave such cliques outside His church. It may be social status, those who dress different than others, women and men, white collar workers and blue collar workers, those who have different likes, etc., but it must not be tolerated in God’s house. When we gather together we should do so as one body, made up of those who are all in need of a savior, around the foot of the cross.

5. **Affluent and influential.** There must not be a distinction between those who have and those who have, the affluent and influential and those who may not have a lot and may be seemingly insignificant. Sadly, those who are affluent and influential are too frequently treated different in our churches.

We think the influential may be able to propel our church to the next level and help us meet all the right people. When someone comes through the doors of our church who appears to be a person of means, our immediate thought is, they would be a good tither and we treat these different. These things ought not so to be.

**James 2:2-4** – “For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?”

“Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?”  
This reveal our true heart. It shows:

1. Impure motives – Our heart is not right before God.
2. Double mindedness – Matthew 6:22 and 24, 1 Kings 18:21.
3. Desire to impress – Look at who I’m with, who’s coming to our church. Look who I’m with.

**James 2:5-7** – “Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him? But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats? Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called?”

God wants all men to come to Himself but the ones He has normally chosen and used have been those who were outcast, rough and those the world typically doesn’t want that He might receive the glory. This does not mean we should shut the others out or shun them. However, God does have a special place in His heart toward outcast.

**Isaiah 16:4** – “Let My outcasts dwell with you... Be a shelter to them from the face of the spoiler.”

**1 Samuel 22:2** – “Every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them.”

**James 1:9-11** – “Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted: But the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away. For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways.”

**1 Corinthians 1:26-29** – “For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in His presence.”

**James 2:8-9** – “If ye fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.”

If our heart is pure and our motive is right, we will love and treat everyone equally.

**Matthew 22:39** – “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.”

**John 13:34-35** – “A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”

**John 17:21** – “That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me.”

**Romans 13:8** – “Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.”

**1 John 2:10** – “He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.”

**1 John 4:11-12** – “Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.”

# James 2:10-13 – The Law of Liberty

If we keep the law but offend in only one point, we become transgressors of the law. Our speech and actions will be judged based on how we show mercy to others. Mercy always triumphs over judgment.

**Watch the Message** (54 Minutes)

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**James 2:10-13** – “For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For He that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law. So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty. For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.”

## Guilty Before God

**James 2:10-11** – “For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For He that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.”

This shows the utter futility of salvation by works or of keeping the law. If we could somehow keep all of the law but fall short in one area, we stand guilty before God.

**Matthew 5:20** – “Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.”

The scribes and Pharisees prided themselves on keeping the law to the minutest of details. In their diligence to keep the law, they too fail short.

**Romans 3:23** – “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.”



Contextually, offending in one point refers back the previous verse of respect of persons, comparing it to the worst of sins, adultery and murder (James 2:9). All sin is abhorrent before a holy God.

Martin Luther wanted to throw out the book of James because he thought its emphasis on works contradicted salvation by faith alone. He apparently didn't read or understand this verse. This verse shows unequivocally the impossibility of justification by the works of the law.

**Galatians 2:16** – “Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.”

If righteousness could be obtained by keeping the law or works then we would have to keep all of the law. If we fall short in even one aspect we are guilty before God. The law was given to show us we all fall short and therefore lead us to faith in Jesus.

**Galatians 3:24** – “Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.”

**Romans 10:4-5** – “For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them.”

**Galatians 3:10** – “For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.”

The curse was death and separation from God. It encompasses both physical and spiritual death, ultimately culminating in eternal separation from God in hell. God told Adam,

**Genesis 2:11** – “The tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”

Adam and Eve did not immediately die physically after sinning but spiritually, they were thrust out of God's presence.

**Genesis 3:24** – “So He drove out the man; and He placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.”

**Ezekiel 18:4** – “The soul that sinneth, it shall die.”

**Romans 5:12** – “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.”

**Romans 6:23** – “For the wages of sin is death.”

**Matthew 25:41** – “Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.”

**2 Thessalonians 1:8-9** – “In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power.”

**Revelation 20:14-15** – “And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”

**Hebrew 10:27** – “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God” without Christ.

Jesus is man's only hope! Without Christ we are all doomed to eternal damnation. If you haven't trusted Jesus and His finished work on the cross for your sins, let me urge you to do so now. Faith in His shed blood on our behalf is the only remedy for our sin and its penalty.

**Hebrews 6:18** – Flee “for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us.”

**Hebrews 10:14** – “For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.”

**Hebrews 13:12-13** – “Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach.”

**Romans 3:25-26** – “Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time His righteousness: that He might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.”

**1 Peter 1:18-20** – “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.”

**Ephesians 1:7** – “In Whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.”

Beware lest after you have trusted Christ and His finished work on the cross on your behalf and you return to trusting in your works and new life rather than continuing to trust in His blood shed on your behalf and that alone. Scripture sternly warns against reverting back to the works of the law. We are either saved by grace or works. It can't be both. Either Jesus' blood is sufficient to cleanse us of our sins or it isn't.

**Hebrews 10:29** – “Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?”

**Romans 11:6** – “And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.”

**Galatians 2:21** – “I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.”

**Galatians 3:1-3** – “O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?”

**Galatians 5:4** – “Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.”

## Governed by the Day of Accountability

**James 2:12** – “So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.”

This isn't referring to the white throne judgment in Revelation 20:11-15. That's a judgment for unbelievers who will be cast into the lake of fire. This has to do with the judgment seat of Christ where reward is determined for the redeemed. Our salvation is the free gift of God and there's nothing we can do to earn it. Reward, however, is earned.

**Romans 14:10-12** – “For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.”

Our works will be judged to determine our reward in glory. Our works done for Christ will pass through the fire of this judgment. Some works will be burned up while some will pass through the fire as gold, silver, and precious stones, and reward will be given for what remains (1 Corinthians 3:10-15).

Can you imagine if each believer governed their words and actions in view of our future judgment? What a difference it would make in what we say and do.

**Matthew 12:36-37** – “But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.”

**2 Corinthians 5:10-11** – “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.”

## The Law of Liberty

The law of liberty refers to the new covenant we're under as believers and followers of Christ. It's the law that sets us free from the bondage of the law. The law was a covenant or contract between God and man and man failed to live up to his side of the covenant. The new covenant is a contract between the Father and the Son and they both lived up to the contract. This covenant can't fail because man is left out of the equation. Our only requirement is to believe.

**Ezekiel 11:19-20** – “I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh: That they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be My people, and I will be their God.”

**Romans 7:5-6** – “For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.”

**2 Corinthians 3:6** – “Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the Spirit: for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.”

**Romans 8:2** – “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.”

It's interesting that the advent of the first covenant brought death, but life ensued at the coming of the new covenant. When the law came, 3,000 died (Exodus 32:28). When the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost, 3,000 received eternal life (Acts 2:41). What a glorious contrast. The new covenant in Jeremiah 31:31-34 is quoted in Hebrews 8:10-12. We see four “I wills” or benefits of the new covenant.

1. **Enlightenment.** “I will put My laws in their mind” (Hebrews 8:10). A fresh enlightenment is received under the new covenant. In the Old Testament the Holy Spirit only came upon people to perform certain tasks. Under the new covenant, the Holy Spirit permanently lives within us (Romans 8:9, 1 Corinthians 3:16) guiding us into all truth (John 16:13) and giving us an understanding that wasn't available under the law. The light has been turned on!

2. **Desire.** “And write them on their hearts” (Hebrews 8:10). Under the new covenant it's not about law, but desire for God. He gives us a desire to follow Him, do His will and please Him. “For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.” (Romans 7:5-6). Under the new covenant, we are given a new founded desire and power to follow Jesus, do what pleases the Father and obey God (2 Peter 1:3-4).

3. **Relationship.** “I will be their God, and they shall be My people” (Hebrews 8:10). Under the old covenant only certain people had a relationship with God. God was referred to as the “God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.” Under the new covenant, God promises to have a relationship with anyone who will trust Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior. After the resurrection Jesus told Mary, “I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God” (John 20:17).

Christianity is about a relationship, not religiosity. “For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father” (Romans 8:15). “And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father” (Galatians 4:6).

4. **Pardon.** “I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more” (Hebrews 8:12). Under the old covenant

there was immediate judgment for sin. Under the new covenant, there is complete pardon of all transgressions. Not only are we forgiven, we are also justified (Romans 3:26, Romans 4:25-5:1). God sees us through the blood of Christ just as if we had never sinned. We are declared the righteousness of God in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:21). Below are three benefits of our pardon.

a. **Freeness of our pardon.** God is a merciful God. “But thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, long suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth” (Psalms 86:15). Praise the Lord! Peter thinking about God’s mercy proclaimed, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead” (1 Peter 1:3). “It is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness” (Lamentations 3:22-23).

b. **Fullness of our pardon.** All of our sins are under the blood. No matter what we have done, we are forgiven when we come to Jesus. There is no sin that God won’t forgive when we trust Jesus as our only hope of salvation. Notice the plurality of our sin – “their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.” The multiplicity (fullness) of all our sins are all washed away, by the blood of Jesus, under the new covenant. “The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin” (1 John 1:7).

c. **Fixedness of our pardon.** Our sins are gone forever – God does not remember them. People often throw our sins back in our face, but Jesus is our great advocate (1 John 2:1) declares, “I paid for that. It’s been forgiven forever, back off!” “As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us” (Psalms 103:12). Our pardon is fixed forever – “I will remember no more.”

Micah prophesied of this, “He will turn again, He will have compassion upon us; He will subdue our iniquities; and Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea” (Micah 7:19). Corrie Ten Boom used to say that God casts our sins into the sea of His forgetfulness and puts up a sign, “NO FISHING!”

Don’t let the devil, others or even yourself bring up what God has washed away from our lives forever (1 John 1:7, 1 John 1:9, Hebrew 10:14, Romans 8:33-34). Remember, the accuser of the brethren has been cast down (Revelation 12:10, Luke 10:17-19).

# Judgment or Mercy

**James 2:13** – “For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.”

This refers to acts of mercy and how we treat others. The law of liberty within our hearts enables us to show mercy and causes love and mercy to flow from our hearts to others.

**Romans 5:5** – “Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.”

**Romans 13:8-10** – “Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.”

**John 13:34-35** – “A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another.”

**John 15:12-13** – “This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”

**1 John 2:7-10** – “Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning. Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth. He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.”



**1 John 3:16** – “Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.”

This gives us a perfect example of sowing and reaping. The judgment and mercy here refers to the judgment and mercy of man. We will either reap judgment or mercy in accord with what we have sown.

**Galatians 6:7** – “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.”

**Luke 6:36-38** – “Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven: Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.”

**Matthew 5:7** – “Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.”

The judgment of the sheep and goat nations was based on their treatment of others (Matthew 25:31-46). Do we have compassion for the least among us? Those who are in trouble? Those experiencing difficulties? Those who are in need?

1. **Spiritual outcasts** – Matthew 9:13, Isaiah 16:4; 1 Samuel 22:1-2.
2. **Showing of favoritism** – James 2:1-9.
3. **Being Judgmental** – Luke 6:36-38.
4. **Forgiveness** – Matthew 18:23-35.
5. **Those in need** – James 2:15-16.
6. **The fallen** – Galatians 6:1.

# James 2:14-26 – Faith Without Works

James is dealing with faith that is not followed by works. He's not saying we are saved by works, but that works should follow faith. Many have claimed Paul and James contradicted one another because of Paul's emphasis on faith and James' on works. On the contrary, they stood back to back fighting opposite foes.

**Watch the Message** (52 Minutes)

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Martin Luther wanted to throw the book of James out because he thought it contradicted justification by faith. Our last study proved this untrue. James clearly taught the contrary. He makes it abundantly clear the utter impossibility of justification by the works of the law.

**James 2:10** – “For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.”

## Faith Without Works

### 1. Partial Faith

**James 2:1** – “My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons.”

Faith that shows respect or partiality is not true faith. It's a false faith. Not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus never shows respect of persons.

**Romans 2:11** – “For there is no respect of persons with God.”

As we saw in our study of James 2:1-9, there should never be a display of partiality in our midst, whether it be partiality in judgment (Leviticus 19:15), religious partiality (Acts 10:34), racial partiality (Numbers 12:1-11), cliques in church (1 Corinthians

11:20-22), or a blatant show of partiality in regard to the affluent and influential (James 2:2-4). Partiality of persons must never be tolerated.

## **2. Merciless Faith**

**James 2:13** – “For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.”

True faith will always be displayed in mercy for and toward our fellowman.

**Matthew 5:7** – “Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.”

**Matthew 9:13** – “But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”

**Luke 6:36-38** – “Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven.”

**Galatians 6:7** – “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.”

## **3. Faith that Saves**

**James 2:14** – “What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?”

True saving faith will always be displayed in works. Works is the fruit of real faith. Faith that does not have with it works is not true saving faith. John Calvin said, “It is faith alone that saves but faith that saves is not be alone.”

**Matthew 7:20-21** – “Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.”

**1 Corinthians 15:10** – “I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.”

**Hebrews 4:10** – “For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His.”

It's God's grace working in our life that produces works in the believer's life. This is not a works salvation but rather a fruit salvation. It's not anything we can boast of because we have ceased from our own works and it is now God working through us.

**Galatians 2:20** – “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.”

**Galatians 5:6** – “For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.”

**1 Thessalonians 1:3-4** – “Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father; Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.”

**Titus 3:8** – “This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.”

#### 4. Need Faith

**James 2:15-16** – “If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?”

True faith, when it sees a legitimate need, will do what it can to meet the need. What good is a faith if it doesn't show compassion a brother or sister in need.

**1 John 3:17** – “But whoso hath this world’s good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?”

In the judgment of the nations, our Lord and King will divide the sheep from the goats and judge them on the basis of how they showed mercy and compassion toward those in need (Matthew 25:32-46).

**James 2:13** – “For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.”

**James 2:17** – “Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.”

## 5. Show Me Faith

**James 2:18** – “Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.”

James is talking of how our faith is manifest before men. Many boast of having great faith but how can anyone know we have faith unless they see something. “Yea, a man may say” indicates a false profession.

John deals with this throughout 1 John using the phrase “he that saith” or “if a man say.” It’s easy to proclaim something and mouth the words but it’s an entirely different thing to display our profession by what we do.

**Matthew 7:20** – “Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.”

**Matthew 5:16** – “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”

**Matthew 6:1** – “Take heed that ye do not your righteousness before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.”

Our faith must be manifest for Man to see. God may know we have faith but man does not unless we either tell them or they see our faith in deeds. In our display of good works we must do them in such a way so as to glorify God and not draw attention to ourselves, “otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.”

## 6. Demon Faith

**James 2:19** – “Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.”

“One God” probably refers to the unity of the Godhead. I’m convinced we are in need of doctrinally purity in the church today like never before. Sound doctrine is sorely lacking in the body of Christ. We need solid doctrine being taught in the church by our pastors and not just good self-help, motivational sermons. People can get that from the world.

Though we have our doctrine down pat and can boast of our faith in the one true God, it alone isn’t sufficient. James is basically saying, congratulations, you’ve brought yourself up to the level of a demon. “The devils also believe, and tremble.” Demons believe in the one true God and know who He is but tremble. Just a generic belief in God is of no credit to us if that’s all we have.

## 7. Sacrificial Faith

**James 2:20-22** – “But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?”

True faith is manifest in sacrifice. This is a reference to Abraham’s willing sacrifice of his promised son.

**Genesis 22:2** – “Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.”

Faith will always manifest itself in sacrifice. Jesus demanded sacrifice of His followers if they were to be His disciples (Luke 14:25-33). We cannot be His disciples unless we unreservedly put Him first above family members and even our own life. We cannot be His disciples unless we take up our cross and follow Him, putting a death to all personal ambition, and live for Him alone. We cannot be His disciple unless we forsake all we have and follow Him.

**Romans 12:1** – “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”

**Philippians 2:17** – “Yea, and if I be offered (poured out as a drink offering) upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all.”

**2 Timothy 4:6-8** – “For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing.”

This kind of sacrificial faith completes our faith, brings it to maturity, perfection, and completion. We are saved by faith alone, but our faith will never be brought to full maturity in Christ without it being expressed by means of sacrifice. Sacrifice causes our faith to be brought to full stature.

## 8. Friendship Faith

**James 2:23-24** – “And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.”

True friendship is manifest by one's actions. Abraham proved he was God's friend by his sacrificial obedience. God further proved His friendship to him and us all by the sacrifice of His own son. It's very likely Mount Moriah was the very same Golgotha's hill upon Jesus was sacrificed for our sins.

**Romans 8:32** – “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?”

Let's draw our attention to some scripture dealing with friendship which will shed light on our friendship with God, how we can be His friend, how He manifests His friendship to us, and how we too can show friendship to others.

**Proverbs 17:9** – “He that covereth a transgression seeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter separateth very friends.”

**Proverbs 27:6** – “Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.”

**John 15:13** – “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”

**John 15:14** – “Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.”

**John 15:15** – “Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.”

**John 15:16** – “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.”

## 9. Delivering Faith

**James 2:25** – “Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way?”

We read about the story of Rahab in Joshua 2. She was moved by fear, hid the spies that Joshua had sent, and let them down in the middle of the night by a cord outside her window. For her kindness to them they promised she and her household



who would remain in her home would be spared when they came to conquer Jericho.

**Joshua 2:18-19** – “Behold, when we come into the land, thou shalt bind this line of scarlet thread in the window which thou didst let us down by: and thou shalt bring thy father, and thy mother, and thy brethren, and all thy father’s household, home unto thee. And it shall be, that whosoever shall go out of the doors of thy house into the street, his blood shall be upon his head, and we will be guiltless: and whosoever shall be with thee in the house, his blood shall be on our head, if any hand be upon him.”

The scarlet thread in her window was a type of the blood of Christ. Like the blood sprinkled on the door posts from the Passover lamb (Exodus 12), all who were in the house would be spared. If we will apply the blood of Christ, in faith, to our lives, our sins will be forgiven, and we will be spared from the wrath of God. Praise His wonderful name!

**Romans 3:25** – “Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.”

**Romans 5:9-10** – “Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.”

## 10. Corpse Faith

**James 2:26** – “For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.”

Spirit here is “pneuma.” It can also be translated “breath.” The body without its breath within it is dead and lifeless. Faith without works is like the body without breath – DEAD!

### a. In a State of Corruption

The body once the breath has departed will begin to decay. Regardless of being embalmed the body will still sooner or later decay. "For dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (Genesis 3:19).

#### **b. Useless**

Once one's breath has departed and they have died they are really of no good any longer. They may have been of great use and value in life but once their spirit has departed they are of no use in this world any more. So having faith without works is. It is of not value or use whatsoever.

#### **c. Lifeless**

When attending a funeral and you pass by the coffin there is no evidence of any life at all. The spirit of the person has departed and therefore there's no indication of life. So it is with fruitless faith, there's simply no sign of spiritual life.

#### **d. Void of Expression**

A body lying there with no spirit is void of expression. All you see is in them is how the mortician has made them look. So it is with a faith that is not accompanied by works, there's no sign of life. There's no praise, no witnessing, no prayer, no expression of faith at all. Its expressionless.

# James 3:1-2 – A Word to Teachers

Being a teacher carries with it grave responsibilities. In this passage, James is warning us to take every precaution before deciding to become teachers of the Word of God. Therefore, we must consider a calling to teach, make sure we are called, then proceed accordingly.

**James 3:1-2** – “My brethren, be not many masters (teachers), knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation (judgment). For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.”

**Watch the Message** (50 Minutes)

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## Who He is Addressing

“My brethren.” James is Addressing fellow believers, brothers, part of the body of Christ, and the family of God. This is an expression of endearment and love (John 13:34-35, Romans 5:5, 1 John 4:11). His love and compassion is being expressed, desiring them to be the best they can be in whatever calling they might have.

## Attitude

“My brethren, be not many masters teachers.” James is challenging all who dare to pursue a position of teacher of the Word to have the right attitude. James was a teacher. There are many in the body of Christ who are called to teach but we must view ourselves properly in our position. It’s not only how we view ourself, but how we view others.

**Matthew 23:8** – “But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master (Teacher), even Christ; and all ye are brethren.”

We are not to lord our position over those we are instructing. We are all brethren! Jesus is the real teacher and shepherd, we are merely under-shepherds and teachers under the Master Teacher, Jesus Himself.

**1 Peter 5:3** – “Neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being examples to the flock.”

Our goal must be to lift up those we are instructing and not make them feel as if they are on a lower level than us. They must never be made to feel inferior to us.

**Philippians 2:3-4** – “Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.”

## Many Teachers

James was not saying there should not be teachers in the body of Christ. There are many He has chosen to be teachers in the church. Those who are teachers should be encouraged in their vocation, not discouraged. God has chosen you specifically for this purpose. It is a divine gifting that He has placed within you.

1. **The Five-fold ministry.** These are people God has given to the body of Christ and His church. They are not just gifted, but are themselves the gifts Jesus gave to strengthen, edify, and equip His people for the work of the ministry. The ultimate goal being maturity and Christ-likeness.

**Ephesians 4:11-13** – “And He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.”

Teachers are a part of the five-fold ministry. In fact, teachers actually referred to twice. Each time the writer mentions the gifted person he says “and some.” The

exception being at the end of verse 11. There he says, “and some, pastors and teachers.” Every pastor is or should be a teacher but not every teacher is a pastor.

2. **Motivational gifts.** The gift of teaching is mentioned in the motivational gifts. These are gifts we are naturally motivated or inclined toward. They flow out of us naturally once we have been born again. They may have even been in a person somewhat prior to their conversion. After the new birth, the Holy Spirit begins to make these gifts to shine.

**Romans 12:6-8** – “Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.”

3. **Deacons and elders.** Those in any position of leadership in the church must be able to teach, including elders and deacons. Though their primary calling and gifting may not be that of a teacher, they still must be able to teach. This is listed in the qualifications of any position of oversight in the church.

**1 Timothy 3:2** – “A bishop (overseer) then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober (self-controlled), of good behavior (respectable), given to hospitality, apt (able) to teach.”

**Acts 20:28** – “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood.”

**1 Peter 5:1-3** – “The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being examples to the flock.”

4. **The mature in Christ.** Every believer must be able to teach to some degree. This is the discipleship process. We are all called to be and make disciples. When we’re saved, someone should begin discipling (teaching) us how to follow Christ.

Once we mature we must in turn begin to teach and disciple someone.

**Matthew 28:19-20** – “Go ye therefore, and teach (make disciples of) all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.”

**2 Timothy 2:2** – “And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.”

**Hebrews 5:12** – “For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.”

## C.A.P. – Calling, Ability, and Participation

The primary focus of James is to those Christ has specifically chosen to be teachers in the body of Christ. Though every born again believer should be teaching to one degree or another, there are those God has singled out to be teachers. These are the ones James is addressing and challenging.

There are those within the body He desires to make into teachers. We must be confident this is His plan for our life. If you feel and desire to be a teacher, there are certain things you must consider. You must be sure you are prepared to face the task that's before you before proceeding into a teaching ministry. Below are three things a teacher must consider:

1. **Calling.** Are you called? Has God called you to be a teacher? If God has not singled you out, chosen you, and commissioned you to teach you had better think twice before proceeding. The stress it will place on your life and the damage you could potentially cause if you are not called will be great.

**Hebrews 5:4** – “And no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God.”

Be sure you are called! Many people push themselves into positions they are not called to be in. If you are not called to teach, don't pursue it! You will save yourself, the church, and the cause of Christ a lot of trouble if you will just get behind other teachers of the Word and support them in what they've been called to do. On the other hand, if God has truly called you pursue it with everything you have.

2. **Ability.** Make sure you have the ability and gifting to teach. If you are not gifted in the area of teaching it will place untold pressure on your life as well as those who are around you. There's nothing worse than trying to function in an area you're not gifted in.

Your gifting will have to be cultivated. Everything doesn't just fall into your lap when you begin to teach. No great teacher began that way. Any good gift is perfected with use. The first time I tried to teach the Word it fell flat. It would have been easy to give up at that point. I found that the more I taught the better teacher I became.

3. **Participation.** It will take a great deal of participation on your part to cultivate your gift as a teacher. It doesn't come easy. You will have to spend a lot of time in diligent study and preparation. It takes studying the Word as well as much research. It takes a lot of hard work to be a great Bible teacher!

**2 Timothy 2:15** – “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

In my first pastorate I taught through a different book of the Bible in each of our three weekly services. To prepare I researched at least seven commentaries on each passage we were covering. I would then study, meditate, and pray over the notes I had taken. The Holy Spirit would begin giving me what I was to present to our people. I later taught systematic theology during our mid-week service using the same process.

## A Warning to Teachers

“We shall receive the greater condemnation (judgment).” We will give an account one day of our gifting and how we used it. We must take this calling very seriously. James is telling us not to step into this calling lightly. This is serious business. There will be a day of accountability.

**Romans 14:10-12** – “We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.”

**1 Corinthians 3:10-15** – “According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man’s work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man’s work of what sort it is. If any man’s work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man’s work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.”

**2 Corinthians 5:10-11** – “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.”

The judgment seat of Christ is a judgment where we will give an account of our gifts and talents. Some will receive reward while others will have their works burned up yet “be saved yet so as by fire.”

1. **What we teach.** Teachers will give an account at the judgment seat of Christ for what we teach. This is why we must take time in diligent study to be sure we are teaching the Word accurately. Don’t just throw something together. We must make sure we have done our due diligence.

**2 Timothy 2:15** – “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

We must make sure our teachings are built upon the proper foundation – the Word of God, the person and cross of Christ, and sound Biblical doctrine. Nothing else will do!

**1 Corinthians 2:1-5** – “And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I



determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

It concerns me greatly that much of what is being taught today is built upon a faulty foundation. Rather than God's Word and the person of Christ, much of it is based upon worldly, self-help messages and pop psychology with possibly a scripture thrown in at the beginning or end. There is very little sound doctrine being taught in our churches today. We are commissioned to:

**2 Timothy 4:2-4** – "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."

**1 Timothy 4:13** – "Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine."

**Titus 2:1** – "But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine."

**1 Corinthians 3:11** – "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

**Acts 4:12** – "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

**Acts 20:27** – "For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God."

2. **Example.** It's imperative we set the best possible example we can. We are all in the flesh and subject to the weakness of the flesh. We will never live out a perfect example but we must do our best. We must teach our people to follow our example but only as we follow Christ and not where we fall short.

**John 13:13 and 15** – “Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.”

**1 Corinthians 11:1** – “Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.”

**Hebrews 13:7** – “Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.”

**1 Peter 5:3** – “Neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being examples to the flock.”

**3. Judgment of others.** The judgment of man is often much more severe in this than God’s. Man seldom shows mercy where God does. We often receive the same judgment we have dished out to others. If we judge we shall be judged, if we show mercy we’ll receive mercy.

**Luke 6:36-38** – “Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven: Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.”

**Matthew 7:1-2** – “Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.”

**Romans 2:1-2** – “Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things.”

In applying this to being teachers, it’s very likely this has as much to do with man’s judgment as it does God’s. When you decide to teach you will fall under the judgment, criticism, and scrutiny of men like you will never imagine. In fact, Jesus

said, "Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets" (Luke 6:26).

Man will critique, criticize and scrutinize every thing you say. People will frequently miss the entire point and substance of your message and find one little thing you say wrong. How often have people gone up to the person preaching and teaching the Word and point out one insignificant thing while missing the entire focus of the message. "You quoted the wrong scripture reference here" or "I noticed you let a participle dangle in your lesson today."

4. **Offensive word.** We must never take out the offense that is naturally in the Word. God's Word will offend people! Jesus often offended. In fact, often when He had a large crowd following Him He would say something that would offend the whole bunch and thin out the crowd (John 6:60-66 and Luke 14:25-33). However, we must be cautious not to offend where there is no need.

**James 3:2** – "For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body."

Often well-meaning pastors and teachers offend because they want to maintain a particular position. If it is not causing us to compromise the Word of God, sound doctrine, or the person of Christ, we must think twice before letting something bring offense.

Frequently, we let something bring offense in a situation where there is no need. The people get mad, leave the church, and we've lost good people when there really was no need. Even worse, we've cut off all opportunity to minister to them. Don't get me wrong, we must never compromise the Word. But we must not allow non-essentials to bring offense.

Not only have we cut off ministry in their lives but bad seed has been planted, feelings are hurt, and they will often vent those feelings as a result. Gossip will begin which damages the reputation of the ministry and church. We've not only cut off ministry to the person(s) in question but countless people may never be ministered to because of the bad seed that has been planted. The person who can find the delicate in this is a perfect (mature) man. This is a demonstration of true maturity according to James 3:2.

# James 3:2-12 – The Unbridled Tongue

James is dealing with the unbridled tongue. Most people's tongues are completely out of control, even Christians. How often do we speak words that tear down rather than build up? If we could master our speech, it would revolutionize the church, our life, and the world in which we live.

**Proverbs 64:3** – “They sharpen their tongues like swords and aim cruel words like deadly arrows.”

**Proverbs 12:18** – “The words of the reckless pierce like swords, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.”

**Watch the Message** (44 Minutes)

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“In Balaam's day it was a miracle for an ass to speak, but today it's a miracle when he keeps quiet.” – Dr. J. Vernon McGee

“It takes a baby two years to learn to talk and fifty years to learn to keep quiet.” – Dr. J. Vernon McGee

The tongue is a badge, we wear it and it identifies us. It's the table of contents of our lives. Our tongue gives us away. It tells who we are. “Thy speech betrayeth thee” (Matthew 26:73).

Someone put it this way. “Thou art master of the unspoken word but the spoken word is master of you.” Once we have said something it's beyond our control. We can't do anything about it. If you haven't spoken it you can't be responsible but once you've spoken it it can condemn you and destroy others.

# The Offensive Tongue

**James 3:2** – “For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.”

1. **Teachers of the Word.** The context this is speaking of and to teachers of the Word. Often well-meaning pastors and teachers offend because they want to maintain a particular position. If it is not causing us to compromise the Word of God, sound doctrine, or the person of Christ, we must think twice before letting something bring offense.

Erroneous teaching can be an offense that brings with it eternal consequences. If not eternal, an offense in a believer's life and walk with the Lord. Our teaching must be that which builds up our people's faith and not discourage faith. We must minister life and not death. We are to “hold fast the form of sound words... in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 1:13).

2. **The body of Christ.** This also deals with the church, body of Christ as whole, individual believers, and mankind in general. How often do the words flowing from our tongue cause irreparable damage. We speak words that tear down rather than build up (Ephesians 4:29). We say things which hurt, bring division, pierce people's hearts like daggers, and cause conflict rather than peace.

What a difference it would make if we could bring the tongue under control. What if we spoke words that built up rather than tear down, words that bring peace rather than tension and turmoil, solved conflict rather than instigate it, and encouraged rather than discourage?

“The same is a perfect (mature) man, and able also to bridle the whole body.” This is a mark of true maturity. Maturity and Christ likeness is the ultimate goal. The degree to which we are able to control the tongue and what we say reveals our level of maturity.

**Ephesians 4:13** – “Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect (mature) man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.”

**Romans 8:29** – “For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.”

**Galatians 4:19** – “My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you.”

## Restrained and Controlled Guidance

**James 3:3-4** – “Behold, we put bits in the horses’ mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body. Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth.”

What if we could control our tongue as a bit and bridle controls and gives direction to a horse or like a rudder controls and directs a ship? All too often our tongue runs out of control like a horse that’s spooked or like a mighty ship in a terrible storm. In which case shipwreck, injury, destruction is possible if it is not brought under control.

If we can control the tongue we can control every other aspect of our lives. A bit and bridle controls the horse, its direction, speed, and demeanor. A rudder controls the direction and course of a ship as the pilot of the ship directs. Even so, we can choose, by our words, the course and direction of our life. The tongue, being so very small, has the ability to direct the entire course of our life.

## Destructiveness of the Tongue

**James 3:5-6** – “Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.”

Using fire as an analogy, the tongue can be a very positive or a very negative thing. Fire can be used to warm us, cook our food, melt metals to be molded into various forms for the use of mankind, and many other things. Fire can also be very destructive. Such a little fire, when out of control, can cause forest fires, burn down buildings, businesses, and homes, etc. It sets on fire the very course of nature.

**Proverbs 64:3** – “They sharpen their tongues like swords and aim cruel words like deadly arrows.”

**Proverbs 12:18** – “The words of the reckless pierce like swords, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.”

1. **Teaching.** As we’ve learned from the context, our words and the use of our tongue in teaching can and should build up and strengthen the faith of God’s people. However, if teaching is poorly used or misused in deceiving, leading astray, and propagating false doctrine it can be a very deadly thing spiritually, as well as causing ramifications in the natural.

2. **Counseling.** In counseling situations hopefully our words and counsel will be uplifting, giving direction, hope, and encouragement to the counselee. Wrong counsel, however, can have devastating consequences in a person’s life. Like the teacher, the counselor has a grave responsibility.

**James 1:19** – “Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.”

**Proverbs 18:13** – “He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him.”

3. **Gossip.** Gossip is a very destructive thing. The devastation it has caused is incomprehensible.

**Proverbs 17:9** – “He that covereth a transgression seeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter separateth very friends.”

4. **Criticism.** How many believers and followers of Christ have a critical spirit. This can be and is very deadly.

**Romans 14:4** – “Who art thou that judgest another man’s servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.”

**Romans 14:10** – “But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.”

**Romans 14:19** – “Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.”

**James 4:11** – “Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge.”

5. **Bitterness.** A bitter tongue is a deadly one. Bitterness, if not brought into check, will soon come out of one’s tongue and daggers piercing hearts and lives. Like a spark in a forest begins to burn and is soon out of control. It is actually set on fire of hell and can destroy an entire body of believers (church).

**Romans 3:10-18** – “As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes.”

**Ephesians 4:31-32** – “Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.”



**Hebrews 12:15** – “Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.”

## The Untamed Tongue

**James 3:7-8** – “For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.”

The tongue is uncontrollable. It's amazing how people can simply not shut up. It's unruly and full of deadly poison. It's a poison that when released into the body can make the body sick and even bring about death. As poison is to the natural body so can the uncontrolled tongue be to the body of Christ.

**Romans 3:13** – “Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips.”

## The Double Tongue

**James 3:9-10** – “Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.”

How often we talk out of both sides of our mouth. On minute we're worshiping God and the next minute we're cursing people who are made in the very likeness of God. It really doesn't make sense. How can this be? Yet, it is nonetheless so. Someone does us wrong, we get mad, and there it goes. We're blessing one minute and cursing the next.

Have you ever been in a position or situation where the joy of the Lord was filling your soul and praise was flowing from your lips? Then something goes wrong and next thing you know you're cursing. Perhaps not cussing but cursing nonetheless. Unwholesome words flowing out of our mouth as freely as praise was a few moments ago.

# The Source of the Tongue

**James 3:11-12** – “Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter? Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.”

The bitter deadly poison that flows from our tongue comes from the heart. It comes forth from our old, sinful, corrupt nature. When we're born again we receive God's' divine nature, the Holy Spirit, but we still struggle with the old Adamic nature. There's a battle raging within the soul of every man (James 1:13-14). There's nothing we are incapable of left to our own devices.

**Luke 6:45** – “A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.”

**Jeremiah 17:9** – “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?”

This is why it's imperative we are continually renewing our mind, seeking the face of God, asking Him to fill us with His Spirit, learning how to crucify the flesh and yield our members as instruments of righteousness to God. We must take our old nature to the cross daily and yield ourself completely to Him day by day and moment by moment.

**Romans 6:11-12** – “Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.”

**Romans 12:1-2** – “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by

the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”

**Ephesians 5:18-19** – “Be (being) filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves (one another) in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.”

## The Power of the Tongue

1. **Justification or condemnation.** We will one day be judged by what we have said. That’s why the first thing we must do after trusting Christ as Lord and Savior is to confess Him as Lord before men.

**Matthew 12:36-37** – “But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.”

**Romans 10:8-10** – “But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; 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. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”

2. **Death and life.** Our words either bring them life or death. According to what we say either death or life will flow from our tongue. There’s power in our words.

**Proverbs 18:20-21** – “A man’s belly shall be satisfied with the fruit of his mouth; and with the increase of his lips shall he be filled. Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.”

**Deuteronomy 30:14-15, 19** – “But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it. See, I have set before thee this day life and

good, and death and evil; I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live.”

3. **The Holy Spirit.** There’s power in yielding our most unruly member to the power of the Holy Spirit. Allowing Him to control our tongue through the experience of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking with other tongues may very well be a major step in allowing the Spirit to control our tongue in all matters of life.

**Acts 2:1-4** – “When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”

**Acts 4:31** – “And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.”

**Acts 10:44 and 46** – “While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the Word. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God.”

**Acts 19:6** – “And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.”

4. **Victory.** Our testimony of Christ and what He did for us on Calvary brings with it victory over the enemy. Also confessing and declaring the Word of God. We can actually frame our world by God’s Word.

**Revelation 12:11** – “And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony.”

**Job 22:28** – “Thou shalt also decree a thing, and it shall be established unto thee: and the light shall shine upon thy ways.”

**Hebrews 11:3** – “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.”

5. **Edification.** Our words either build up or tear down, edify or destroy. If we'll allow Him to fill us with His Spirit and begin speaking life we will find our words begin to lift up, encourage, and strengthen others instead of tearing them down.

**Ephesians 4:29** – “Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.”

**Prayer:** Lord, we take our tongue to the cross and crucify it and ask You to fill us with Your Holy Spirit and cause us to begin to speak words of life from this day forward. In Jesus' name. Amen!

# James 3:13-18 – Wisdom From Above

James contrasts the wisdom that's from above with that which is earthly, sensual, and devilish. He has some harsh words for those who are dominated by the mere wisdom of this world. He encourages those who depend on the wisdom that originates from above.

The wisdom of this world brings strife, confusion, and every evil work. The wisdom that comes from above is pure, peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

**Watch the Message** (47 Minutes)

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Sadly, even “so called” believers today are leaning too much on the wisdom of this world rather than the things of God, the Holy Spirit, and the Word of God. Wise is the one who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly but rather depends on Christ, His Holy Spirit, and the Word of God. Then and only then will we display true godly wisdom that is from above.

**Psalms 1:1-3** – “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.”

**Colossians 2:8** – “See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.”

**Colossians 3:16** – “Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”

**Romans 15:14** – “And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.”

## Those Endued With Knowledge

**James 3:13** – “Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? Let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.”

Great question! Are you wise and endued with knowledge? Then it should show forth in your conversation, life, and practice. Far too often the “so called” wise and those who seem to know so much do not display it in their daily lives and how they act and react with people. Solomon was such a man. He was known as the wisest man to ever live and he indeed was. He displayed godly wisdom in his early years but sadly, as he grew older and grew in knowledge this was sorely lacking.

### This may refer to four things in the context:

1. **If any lack wisdom (James 1:5).** Surely we all lack wisdom at times. Most everyone, as they grow more and more in knowledge, seem to appropriate less and less wisdom. Pride wells up within them, they begin to think they know more than others, and as a result they fall short in wisdom. Far too often, those who are endued with knowledge the most fail to apply wisdom. Let it be a lesson to us that the more knowledge we obtain the more we should cry out to God for wisdom on how to apply such knowledge wisely.
2. **Teachers (James 3:1).** Teachers hopefully are studying to equip our-self to be the best teacher we can possibly be. Particularly teachers of God’s Word (2 Timothy 2:15). We too can allow this to go to our head and be puffed up with pride – “Knowledge puffeth up” ( 1 Corinthians 8:1). In seeking to grow more and more in knowledge its incumbent on us to humbly lay our-self at the feet of Jesus and ask the Holy Spirit to help us to apply all we know wisely.
3. **The lowly (James 1:9-11).** It’s often that the lowliest among us often show more wisdom. It’s likely because we don’t think so highly of our-self and depend more on the wisdom that’s from above. It is frequently the case that the less educated are

extremely wise and pragmatic. Those young in the Lord and not as well trained in the things of God He seems to impart the greater wisdom. No matter how much knowledge we have, we must continually seek wisdom from above and not lean on our own wisdom. We must constantly rely on His wisdom.

**Colossians 2:3** – “In Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.”

**1 Corinthians 1:26-30** – “For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in His presence. But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.”

4. **Conflict (James 3:3-4:1).** The entire context deals with the unbridled tongue, strife, confusion, selfish ambition, wars and fighting. When do we need wisdom more than in the midst of conflict? When there are those who are speaking evil against us, criticizing, complaining, and sowing discord. It's in these times that we need wisdom from above more than ever. It's in times of trial, temptation, and testing that we are challenged to ask God for wisdom (James 1:2-5).

**“Meekness of wisdom.”** Instead of letting tempers flare, and striking back we must respond with meekness. Moses was constantly dealing with conflict with the children of Israel. He indeed at times got angry but he mostly displayed meekness of wisdom. “Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth” (Numbers 12:3). When conflict is raging wisdom dictates we respond with all meekness and gentleness in dealing with people and situations. The context deals with things and situation within the church.

**2 Timothy 2:24-25** – “And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.”

**Proverbs 15:1** – “A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.”



The response on the behalf of a man, woman, and leader can either cause tempers to flare and the situation to blow up or they can dissipate the situation. Our response is paramount. Most of us have, at times, reacted to situations improperly. Hopefully we learn and grow and deal with things better. Sadly, we could have saved a lot of trouble for ourself and the cause of Christ had we applied meekness of wisdom originally. This also applies to any and all relationships of life.

## Lie Not Against the Truth

**James 3:14** – “But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.”

Bitter envying and strife is utterly opposed to the truth. We cannot be walking in the truth while possessing envy and strife in our heart. According to James 3:3-12, when in the heart, this deadly poison spews out of the mouth and off the tongue and is deadly. It defiles the entire body and sets on fire the course of nature (James 3:5-6). This has destroyed more churches than one can count. If not destroyed, it has, at the very least, rendered it ineffective and powerless. This is a specific application to the church but can also apply to families, relationships, marriages, businesses, and individuals alike. It's deadly and is a lie against the truth!

This bitter envying resulting in strife runs the gamut. Jealousy over someone getting a position we think should have been offered to us, people possessing things, being blessed, or getting things we wish we had, people working in the church, business, etc. and getting too much attention, closer to someone than we are, and on and on it goes. This comes from the heart and, if not dealt with, goes out of the mouth. The unbridled tongue goes on the warpath and destruction and division is sure to follow. This must be taken to the cross (Romans 6:11-13).

**Proverbs 64:3** – “They sharpen their tongues like swords and aim cruel words like deadly arrows.”

**Proverbs 12:18** – “The words of the reckless pierce like swords, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.”

**Psalms 37:1** – “Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity.

**Proverbs 27:4** – “Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous; but who is able to stand before envy?”

**Hebrews 12:15** – “Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.”

**Romans 12:15** – “Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.”

Let's make a habit of rejoicing with people when they're blessed, promoted, praised, etc. If we would make this a practice in our life it would begin to change our heart and life. Bitter envying not only destroys those around us but it destroys us as well. It's a bitterness that takes root in the heart and will slowly eat away at our very soul. If we'll begin to rejoice with those who rejoice we'll find bitterness replaced with joy. Who knows, if we rejoice enough with others, we may find blessing coming our way as well.

## The Source of Earthly Wisdom

**James 3:15-16** – “This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.”

Bitter envying and strife or selfish ambition does not come from God. Often people think they have to fight their way to the top as it were. They believe that's the only way to get ahead. Look out for number one. If you don't fight for yourself who will. They feel they must manipulate the system and people to get where they want to go and what they want. Its results are always confusion and every evil work. “This wisdom descendeth not from above.”

**It's source is three-fold:**

1. **Earthly.** People may try and give off a spiritual aura but it's not spiritual at all. It's a wisdom that comes from this world system and is not of God.
2. **Sensual.** It's natural and not supernatural. It's carnal and attempting to satisfy the flesh and is soulish.
3. **Devilish.** Wherever bitter envying and strife is its ultimate source is always demonic. It's inspired by the devil himself. It comes straight from the pit of hell.

## Heavenly Wisdom

**James 3:17-18** – “But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.”

James now shows the contrast from worldly wisdom to heavenly wisdom. The two are in direct opposition to one another. They are diametrically opposed. It's the fruit of righteousness and is always sown in peace of them that make peace.

### Eight-fold aspect of heavenly wisdom:

1. **Pure.** This wisdom is unmixed and unadulterated. It's absolutely pure in motive and intention. Heavenly wisdom has nothing but good intentions toward others. It seeks nothing but good for those they have dealings with.

**Matthew 7:12** – “Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.”

**Romans 13:7-10** – “Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour. Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt

love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.”

**1 John 3:16** – “Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.”

2. **Peaceable.** The last verse of this chapter sums it up, “And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace” (James 3:18). Those who operate and govern their lives with the wisdom that is from above are always peace makers. They always seek peace at all cost, except where scripture and doctrine is opposed.

**Matthew 5:9** – “Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.”

**Romans 14:19** – “Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.”

**Ephesians 4:29** – “Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.”

**Hebrews 12:14** – “Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.”

3. **Gentle.** This brings us back to our first verse of our study (James 3:13). Meekness is the key to dealing with people in any and all situations. Instead of letting tempers flare, and striking back we must respond with meekness. When conflict is raging wisdom dictates we respond with all meekness and gentleness in dealing with people and situations.

4. **Easy to be entreated.** Reasonable! Things never turn out well when dealing with unreasonable people. You just can’t reason with them. They won’t listen to reason. In contrast, the wisdom that’s from above is always reasonable. It always listens to reason. They will always listen to the other side of the story or argument with an open mind. Most of all those with heavenly wisdom will seek to bring reason and peace into a situation with God’s Word.

**Exodus 18:16** – “When they have a difficulty they come to me and I judge between one and another. I make known the statutes of God and His laws.”

**Romans 15:14** – “And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.”

**Romans 12:18** – “If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.”

5. **Full of mercy.** God is a God of mercy, therefore, any wisdom from above will always be filled with mercy not judgment. I’d rather stand before God having shown too much mercy than having shown none or too little mercy. God’s wisdom always shows mercy.

**Micah 6:8** – “He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?”

**Matthew 5:7** – “Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.”

**Luke 6:36** – “Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.”

**2 Samuel 22:26** – “With the merciful Thou wilt shew Thyself merciful.”

6. **Good fruits.** This no doubt refers to the fruit of the Spirit which will produce the best fruit in any situation. It resolves conflict with best possible results and outcome. It’s always fruitful and is somehow able to take the worse situation and make it turn to good account.

**Galatians 5:22-23** – “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.”

**James 3:18** – “And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.”

7. **Without partiality.** Heavenly wisdom shows no partiality or respect of persons. God never looks on the person of man and shows partiality and we shouldn't either. We must never show favoritism. The wisdom that's from above seeks to bring peace without partiality or favoritism.

**Romans 2:11** – “For there is no respect of persons with God.”

**James 2:1** – “My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons.”

8. **Without hypocrisy.** Wisdom from above does not play games nor put on an act to please certain parties. It deals with each and every person and situation without partiality, hating only evil and cleaving to that which is good. Those displaying God's wisdom seek to “make known the statutes of God and His laws” (Exodus 18:16). It shows love, judgment, and discernment by the love of God and His Word.

**Romans 15:14** – “And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.”

**Romans 12:11** – “Let love be without dissimulation (hypocrisy). Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.”

# James 4:1-17 – Wars and Fightings Among You

We will be applying most of this to the body of Christ to which James was addressing but it can apply to all relationships of life, to marriages, families, and the work place.

There is entirely too much strife in the body of Christ. The entire context deals with wars, fighting, and strife among God's people. In chapters three and four, James deals with both the cause and the cure. We do well if we take heed to his admonition and advice.

**Watch the Message** (51 Minutes)

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Strife, contention, arguing, fighting, and division is contrary to Christ and His purpose for our lives. We all are part of one body and members one of another. The purpose of His coming was, in part, unity. We all have different callings and giftings. We must be willing to function where He has called us.

## Unity

Jesus prayed,

**John 17:21** – “That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me.”

**Romans 12:4-5** – “For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.”

**1 Corinthians 1:10** – “Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions

among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.”

**Galatians 5:15** – “But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.

## Unity at What Price

This does not mean we seek to maintain unity at the cost of sound doctrine. Doctrinal error is the only reason for division. When there are those who forsake sound, fundamental, and essential doctrines of the faith this and this alone we must contend with and fight for.

**Jude 3** – “Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.”

**Romans 16:17** – “Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.”

## Wars and Fightings Among You

**James 4:1** – “From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?”

Good question! Where do wars and fightings among us come from? How do they get started and begin? What do we do about it when they arise? Context is always paramount! To arrive at an answer to a question or the meaning of a verse or passage we must always look at the context in which it is written.



# The Cause

1. **Offense.** Offense is one of the greatest causes of conflict there is. When one is offended strife, conflict, and division arise. It is better to never have an offence but they nonetheless do arise at times.

**James 3:2** – “For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.”

**Matthew 18:7** – “Woe unto the world because of offences! For it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!”

Putting an end to offences before they arise is preferable but what do we do when we’ve offended someone or when they’ve offended us? Jesus is always a great source to an answer to any problem.

a. **What to do when we are the offender.** Jesus gives a simple answer to this dilemma. We must go to them and do whatever is necessary to make it right with the one we’ve offended.

**Matthew 5:23-24** – “Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.”

Even before going to God in prayer or attempting to bring a gift or offering to Him we must first make every effort to be reconciled to the one we’ve offended. If we even think there may a remote possibility of offence we are to go to them seeking forgiveness and reconciliation.

This, of course, doesn’t mean they will always accept our apology but we must make the effort nonetheless. It doesn’t even mean they are correct in being offended. We nevertheless are obliged to seek their forgiveness. We are to humbly go to them confessing our error or misunderstanding and seek their forgiveness.

b. **What to do when we've been offended.** This is to be dealt with similarly but in reverse. We are to go to the one who has offended us and tell them what they have done to offend us.

**Matthew 18:15** – “Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.”

The goal is always reconciliation. We are to go to them alone and tell them what they have done to offend us. Initially, this must not be done in front of others making them feel they have to defend themselves. When we go to them it must be done humbly and not in a confrontational manner.

It might go something like this. “Could we talk for a moment alone? I may be wrong and forgive me if I am but I feel you did this against me. I really don't want there to be anything between us.” If done in the proper way reconciliation will usually be achieved.

There's always a chance they may not respond favorably. You, however, have done your part to make things right. The rest is between them and God. Don't argue with them but leave it in God's hands. Jesus goes on to tell the next steps to take if you want it to go that far. At times this is proper but at other times you may want to let it rest with God.

**Matthew 18:16-17** – “But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.”

2. **The unbridled tongue** (James 3:3-12). We won't cover the entire passage here. We refer you to the teaching on this passage. Suffice it to say that the tongue, out of control, can do irreparable damage in the body and nearly every relationship of life. It has stirred more strife, conflict, fighting, and wars than one can fathom.

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**James 3:5-6** – “Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of

iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.”

All too frequently people's tongues are out of control in the body of Christ. We tend to make an emphasis on “So Called Bad Sins” and dismiss and overlook the grievous sins of the unbridled tongue. God's people seem to be given to unleashing their tongues with criticism, complaining, arguing, and gossip. May I suggest to you that these are the more grievous and destructive sins which must be repented of.

**Proverbs 17:9** – “He that covereth a transgression seeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter separateth very friends.”

**Philippians 2:14** – “Do all things without complaining and disputing – arguing.”

**Romans 14:4** – “Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.”

**Romans 14:10** – “But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.”

**Romans 14:19** – “Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.”

**Ephesians 4:29** – “Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.”

3. **Jealousy, self-seeking, selfish ambition, and a lust for power.** Therein is the cause for “wars and fightings among us.” We want what we want with a total disregard for others. If someone else has something we desire look out. It's not just things but power and position as well. In fact, power, authority, and prestige is probably the bulk of what this is dealing with. The desire to be someone of prestige, position, and power.

Sadly, far too frequently, power hungry people in the church have often sought to usurp the pastors authority in their thirst for power and control. This grieves the Holy Spirit and is not of God.

**1 Samuel 15:23** – “For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness (insubordination) is as iniquity and idolatry.”

**James 3:14-16** – “But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.”

Notice it's bitter envying stemming from the heart. It's a bitter root within the heart, really an evil heart. It's a heart problem. Envy, strife, self-seeking, selfish ambition, and a lust for power all stem from an evil heart.

**Jeremiah 17:9** – “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?” Who can know the depths of its depravity?

**Matthew 15:19** – “Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.”

**Proverbs 27:4** – “Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous; but who is able to stand before envy?”

Strife is translated self-seeking in the New King James and selfish ambition in the New American Standard Bible. Most strife is there because people are wrapped up in themselves. It's all about number one and forget everyone else. We want our own selfish way with a total disregard for others.

It's all about self, trying to get a head, and get our own way. All our striving get us absolutely nowhere. We want a certain position in the church, in business, or some position in life and fight with everything we have to get it. We're even willing to destroy others to get what we want.

**Philippians 2:3-4** – “Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.”

**4. Politicking in the church.** Believers far too often politicking in the church. Attempting to politicize a position in the church, one above another. If someone gets a position in the church, there are those who become jealous and wonder why didn't I get it or someone they favor. Then their envy becomes divisive through their criticism, complaining, and planting seeds of doubt throughout the body.

**Romans 16:17** – “Mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.”

A great example of this is with the mother of James and John. She came to Jesus, with James and John, desiring something from Jesus. Her request was undoubtedly motivated by her sons' thirst for power and position. We read,

**Matthew 20:20-23** “Then came to Him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping Him, and desiring a certain thing of Him. And He said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto Him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on Thy right hand, and the other on the left, in Thy kingdom. But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto Him, We are able. And He saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of My cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on My right hand, and on My left, is not Mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of My Father.”

Notice, His answer to their request was, “to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of My Father.” We'd do well to learn from this. When someone is promoted or placed in a position can we simply accept that it's God's will and rejoice with them? If the Father has called them that should be enough.

**Hebrews 5:4** – “No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God.”

Jesus also said to them, "Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto Him, We are able. And He saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with."

He was referring to the cup and baptism of His suffering. Before thirsting for prestige, position, and power we had best understand there's a price tag to being in a position of leadership and authority. Paul became one of the greatest of the apostles and his calling would come with great sacrifice. Jesus said of him, "I will shew him how great things he must suffer for My name's sake" (Acts 9:16). Promotion comes at great cost!

The desire and thirst for positions of authority always brings with it jealousy, strife, and indignation (James 3:16). "And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren" (Matthew 20:24). They went behind the back of the other ten seeking to be elevated. This inevitably made them indignant. Jesus' answer to them all was that the way to greatness in the kingdom of God was through servanthood.

**Matthew 20:25-28** "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

**Philippians 2:5-11** "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

5. **Prayerlessness.** The very things we desire could be ours if we would but ask God for them. If we do not receive it then we are praying amiss the implication that we must be seeking God as to what He desires for us and praying accordingly.

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**James 4:2-3** – “Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.”

This means to pray properly we must set aside self, self-seeking, selfish ambition, and lust for power, and take up our cross and follow Him and His will for our life (Luke 9:23). True prayer is a complete abandonment of self and surrender to God and His will.

We must pray! Prayerlessness is the cause whereas prayer is the cure.

6. **Worldliness.** Worldliness is much of the cause of wars and fightings among God's people. If we weren't strapped to the things of this world and all that's in it there would be no jealousy, self-seeking, selfish ambition, or lust for power. Thus, most wars and fighting would be abolished.

Even in the church do we see this raising its ugly head over and over again. Someone was promoted to a position in the church that we think should have been ours, they get blessed instead of us, or a decision is made that opposed what we wanted and bitter envying raises its head in our heart and spirit. Then what typically happens our unbridled tongue begins to spew its venom, then comes strife, backbiting, gossip, criticism, slander and war has begun.

**James 4:4-5** – “Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?”

**1 Kings 18:21** – “How long halt (hesitate) ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him.”

**Matthew 6:24** – “No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other.”

**Mark 4:18-19** – “And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the Word, And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the Word, and it becometh unfruitful.”

**Mark 8:36** – “For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?”

**Romans 8:5-6** – “For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.”

**2 Corinthians 6:17** – “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.”

**Colossians 2:8** – “See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.”

**1 John 2:15-17** – “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.”

**Colossians 3:1-4** – “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory.”

**7. The devil.** Satan is the cause of all wars and fighting among us. His goal is to thwart the purpose of God, God Himself, His people, and the church. We must wake up and see our fight is not with flesh and blood (people) but with the powers of darkness.



**James 3:14-16** – “But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.”

It's straight from the devil himself. He designs to stir our emotions, jealousy, self-seeking, selfish ambition, and sensual desires thereby causing strife within the body. When these things begin to arise we must see it for what it is.

**Ephesians 4:25-27** – “Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another. Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: NEITHER GIVE PLACE to the DEVIL!”

This requires seeing beyond the flesh, the desires of the flesh, and our own personal ambition. Discernment is needed to see beyond the things that are merely of this world. We need spiritual people who can see beyond the natural realm into the spiritual.

**Ephesians 6:12** – “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.”

## The Cure

1. **Humility.** Humility is the opposite of pride. Pride is the source of much strife in the body of Christ and all other relationships of life. God resists the proud but grants grace (favor) to those who humble themselves before Him and others. If we desire God's favor humility is the key and the cure to all strife.

**James 4:6, 9-10** – “But He giveth more grace. Wherefore He saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.”

**1 Peter 5:5-6** – “Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the

proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time.”

Humbling ourselves before God says we are trusting Him to exalt us “in due time.” There’s no need to fight and war and strive to get ahead. God will elevate us in His timing which is always perfect. He knows what we can handle and when we are ready for all He may be calling us to.

Pride verses humility is best exemplified in the parable of the Pharisee and the publican.

**Luke 18:8-14** – “And He spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.”

The Pharisee trusted in himself whereas the publican laid himself completely at the mercy of God, knowing that he had nothing to offer Him but himself. If he was to amount to anything at all it would be God Who would do it. If we are to be exalted, our exaltation lies with God alone and nothing within ourselves, “for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.”

**Micah 6:8** – “He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?”

2. **Submit yourself to God.** Submission to God is the cure to most everything in life. If we will submit to God and trust Him, He will take care of everything else. There’s no need for striving for what we desire because our life and all its pursuits are in His hands. Your submission to God declares you trust Him to give you all you need and to “exalt you in due time.”

**James 4:7** – “Submit yourselves therefore to God.”

**Philippians 2:5-11** “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

**Romans 12:1** – “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”

**Psalms 37:4-5** – “Delight thyself also in the Lord: and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass.”

3. **Resist the devil.** The devil is the source of strife and division within the church and all institutions and relationships in life. Division keeps God’s people from being all we can be and accomplishing all He calls us to. Jesus’ prayer was that we be unified for the purpose of declaring Him (John 17:21).

If we are unified there’s nothing we cannot accomplish for the glory of God. It was said of those at the tower of Babel, “Behold, the people are one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do” (Genesis 11:6).

It’s interesting that tongues, in this case, brought division, confusion, and the people were scattered abroad (Genesis 11:7-9). In Acts 2:1-4, at the birth of the church, tongues unified them and as a result great things were accomplished for God.

The one was self-seeking, selfish ambition, and lust for power, whereas, the latter was complete submission to God and His purposes. The devil seeks to divide,

therefore, when envy, self-seeking, selfish ambition, lust for power, and strife arise  
He Must Be Resisted!

**James 4:7** – “Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”

**1 Corinthians 1:10** – “Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.”

The devil must be resisted on every front. His primary goal is to thwart the purposes of God. If we are to accomplish all God calls us to we must vehemently “resist the devil” at every temptation, every attack, and each time he seeks to divert us from the plan and purpose of God for our lives, even when it comes from those close to us.

Jesus had just finished talking to His disciples concerning Who He was and the power and authority that would be given to the church in Matthew 16:16-19. I’m sure they were excited and enthused. Immediately afterwards, He began telling them “how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day” (Matthew 16:21).

This completely deflated Peter’s enthusiasm. I’m sure he thought “how can this be?” On minute He tells us of the authority He’s going to give us and now He’s telling us He’s going to suffer and die. Peter’s response was one of the flesh, self-seeking, and not “the things of God.”

**Matthew 16:22-23** – “Then Peter took Him, and began to rebuke Him, saying, Be it far from Thee, Lord: this shall not be unto Thee. But He turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind Me, Satan: thou art an offence unto Me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.”

We must resist the devil at every front. Whenever he attacks we must resist him. He will even come at us often from those closest to us. As well meaning as they may be, when they seek to turn us from the plan, purpose, and will of God, discernment

is necessary, and we must see who is actually behind it. The devil is the cause and the cure is to resist him.

4. **Draw near to God.** If we will draw near to God in times of conflict, purify our hearts, and seek Him above all else, He will give us the needed answer and direction as to what to do. We have a responsibility under the new covenant to draw near to Him.

**James 4:8** – “Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.”

**Jeremiah 29:11-13** – “For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon Me, and ye shall go and pray unto Me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart.”

We have a mandate to draw near to God, seeking His face, and He will meet us in our hour of need. If those in conflict with one another will lay aside their differences for a time to seek Him, we'll find the conflict no doubt resolved.

How can we draw near to God? There are some specific ways in which we are told we can draw near to the Lord. They are outlined clearly in scripture. If we'll apply them diligently, in our time of trouble, whatever it may be, and draw near to Him, God Will Intervene!

a. **The blood of Jesus.** “Therefore, brethren, since we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is, His flesh, and since we have a great priest over the house of God” (Hebrews 10:19-21). When Jesus died on the cross the veil of the temple was torn into from top to bottom by God the Father.

The veil was eighteen inches thick and interwoven. It was what kept mankind out of the the Holy of Holies – God's presence. The veil was ripped apart signifying man's sin was atoned for and that nothing could keep us from God's presence as long as we came through the blood of Jesus. Let's draw near God with all boldness by the blood of Jesus. Also read Proverbs 28:1, Hebrews 4:16, Hebrews 10:14, Romans 3:25-26, Romans 4:4-5, Romans 5:1-2, 1 John 1:7, and 2 Corinthians 5:21.

b. **Submit to God.** “Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you” (James 4:7-8). Submission to the Lord is a special way of drawing near to God. When a believer submits to God they are choosing to draw close to Him in obedience and full surrender as Jesus did in the garden of Gethsemane. We are in essence making Him not just Savior but Lord of our lives.

c. **Spend personal time with God.** Whenever we set apart time to be alone with God we are purposely drawing near to God. Jesus made this a priority in His life as our example. “And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, He went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed” (Mark 1:35). This should be a daily practice of every born again believer. “The one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked” (1 John 2:6). Let’s spend daily time drawing near to Him!

d. **Practice His presence.** We draw near to God by constantly practicing God’s presence. “He Himself has said, I WILL NEVER DESERT (LEAVE) YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU” (Hebrews 13:5). Jesus said, “I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:20). His promise is that He will always be with us. It is incumbent upon us to constantly acknowledge and conscientiously dwell on His presence. In doing so we are drawing near Him.

e. **Fellowship with other believers.** “Where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am there in their midst” (Matthew 18:20). When we gather together with those of like precious faith, He is there with us. We know He is always with us but His presence is in our midst in a special way when we gather in His name.

John wrote, “No one has seen God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us” (1 John 4:12). If God resides in every believer, it stands to reason His presence would be magnified the more of us are assembled as one in His name. If we understood this it would settle most conflicts.

f. **Worship Him.** Worship (both personally and corporately) ushers in His presence in one of the most profound and powerful ways we can ever imagine. The Bible says, “Shout joyfully to the LORD, all the earth. Serve the LORD with gladness; Come before His presence with joyful singing. Enter His gates with thanksgiving And His courts with praise. Give thanks to Him, bless His holy name” (Psalms 100:2-3 and 4).

And again, "But Thou art holy, O Thou that inhabitest the praises of (Your people) Israel" (Psalms 22:3). I've noticed, the more intensely I am involved in worship the more I sense His presence. Let's worship our Lord with all we have within us. The Psalmist said, "Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless His holy name" (Psalms 103:1).

g. **Exercise your faith.** We must approach Him "In full assurance of faith" (Hebrews 10:22). Jesus made the way for us to come to God without fear having become sin for us and making us the righteousness of God in Him (2 Corinthians 5:21). Our hearts and consciences have been cleansed. Guilt can keep us from and hinder us from drawing near God.

We must draw near "in full assurance of faith" that we have been cleansed of all sin and guilt by the finished work of Christ at Calvary on our behalf. Faith is the key. We are saved by faith and we must approach Him by faith, believing we are "The righteousness of God in Him" (2 Corinthians 5:21). "By whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Romans 5:2).

5. **Refuse to speak evil of others.** This goes back to the unbridled tongue. How frequently have we spoken ill of our brothers and sisters in Christ? We should not be speaking evil of anyone without alone those who are part of the family of God. We talk about them behind their back, we criticize, complain about them, and say all manner of evil against one another. "My brethren, these things ought not to be" (James 3:9-10).

**James 4:11-12** – "Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge. There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?"

**Romans 14:4** – "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand."

**Romans 14:10** – "But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ."

**Matthew 7:1-3** – “Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother’s eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?”

Another great question! Who do we think we are to stand in judgement over another? Why do we judge and criticize one another? Why do we so easily notice the faults and imperfections of others and so easily overlook our own faults and imperfections?

### **A few things about judging and criticizing:**

1. It’s easy when it’s not us.
2. We set the criteria for our own judgment (Matthew 7:1-3).
3. We set in motion the law of sowing and reaping (Galatians 6:7, Luke 6:36-38, James 2:13).
4. We display our negative attitude (Romans 14:19, Philippians 2:14, 4:8).
5. It makes us feel better about ourselves.
5. We don’t have all the facts.
6. It reveals our insecurities.
7. We don’t know their motives.
8. Judgment is the area given to the Son.

**John 5:22** – “The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.”

We must commit ourselves to speaking nothing but what good and uplifting to and about our brothers and sisters in Christ and all others. If we can ever do this it will put an end to “wars and fightings among us.”



**Ephesians 4:29** – “Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.”

**Colossians 4:6** – “Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.”

**6. All pursuits must be divinely directed.** If all our pursuits were divinely directed it would put an end to most strife and division in the body of Christ. The will of God must be supreme above all else and in all our pursuits in life.

**James 4:13-16** – “Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that. But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil.”

God’s will should be paramount in the life of every Christian. We must surrender completely to God’s will as Jesus did in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26:36-46). “Thy will be done” may be the hardest words one could ever say. Once we have completely surrendered to the will of God, we must pursue His will with all the passion we can muster up.

Paul had such a passion. When at Phillip’s home in Caesarea, Agabus took Paul’s belt, bound his own hands and feet, and said, “Thus says the Holy Spirit, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man who owns this belt, and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles” (Acts 21:11). Those present begged Paul not to go to Jerusalem. Paul said, “What do you mean by weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. So when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done” (Acts 21:13-14).

The will of God is one of the primary keys to seeing our prayers answered and must be sought in all our pursuits. Jesus sets forth the will of God at the beginning of the Lord’s Prayer. “Your kingdom come. Your will be done in earth as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:10). Our goal must be the implementation of the will of God in all our affairs.

This doesn't mean we shouldn't make plans and have vision for our future. On the contrary, the Word of God makes it abundantly clear we should. "If you plan at nothing you will surely hit it" (Zig Ziglar). It's foolish not to have goals or plan.

**Proverbs 29:18** – "Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he."

**Habakkuk 2:2-3** – "Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie (It hastens toward the goal and it will not fail): though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry."

Submission to God and His will is the key. Cockiness and arrogance is what is to be avoided. One who is overly self-confident in the pursuit of their own desires irregardless of how it affects others is filled with arrogance. I want this position, business, career, etc., and will have it, leaving God out of the equation completely.

**Proverbs 27:1** – "Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

**James 4:16** – "But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil."  
(KJV)

**James 4:16** – "But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil."  
(NASB)

**7. Do the right thing.** Doing the right thing will put an end to strife and contention. Doing what is right in all the aforementioned as well as what we know to be right in our actions and responses to others.

**James 4:17** – "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."

This deals with sins of omission. When we know what God wants of us and what is clearly commanded in scripture and do not obey, we sin. When we fail to do what

God has told us to do it's sin. If we will passionately seek to do all God has told us it will put an end to most conflict.

**Things we know are God's will:** (We'll only list a few search the scriptures for things we know God has commanded us to do.)

1. **Sanctification** (1 Thessalonians 4:3).
2. **Maintain unity** (Ephesians 4:3 and 13).
3. **Prayer** (Luke 18:1, 1 Thessalonians 5:17).

**What to pray for:**

- a. **Leaders** (1 Timothy 2:1-2).
  - b. **Wisdom and direction** (Proverbs 3:5-6, James 1:5).
  - c. **Our enemies** (Matthew 5:43-44, Romans 12:17-21).
  - d. **Infilling of the Holy Spirit** (Luke 11:9-13).
  - e. **Laborers in the harvest** (Matthew 9:37-38).
  - f. **Boldness** (Acts 4:23-24 and 31).
4. **Preach the gospel** (Mark 16:15, Matthew 28:19-20).

The Corinthians were experiencing an element of strife and division over sectarianism. Paul challenged them to maintain unity and speak the same thing (1 Corinthians 1:10). After dealing with the root cause of their division he challenged them to focus on preaching the gospel.

**1 Corinthians 1:18** – “For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.”

One of the best ways to maintain unity and settle strife, wars, and fighting is to prioritize. What is the primary thing we are commissioned to do? Preach the Gospel! Paul presents this as the primary way to maintain unity and put an end to division and strife.

**Matthew 28:19-20** – “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age.”

**Mark 16:15** “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.”

**Acts 1:8** – “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

### **Three I AMs of the Apostles Paul:**

**1. Romans 1:14** – “I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise.”

**2. Romans 1:15** – “So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.”

**3. Romans 1:16** – “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”

# James 5:1-6 – A Word to the Rich

James gives a stern warning to the rich here. He is by no means condemning riches but they must be put into proper perspective. It's the love of money that's the root of all evil, not money itself (1 Timothy 6:10). It can be used for good or it can be used for evil. Our passage makes it abundantly clear that we will be judged accordingly.

**Watch the Message** (52 Minutes)

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**James 5:1-6** – “Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold, the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabbath. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you.”

The Word of God and Jesus Himself had a lot to say about money and its use. God uses money in this life to accomplish His purposes. There's simply a lot that could not be done without money. It's about how it is viewed and used.

## Five Parables and/or Examples Dealing With Riches

1. **The Rich Young Ruler (Matthew 19:16-29).** There's much that can be drawn from this passage. We will attempt to bring out a few insights and applications.

a. **Jesus' claim to divinity.** The rich young ruler called Jesus “Good Master.” Jesus' response to him was “Why callest thou Me good? There is none good but one, that is, God.” Jesus was making it clear that to call Him “Good” was to call Him God.

Study: John 1:1 and 14, 5:18, 8:56-58, 10:30-33, Colossians 2:9, 1 Timothy 3:16, Hebrews 1:8, Revelation 1:8.

b. **His riches stood between him and the Master.** Jesus challenged him concerning keeping the commandments. He claimed he had kept them all since his youth. He had obeyed the commandments and yet he still knew something was missing. Jesus challenged him to a total commitment of himself and all he had.

**Matthew 19:20-22** – “All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.”

It wasn't that having wealth was wrong but it was what stood between Him and complete surrender to Jesus. His trust and devotion was in what he possessed and not in Jesus. Jesus demands to be number one in our life. Many who have wealth find it hard to surrender it all to the kingdom and trust God with it. This is emphasized in Jesus' next statement.

**Matthew 19:23-24** – “Then said Jesus unto His disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.”

**Matthew 19:25-26** – “When His disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.”

It is possible to have wealth, serve God, go to heaven, and experience the kingdom of God. God does desire to bless His people but He must have first place. We must surrender ourselves to Christ as well as all that we have and realize it all belongs to Him. We are merely stewards of what belongs to Him.

c. **When we surrender ourselves and all we possess completely to Jesus, we are the true beneficiaries.** There's not anything that's given to God out of true devotion that we don't receive back many times over. “You can't out give God.” We

will receive back a hundred times in this life what we have given up and in the world to come eternal life.

**Matthew 19:27-29** – “Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore? Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name’s sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.”

2. **Bigger Barns (Luke 12:13-21)**. Context is always imperative. The parable of the rich man, who prospered, and tore down his barns and built larger ones to store his goods. Just prior to this a man came to Jesus asking him to have his brother divide their inheritance with him.

**There are four things we can glean from this:**

a. **A warning against covetousness.** He wanted Jesus to have his brother divide the inheritance with him. Jesus immediately responded putting it in the proper perspective.

**Luke 12:14-15** – “Man, who made Me a judge or a divider (arbitrator) over you? And He said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.”

He sternly warns against covetousness. It’s not that it is wrong to have things or to accumulate wealth but we must not covet, seek, and long after such. There’s more to life than just stuff. “A man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.”

**1 Timothy 6:5-10** – “Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself. But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.”

But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.”

b. **Warning against hoarding.** We are not meant to have as our goal to see how much we can accumulate. This doesn't mean we should not save and have goals but we do so for a specific purpose. We save for retirement, our children's education, purchase of a home, and so on. God blesses us so we can be a blessing! (Genesis 12:2 and 2 Corinthians 9:6-8).

**James 5:1-3** – “Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.”

c. **Warning not to trust in the uncertainty of riches.** This rich man thought he could rest in the security of his wealth. Our security and trust must primarily be in the Lord and not in what we accumulate. You never see a Hurst pulling a trailer behind it.

**Luke 12:19-20** – “Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?”

**1 Timothy 6:17** – “Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.”

**Mark 8:36** – “For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?”

d. **Warning to prioritize our wealth heavenward.** We must prioritize. What's the most important? The most important thing is to be rich toward God, to store up for ourselves treasure in heaven. This is the only type of wealth we'll be able to take with us.



**Luke 12:21** – “So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”

**Matthew 6:19-21** – “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

**1 Timothy 6:18-19** – “That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate (share); Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.”

**3. The Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31).** This may or may not have been a parable. The Jehovah Witnesses, in an attempt to dismiss hell as a place of eternal torment, claim this was just a parable and therefore cannot be used to verify hell as eternal. Whether it was a parable or two real people who lived, Jesus was still using it to teach there is both a place of comfort and eternal torment for those who leave this life.

**a. This does not mean every rich person will go to hell.** Our eternal destiny is determined by what we do with Jesus. Both old and new testament believers are justified by faith. They looking forward to the sacrifice of Christ and we looking back to what He did for us.

**b. This does teach the rich should have compassion on the needy in this life.** We will be held accountable on how we treat others and particularly the needy in this life. The judgment of the sheep and goat nations makes this abundantly clear (Matthew 25:31-46).

**1 John 3:17-18** – “But whoso hath this world’s good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.”

**James 2:14-17** – “What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye

warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.”

c. **Hell is a real place.** It's a place of torment that will never end. It is forever! The rich man pleaded for mercy saying “send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame” (Luke 16:24). The torment of hell will never end.

### **Scripture on hell:**

**Luke 16:23** – “And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments.”

**Matthew 18:9** – “And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire.”

**Matthew 10:28** – “Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.”

**Matthew 13:42** – “And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”

**Matthew 13:50** – “And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”

**Matthew 25:41** – “Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.”

**Mark 9:43-44** – “To go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.”

**2 Thessalonians 1:8-9** – “In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished

with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power.”

**Revelation 20:14-15** – “And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”

**Revelation 21:8** – “But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.”

d. **Heaven is a place of comfort, blessing, splendor, and glory.** All believers will find heaven a place of comfort but particularly those who have suffered in this life as Lazarus. Heaven is a place where there will be no more sorrow, nor pain, nor suffering, and a place in which God will wipe away every tear. Glory be to God!

**John 14:1-3** – “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”

**1 Corinthians 2:9-10** – “But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.”

**Revelation 21:1-5** – “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.”

**Revelation 21:9-27** – “Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb’s wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal; And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. And the city lieth foursquare (like a square), and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs (fifteen hundred miles). The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal. And he measured the wall (thickness) thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits (seventy-two yards or 216 feet), according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel. And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolyte; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls: every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life.

**Revelation 22:1-5** – “And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him: And they shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.”

**Revelation 22:17** – “And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”

4. **Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30)**. This deals specifically with stewardship. Being faithful with that which the Lord has entrusted us with. Are we being found faithful? Are we faithful with all the Lord has entrusted us with?

This parable makes it abundantly clear that as we show ourselves faithful with whatever the Lord sees fit to bestow upon us He will entrust us with more. There will be an increase. Both now in this life and in the life to come.

**1 Corinthians 4:2** – “Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.”

a. **Time**. Time is one of the most precious commodities God has given us. The Bible says, we are to “Make the most of our time because the days are evil” (Ephesians 5:16). And again, “So teach us to number our days, that we may present to You a heart of wisdom” (Proverbs 90:12). Is God first in what we do with our time or does everything else in our life take precedence over the things of God?

b. **Talent**. Each of us has gifts from God, both natural and spiritual. Are we faithfully using them for Him and His kingdom? Peter said, “As each one has received a special gift, let him employ it in serving one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God” (1 Peter 4:10).

c. **Treasure**. We are required to be faithful with the resources God has entrusted us with. If we are not, the Bible clearly teaches we will miss out on so much. Many will never get ahead financially or reach the level God desires for them because they haven’t learned to be faithful with their first-fruits (Proverbs 3:9-10; Malachi 3:8-11). However, when we’re faithful there’s an increase.

The Bible also makes it clear that spiritual insight is cut off or at least greatly diminished when we are not faithful with our finances. Many wonder why God is not giving them enlightenment into His Word, their life, situations, and spiritual things when Jesus said, “If you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon (money), who will commit to your trust true riches” (Luke 16:11)?

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5. **The Unjust Steward (Luke 16:1-13).** This steward had been unfaithful and was called into account of his stewardship and was in essence fired. He said to himself,

**Luke 16:4-7** – “I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses. So he called every one of his lord’s debtors unto him, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord? And he said, An hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty. Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, An hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore.”

**Luke 16:8-9** – “And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light. And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.”

It’s interesting that he was commended for his shrewdness, even though it was deceitful. How does this apply to us? What Jesus was conveying to us was that, as the unjust steward, we must prepare wisely for the future and that which is eternal. Are we investing in what will prepare the way for us in the days ahead and for eternity?

**Jesus gives us three ways to prepare for our future.** This has to do with preparing our way for our future in the here and now as well as eternity. Again, we see that as we are faithful with all He chooses to give us, there will be an increase.

a. **Faithful in small things.** If we cannot be faithful in the little things of life how can we be trusted with greater things. Life isn’t a long jump. We don’t go from step one to step ten. If we cannot obey step one, we will never get to step two. We must be faithful and obey step one, then two, and so on. As we show ourselves trustworthy we will continue to advance further and further.

**Luke 16:10** – “He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.”

b. **Faithful financially.** Are we faithful in the financial realm? If we are not faithful with a small amount we can’t be trusted with more. That is why tithing is so

important (Malachi 3:8-11). We begin with being faithful with ten percent and as we show ourselves faithful the Holy Spirit may very well lead us to increase the amount we give and continue to bless us.

**Luke 16:11** – “If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon (money), who will commit to your trust the true riches?”

Notice it says, “who will commit to your trust the true riches?” If we cannot be faithful with unrighteous mammon (money) then true spiritual riches are withheld. When Malachi rebuked Israel for robbing God and withholding the tithe they failed to obey. As a result, God was silent 400 years until the coming of John the Baptist. The degree to which we are faithful with our money determines spiritual insight. “When God has our pocketbook, He has our heart.” – Dr. Paul E. Paino

c. **Faithful in what is another's.** Before giving us that which is our own we must first be faithful in what is another's. This can apply to business and ministry alike. If we cannot be trustworthy in what is someone else's we will never be given what is our own.

**Luke 16:12** – “And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?”

**Psalms 12:1** – “Help, Lord; for the godly man ceases to be; for the faithful disappear from among the sons of men.”

**Proverbs 20:6** – “Many a man proclaims his own loyalty, But who can find a trustworthy (Faithful) man?”

When we show ourselves faithful in what is another's, God will give us that which is our own. In the work place, if we will do all we can to make the owner of the business to prosper, we'll see promotion and very possibly one day have our own business over which God will see that we prosper.

The same applies to ministry. If we will be faithful to serve in someone else's ministry, the Holy Spirit will begin to elevate and promote us accordingly. I've seen

this in things as simple as ushering. As they faithfully served, when they were given their own ministry God prospered all that they did.

We see this best exemplified in the life of Phillip. When the church was going through a time of trouble, he was appointed to be one of the first deacons (Acts 6:1-7). As a result of their faithfulness, the church grew and prospered. Because of Phillip's faithfulness, after the church was scatter (Acts 8:1), he was used mightily in Samaria. Many came to the Lord, were healed, and many were set free from evil spirits (Acts 8:4-6). This same Phillip was later called Phillip the Evangelist (Acts 21:8-14).

**Let's be found faithful!**

## Applications Concerning the Rich and Riches

God does desire to bless and prosper His people. This has been taken to an extreme by many, but nonetheless true. Just because some take certain teachings to far doesn't negate the truth. We must take care not to run to the opposite extreme. Both extremes are usually incorrect.

By way of summary and application let's take another look at our passage along with a few other verses and/or passages.

**James 5:1-6** – “Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold, the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabbath. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you.”

1. **The things we accumulate in this life won't last.** “Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of



them shall be a witness against you” (James 5:2-3). It will all be eaten up in the end. Our focus must be on eternity!

2. **Many miseries will befall those who trust in riches.** This refers to both now and in eternity. Those who trust in their riches always end in misery. Misery is plural. They will be many. Emptiness is their lot. Many who have more than they know what to do with ultimately find they still end up empty.

3. **Preparation for the last days.** “Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days” (James 5:3). The utter futility of storing up riches for the last days. This doesn’t mean we should not save. That’s foolishness! However, they will fail us in the end. Let’s focus on eternity and storing treasure in heaven.

**Matthew 6:19-21** – “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

**Matthew 6:24** – “No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.”

4. **A warning against oppression.** “Behold, the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabbath. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you” (James 5:4-6).

This is a warning against those who would oppress those in their employment and service. The wicked hold back fair wages to those in their employment out of greed. They desire more for themselves. The wise and righteous, however, will take of their profits and bless their employees. Those who do so will find the blessings of the Lord will continue to flow.

**1 Timothy 6:9-10** – “But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.”

**1 Timothy 6:17-19** – “Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate (share); Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.”

# James 5:7-8 – The Coming of the Lord

James is dealing with the coming of the Lord. It's interesting he says "the coming of the Lord" and not the return of the Lord. This is multifaceted. It has many applications that are pertinent to believers then and now.

He's encouraging the people of God to remain steadfast, continue praying, and laboring in the harvest fields, don't give up, and look for the "the coming of the Lord." He's dealing with waiting, endurance, and expectation.

**Watch the Message** (42 Minutes)

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**James 5:7-8** – "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; establish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh."

James gives us an example of a farmer. The farmer plows the fields, plants the seeds, and then patiently awaits the harvest. He "hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain." He plants in the spring and harvests the crop in the fall. Months go by before the harvest is brought in. It takes patience and endurance but it will come.

He patiently waits for "the early and latter rain." The early rain is what germinates the seed and the latter rain is what brings in the harvest. There was a long season between the two. This requires patience, endurance, and perseverance. As the farmer, we too must be patient, faithfully laboring in the harvest fields until the Lord germinates the seeds we sow, and then causes what we have planted and labored for to blossom so it can be harvested.

Water, in scripture, is a type of both the Word of God and the Holy Spirit. Rain here refers to both. Both the Word and the Holy Spirit is required for any type of harvest. The Word must be planted in the hearts of men and in the spiritual realm, along with the work of the Holy Spirit for the seeds we plant to be germinated and ultimately harvested. The Word alone isn't sufficient. It must be presented under the unction of the Holy Ghost.

**2 Corinthians 3:6** – “Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the Spirit: for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.”

## Threefold Application

1. **The coming of the Lord in your situation.** This is at least in part dealing with those who are going through a time of testing, trial, and oppression. Both the preceding and following context bears this out.

**James 5:4** – “Behold, the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabbath.”

**James 5:9-11** – “Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door. Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.”

Some are reading this who have been going through a time of difficulty, trial, and affliction. God is about to intervene on your behalf. He will set things straight. He’s about to move in your particular situation and bring victory. Once Job had gone through his test the Lord came into his life and situation and gave him back twice what he had lost.

**Job 42:10** – “And the Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before.”

Hang in there, don’t give up, and rejoice, your deliverance and victory is imminent!

**Isaiah 35:10** – “The ransomed of the Lord will return, they will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.”

**Isaiah 44:3** – “I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour My Spirit upon thy seed, and My blessing upon thine offspring.”

**Isaiah 43:19** – “Behold, I will do something new, Now it will spring forth; Will you not be aware of it? I will even make a roadway in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.”

**Isaiah 52:9** – “Break forth into joy, sing together – shout for joy together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the Lord hath comforted His people, He hath redeemed Jerusalem.”

**Isaiah 60:5a** – “Then you will look and be radiant, your heart will throb and swell with joy.”

**Zephaniah 3:17** – “The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty – A victorious warrior; He will save, He will rejoice over thee with joy; He will quiet you in His love, He will joy over thee with singing – with shouts of joy.”

**Micah 5:9** – “Thine hand shall be lifted up upon (against) thine adversaries, and all thine enemies shall be cut off.”

**Isaiah 10:27** – “It shall come to pass in that day, that his burden shall be taken away from off thy shoulder, and his yoke from off thy neck, and the yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing.”

**Exodus 14:13-14** – “Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will show to you to day: for the Egyptians (your enemies) whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.”

**Deuteronomy 20:4** – “The Lord your God is He who goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you – to give you victory.”

**Psalms 40:1-3** – “I waited patiently for the Lord; and He inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and

set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord.”

**Psalms 60:12** – “Through God we shall do valiantly: for He it is that shall tread down our enemies.”

**Psalms 68:1-3** – “Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered: let them also that hate Him flee before Him. As smoke is driven away, so drive them away: as wax melts before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God. But let the righteous be glad; let them rejoice before God: yea, let them rejoice exceedingly.”

**2 Kings 6:16** – “Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.”

**Hebrews 1:13-14** – “But to which of the angels said He at any time, Sit on My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?”

**Joel 2:11** – “The Lord shall utter His voice before His army: for His camp is very great: for he is strong that executeth His Word: for the day of the Lord is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?”

**2. The coming of the Lord in the end time harvest and revival.** I’m speaking to some of you who have been planting and laboring for a long time and seeing little results from your toil. You’ve become discouraged, disheartened, and fainthearted. I’m here to encourage you to be patient, keep at it, don’t quit or give up. Your harvest is nigh at hand. Begin rejoicing with expectancy! “The Lord draweth nigh!”

**1 Corinthians 3:7-8** – “So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour.”

**Galatians 6:9** – “And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.”

**1 Corinthians 15:58** – “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”

**Joel 2:23** – “Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God: for He hath given you the former rain moderately, and He will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month.”

This in connection with and context of the latter day outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Until now any fruit has been moderate at best. Notice the promise, “He will cause to come down for you the rain.” Praise the Lord! “There is a sound of abundance of rain” (1 Kings 18:41).

The rain is forthcoming. There’s coming a time when we will see it all happen nearly simultaneously, “the former rain, and the latter rain in the first (same) month.” No sooner than we plant the harvest will come in. It will come suddenly as on the day of Pentecost. Glory be to God!

**John 4:35** – “Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.”

**Joel 2:28-29** – “And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out My Spirit.”

**Acts 2:1-4** – “And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”

**John 4:14** – “But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.”

**John 7:37-38** – “In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.”

**Isaiah 44:3** – “For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour My Spirit upon thy seed, and My blessing upon thine offspring.”

**3. The return of the Lord.** This can and indeed does apply to the return of the Lord. “When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels” (2 Thessalonians 1:7). We are seeing things happen in the world today the likes of which we have never seen or imagined. I’m here to tell you – “The coming of the Lord draweth nigh” (James 5:8).

**Revelation 1:7** – “Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen.”

At His first coming Jesus came as a conquering servant to bear the sins of many. This time, His second coming, He’s coming as a warrior and conquering King in triumph, power, and glory. He is our soon coming deliverer!

**Hebrews 9:28** – “Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation.”

**Matthew 24:29-30** – “Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.”

**Zechariah 14:3-4** – “Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.”



**2 Thessalonians 1:6-9** – “Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power.”

### **Watch When Will the Rapture Happen?**

### **Watch Signs of Jesus' Return**

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**Titus 2:13** – “Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ.”

# James 5:9-13 – A Word to the Afflicted

James is dealing with affliction in the lives of God's people. Affliction will come – it's all about how we deal with it. If handled in the proper way, it will ultimately turn to our good. If managed incorrectly, it brings despair, discouragement and confusion.

**James 5:9-13** – “Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door. Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy. But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation. Is any among you afflicted? Let him pray. Is any merry? Let him sing psalms.”

**Watch the Message** (51 Minutes)

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## Types of Affliction

Affliction comes in many ways, shapes and forms. James leaves it open so that it will apply to us all, no matter what we're going through. Here we will list a few examples of affliction. Apply it to whatever you may be going through.

1. **Things of our own making.** There's a natural consequence to our actions and decisions. We reap what we sow (Galatians 6:7). Many are dealing with things we have brought on ourselves. We must be will to deal with the consequences of our actions and decision, face them, and move on from it. Seek God, His direction, and move forward in obedience to Him.

2. **The trials of life.** Trials are simply a part of life. Everyone goes through them. Some, it seems, go through worse things than others but we all go through them. I would encourage you to study with this James 1:2-4 – Count it All Joy.

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3. **Spiritual conflict.** If you are a saved, blood washed, born again believer, you will face spiritual battles. Before you were saved the devil had you (Ephesians 2:1-3, 1 John 5:19). When you gave your heart to Jesus you became Satan's enemy. In these last days the spiritual conflict is intensifying exponentially.

**Ephesians 6:12** – “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.”

**Revelation 12:12** – “The devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.”

4. **Conflict with the world.** The world in which we live is in opposition to God, the things of God, and the people of God. We fight against the world, the flesh, and the devil. There will always be conflict as long as we are in this world. We must “fight the good fight of faith” (1 Timothy 6:12).

5. **Strife among the brethern.** At times, much of our afflictions comes, not from the world but from among our own brethren. It comes by means of accusations, criticism, and complaint.

**Romans 8:31, 33 and 34** – “What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, Who is even at the right hand of God, Who also maketh intercession for us.”

**Romans 14:4 and 10** – “Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand. But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.”

6. **Physical affliction.** Many may be battling physical affliction and though we must persevere in the midst of it, we must also stand on the promises of God for divine health and healing. We must persevere in faith believing God for His intervention. Divine health and healing was provided for in the atonement (Exodus 15:26, Isaiah 53:3-5, Psalms 103:1-5, Mark 16:18, Romans 8:11, 1 Peter 2:24-25, James 5:13-15).

7. **Life itself.** Life has a way of taking much of the fight out of us. When the things of life drains us of our strength and takes the fight out of us we must press on. We must continue moving forward with undaunted perseverance.

**1 Corinthians 15:58** – “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”

**Ephesians 6:10** – “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might.”

## Resist the Bitterness of Affliction

**James 5:9** – “Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door.”

It's easy to hold a grudge and become bitter in times of affliction no matter what type of affliction we are facing. We can become bitter at the spiritual conflict, the conflict of this world, tension with our brother and sisters in Christ, physical and financial problems, life in general, and even God Himself.

**Hebrews 12:15** – “Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.”

Bitterness can become a bitter root in our lives cause us to miss the grace of God in our life and situation, destroying us and those closest to us. It can affect every aspect of our life. It must be resisted with everything that's in us. We must forgive ourselves, all that life has thrown our way, and even God.

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**Colossians 3:13** – “Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.”

**Ephesians 4:31-32** – “Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another,

tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

Bitterness is often the glue keeping us in our present affliction.

Bitterness is like a man drinking a cup of poison hoping it kills the other guy. It brings with it nothing but trouble.

## **Let God deal with it!**

**Romans 12:19-21** – "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."

## **Swear Not – Don't be Rash in Word**

**James 5:12** – "But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation."

In times of affliction don't be rash in what you say. It's easy to say things that are detrimental when in the midst of trouble, things that are not beneficial, and that we may later wish we could retract. It's out of the bitterness of our situation that we utter words we may later regret. What we say can either bring blessing into our life and situation or condemnation – "lest ye fall into condemnation."

**Deuteronomy 23:21-23** – "When thou shalt vow a vow unto the Lord thy God, thou shalt not slack to pay it: for the Lord thy God will surely require it of thee; and it would be sin in thee. But if thou shalt forbear to vow, it shall be no sin in thee. That which is gone out of thy lips thou shalt keep and perform; even a freewill offering, according as thou hast vowed unto the Lord thy God, which thou hast promised with thy mouth."

**Numbers 30:2** – “If a man vow a vow unto the Lord, or swear an oath to bind his soul with a bond; he shall not break his word, he shall do according to all that proceedeth out of his mouth”

**Ecclesiastes 5:2-4** – “Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few. For a dream cometh through the multitude of business; and a fool’s voice is known by multitude of words. When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed.”

**Matthew 5:33-37** – “Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God’s throne: Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.”

**Matthew 12:36-37** – “But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.”

**Proverbs 18:20-21** – “A man’s belly shall be satisfied with the fruit of his mouth; and with the increase of his lips shall he be filled. Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.”

## Endurance in Affliction

**James 5:10** – “Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience.”

Endurance, long-suffering, patience, and perseverance is a must. It does little good to give up. The devil knows that the only way he will prevail is to get us to quit and give up. If we refuse to quit we will prevail and overcome all adversity. Victory will be ours!

**Matthew 10:22** – “And ye shall be hated of all men for my name’s sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.”

**Acts 20:23-24** – “The Holy Spirit solemnly testifies to me in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions await me. But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, so that I may finish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God.”

**2 Timothy 2:3** – “Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.”

**2 Timothy 4:5** – “But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.”

**Hebrew 12:1 and 3** – “Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience (endurance) the race that is set before us. For consider Him that endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.”

## Prayer and Praise

**James 5:13** – “Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.”

We must remain constant in prayer and praise in all that we go through in this life whether good or bad.

**Romans 12:12** – “Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant (steadfast) in prayer.”

**Hebrews 13:15** – “By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name.”

# Affliction Plus Endurance Produces Blessing

**James 5:10-11** – “Behold, we count them happy (blessed, to be envied) which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.”

There is something to look forward to both now and at the end of our race. God does reward faithfulness! There's a prize at the end of the course He has set before you. Hang in there! Don't give up! At the end of Job's test God restored all that he lost.

SEE: [The Benefits of Trials and Suffering](#)

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## The here and now...

**Job 42:10** – “And the Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before.”

**Joel 2:25** – “And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, My great army which I sent among you.”

## The life to come...

**2 Timothy 4:6-8** – “For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing.”

**Hebrew 12:2** – “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 is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”



**Philippians 2:5-11** – “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

**Romans 8:17-18** – “And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”

**1 Corinthians 9:24-27** – “Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.”

**Philippians 3:12-14** – “Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”

**James 1:12** – “Blessed is the man that endureth temptation (trials and testings): for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him.”

# James 5:14-16 – Is Any Sick Among You?

James is addressing those who may be sick among us. When you find yourself sick there is a remedy. James gives clear cut instructions what we are to do if we find ourselves in a bed of affliction. Jesus, during His earthly life here, never once turned any away who were sick. He always met them with compassion and divine intervention. Jesus is still doing so today through His church.

**James 5:14-16** – “Is any sick among you? 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: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed.”

**Watch the Message** (43 Minutes)

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Though divine health and healing is provided for in the atonement (Isaiah 53:5), we are not exempt from sickness and disease. There's still a law of sin and death working in our members. This is why Paul said, “And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body” (Romans 8:23).

## Our Claim to Divine Health and Healing

Divine health and healing is provided for in the atonement. This has to do with physical, emotional, mental, relational, natural and spiritual healing. When you find yourself sick and in need of healing we must apply the blood of Jesus and God's promises of divine health and healing.

**Exodus 15:26** – “I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians – the world: For I am the Lord (Jehovah Rapha) that healeth thee.”

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**Psalms 103:3** – “Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; Who healeth all thy diseases.”

**Isaiah 53:3-6** – “He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from Him; He was despised, and we esteemed Him not. Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.”

**1 Peter 2:24-25** – “Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by Whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.”

**Divine healing is a touch of future resurrection power:**

**Romans 8:23** – “And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.”

**Romans 8:11** – “But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you.”

## The Remedy

Healing here refers to both physical and spiritual healing. “And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.” This has to do with the healing of the entire person. That’s God’s design and will for His people. “Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth” (3 John 2).

## **A six-fold prescription for healing:**

1. **Call for the elders of the church.** The first step toward healing is to call for the elders of the church. There's power and authority in a properly structured church. The two places where Jesus said we have the authority to bind and loose were in the context of the church. Yes, it is the universal church and body of Christ but that can be very abstract. The power and authority of the church is released through local bodies of believers.

**Matthew 16:18-19** – “Upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

**Matthew 18:18-20** – “Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name there am I in the midst of them.”

It's significant to note that we must “call for the elders of the church.” Many in the church complain saying when they were sick no one called upon them. Church leaders don't automatically know when people are sick by some kind of osmosis or word of knowledge. Sure God can do that but it's unfair and unrealistic to expect such all the time. God says we're to “call for the elders of the church” when we are sick.

This can happen by requesting prayer in the public worship services. Typically a church should have a time set apart in its services to pray for the needs of its people. During these times any who are sick can request prayer. Church is about gathering together for prayer, fellowship, worship, teaching the Word, and to minister to the needs of the people. This should never be left out. Without this the service incomplete.

At times parishioners may be sick enough that they must stay home from church. At such times they must call the church office and request for the elders and/or Pastor to come pray for them. It's their responsibility to call. On the other hand, the leadership of a church should be so structured that when someone is absent it's

noticed, and the person is called upon. This applies to those who may be admitted to the hospital as well. However, James places the responsibility for calling on the individual.

2. **Let them pray over him.** This assumes elders are praying elders. God help the church that has leaders who are not prayer warriors. If you are not a praying person in communion with God and for the needs of your people on a regularly basis you will not be equipped to pray over them when they come with a specific need. Both elders and deacons must be praying men and women.

**1 Samuel 12:23** – “Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way.”

3. **Anointing him with oil.** The anointing of oil in prayer for the sick is something that should be practiced in every Bible believing church. It's a command of scripture and therefore must be implemented in the church. This is not just for Charismatic, Full Gospel, and Pentecostal churches. It should be the practice of all God fearing churches everywhere.

**The purpose of anointing with oil is two-fold:**

a. **It symbolizes or is a type of the anointing of the Holy Spirit.** We desperately need the power and anointing of the Holy Ghost in our churches today (Acts 4:23-31). To many are depending on man made ideas and formulas to accomplish the work of God. For God's work to be accomplished it takes a moving of the Spirit of God. God can do more in a brief moment under the unction of the Holy Ghost than all the programs and works of men can do in a lifetime. “The yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing” (Isaiah 10:27).

b. **Point of contact.** Often there's a point of contact whereby people's faith is released. It's more for us than it is for God. We believe that when we do such and such happens God is going to act. In scripture we see this taking place in touching the hem of His garment (Matthew 9:20-22), the laying on of hands (Mark 16:18), and the anointing of oil here in our passage. The laying on of hands in scripture seems to be the most frequently used.

4. **In the name of the Lord.** We must pray in the name of the Lord. There is power in Jesus' name. So much so that God “Bestowed on Him a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and every tongue

confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the father” (Philippians 2:10-11). Praying in His name is not simply a blank check that we sign to get whatever we want. Praying in the name of the Lord Jesus means the following things:

a. **We receive power of attorney.** If you are given power of attorney over someone’s estate, you are to use the assets for their purposes only. That said, you can use it however you choose. However, there will be a day when you will have to give an account as to how you used the funds. Likewise, there will be an accounting of how we used His name.

b. **We pray in God’s will (1 John 5:14-15).** Praying in His name means we are praying for His purposes (will) to be implemented in the affairs of men (our affairs and life) on earth (Matthew 6:10).

c. **We pray in His merit (Romans 5:1-2, Hebrews 4:16).** When we come to Him, praying in His name, we come in His merit and not our own. We come in His righteousness, having been made worthy by His finished work on the cross for us (2 Corinthians 5:21).

d. **We pray for God’s glory (John 14:13-14).** When praying in His name we should be praying for that which will bring Him glory. Judge what you are praying for and if it will bring God glory then you are praying rightly and if not don’t pray for it.

5. **The prayer of faith.** “The prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.” “The prayer of faith” is a powerful force in the economy of God. God moves in response to the faith of His people. It’s significant that faith here is on the part of the one praying. Often when someone isn’t healed immediately it’s blamed on the person being prayed for not having enough faith. The contrary is true. It’s dependent on the one doing the praying.

Those praying must be men and women of faith. They must believe God on behalf the one they’re praying for. We must not only believe God can heal but that He will. “All men believe God can do anything but few believe He will” (Finis Jennings Dake). Faith is the key to answered prayer on behalf of the sick. Those we appoint to be elders in the church must be full of faith.

**Matthew 21:21-22** – “Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done. And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.”

**Mark 11:22-24** – “And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.”

6. **Confess your faults.** “Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed.” The prayer of faith for the healing of the sick is not restricted to elders alone. “Pray one for another, that ye may be healed” seems to indicate anyone who is part of the local body of believers. The ones are to be called upon are the “elders of the church.” At those times when the elders are not readily available we are encouraged to “Pray one for another, that ye may be healed.” All who believe can “lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover” (Mark 16:18).

“Confess your faults” brings in the spiritual component to the equation. Sin was often believed to be the cause of some sickness and disease. When the disciples saw one who was blind from birth they asked Jesus, “Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind” (John 9:2)? James seemed to be covering all his bases. Just in case there might be sin causing the sickness or preventing the person from being healed let's make sure it is dealt with. Thus bringing about both spiritual and physical healing.

The Roman Catholic Church use this passage in support of the confessional. However, this passage has nothing whatsoever to do with confessing our sins to a priest to have them resolved. “Confess your faults one to another.” “One to another” makes it clear it refers to brothers and sisters in Christ, those part of the local body, or the body of Christ. And it has nothing to do with the resolving of their sins except by God alone.

This has to do with accountability. If there is a particular sin that someone is struggling with, they confess it to a brother or sister in Christ. When they do so they are asking them to hold them accountable. This is not to lord it over them but to pray for them and now and then to ask them how they're doing with it. In prayer

and confession they are committing themselves to letting that person know whenever they are being tempted or have slipped and fallen. If committed to such ongoing confession it acts as a restraint mechanism in their life.

**James 5:14-16** – “Is any sick among you? 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: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed.”



# James 5:16-18 – Fervent Prayer

There is great power in fervent prayer. Fervent praying can accomplish much for and in the kingdom of God. James gives Elijah as a prime example of what fervent prayer can do.

**James 5:16-18** – “Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Elijah was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.”

**Watch the Message** (45 Minutes)

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## Confess your faults

Notice it says faults and not sin. We are to confess sin to God alone. We confess our faults to one another for accountability, comfort, encouragement, and for prayer. It's important we do not confess our faults and struggles to just anyone. We must take every precaution to make sure the one we confess to is trustworthy. If we're the one to whom confession is being directed it's imperative we keep it in the strictest confidence.

A group of pastors were meeting together for accountability, prayer and support. They were confessing things they were struggling with to one another. One said, “I’m having a real problem with lust and fear and I am a womanizer.” The second said, “I’m struggling with drinking.” The third one said, “I really like to gossip and can’t wait to get out of here!” We must make sure those we confess to are trustworthy.

# A Righteous Man

When we fail the devil accuses us and says, “See you really messed up. It says a righteous man. You’re not righteous. You have no reason to expect God to answer your prayers.” Satan is the accuser of the brethren (Revelation 12:10). It’s important we realize that our righteousness is not predicated on anything we do or don’t do. Our righteousness is predicated on our faith in Jesus Christ and that alone.

**Isaiah 64:6** – “But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.”

**2 Corinthians 5:21** – “For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.”

**Isaiah 61:10** – “I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, He hath covered me with the robe of His righteousness.”

**Hebrews 4:16** – “Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.”

# A Man Subject to Like Passions as We Are

We tend to think of certain people as spiritually superior. They seem to be on a higher level than we are. They appear to have a connection to and with God that we can’t seem to attain to. They’re on a spiritual plateau that few aspire to or ever reach. Elijah is one such man.

He actually controlled the weather for three and a half years. He was supernaturally provided for by ravens and a widow lady for three and a half years. When he returned he called the prophets of Baal to Mount Carmel, had a contest as to which was the true God, Baal or Jehovah. He called fire down from heaven and

consumed the sacrifice, and when he asked God to cause the rain to return it did (1 Kings 17-18).

Shortly thereafter, Jezebel, enraged by what he had done and how he humiliated Ahab the king, threaten to take his life in revenge by the same time the next day. This same mighty man of God “went a day’s journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers” (1 Kings 19:4).

He was subject to the same passions we are. He had times of victory where he felt unstoppable. Then he also had times of doubt, despair, discouragement, and failure. After such a great victory he felt like giving up and just wanted to die. That should encourage us. If he had such power with God in prayer so can we. We too can touch heaven and see great things accomplished for the glory of God.

## Effectual Fervent Prayer

The English word fervent simply means “impassioned, forceful, passionate, heartfelt, powerful, and wholehearted.” The verse, as translated in the King James Version, seems to indicate that a passionate, wholehearted prayer will accomplish much, implying that a half-hearted prayer will not be as effective.

Effectual fervent is translated from a single Greek word, *energeo* (ἐνεργέω), a cousin to our word for energy. It conveys the idea of “energizing,” similar to an electrical current that brings energy to a circuit. This suggests a type of prayer that is “passionate, heartfelt, heated, persistent, energetic, and laborious.”

Pastor Chuck Smith tells of, when he was around five or six years old, he hurt himself and ask his mother to pray for him. She prayed and he was still hurting. He turned to his mom and said, “Pray again mom, but this time pray like you really mean it!” Effectual fervent prayer is praying like you really mean it.

Too frequently we don’t pray like we really mean it. “Lord, I’m asking You for this and if You want to answer my prayer that would be great. If You don’t want to, that’s

okay too.” Prayer like that isn’t praying like we really mean it. We’re to pray in faith really believing and expecting God to answer our prayer and grant our request.

**1 John 5:14-15** – “And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask any thing according to His will, He heareth us: And if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him.”

**Jeremiah 29:12-13** – “Then shall ye call upon Me, and ye shall go and pray unto Me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart.”

**Colossians 4:12** – “Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always laboring fervently for you in prayers.”

**Joel 2:12-13** – “Therefore also now, saith the Lord, turn ye even to Me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God.”

**Psalms 141:1-2** – “Lord, I cry unto thee: make haste unto me; give ear unto my voice, when I cry unto thee. Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.”

**Galatians 4:19** – “My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you.”

## Accomplishments of Fervent Prayer

1. **Fervent prayer ushers in revival.** John Knox saw such a tremendous move of God in Scotland but prior to it it was said that he agonized before God. He prayed, “Lord, give me Scotland or I die.” How bad do we really want what we’re praying for? Are we putting our entire soul into our prayers?

David Brainerd was a missionary to American Indians. He saw a revival break out and change an entire tribe. He had a lot going for him. David was engaged to

Jonathan Edwards daughter, Jerusha. He was young, he loved the Lord, He had a desire to see the unreached reached for Christ.

He would ride horseback for miles and miles no matter the weather. He slept on the ground. Often He would kneel in the snow and pray to the Lord. His fervor for the Indians' salvation and God's glory was so great that when He finished praying, the heat from His body had melted all of the snow within two feet of him in every direction.

**Acts 1:14** – “These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer.” The result was the outpouring of the Spirit on Pentecost where 3,000 were saved.

**Acts 3:1** – “Now Peter and John went up together into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour.” The result being a lame man was healed and another 2,000 people were saved.

2. **Fervent prayer brings a shaking from on high.** Oh how we desperately need a shaking in the church today! We need the Holy Ghost to shake the complacency out of us and set us on fire once again. Removing all that's not of God so that only He remains, both individually and corporately as the body of Christ.

**Acts 4:24** – “And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God.”

**Acts 4:31** – “And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the Word of God with boldness.”

**Hebrews 12:26-27** – “Whose voice then shook the earth: but now He hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.”

3. **Fervent prayer activates angels and sets captives free.** “Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church. And he killed James the

brother of John with the sword” (Acts 12:1-2). When he saw that it pleased the Jews he also arrested Peter. Peter was thrown in prison and chained with two guards by his side and two at the door.

**Acts 12:5** – “But prayer for him was being made fervently by the church to God.”

When the church gathers in fervent prayer captives are set free. Peter lay securely in prison and an angel appeared and struck him in his side and his chains fell off. The angel then led him out of the prison, out of the city gate, and he was freed. He proceeded to the house of Mary, Mark’s mother, “where many were gathered together praying” (Acts 12:12).

**2 Kings 6:16** – “Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.”

**Psalms 34:7** – “The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.”

**Hebrews 1:14** – “Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?”

4. **Fervent prayer emulates Jesus.** What better example can we mimic the the Lord Himself. In the days of His earthly dwelling among us He was a man of fervent prayer. In the Garden of Gethsemane, He prayed so fervently that He sweat great drops of blood from His brow (Luke 22:40-46).

**Hebrews 5:7** – “Who in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared.”

5. **Fervent prayer brings forth healing.** It heals both the afflicted and the sick. If we’re going to see people healed of all that ails them it will be through the fervent prayers of God’s people. Fervent praying can bring physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual healing into the lives of God’s people.

**James 5:16-18** – “Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”

It can also bring healing to the church. The church, particularly in America, is in need of a touch from on high. The body of Christ is sick and therefore not functioning as it ought. If we're going to see the church healed and brought back to life it is going to take His people laying hold of God in fervent prayer.

**Isaiah 64:7** – “And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee.”

Where are those of yesteryear who laid hold of God in fervent prayer? That generation has overall passed on to glory. God is looking for those who will cease playing church and will begin to lay hold of the horns of the altar again. He's searching for those who will not only lay hold of God themselves but call their people to do the same.

6. **Fervent prayer will usher in the latter rain.** I'm convinced that if we will really begin to seek the face of God in fervent prayer we'll see an outpouring of the Spirit of God the likes of which we have never imagined.

**James 5:17-18** – “Elijah was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.”

We are living in a parched land as during the three and a half years of Israel's drought. As in Elijah's time, God has caused it. He has caused it because we've drifted far from Him as Israel had done. He's caused it that we might turn back to Him again with all our heart and thirst for Him once more.

Just prior to prophesying of the latter day outpouring of the Holy Spirit, Joel called the leaders, the priests, and all of the people to seek the face of God. If we'll truly begin seeking the face of God with all our heart we'll see an outpouring of the Holy Ghost upon all flesh. “There is a sound of abundance of rain” (1 Kings 18:41)! If we seek God in fervent prayer we'll see the latter rain.

**Joel 2:16-17** – “Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet. Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar.”

**Joel 2:28-32** – “And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out My Spirit.”

Let's stop playing church and begin seeking the face of God in fervent prayer as in the days of old. If we do we'll see a mighty move of God in these last days.



# James 5:16-18 – Keys to Effective Praying

What are the secrets to an effective prayer life? James 5:16-18 says, “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Elijah was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain and it rained not on the earth by the space three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.”

**Watch the Message** (47 Minutes)

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If Elijah could pray that effectively, so can we. An effective prayer life makes a major difference in our lives. It filled Elijah with so much excitement that when he saw just a hint of rain, he outran Ahab all the way to Jezeel, with Ahab in his royal chariot and Elijah on foot. Seeing God miraculously answer our prayers fills us with such anointing, enthusiasm and zeal that we can outrun the best of the enemy's chariots.

## Keys to Effective Praying

1. **Our prayers must be divinely directed (1 Kings 18:36).** Elijah heard from God and prayed accordingly. “The word of the Lord came to Elijah” (1 Kings 18:1). And again, “Let it be known, I have done all these things at thy word” (1 Kings 18:36). Our first prayer should be directional. “God how do you want me to pray?” I'm convinced that if we would wait on direction from God first, seeking Him and as we receive word from Him, pray accordingly, we would have much more effective prayers. Prayer must depend on the Holy Spirit, be made in accordance with (Romans 8:26-27, 1 John 5:14-15) and the goal of seeing God's will implemented in the affairs of men on earth (Matthew 6:10).

2. **We must pray in the name of the Lord (James 5:14).** There is power in Jesus' name. So much so that God “Bestowed on Him a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the father” (Philippians 2:10-11). Praying in His name is not simply a blank check that we sign to get whatever we want. Praying in the name of the Lord Jesus means the following things:

a. **We receive power of attorney.** If you are given power of attorney over someone's estate, you are to use the assets for their purposes only. That said, you can use it however you choose. However, there will be a day when you will have to give an account as to how you used the funds. Likewise, there will be an accounting of how we used His name.

b. **We pray in God's will (1 John 5:14-15).** Praying in His name means we are praying for His purposes (will) to be implemented in the affairs of men (our affairs and life) on earth (Matthew 6:10).

c. **We pray in His merit (Romans 5:1-2, Hebrews 4:16).** When we come to Him, praying in His name, we come in His merit and not our own. We come in His righteousness, having been made worthy by His finished work on the cross for us (2 Corinthians 5:21).

d. **We pray for God's glory (John 14:13).** When praying in His name we should be praying for that which will bring Him glory. Judge what you are praying for and if it will bring God glory then you are praying rightly and if not don't pray for it.

3. **We must pray in faith (James 5:15, James 1:6-8).** Jesus said if we have faith we can move mountains (Mark 11:22-24). Below are a few things that will help strengthen your faith.

a. **Be divinely directed (1 John 5:14-15).** Elijah was filled with faith because he knew he was in God's will and acting according to His word.

b. **Read the Word (Romans 10:17).** Spending time reading the Bible builds and strengthens our faith.

c. **Meditate on the Word (Psalm 1:2-3 and Joshua 1:8).** We need more than a casual reading of scripture. We must spend time not only reading the Word, but meditating on it. This means we take a passage, verse or phrase and toss it over and over in our mind, letting it sink deep within our spirit. This will build and strengthen our faith.

d. **Use your imagination (John 5:17 and 19).** Visualize God doing what you're praying for and see it as completed. Jesus saw what the Father was doing in the spiritual realm before He did anything, and then acted accordingly. If we really believe something, our imagination will be stirred which will also stir our faith.

e. **Pray in the Spirit.** Jude said, “But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit” (Jude 20). Paul said, “Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints” (Ephesians 6:18).

4. **We must be bold (1 Kings 17:1, 18:44).** Elijah was bold in two ways:

a. He was confident in his declaration, and in what he believed God was going to do. Then he declared it.

b. He was bold in what he prayed for. He prayed that it wouldn’t rain until he said it would (1 Kings 17:1), he prayed expecting life to come back into the widow’s son (1 Kings 17:19-22), and, after a three and a half year drought, he dared believe God would make it rain again.

If we are afraid to exercise boldness in our prayer life, we will never experience great effects from our prayers. Psalms 81:10 says, “Open thy mouth wide and I will fill it.” George Mueller said this meant we should “open our mouth wide in big requests.”

5. **We must pray specifically.** There’s a difference between communing with God and asking God for things to be accomplished for His glory. Elijah needed to see something happen. He didn’t pray in general, “Lord do something to turn the people around.” He sought the mind of God, asked how He wanted to pray, then prayed exactly the way He said. If we are to pray effectively, we must be specific in what we are praying for.

6. **We must pray fervently (James 5:16-18).** Fervent means to “work hard at, hot, boiling over, to put all you have into your praying.” If you are ever in a really desperate place and need someone’s help, you won’t calmly say to them, “Would you mind helping me for a minute?” No, you’d raise your voice (scream) and say, “Help me now!”

The early church prayed fervently for Peter and God sent an angel and miraculously delivered him out of jail and from the hand of Herod (Acts 12:1-17). It was said of Jesus, “Who in the days of His flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplication with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death, and was heard in that He feared” (Hebrews 5:7). God told Isaiah, “Put me in remembrance; let us argue our case together; state your cause that you may

be proved right” (Isaiah 43:26). Let’s remind God of His Word and put all we have into our praying.

**7. We must be persistent (1 Kings 17:19-21, 18:41-44).** Whatever you’re praying for you must not loose heart and give up. True faith believes when we have prayed, we have already received what we have asked for (Mark 11:22-24) and goes on to continue to ask and remind God of our request until the answer to our request has materialized. A few scriptural examples of persistence in prayer:

- a. The widow’s son (1 Kings 17:19-21).
- b. Elijah praying for rain (1 Kings 18:41-44).
- c. The Syrophenician woman (Mark 7:24-30).
- d. Jacob (Genesis 32).
- e. A friend asking for bread at midnight (Luke 11:5-10).
- f. The widow and the unjust judge (Luke 18:1-8).

**8. We must pray with anticipation (1 Kings 18:41-45).** When Elijah began to pray for it to rain again, after being dry for three and a half years, he prayed with expectancy. He put his head between his legs and prayed. He then asked his servant if he saw anything. He said, “there is nothing”. He did this seven times, until after the seventh time the servant said, I see a cloud about the size of a man’s hand. When Elijah heard this, he knew the rain was on its way. Pray and keep praying in faith, looking for and expecting your answer, until it manifest itself.

**9. We must be righteous (James 5:16).** The blind man who had been healed said, “We know that God does not hear sinners” (John 9:31). Sin blocks our prayers from being heard and answered (Isaiah 59:1-2; Psalms 66:18). It’s extremely important to understand we have absolutely no righteousness of our own (Isaiah 64:6; Romans 3:23). The only righteousness we will ever have is imputed righteousness (2 Corinthians 5:21). That is why we need Jesus. He is the substitution for our sins. The moment we put our faith in Jesus as our only hope of salvation and the one who paid the penalty for our sins, we are declared righteous by God.

Jesus' righteousness is put to our account and we are righteous in God's sight. He sees us just as if we had never sinned. From that point on you can pray effectively as a righteous man or woman. We also should daily ask God to search our heart for anything that may not be right with Him and make it right by confessing it as sin (1 John 1:9). This should be done at the beginning of our prayer time. We should also ask God to show us anything that might be wrong between us and any other person. If there is anything, we should do our best to make things right with them as well. This assures there is nothing standing in the way of our praying effectively.

**Matthew 5:23-24** – “Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.”

If anyone has done us wrong or offended us in anyway, we must forgive them. “Whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him” (Mark 11:25). “Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother” (Matthew 18:15).

**Prayer:** Lord, help us to pray in an effective way as Elijah did, so as to make an impact on this world and see lives changed for Your glory and not merely my personal interest. In Jesus name. Amen!

# James 5:19-20 – If Any Err From the Truth

James ends his epistle by dealing with those who “err from the truth.” For those who know the truth, it’s incumbent upon them to convert those who are in error regarding the gospel and the doctrines of our Lord Jesus Christ. In so doing we “shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.”

**James 5:19-20** – “Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the err of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.”

**Watch the Message** (53 Minutes)

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## Err from the Truth

To err from the truth is a fearful place to be. James warns against straying from the truth and challenges those walking in the truth to make it their business to convert such a one and turn them back again. And thus, he “shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.”

### Three-fold application of the truth:

1. **Jesus is the truth.** The Lord Jesus is the source and embodiment of truth. Truth is found in Him and His words alone. To follow Jesus is to pursue truth.

**John 1:1 and 14** – “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”

**John 14:6** – “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.”

2. **The Word of God is truth.** Jesus was and is the incarnate and living Word. The Word of God is the revealed truth to mankind. When you study and read God's Word truth is made clear to us. When you walk in the Word you are walking in the truth.

**John 8:31-32** – “If you continue in My word, then are you My disciples indeed; And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

**John 17:17** – “Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth.”

3. **We must speak the truth.** We as followers of Christ must speak the truth. When we vocalize the Word we are speaking truth. “Thy Word is truth.” We must speak truth to one another.

**Ephesians 4:25** – “Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.”

**Ephesians 4:15** – “But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.”

## Converting the Sinner

The converting of sinners must be our goal. The turning from sin to a life of following Christ in spirit and truth. What a glorious ambition for every child of God. This must not be the vocation of paid clergy alone but each disciple of Jesus. God help those of the five-fold ministry and laity alike to be in the business of converting sinners to our Lord.

**Matthew 18:3** – “Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.”

**Acts 3:19** – “Repent ye therefore, and be converted (return), that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.”

### **Three-fold application:**

1. **The lost.** Those who are without Christ and don't know Him as their personal Lord and Savior. The lost are in error of the truth. They are not following Christ or His Word. They are separated from God and in need of Jesus.

The Bible has a lot to say about us winning souls to Christ. This is a part of the great commission and following Christ. Soul winning should be the passion of every born again believer. Their eternal destiny hangs in balance and we could be the deciding factor as to which way the scales tip.

**Matthew 28:19-20** – “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”

**Mark 16:15** – “And He said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.”

**Matthew 4:19** – “And He saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.”

**Acts 1:8** – “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me.”

**John 4:35** – “Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.”

**Luke 15:10** – “Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repents.”

**Luke 19:10** – “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.”



**Luke 5:31-32** – “Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”

This seems to indicate that much of our time should be invested in endeavoring to win those who know they are sinners and not those who think themselves to be righteous and good in themselves. This is because the “so called righteous” don’t think they have need of salvation. Our time is best invested in those who know they are in need. That said, we should be ready and equipped to win all lost individuals to Jesus.

**1 Peter 3:15** – “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you.”

**Romans 1:14-16** – “I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.”

**Acts 3:26** – “Unto you first God, having raised up His Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.”

**2. The backslider and wayward.** This has to do with those who know the truth but for whatever reason have fallen away and are no longer living for Christ. We are to do what we can to bring them back to Him.

This may also apply to those who have fallen out of fellowship. They were once active in a local body of believers (church) and for some reason have drifted away. This, of course, could be because they are a backslider. On the other hand, it may be the result of discouragement, despair, and difficulties of life. These must be brought back into the fold.

**Matthew 9:36-38** – “When He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith He unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth laborers into his harvest.”

**Matthew 18:12** – “How think ye? If a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?”

**Hebrews 5:1-4** – “For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins: Who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also is compassed with infirmity. And by reason hereof he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer for sins. And no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.”

This is particularly the duty of the shepherd. Pastors, you must be at the business of going after those who have fallen out of your church. If someone has missed a number of weeks in a row something is inevitably wrong. You don't know what they may be going through. You must leave the ninety and nine and go after the one that has strayed.

All too often people have stopped going to church and no one has so much as given them a call to see what's wrong. This should never be. This has all too frequently been the testimony of those who have stopped going to church. Pastors and church leaders have been derelict of their duties in this area. This must be repented of or God will deal with it.

3. **Those in doctrinal error.** This is the most dangerous of them all. Doctrinal error in little areas, may in time, lead to heresy. If at all possible these must be brought back around to the acknowledgment of the truth.

There are deceptive spirits that seek to lead men astray. Paul constantly warned against deception and wolves in sheep's clothing. This is particularly true in our day like never before. There's a lot of teaching and preaching that sounds good on the surface but if you really look at it closely, beneath the surface, you'll see something is drastically wrong.

**1 Timothy 4:1** – “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.”

Deception is best cloaked in truth. Err and deception is hidden when wrapped in just a little bit of truth. An out and out blatant lie is obvious. In order to get people to buy into a lie or falsehood it has to be disguised with an element of truth. God's Word warns...

**Acts 20:28-30** – “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.”

**2 Corinthians 11:3-4** – “But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ. For if one comes and preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted, you bear this beautifully.”

**2 Corinthians 11:13-15** – “For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds.”

**Galatians 1:6-9** – “I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.”

**Galatians 3:1-3** – “O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?”

**2 Timothy 4:2-5** – “I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, Who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom; Preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.”

**1 John 4:1-3** – “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.”

**2 John 7-11** – “For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.”

If we will consistently teach our people sound doctrine there would be fewer carried away by deception. Paul exhorted both Timothy and Titus to instruct the people in sound doctrine. There's plenty of good motivational and self-help messages in the church today but little teaching of the Word of God and instructing in sound doctrine. Paul exhorts...

**Hebrews 13:9** – “Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines.”

**Romans 16:17** – “Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.”

**Titus 2:1** – “But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine.”

**1 Timothy 4:13** – “Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

Reading has to do with the public reading of scripture (explaining and applying the Word), exhortation has to do with preaching, and then the teaching of doctrine. To leave out any of these three is to fail your people. Many churches today only have Sunday morning services which can make this task difficult.

The teaching of doctrine is imperative! Without this your people may be easily led astray. I suggest, for those who have limited time, you interject doctrine into your Sunday morning sermons. In most passages you preach from, there are treasures of doctrine to instruct your people in the fundamentals of the faith.

## Compel Them

We are not to simply give a polite invitation and leave it with them. We must compel mankind to turn to the truth of the gospel and accept Jesus as both Lord and Savior.

**Jude 23** – “And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.”

**Luke 14:23** – “And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that My house may be filled.”

**Ephesians 3:8-9** – “Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ.”

# Save a Soul From Death

What a promise and encouragement to go after the wayward, those who have fallen out of church, and those in doctrinal err. We can actually save a soul from death. Glory to God in the highest!

## Death is two-fold:

1. **Separation from God.** We have the distinct privilege of bringing people back into a relationship with God through the finished work of Christ on Calvary's cross. Mankind is at enmity with God separated by sin. Through the cross of Christ, His death, and the shedding of His blood for our sins reconciliation was made possible.

**1 Peter 3:18** – “Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.”

**1 John 1:1-3** – “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us; That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that you also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.”

**Romans 5:9-11** – “Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by Whom we have now received the reconciliation.”

**2 Corinthians 5:17-21** – “Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did

beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

**2. The second death – Hell itself.** The curse of sin was death and separation from God. It encompasses both physical and spiritual death, ultimately culminating in eternal separation from God in hell. God told Adam,

**Genesis 2:11** – "The tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eat thereof thou shalt surely die."

**Ezekiel 18:4** – "The soul that sinneth, it shall die."

**Romans 5:12** – "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

**Romans 6:23** – "For the wages of sin is death."

**Matthew 25:41** – "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

**2 Thessalonians 1:8-9** – "In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power."

**Revelation 20:14-15** – "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

**Hebrew 10:27** – "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" without Christ.

Jesus is man's only hope! Without Christ we are all doomed to eternal damnation. If you haven't trusted Jesus and His finished work on the cross for your sins, let me urge you to do so now. Faith in His shed blood on our behalf is the only remedy for our sin and its penalty.

**Hebrews 6:18** – Flee “for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us.”

**Hebrews 10:14** – “For by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.”

**Hebrews 13:12-13** – “Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach.”

**Romans 3:25-26** – “Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time His righteousness: that He might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.”

**1 Peter 1:18-20** – “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.”

**Ephesians 1:7** – “In Whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.”

## Cover a Multitude of Sins

Believers and followers of Jesus are to be about the business of hiding and covering sins and not exposing them. Too many in the church thrive on exposing. They say, “Hey, look what so and so did! I don't want to talk but... I'm telling you this so you can pray”...



**Galatians 6:1** – “Brethren, if a man is overtaken in a fault, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.”

**Proverbs 17:9** – “He that covereth a transgression seeketh love; but he that repeateth a matter separateth very friends.”

This was exemplified in the life of Noah. After the flood, he planted a vineyard, made wine, got drunk, then passed out naked in his tent.

**Genesis 9:22-23** – “Ham saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brothers. But Shem and Japheth took a garment and laid it upon both their shoulders and walked backward and covered the nakedness of their father and their faces were turned away, so that they did not see their father’s nakedness.”

Shem and Japheth were blessed by covering his sin while Ham was cursed (Genesis 9:24-27). If we want the blessing of God on our lives, we must follow the example of Shem and Japheth and cover the sins of our brothers and sisters instead of exposing them as Ham.

**1 Peter 4:8** – “Above all things have fervent charity (love) among yourselves: for charity (love) shall cover the multitude of sins.”

That’s what we must do ourselves but when we turn people from err and deception to the truth of the gospel we’re not just covering their sins but wiping them out. Through the forgiveness and cleansing power of the blood of Christ their sins are not just hidden but gone forever. His blood washes away all our sins and makes us white as snow.

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**Isaiah 1:18** – “Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”

**Psalms 103:2** – “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities.”

**Psalms 103:12** – “As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us.”

**Micah 7:19** – “He will turn again, He will have compassion upon us; He will subdue our iniquities; and Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.”

**Ephesians 1:7** – “In Whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.”

**1 John 1:7** – “But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

**1 Peter 1:18-19** – “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”

## Softly and Tenderly Jesus is Calling

Softly and tenderly Jesus is calling—  
Calling for you and for me;  
Patiently Jesus is waiting and watching—  
Watching for you and for me!  
Come home! come home!  
Ye who are weary, come home!  
Earnestly, tenderly, Jesus is calling,  
Calling, O sinner, come home!

Why should we tarry when Jesus is pleading—  
Pleading for you and for me?  
Why should we linger and heed not His mercies—  
Mercies for you and for me?

Time is now fleeting, the moments are passing—  
Passing from you and from me;

Shadows are gathering, death-beds are coming—  
Coming for you and for me!

Oh, for the wonderful love He has promised—  
Promised for you and for me!

Though we have sinned, He has mercy and pardon—  
Pardon for you and for me!

## About Ministrymaker

Originally formed as a church corporation in 1989, our organization developed into an online church planting, leadership training, and ministry support site in 2001. Ministrymaker Ministries provides training, mentoring, support, and restoration to men and women entering the ministry, starting a church, or wanting to expand an existing congregation. We help people from all walks of life become better preachers, teachers, and ministry leaders.

Ministrymaker Ministries has received a mandate from God to gather together leaders, ministers, and churches of like precious faith. The vehicle He has raised up for this gathering of leadership is [Ministrymaker Ministerial Fellowship](#). For more information, [watch this message](#) from Dr. Linton.

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## Our Philosophy

Ministrymaker Ministries is spirit-filled, charismatic, and trinitarian. We know this covers a wide range of churches, denominations, and movements. By this, we basically mean that we believe in the fullness of the Spirit and that all of the gifts and manifestations of the Holy Spirit are for today. Many take the position that the [fivefold ministry](#) (Ephesians 4:11) and the manifestations of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:7-11) passed away with the original twelve apostles and the completion of scripture. We believe all of the Bible and that these gifts are still present within the church.

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Our ministry is experientially and doctrinally balanced, rejecting most extremes. However, as with most extremes, there is usually an element of truth. The problem is with man, not with God, or what the Holy Spirit is wanting to emphasize. What typically happens is there is a move of the Holy Spirit in the church. People get excited and take the truth to a far extreme, which becomes error. When attempting to correct the error, they take it to the other extreme, which is also error. Biblical balance is usually found somewhere in the middle. Read our [statement of faith](#) to find out more about what we believe.

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## Learn More

Want more information about what we offer? Check out the pages below to learn how you can benefit from our ministry and outreach programs.

- [Ministrymaker Ministerial Fellowship](#)
  - [Ministrymaker University](#)
  - [Ministrymaker Contributors](#)
  - [Statement of Faith](#)
  - [Contact Us](#)
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## Become a Partner

Ministrymaker Ministries provides free tools, training, and resources to churches and ministry leaders around the world. If you've benefited from our ministry, would you consider making a donation? Whether a single gift or monthly pledge, all donations help equip people for the work of the ministry.

[Donate to Ministrymaker Ministries](#)

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