

SIMPLE STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES

THE EPSITLE OF JAMES

LEADER'S STUDY GUIDE



**Rembrandt van Rijn:
Saint James the Greater
1661**

DR. STANFORD E. MURRELL

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FAITH PROVEN BY WORKS

The General Epistle of James

Written: early date AD 45-49

Late date after AD 55

Key Word: Faith

Key Verse: James 2:20

“But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?”

JAMES 1

1 James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting.

1:1 James. The name James in the Hebrew is Jacob which means “*the supplanter*” or “*heel catcher*” or the “*one who trips up*.” The son of Isaac “*took his brother [Esau] by the heel in the womb*” (Hos. 12:3).

Jesus called two men named James or Jacob to be His disciples. There was James the son of Zebedee whose brother was John, and James the son of Alpheus, whose brother was Judas, not Iscariot. However, the author of this epistle was another James, the brother of Christ Himself according to the flesh (Gal. 1:19) for Mary and Joseph had other children after the birth of Christ (Matt. 12:46, 47; 13:55; Mark 3:31, 32; Luke 8:19, 20; 1 Cor. 9:5).

The brethren of Christ did not believe that Jesus was the Messiah until after His resurrection (John 7:5) when the Lord appeared to James (1 Cor. 15:7). James went on to become a leader at the church in Jerusalem (Acts 14:24; Gal. 2: 9, 24). And while he has known Christ after the flesh James humbly submits and refers to himself as a “*servant*” of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ.

1:1 to the twelve tribes. The concept finds support in this passage that the church is the true spiritual Israel of God and the true spiritual seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:7). There is nothing in this epistle that is distinct for any physical race or for any special period of time. Each statement finds fulfillment and application in the church.

2 My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers [various] temptations;

1:2. temptations. The word is *peirasmos* (*pi-ras-mos'*) and refers to putting something to a test for the purpose of approval. While there are many adversities the Christian will face, the proper Christian response is to be one of joy, or calm delight. This mental attitude can only be cultivated by the intake of *Bible* doctrine into the soul on a consistent basis which will then fortify the heart in the hour of concern.

3 Knowing *this*, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.

1:3 worketh patience. The divine intent of God in allowing adversity to come to the believer is to cultivate patience which is cheerful endurance and consistency.

4 But let patience have *her* perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

1:4 perfect. It is a tremendous spiritual victory when the heart no longer craves for the things of this world but only for God.

5 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.

1:5 lack wisdom. Knowing there is a spiritual need is only the first step to spiritual maturity. The next step is to ask God for the wisdom to pursue a right course of action through a difficult period. The promise is made that wisdom will be given.

6 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.

1:6 nothing wavering. The child of God is not to be given to constant change. *Proverbs 24:21* “*My son, fear thou the LORD and the king: and meddle not with them that are given to change.*” A person who careens from one course of action to another reveals a lack of inward stability and sense of divine control.

7 For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.

8 A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.

1:8 unstable. A person who is double minded is never sure of anything. First one doctrine is embraced and then another. One course of action is decided upon, and then another. In contrast, “*The meek will He teach His way*” (*Psa. 25:9*). Life is best lived with a sense of purpose and a definite direction.

9 Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted:

1:9 low degree. Salvation is a self-affirming theology because every person who comes to faith can rejoice, “*in that he is exalted.*” Christ has made us “*kings and priests unto God and his Father*” (Rev. 1:6). “*Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God*” (1 John 3:1).

10 But the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away.

11 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.

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.

1:12 crown of life. There are five crowns mentioned in Scripture, which are promised to God's people. They are referred to as prizes (I Cor. 9:24; Phil. 3:13, 14) to be won or lost (Rev. 3:11). They are described as crowns of gold (Rev. 4:4).

- **The Incorruptible Crown.** *1 Corinthians 9:25 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.*

This crown is given to those who are temperate in their Christian walk and do not indulge the natural appetites of the body, in order that they may faithfully preach the gospel to all men, whether Jew or Gentile, whereby at least some shall be saved (1 Cor. 9: 16-27).

- **The Crown of Rejoicing.** *1 Thessalonians 2:19 For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?*

This crown is bestowed upon those who win souls for Christ. Solomon said, “*He that winneth souls is wise*” (Prov. 11:30). Daniel wrote, “*they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever*” (Dan. 12:3).

“Sowing in the morning,
sowing seeds of kindness,
Sowing in the noon tide
and the dewy eve;

Waiting for the harvest,
and the time of reaping,
We shall come rejoicing,
bringing in the sheaves.”

- **The Crown of Glory.** *1 Peter 5:4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.* The Lord has promised a special crown to faithful pastors who have cared for the flock of God, not as lords but as overseers.
- **The Crown of Righteousness.** *2 Timothy 4:8 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.*

For those who love the appearing of Christ a crown is to be given. A word of warning should go out to many believers today seeking so-called signs of the time that the world is coming to an end. The heart can be redirected and misdirected to look for the appearance of the anti-Christ if care is not taken.

- **The Crown of Life.** *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.* *Revelation 2:10 Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.* The crown of life is reserved for those who pay the supreme price for the cause of the kingdom. *"They loved not their lives unto the death"* (Rev. 12:11). Stephen will receive this crown along with James, John, Peter, Paul, Huss, Tyndale, Latimer, Cranmer, and many others. There are many martyrs for the sake of Christ (Read *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*). The crown of life is not the same as the gift of life mentioned in John 4:10, John 5:24, Romans 6:23, and Ephesians 2:8. Eternal life is the free gift of God graciously bestowed upon all who believe in His Son. *"He that hath the Son hath life"* (1 John 5:11, 12). Those who have received the gift of eternal life through faith in Christ may also receive the crown of life as well insofar as they suffer for His cause and kingdom unto death.

13 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:

1:13 God cannot. God cannot cease to be unfaithful to His essence. Therein is the stability of the universe, the hope of the believer and the confidence of the creation in the Creator. God cannot lie, God cannot be tempted with evil nor can God tempt any one to do evil. The concept that God cannot be tempted has tremendous ramifications in the mystery of the Triune Godhead for many have long argued for the impeccability or sinlessness of Jesus Christ. Not only was Jesus able not to sin, Christ was not able to sin.

14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

1:14 James has spoken of temptation in the sense of testing for the purpose of approval, now he speaks of temptation in the sense of an inducement to sin. The origin of sin is found in various lust patterns such as sexual lust, approbation lust or power lust. While individuals do not like to accept personal responsibility for the evil they do “*every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust.*” There is no need to look for demonic oppression or possession in matters of sexual sins nor to the challenges of childhood. Out of the heart proceed “*evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: 20 These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashed hands defileth not a man*” (Matt 15:19-20).

15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

1:15 Once lust is allowed free reign in the soul through a conscious act of the will, a spiritual enslavement takes place which is stronger and more real than any rule of a physical tyrant. The heart is enticed or entrapped. This is followed by death. There is rational death whereby all exhortations to turn from evil are not heard. There is emotional death whereby the heart pursues a lust that the fires of hell cannot burn out. Emotional appeals to turn from sin are meaningless. There is no sensitivity left in the soul. There is spiritual death for no one can entertain God in the parlor of the heart while the devil is in the cellar. Any presumed abiding relationship with God is sterile and without holy passion.

16 Do not err, my beloved brethren.

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.

1:17 good gift. God has many gifts to bestow upon the believer, at least thirty four He gives at the moment of salvation.

1:17 Father of lights. In *Scripture* light is presented in contrast to darkness morally, spiritually and physically. God dwells in light. *Daniel 2:22 He [God] revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him.*

1:17. No variableness. There are many attributes about God. An attribute is something about God that is true. God is love. Love is an attribute of God. God is without variableness or change, which means He is immutable. Immutability is an attribute of God. The security of the believer and the stability of the universe rests on the divine attribute of God’s immutability. He is not capricious. He is not a man that is moved from moment to moment and from passion to passion. He is constant in His decrees and the outworking of His essence which is holy, just and good.

“Great is Thy faithfulness,
O God my Father;
There is no shadow
of turning with Thee;

Thou changest not,
Thy compassions,
they fail not;
As Thou hast been,
Thou forever will be

Great is Thy faithfulness!
Great is Thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see.

All I have needed
Thy hand hath provided;
Great is Thy faithfulness,
Lord, unto me!

Summer and winter
and springtime and harvest,
Sun, moon and stars
in their courses above

Join with all nature
in manifold witness
To Thy great faithfulness,
mercy and love.

Pardon for sin
and a peace that endureth
Thine own dear presence
to cheer and to guide;

Strength for today
and bright hope for tomorrow,
Blessings all mine,
with ten thousand beside!”

18 Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

1:18 His own will. While many individuals contend that the “*free will*” is the determining factor in salvation the *Scriptures* exalt the free grace of God and the sovereign will of the Creator over the creation.

19 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:

1:19 wherefore. Knowledge of God’s attributes is intended to produce a specific response in the life of the believer. The Christian is to be quick to listen, slow to speak and even more slow to getting anger.

20 For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

21 Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity [superabundance] of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.

1:21 filthiness. *rhuparia* (*hroo-par-ee'-ah*); dirtiness (morally). There are many commandments for Christians throughout the *New Testament* for the believer is not lawless. The believer operates under the highest moral law there is, the law of the life of the Spirit in Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:2). Therefore, as a person would lay aside soiled or filthy garments so the Christian is to take off and lay aside any moral dirtiness the Spirit exposes.

1:21 naughtiness. *kakia* (*kak-ee'-ah*); badness, i.e. (subjectively) depravity, or (actively) malignity, or (passively) trouble.

1:21 and receive. While moral dirtiness is to be laid aside along with acts of moral depravity, in a positive manner the Word of God is to be received with meekness, for by the Word the soul will be saved not only from eternal spiritual death but also from operational death as the heart is sanctified unto holiness. The Word of God is engrafted into the heart when it is received by faith, believed and acted upon.

“More love to Thee,
O Christ, more love to Thee!
Hear Thou the prayer I make
on bended knee.

This is my earnest plea:
More love, O Christ, to Thee;
More love to Thee, more love to Thee!

Once earthly joy I craved,
sought peace and rest;
Now Thee alone I seek,
give what is best.

This all my prayer shall be:
More love, O Christ to Thee;
More love to Thee, more love to Thee!

Let sorrow do its work,
come grief or pain;
Sweet are Thy messengers,
sweet their refrain,

When they can sing with me:
More love, O Christ, to Thee;
More love to Thee, more love to Thee!

Then shall my latest breath
whisper Thy praise;
This be the parting cry
my heart shall raise;

This still its prayer shall be:
More love, O Christ to Thee;
More love to Thee, more love to Thee!

The Story Behind the Song

In 1856 Elizabeth P. Prentiss wrote these words during a period of illness, but kept them to herself. When she showed them to her husband 13 years later, he encouraged her to publish them. Howard Doane saw the resulting pamphlet, and wrote music for the words.

22 But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

1:22 deceiving your own selves. One of the great debates that rages in Christendom is whether or not a person who is truly born of God can ever be lost. While those who argue for the security of the believer stand on solid scriptural ground (John 6:37) there can be an abuse of the doctrine of eternal security by careless understanding of the gospel. Simply put, many who claim to be born again are self-deceived. Self-deception takes place when the soul says to itself, *“It does not matter how I live. I have trusted Christ as Savior and that is all that matters.”* By such shallow reasoning a sense of freedom is found to live in known sin and practice evil without any qualms in the conscience. Such a person may be a hearer of the Word of God but is not a doer of the same and so is in danger of eternal damnation.

Self-deception will be no basis for escaping judgment. Eve was deceived and yet she was judged severely for her actions (1 Tim. 2:14; Gen. 3:6, 16).

23 For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass:

24 For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.

2:23-24 forgetteth. Once a person looks in the mirror to see if everything desired is in proper order the mirror is laid down and a person moves on to other matters. Spiritually, it is possible for a professing Christian to forget to whom He belongs and what he is suppose to be, a Christian who acts like Christ. When a person forgets to act like a Christian consistently there is a valid question whether or not conversion has taken place for only a doer of God's will shall be blessed.

25 But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth *therein*, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

1:25 the perfect law. The perfect law is probably a reference to the completed cannon of *Scripture* or "*the Word*." Certainly the whole *Bible* consisting of the *Old* and *New Testaments* contains the wisdom of God to mankind. James calls "*the Word*" of verse 23 the "*perfect law of liberty*" which indicates there is a grand principle that governs the Christian life which is in contrast to the law of bondage that seeks to rule the soul. This law of bondage is called the law of sin and is personified in Romans 7. What does God expect? God expects individuals to study His Word and then obey regardless of how they feel but with this understanding. True freedom or perfect liberty is found in gospel obedience. Sin brings not only shame but also bondage to the soul. In *Alice in Wonderland*, Alice asked the Cheshire Cat, "*Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?*" The Cat answered, "*That depends a good deal on where you want to get to.*" Our moral decisions depend on where we want to go. If we want to get to heaven then the word of God must be obeyed.

26 If any man among you seem to be religious [with outward forms and ceremonies], and brideth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain [empty].

On a windswept hill in an English country churchyard stands a drab, gray slate tombstone. The quaint stone bears an epitaph not easily seen unless you stoop over and look closely. The faint etchings read:

“Beneath this stone, a lump of clay,
lies Arabella Young,
Who on the twenty-fourth of May,
began to hold her tongue.”

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.

1:25-27. There are several signs of salvation provided in this passage.

- A person who is a Christian will look into the perfect law of liberty. There will be a natural love for the Bible.
- A person who is a Christian will remember and not forget what the Bible has to say about moral matters.
- A person who is a Christian will be a doer of the work of God.
- A person who is a Christian will be blessed in the work entrusted to him.
- A person who is a Christian will control his tongue.
- A person who is a Christian will have a tender heart reflected in part by visiting others in time of affliction or sorrow.
- A person who is a Christian will be characterized by a personal life of holiness.

Leader's Study Guide

Questions on James 1

1. What is significant about the salutation, “*to the twelve tribes scattered abroad*”?

Answer.

The reference to the “*twelve tribes*” indicates the true church is the spiritual Israel of God for “*not all Israel is Israel*” (Rom. 9:6) but only those who have the faith of Abraham are the children of God (Gal. 3:7).

2. In the discussion about the will of man in salvation what is important about James 1:18?

Answer.

The *Bible* teaches that the determining factor in salvation is not based on the will of man but on the will of God. *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.*

3. List the five crowns that Christians can receive.

Answer.

• Incorruptible Crown	<i>1 Corinthians 9:25</i>
• Crown of Rejoicing	<i>1 Thessalonians 2:19</i>
• Crown of Glory	<i>1 Peter 5:4</i>
• Crown of Righteousness	<i>2 Timothy 4:8</i>
• Crown of Life	<i>James 1:12</i>

4. List the three stages of the progression of temptation.

Answer.

Lust, lust acted upon, death.

5. What is meant by the impeccability of Christ?

Answer.

Not only was Christ able not to sin, Jesus was not able to sin. There was nothing in the character of Christ that sin could touch.

Personal Application and Reflection

1. Knowing the passions that rage in the heart what practical steps can the believer take to mortify the flesh?
2. In judgment day honesty, write out one paragraph at least stating why you are or are not a religious hypocrite in the sight of God.
3. What signs of salvation can you point to in your life indicating that you are converted? Please list these signs on a sheet of paper.
4. Answer "Yes" or "No." Do you struggle with anger? If so what are you doing to put off wrath?
5. Is your religion pure and undefiled? When was the last time you visited the hospital or a widow or looked after an orphan or some one's need? Be as specific as possible.

Memory Work

James 1:5 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.

Leader's Supplemental Material

Doctrine of Patience

1. In times of economic distress individuals often plead for patience in repaying the loan.
 - *Matthew 18:26 The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.*
2. Spiritual fruit can only come forth with the passage of time and patience provided the soul soil is good and receives the Word. Weeds and flowers may spring up overnight for a mighty oak takes a long time to produce.
 - *Luke 8:15 But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.*

"No great thing is created suddenly, any more than a bunch of grapes or a fig. If you tell me that you desire a fig, I answer you that there must be time. Let it first blossom, then bear fruit, then ripen." Epictetus

3. Souls are lost, people are injured, harsh words are spoken, poor judgments are rendered sometimes even health is jeopardized in the presence of impatience. A French proverb says, *"Laziness is often mistaken for patience."*

Perhaps the opposite is also true, patience is often mistaken for laziness. A mother once chided her doctor, when her daughter was ill and she was worried. *"Why don't you do something?"* she asked. *"I am doing something,"* replied the doctor. *"I am waiting."* Many of us have trouble determining when we are being patient and when we are being lazy.

- *Luke 21:19 In your patience possess ye your souls.*

4. Both Paul and James taught that tribulation or adversity worketh the Christian virtue of patience or calm endurance.

- *Romans 5:3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience.*
- *James 1:3 Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.*

5. From the root of patience comes the fruit of patience.

- Experience is a fruit of patience. *Romans 5:4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope:*
- Hope is a fruit of patience. *Romans 15:4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.*
- Worthiness to serve as a minister is a fruit of patience. *2 Corinthians 6:4 But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, 2 Corinthians 12:12 Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.*
- Reflected glory is a fruit of patience. *2 Thessalonians 1:4 So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure.*
- Receiving the promise of eternal life is a fruit of patience. *Hebrews 10:36 For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.*
- Coming to a place in the Christian life where nothing is wanted for nothing is lacking is a fruit of patience. *James 1:4 But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.*
- Happiness is a fruit of patience. *James 5:11 Behold, we count them happy which endure.*

6. Patience is an attribute of God that is to be manifested toward others according to the will of the Lord.

- *Romans 15:5 Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus:*

Benjamin Franklin said, "He that can have patience can have what he will."

7. Only the power of the resurrected Christ can strengthen or fortify the soul with divine patience.

- *Colossians 1:11 Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness;*

8. When the virtue of patience is displayed it is remembered and commented upon.

- *1 Thessalonians 1:3 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;*

9. While fleeing from specific forms of evil such as covetousness the believer is to seek hard after patience.

- *1 Timothy 6:9 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. 10 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. 11 But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.*

Holiness itself takes time and effort. Along the Danube River in Austria, on top of a prominent hill, sits the famous Weissenkirk. There are 365 steps leading from the valley below up to the church. There is one step for every day in a year! So for us there may be many steps before we reach our spiritual goals. We must not get discouraged. We must take one step at a time.

10. It is not wrong to evaluate self and even offer self as a role model in spiritual virtues as Paul did, provided there is genuine integrity in the soul.

- *2 Timothy 3:10 But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience,*

11. The church is to teach Christian men how to be mature in patience.

- *Titus 2:2 That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience.*

12. Christian exhortation is sometimes needed to remain faithful, as others have been faithful. We need to follow the example of believers who have gone before.

- *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.*
- *Hebrews 12:1 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 the race that is set before us,*

13. The Christian must be like a farmer waiting on a crop.

- *James 5:7 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.*

In Young and Drake's famous comic strip "Blondie," a man is standing in front of Dagwood's door saying, "*I'm accepting political contributions.*" Dagwood replies, "*Well, I'd have to know what you stand for first.*" The man answers, "*If the contribution is large enough, I can stand for just about anything.*" Certainly, we must have convictions that we will not give up for any price, but we may take the phrase in a far different sense and say that God's grace can give us patience to endure, to stand for just about anything.

14. We often speak of the patience of Job. We ought also to speak of the patience of Jesus. We see his patience with the disciples when we read the gospels. We see his patience with us when we think about our lives. The apostle Peter calls it "*the long-suffering of God*" (2 Peter 3:15).

- *James 5:11 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.*

The patience of Job reminds us that spiritual lessons are not always easily learned or understood. Charles Kingsley wrote, "*Therefore let us be patient; and let God our father teach his own lesson in his own way. Let us try to learn it well and quickly; but do not let us fancy that he will ring the school bell, and send us out to play before our lesson is learnt.*"

15. Virtue after virtue is to be added to the Christian character.

- *2 Peter 1:6 And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness.*

16. In times of adversity the believer is not alone.

- *Revelation 1:9 I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.*

17. The resurrected Lord knows intimately the lives of the saints. He knows the areas of weakness and He knows the areas of strength.

- *Revelation 2:2 I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars:*
- *Revelation 2:19 I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first.*

18. The Lord speaks with favor for those who have calmly endured hardships for His cause.

- *Revelation 2:3 And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted.*
- *Revelation 3:10 Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.*

19. Christ will honor those who have honored Him.

- *Revelation 14:12 Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.*

Do not be discouraged. Often time must pass before honor can be bestowed. In 1917, Irving Berlin wrote a song for a musical intended to boost morale during World War I. It was cut from the show. It did not appear in the musical made for the show. Twenty years later, Kate Smith asked Berlin for a patriotic song. He opened a trunk and dusted off "God Bless America."

Doctrine of the Impeccability of Jesus Christ

The Sinlessness of Christ

1. In the year 451 AD the Council of Chalcedon met and formulated the faith of the Church respecting the person of Christ, and declared Him, *"to be acknowledged in two natures, inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably; the distinction of the natures being in no wise taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one Person and one Subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons."*
2. The great truth enunciated is that the eternal Son of God took upon Himself our humanity, and not that the man Jesus acquired divinity.
3. Fierce controversy has raged around the subject, *"Did the Lord's deity render sin impossible, and consequently make His temptations unreal?"* The following argument is set forth:

4. If, to Christ, sin was impossible then His temptation by Satan was a meaningless display, and His victory a mere delusion, and His coronation (Phil. 2:6) a shadow.
 - *Philippians 2:6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:*
5. One charitable answer to this thorny problem is—"We may say it was impossible Jesus would sin. We dare not say it was impossible He could not sin."
6. While this response would please many, for others it does not due justice to either the Scriptures or to the person of Christ.
7. It is a matter of record that once the concept is embraced that Jesus could sin, the temptation comes to teach and believe that He did sin.
8. Historically, the church has argued that Jesus was free, both from hereditary depravity, and from actual sin. This is shown:
 - by His never offering a sacrifice and by His never praying for forgiveness. Jesus frequently went up to the Temple, but He never offered a sacrifice. He prayed, "*Father, forgive them*" (Luke 23:34); but He never prayed: "*Father, forgive me.*"
 - by His teaching that all but He needed the new birth He said: "*Ye must be born anew*" (*John 3:7*); but the words indicated that He had no such need. Jesus not only yielded to God's will when made known to him, but he sought it: "*I seek not mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me*" (*John 5:30*). It was not personal experience of sin, but perfect resistance to it that made Jesus fit to deliver us from it.
 - by His challenging all to convict Him of a single sin.

Luke 1:35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

John 8:46 Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?

John 14:30 Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.

There was not the slightest evil inclination upon which His temptations could lay hold.

7. But if in Christ there was no sin, or tendency to sin, how could He be tempted?

8. The answer is that Jesus was tempted in the same way that Adam was tempted which is susceptibility to all the forms of innocent desire. To these desires temptations may appeal. Sin consists, not in these desires, but in the gratification of them out of God's order, and contrary to God's will. So Satan appealed to our Lord's desire for food, for applause, and for power (Matt. 4:1-11). All temptation must be addressed either to desire or fear; so Christ "*was in all points tempted like as we are*" (Heb. 4:15).

The first temptation, in the wilderness, was addressed to desire; the second, in the garden, was addressed to fear. Satan, after the first, "*departed from him for a season*" (Luke 4:13); but He returned, in Gethsemane—"the prince of the world cometh: and he hath nothing in me" (John 4:30)--if possible to deter Jesus from His work, by rousing within Him vast and agonizing fear with which His holy soul was moved, He was "*without sin*" (Heb. 4:15).

9. To press the point of the impeccability of Christ more closely, we ascribe to Christ not only natural, but also moral, integrity or moral perfection, that is sinlessness. This means not merely that Christ could avoid sinning, and did actually avoid it, but also that it was impossible for Him to sin because of the essential bond between the human and the divine natures.

10. The sinlessness of Christ is clearly testified to in the following passages:

- *Luke 1:35. And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.*
- *John 8:46. Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?*
- *John 14:30. Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.*
- *2 Cor. 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.*
- *Heb. 4:15. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.*
- *Heb. 9:14. How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?*
- *1 Pet. 2:22. Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:*
- *1 John 3:5. And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.*

11. While Christ was made to be sin judicially, yet ethically He was free from both hereditary depravity and actual sin.
12. Part of the problem for those who do not embrace the impeccability of Christ is the tendency to believe that Jesus is but a man; yet there is at the same time they feel the constraint to ascribe to Him the value of a God, or to claim divinity for Him in virtue of the immanence of God in Him, or of the indwelling Holy Spirit. Again, this does not do justice to the truth of the two natures in Christ: He is both Divine and Human in one Person forever.

**Thirty-four Gifts of Divine Grace
Given to Every Believer
at the moment of Salvation**

The moment a person accepts Jesus Christ as personal Saviour, God the Father bestows thirty-four unconditional gifts of divine grace. These gifts of grace take the form of promises, privileges, positions, spiritual endowments and mental certainties. When understood and received by faith they become precious to the soul. But first, a person must be saved. Salvation comes to the soul through faith in Jesus Christ. The *Word of God* says, “*He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him*” (John 3:36). If you have never received Christ as your personal Lord and Savior, why not call upon Him right now for whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved (Rom. 10:13).

Thirty-four Gifts of Divine Grace

1. AT THE MOMENT OF SALVATION THE SINS OF A PERSON ARE FORGIVEN—PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE.
 - *Ephesians 1:7 In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.*
 - *Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*
2. AT THE MOMENT OF SALVATION THE ABSOLUTE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF CHRIST IS IMPUTED [CHARGED OR CREDITED] TO THE ACCOUNT OF THE BELIEVER.
 - *Rom 4:24 But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; 25 Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.*
 - *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.*

3. AT THE MOMENT OF SALVATION THE GIFT OF ETERNAL LIFE IS GIVEN.

- *1 John 5:11, 12 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.*

4. AT THE MOMENT OF SALVATION AN HEIRSHIP IS ASSURED.

- *Ephesians 1:14, 18, [The Holy Spirit] is the earnest [down payment] of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory.” “The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints.*
- *Titus 3:7 That being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*

5. AT THE MOMENT OF SALVATION THE BELIEVER BECOMES A PRIEST IN THE SIGHT OF GOD.

- *1 Peter 2:5, 9 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priest-hood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.” “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.*
- *Revelation 1:6 And hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*

6. AT THE MOMENT OF SALVATION THE BELIEVER IS PROMISED TO BE TRANSFORMED INTO THE IMAGE 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.*

7. AT THE MOMENT OF SALVATION THE BELIEVER IS ASSURED OF HAVING BEEN REDEEMED.

- *Ephesians 1:7 In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.*
- *Romans 3:24 Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.*

8. AT THE MOMENT OF SALVATION EVERY BELIEVER IS MADE A CHILD OF GOD.

- *Galatians 3:26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.*

- *John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His Name.*

9. AT THE MOMENT OF SALVATION EVERY BELIEVER IS RECONCILED TO GOD.

- *Ephesians 2:16 And that He might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.*

10. AT THE MOMENT OF SALVATION EVERY BELIEVER IS JUSTIFIED [DECLARED RIGHTEOUS] IN GOD'S SIGHT.

- *Romans 5:1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*
- *Romans 3:24 Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.*
- *Romans 4:5, "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."*
- *Romans 8:30 Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified.*

11. AT THE MOMENT OF SALVATION EVERY BELIEVER IS SET APART FROM THE WORLD AND THE CHILDREN OF SATAN IN ORDER TO BE SANCTIFIED AND FIT FOR SPIRITUAL SERVICE.

- *1 Corinthians 1:2, 30, Unto the Church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours.*
- *2 Thessalonians 2:13 But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:*

12. AT THE MOMENT OF SALVATION EVERY BELIEVER IS TRANSFERRED OUT OF THE KINGDOM OF DARKNESS INTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

- *Colossians 1:13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son.*
- *Ephesians 2:6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.*
- *2 Peter 1:11 For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*

- *1 Thessalonians 2:12 That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto His kingdom and glory.*

13. PRIOR TO THE MOMENT OF SALVATION THE BELIEVER IS REGENERATED BY GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT IN ORDER TO HAVE CAPACITY TO BELIEVE WHEN THE GOSPEL IS PRESENTED.

- *John 3:5 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.*

14. AT THE MOMENT OF SALVATION GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT BAPTIZES EVERY BELIEVER INTO THE BODY OF CHRIST.

- *1 Corinthians 12:13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.*

15. AT THE MOMENT OF SALVATION GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT ENTERS INTO THE SOUL TO DWELL.

- *John 16:7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.*
- *Romans 8:9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.*
- *Ephesians 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man.*

16. AT THE MOMENT OF SALVATION GOD THE SON BEGINS TO INDWELL THE SOUL.

- *John 14:20 At that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you.*
- *Galatians 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.*
- *Romans 8:10 And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.*
- *1 John 4:4 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.*

17. AT THE MOMENT OF SALVATION GOD SEALS EVERY BELIEVER BY THE HOLY SPIRIT THEREBY ASSURING THE SOUL OF ETERNAL LIFE.

- *Ephesians 1:13 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the Word of Truth, the Gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise.*
- *Ephesians 4:30 And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.*
- *2 Corinthians 1:22 Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.*

18. AT THE MOMENT OF SALVATION THE ELECTION OF THE BELIEVER IS MADE CERTAIN.

- *Ephesians 2:10, 20 For we are His work-manship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*
- *1 Thessalonians 1:4 Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God.*
- *1 Peter 1:2 Elect according to the fore-knowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.*
- *Romans 8:33 "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.*

19. AT THE MOMENT OF SALVATION THE WRATH OF GOD IS PROPITIATED OR SATISFIED.

- *1 John 2:2 And He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.*

20. AT THE MOMENT OF SALVATION EVERY BELIEVER IS GIVEN THE PRIVILEGE OF AN IMMEDIATE ACCESS TO GOD.

- *Ephesians 2:13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.*
- *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.*
- *Hebrews 10:22, Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.*

21. AT THE MOMENT OF SALVATION EVERY BELIEVER IS DECLARED TO BE FREE FROM THE PENALTY OF THE LAW.

- *Ephesians 2:15 Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace*
- *Galatians 3:25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.*
- *Romans 7:4, 6 Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God...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.*

22. AT THE MOMENT OF SALVATION EVERY BELIEVER IS SET FREE FROM THE POWER AND DOMINION OF THE RULER OF DARKNESS.

- *Ephesians 2:2-6 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love where-with He loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved ;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.*
- *Colossians 1:13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son.*
- *Colossians 2:13-15, "And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.*

23. AT THE MOMENT OF SALVATION EVERY BELIEVER IS PLACED UPON A SURE FOUNDATION FOR THEIR FAITH AND SECURITY. THAT SURE FOUNDATION IS CHRIST JESUS.

- *Ephesians 2:20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief Corner stone.*
- *1 Corinthians 3:11 For other Foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*
- *2 Corinthians 1:21 Now He which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God.*

24. AT THE MOMENT OF SALVATION EVERY BELIEVER IS GIVEN AS A GRACE GIFT FROM GOD THE FATHER TO GOD THE SON.

- *John 17:6, 11, 12 I have manifested Thy Name unto the men which Thou gavest Me out of the world: Thine they were, and Thou gavest them Me; and they have kept Thy Word" "And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to Thee. Holy Father, keep through Thine own Name those whom Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, as We are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Thy Name: those that Thou gavest Me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the Scripture might be fulfilled.*
- *John 17:20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word.*

25. AT THE MOMENT OF SALVATION EVERY BELIEVER IS MADE A UNIQUE POSSESSION OF GOD TO BE PROTECTED BY HIM.

- *Ephesians 1:14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory.*
- *1 Peter 2:9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people [unique possession]; that ye should shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.*
- *Titus 2:14 Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*

26. AT THE MOMENT OF SALVATION THE BELIEVER IS GIVEN AN EASY ACCESS TO GOD.

- *Ephesians 2:18 For through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.*
- *Romans 5:2 By Whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*
- *Hebrews 4:14-16, Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*
- *Hebrews 10:19, 20 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, 5 34 Things That God Wants to Give You which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh.*

27. AT THE MOMENT OF SALVATION EVERY BELIEVER IS GIVEN ASSURANCE OF HAVING A HEAVENLY CITIZENSHIP.

- *Ephesians 2:19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God.*
- *Hebrews 12:22 But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels.*
- *Philippians 3:20 For our conversation is in Heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.*

28. AT THE MOMENT OF SALVATION EVERY BELIEVER IS PLACED INTO THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD.

- *Galatians 6:10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.*
- *Matthew 12:48 But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? And who are my brethren? 49 And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! 50 For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.*

29. AT THE MOMENT OF SALVATION EVERY BELIEVER IS MADE A SPIRITUAL LIGHT IN THE LORD FOR THE WORLD.

- *Matthew 5:14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.*
- *Ephesians 5:8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light.*

30. AT THE MOMENT OF SALVATION THE BELIEVER IS MADE COMPLETE IN CHRIST SO THERE IS NOTHING THAT HE CAN ADD TO HIS OWN SALVATION.

- *Colossians 2:10 And ye are complete in Him, which is the Head of all principality and power.*

31. THERE IS GLORY IN BEING SAVED. AT THE MOMENT OF SALVATION EVERY BELIEVER IS GLORIFIED BY VIRTUE OF BEING IDENTIFIED WITH CHRIST.

- *Matthew 10:32 Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.*
- *Ephesians 2:6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.*

- *Romans 8:30 Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified.*

32. AT THE MOMENT OF SALVATION THE ELECTION IS CONFIRMED OF THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN CHOSEN BY CHRIST TO BE WITH HIM FOREVER.

- *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.*
- *John 15:19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.*
- *John 6:44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.*
- *Ephesians 1:4 According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love.*

33. AT THE MOMENT OF SALVATION THE PREDETERMINED DESTINY OF EVERY BELIEVER FOR SALVATION IS REALIZED.

- *Ephesians 1:5, 11 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will.” “In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will.*

34. AT THE MOMENT OF SALVATION EVERY BELIEVER IS MADE A KING TO RULE AND REIGN WITH CHRIST. THE ELECT JUDGE SIN, SATAN AND THE FALLEN ANGELS.

- *Revelation 1:6, “And hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*

The believer is to judge sin in self.

- *1 Corinthians 11:31 For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.*

The believer is to judge sin in the church.

- *1 Corinthians 5:11 But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. 12 For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? Do not ye judge them that are within? 13 But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person.*

The believer is to judge sin in the world.

- *John 7:24 Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.*
- *1 Corinthians 6:2 Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? And if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?*

The believer will one day help to judge the angels.

- *1 Corinthians 6:3 Know ye not that we shall judge angels? How much more things that pertain to this life?*

Here are thirty-four miracles of divine mercy that every believer receives at the moment of salvation. They are listed so that none will despise the “*riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering.*” Rather, let individuals be led to repentance and faith (Rom. 2:4).

Concerning these gifts of divine grace it should be noted that they are given at once at the moment of salvation. However, believers can only know of them through a study of the *Scriptures*. Therefore, “*Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth*” (2 Tim. 2:15). Once a person has received the gift of salvation and all the blessings associated with redemption, nothing shall ever be taken back by God. “*Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it*” (1 Thess. 5:24). The gifts of God are eternal in nature for they are not mingled in any way with human works. Now let the Church give thanks unto God for his unspeakable gift(s) of His sovereign grace (2 Cor. 9:15).

Doctrine of Wrath (Anger)

1. The word “*anger*” means literally “*to breathe hard.*”
2. Anger is a God given emotion to be used righteously.
 - *Ephesians 4:26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:*
 - *John 7:24 Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.*
2. Some anger is justified.
 - God the Father is angry with presumptuous sinning. *Psalms 7:11 God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day.*
 - God the Son is angry at the hardness of the human heart. *Mark 3:5 And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other.*

- Moses was angry at the constant complaining of the children of Israel. *Num 20:11-12 And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also. 12 And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them.*

3. Most anger is not productive. It does no good.

- Wives are not to provoke their husbands. *1 Peter 3:1-6 Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; 2 While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. 3 Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; 4 But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. 5 For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: 6 Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement.*
- Husbands are not to provoke their wives. *1 Peter 3:7 Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.*
- Parents are not to provoke their children. *Colossians 3:21 Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.*
- Employers are to treat their employees fairly and not provoke them. *Eph 6:9 And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.*
- Christians are not to provoke one another to anger through competition. *Gal 5:26 Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.*

4. Anger expresses itself in inappropriate actions or words.

- Physical violence
- Libel, which is writing something down which is not true with the intent to hurt someone's livelihood or reputation
- Slander, which is unspoken truth or embellishment of the reason for one's anger
- Maligning or taking the opportunity to let many others know what has been said or done
- Railing (venting)

5. In the life of the believer illegitimate anger is to be put away
 - *Ephesians 4:26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:*
 - *Ephesians 4:31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:*
6. One reason Christians should seek to put away anger is a desire to reflect the divine attribute of patience and grace.
 - *Psalms 103:8 The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.*
7. A person who is patient with others can make strife to cease.
 - *Proverbs 15:18 A wrathful man stirreth up strife: but he that is slow to anger appeaseth strife.*
8. The ability to control one's emotions is considered to be of greater value than a military victory.
 - *Proverbs 16:32 He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.*
9. No one has to get angry. Anger is a matter of the will.
 - *Proverbs 19:11 The discretion of a man deferreth his anger; and it is his glory to pass over a transgression.*
10. Angry people do not make good friends.
 - *Proverbs 22:24 Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go:*
11. The sin of anger leads to other sins.
 - *Proverbs 29:22 An angry man stirreth up strife, and a furious man aboundeth in transgression.*
12. An angry person is a foolish person.
 - *Ecclesiastes 7:9 Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools.*

13. It is foolish to make others angry.

- *Proverbs 20:2 The fear of a king is as the roaring of a lion: whoso provoketh him to anger sinneth against his own soul.*

14. Most anger is unjustified.

- The anger of Cain was unjustified. *1 John 3:12 Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.*
- The anger of James and John was unjustified. *Luke 9:54 And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?*
- The anger of the Apostle Paul against Barnabas was unjustified.
- *Acts 15:39 And the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other: and so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus.*
- The anger of Jonah against God for sparing the citizens of Nineveh was unjustified. *Jonah 4:4 Then said the LORD, Doest thou well to be angry?*

15. The stubborn heart will justify anger.

- *Jonah 4:9 And God said to Jonah, Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd? And he said, I do well to be angry, even unto death.*

16. Those who do not put away unlawful anger are in danger of eternal judgment.

- *Matthew 5:22 But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.*

17. One of the qualifications for useful spiritual service is to have a temperament that is void of excessive anger.

- *Titus 1:7 For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;*

18. God's anger can be deferred.

- *Isaiah 48:9 For my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off.*

19. The anger of the Lord is treasured up against the ungodly.

- *2 Peter 3:7 But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the Day of Judgment and perdition of ungodly men.*

20. God's anger is turned away by repentance

- *Jeremiah 3:12 Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and say, Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the LORD; and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you: for I am merciful, saith the LORD, and I will not keep anger for ever.*

21. The anger of man is turned away by a soft answer and by doing something in secret for someone.

- *Proverbs 15:1 A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.*
- *Proverbs 21:14 A gift in secret pacifieth anger: and a reward in the bosom strong wrath.*

JAMES 2

1 My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, *the Lord* of glory, with respect [favoritism] of persons.

2 For if there come unto your assembly [synagogue] a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment;

3 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:

4 Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?

2:4 evil. *poneros* (*pon-ay-ros'*); hurtful.

5 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?

2:5 hath not God chosen? That God chooses those who are to be the heirs of salvation is one of the grandest truths of Scripture (Eph. 1:4; 2 Thess. 2:13). The soul bows to say in humble gratitude, "*Salvation is of the Lord.*" If you would like to know if God has chosen you to salvation there is a simple way to discover the answer, "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved*" (Acts 16:31).

6 But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats?

7 Do not they blaspheme [slander] that worthy name by the which ye are called?

2:7 called. The external call of the gospel is extended to all without exception or distinction in as far as individuals come under the sound of gospel preaching or witnessing. The internal call of the gospel is reserved for those whom the Father has given to the Son. It is an effectual call to the elect to come to Christ and come they will. Jesus said, "*My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. 29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. 30 I and my Father are one*" (John 10:27-30).

8 If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well:

2:8 Jesus said the second great command was, “*Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thy self*” (Matt. 22:39). James calls it The Royal Law.

9 But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.

10 For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one *point*, he is guilty of all.

2:10 guilty. It is not necessary to violate every commandment of the law in order to be condemned as a spiritual criminal in the sight of God. Those should remember this who engage in relative righteousness whereby self is compared to others. A person may be suspended over a bridge and held by many chains. Nevertheless, if only one link, the weakest link breaks, the person can be easily plunged to lasting injury or death.

11 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.

12 So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.

2:12 the law of liberty. It is a terrifying word picture James paints. Those who will be judged according to the law will perish. In contrast the Christian is to live as one who will be judged by the law of liberty. In the day of ultimate judgment God will ask, “*Did you show favoritism? Did you cater to the rich? Did you ignore the poor? Did you show mercy? Did you love the law and view it as a liberating force in your life?*”

13 For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.

2:13 judgment without mercy. A judge does no wrong if he imposes the full penalty the law allows upon a hardened impenitent criminal. He does no wrong to judge without mercy. God has warned that He too will judge without mercy those who have shown no mercy. For the Christian, mercy should triumph over legalism and harsh spirit of judgment. Tenderness of heart is to characterize the believer.

14 What *doth it profit*, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him?

15 If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food,

16 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*?

17 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

2:16 being alone. The Puritans wisely taught that while salvation is by grace through faith alone, faith is not alone for good works always accompanies it. There are two extremes religiously inclined people consistently make. The first is to believe that salvation is based upon one's moral character and the good deeds that have been done. The Apostle Paul destroys this concept in Romans 3:20 "*Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.*"

Titus 3:5 "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."

The other extreme is to believe that good works have no part in the salvation of the soul. What is forgotten is that a new heart produces new results. Good fruit will naturally come from a good root of righteousness. If there is no good fruit then the alleged root of righteousness is dead, non-operative. It did not die, it is dead, non-existence.

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.

2:18 a man may say. It is easy to be a religious hypocrite. It is easy to fool family and friends and even the most intimate loved ones. A public persona can mask a secret life of sin and shame. Year after year may go by without anyone discovering the true extent of the nature of inward corruption. But God knows and the heart of the hypocrite knows as well. Mark it down, God knoweth the secrets of the heart (Psa. 44:21) and shall one day judge those secrets (Rom. 2:16). In that day it shall be a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God (Heb. 10:31). For those struggling to be authentic, remember to keep this thought of hope before your heart, "*Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. 8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. 9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts*" (Isa 55:7-9).

19 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

2:19 the devils also believe and tremble. The greatest created theologian is the devil. What he knows he has taught his demonic army. The devil knows God has appointed him to an eternal existence in the Lake of Fire. So, he and his believe and they tremble but they do not repent. The point for the religious hypocrite is given. It is not enough to believe correctly. It is not enough to tremble. Knowledge is not enough. A proper emotional response is not enough. There must be gospel obedience. Evangelical good works must follow salvation for faith without works is dead. It has always been dead.

Eternal destruction remains as certain for the soul as it does for Satan and his servants. *Rev 20:10 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire. Rev 20:15 “And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.* Someone might say, “*You are trying to scare me into heaven and that is not right.*” A person should respond, “*It is better to be scared into heaven than laughed into hell.*” But here is the alarming truth. No one can be scared into heaven, not even the devil and his demons for we read how they already “*fear and tremble.*” But they do not repent. They do not perform good works.

20 But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

2:20 faith without works. Once more James presses this important point for it cannot be said often enough. Careless professing Christian, listen: “*Faith without works is dead*”. Religious hypocrite, listen: “*Faith without works is dead.*”

21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?

2:21 justified by works. James is not advocating a works salvation. As Paul addressed the question how a person can be justified or declared righteous in the sight of God, so James addresses the question of how a person can be justified or declared righteous before others.

22 Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?

23 And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed [charged to his account] unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.

2:23 the Friend of God. There are several basic characteristics of friendship with God.

- **Knowledge.** *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.”*
- **Trust.** *James 2:23 “...Abraham believed God...”*
- **Obedience.** *John 15:14 “Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.”*
- **Abiding love.** *Proverbs 17:17 “A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.”*

24 Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

2:24 and not by faith only. The cry of the Reformers was fivefold.

Sola Scriptura
The Scripture Alone is the Standard

Soli Deo Gloria!
For the Glory of God Alone

Solo Christo!
By Christ's Work Alone are We Saved

Sola Gratia
Salvation by Grace Alone

Sola Fide
Justification by Faith Alone

In context James contends that the faith which saves is never alone but is accompanied by good works. In taking this position James does no violence to the teaching of the apostle Paul who argued that salvation is by grace through faith which is the gift of God (Eph. 2:8,9).

In their teachings Paul and James are not contradictory for they share a common concern and that is to withstand the various assaults on the gospel. When individuals came into the church and taught that the saving work of Christ must be supported by a person's own good works the apostle Paul declared that good works flow from faith but Christ alone is the object of saving faith.

When individuals came into the church and began to teach that a holy life was not necessary as long as one had faith, James took quill in hand to declare that saving faith apart from good works is dead. Together Paul and James unite to defend the gospel against enemies coming in different directions. God has united good works to saving evangelical faith, not in order to obtain salvation but as a natural consequence of the same. While faith and works can be distinguished they cannot be divorced the one from the other. The apostle Paul preserved the gospel from legalism while James saved the gospel from anti-nomianism (lawlessness) and a false confidence.

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

26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

2:26 faith without works is dead. The life of Abraham and the life of Rahab prove that good works accompanies saving faith. As the body cannot live without the spirit of life so faith cannot survive without good works wrought by the Holy Spirit. The reason why the Reformation leader Martin Luther and others have reacted to the teaching of James, is a fear that the door has been left open for a return to legalism or to some other system of salvation whereby a person can merit the righteousness of Christ.

Leader's Study Guide

Questions on James 2

1. What does the word “evil” mean?

Answer.

The word for evil is *poneros* (*pon-ay-ros'*) and means “*hurtful*”.

2. Define the Royal Command.

Answer.

“*Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.* “

3. Which two biblical lives illustrate the teaching that faith without works is dead?

Answer.

Abraham and Rahab

4. What were the five basic doctrinal positions of the Reformation?

Answer.

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5. Reconcile the teaching of Paul with respect to justification and the teaching of James.

Answer.

Paul addresses those individuals who wanted to add something to the work of Christ and thus make salvation some form of synergism whereby Christ does His part, man does his part and the end result is salvation and heaven. To such an attempt to unite good works to saving faith Paul maintains that the “*just shall live by faith*” (*Romans 1:17*). James too was concerned with the content of the gospel being corrupted, not my legalist by those who were anti-nomian and argued by a wicked lifestyle that good works did not matter. Such faith without works is declared to be dead. When two statements appear to be contradictory but are not, a paradox appears. The teaching of Paul and the teaching of James offers an initial paradox.

Personal Application and Reflection

1. Do you have a tender heart? Would others agree? Give an example of a time when you showed mercy to someone who did not earn or deserve it.
2. Do you think the *Scriptures* teach the Doctrine of Self Esteem by advocating self-love? Explain.
3. On which side of the debate would you more likely be if it were said that Calvinism emphasizes salvation by grace through faith alone and Arminianism puts an emphasis on good works? Why?
4. Have you ever thought of yourself as a Friend of God? Is it possible to be a friend as Abraham was (*John 15:14, 15*)?
5. Have you ever in all your life known what it is to fear and tremble before God as the demons? If not do you believe you should seek such a spiritual experience? Why or why not?

“Years I spent in vanity and pride,
Caring not my Lord was crucified,
Knowing not it was for me He died on Calvary.

Mercy there was great, and grace was free;
Pardon there was multiplied to me;
There my burdened soul found liberty at Calvary.

By God’s Word at last my sin I learned;
Then I trembled at the law I’d spurned,
Till my guilty soul imploring turned to Calvary.

Now I’ve given to Jesus everything,
Now I gladly own Him as my King,
Now my raptured soul can only sing of Calvary!

Oh, the love that drew salvation’s plan!
Oh, the grace that brought it down to man!
Oh, the mighty gulf that God did span at Calvary!”

Memory Work

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

JAMES 3

1 My brethren, be not many masters [teachers], knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation [judgment].

3:2 condemnation. *"It is a serious thing indeed to attempt to influence men either for good or for evil"* (Dr. H. A. Ironside).

2 For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect [thoroughly mature, well balanced] man, *and* able also to bridle the whole body.

3:2 a perfect man. British statesman Edmund Burke (1729-1797) argued, *"men are qualified for civil liberty in exact proportion to their disposition to put mutual chains on their own appetites. Society cannot exist unless a controlling power upon will and appetite be placed somewhere, and the less of it there is within, the more there is without. It is ordained in the eternal constitution of things that men of intemperate minds cannot be free. Their passions forge their fitters."*

3 Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths [Psa. 32:19], that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body.

4 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.

5 Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!

3:5 a little fire. This thought is often misquoted to say, *"Behold, how great a fire a little matter kindleth!"* but that is to miss the meaning of the text. What James is saying is that it only takes a little spark to ignite a conflagration that results in monumental loss. An unwise or unkind remark, no matter how innocent it may be in context, may be the beginning of resentment and bitterness and trouble that will last for years resulting in continual strife and bitterness unless tempered and extinguished by the washing of the water of the Word.

6 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.

7 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:

8 But the tongue can no man tame; *it is* an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.

3:8 the tongue.

- The tongue is a small organ in the body.
- The tongue is capable of great boasting.
- When misused the tongue can, like a spark of fire, create great damage.
- When misused the tongue is a world of iniquity unto itself.
- When misused the tongue corrupts the whole person.
- When misused the tongue can set on fire the direction of a person's life and destroy it.
- Because it is misused the tongue will be set on fire in hell.
- The tongue cannot be tamed.
- The tongue is an unruly evil organ.
- The tongue is full of deadly poison.

9 Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse [injure] we men, which are made after the similitude [image] of God.

10 Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.

11 Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet *water* and bitter [brackish]?

12 Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? Either a vine, figs? So *can* no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.

3:11-12 In nature sweet water and brackish water is not mixed together nor does one type of tree or vine yield a surprising crop of a different sort than its nature. Yet, the tongue of man does speak evil as well as good – but it ought not to be. The Christian is to be consistent with his new nature in Christ Jesus.

13 Who *is* a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? Let him shew out of a good conversation [manner of life] his works with meekness of wisdom.

3:13 meekness. A. W. Tozer once wrote, "*The meek man is not a human mouse afflicted with a sense of his own inferiority. Rather he may be in his moral life as bold as a lion and as strong as Samson; but he has stopped being fooled about himself. He has accepted God's estimate of his own life. He knows he is as weak and helpless as God declared him to be, but paradoxically, he knows at the same time that he is in the sight of God of more importance than angels. In himself, nothing; in God, everything. That is his motto.*"

14 But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.

3:14 glory not. So hard can the heart become to the gospel message that evil is rejoiced in, if not openly at least secretly in the deepest part of the soul.

- Glory not in being envious
- Gory not in being bitter
- Glory not in inner strife
- Lie not against the truth

15 This wisdom descendeth not from above, but *is* earthly, sensual, devilish.

16 For where envying and strife *is*, there is confusion and every evil work.

3:15-16. This wisdom. The worldly wisdom that justified envy, bitterness, strife and lies stands in contrast to divine wisdom.

- Worldly wisdom is earthly
- Worldly wisdom is sensual
- Worldly wisdom is devilish
- World wisdom produces envy
- Worldly wisdom produces strife
- Worldly wisdom produces confusion
- Worldly wisdom produces evil

17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, *and* easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

3:17 the wisdom that is from above.

- Divine wisdom is pure
- Divine wisdom is peaceable
- Divine wisdom is gentle
- Divine wisdom is easy to be entreated
- Divine wisdom is full of mercy
- Divine wisdom is full of good works

18 And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

Leader's Study Guide

Questions on James 3

1. What can the tongue do when misused?

Answer.

When misused the tongue can make a small matter much worse than it is. And it does not take much. As a spark can cause a forest fire so an inappropriate comment or observation can do great damage.

2. Define the term perfect.

Answer.

The word means to be thoroughly mature or well balanced.

3. What are four emotions or practices the Christian should never honor or justify?

Answer.

- The Christian should not glory in being envious
- The Christian should not glory about being bitter
- The Christian should not honor inner strife
- The Christian should never lie not against the truth

4. What are the seven characteristics of worldly wisdom?

Answer.

- Worldly wisdom is earthly
- Worldly wisdom is sensual
- Worldly wisdom is devilish
- World wisdom produces envy
- Worldly wisdom produces strife
- Worldly wisdom produces confusion
- Worldly wisdom produces evil

5. What are the five characteristics of divine wisdom?

Answer.

- Divine wisdom is pure
- Divine wisdom is peaceable

- Divine wisdom is gentle
- Divine wisdom is easy to be entreated
- Divine wisdom is full of mercy
- Divine wisdom is full of good works

Personal Application and Reflection

1. What form of greater judgment do you think awaits those who teach God's word?
2. Do you believe that individuals can be "*perfect*" in time and without sin? Why or why not?
3. What should the Christian do when offense has been given with the tongue? Have you ever misspoken? Did you do what you believe others should do when they have offended with the tongue? Give an example.
4. Has God every given you wisdom from above to handle a particular situation? Please share.
5. Do you have a reputation for being a peacemaker? Would others agree?

Memory Work

James 3:17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. 18 And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

JAMES 4

1 From whence *come* wars and fightings [brawlings] among you? *Come they* not hence, *even* of your lusts that war in your members?

4:1 fightings. It is tragic that many religious wars have been fought in the name of the Prince of Peace. And many churches have been divided by individuals asserting their will or arguing over a matter of procedure or the manner of service. James identifies one origin of spiritual conflict in the lust pattern that resides and rages in the heart.

2 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.

4:2 ye lust. The human heart is never satisfied which is why the Spirit must mortify its passions.

Five Holy Accomplishments Through the Spirit

- **Divine guidance.** *Acts 21:4 And finding disciples, we tarried there seven days: who said to Paul through the Spirit, that he should not go up to Jerusalem.*
- **Mortification of sin.** *Romans 8:13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.*
- **Wait for righteousness.** *Galatians 5:5 For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.*
- **Built up in Christ.** *Ephesians 2:22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.*
- **Obey the truth.** *1 Peter 1:22 Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently.*

4:2 ye ask not. Evangelist John R. Rice wrote a book with the title, *Prayer: Asking and Receiving*. He argued that the essence of praying is simply asking God for what is needed and expecting to receive it. The great auto giant Henry Ford had a friend in the insurance business, but one day Mr. Ford bought a million-dollar policy from another insurance agent. His friend called and asked why. Mr. Ford replied, "You didn't ask me!"

3 Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume *it* upon your lusts.

4:3 ye ask amiss. There are several specific reasons why prayers are not answered.

- **Prayers are not answered because there is a wrong motive.** *James 4:3 Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.* The Lord is interested in what we ask for and why we ask for things. Our hearts are to be guided by holy motives with God's glory in view.
- **Prayers are not answered because there is a wrong spirit in our hearts.** *Psalms 66:18 If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.* Bitterness, jealousy, and hatred will poison the fragrance of prayer.
- **Prayers are not answered because the Christian is not abiding in Christ and keeping His commandments.** *John 15:7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.* The objective in prayer is not so much to get what we want but to ask God what He wants and petition Him for that. As the life of the vine flows into the branches so the will of God should naturally flow into the heart of the Christian.
- **Prayers are not answered because the Lord sees the prayer is not sincere and is not earnest enough.** Moses cried out, *"Answer my plea for Israel or blot me out of Thy book!"* Jacob said, *"I will not let thee go unless you bless me."* John Knox said, *"Give me Scotland or I die!"* The Bible says, *"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much"* (James 5:16).
- **Prayers are not answered because it is not believed that the prayers will be answered.** Sometimes, because God has a sense of humor He might just go ahead and answer our prayer despite unbelief as He did in the case of the saints who were praying for the release of Peter from prison. But they did not really believe it was going to happen despite the fact that the apostle was banging on the front door of the house!
- Prayers are not answered because there is a lack of submission to the known will of God.

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.

4:4 adulteress and adulteresses. The language of James is harsh and shocking but then it was meant to be. The Bride of Christ commits spiritual adultery when she flirts with the world and engages in mental and physical intercourse in such a way as to lead the world to believe she is its friend. James says plainly that to be a friend of the world is to be no friend of God. Ideally in a marriage husband and wife are friends as well as lovers and legally bound. And so in the spiritual relationship with God, He would have Christians as His friends.

5 Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?

4:5 the Scripture. A rhetorical question is being raised that demands a negative answer. “*Does the Church really believe the Scriptures have been giving words of warning against worldliness in vain?*” And the answer is, “*Of course not. God is very serious when He warns individuals not to love the world or the things that are in the world.*”

4:5 The spirit. God the Holy Spirit yearns earnestly for the Christian to live a holy life. The Spirit yearns enviously. He is jealous, He is grieved and distressed when the believer is spiritually unfaithful to the Christ who has bled and died on the cross of Calvary for him. The Spirit wants every believer only for Himself. A divided allegiance of the heart brings disaster to the soul and dishonor to Christ.

6 But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

4:6 more grace. Grace is unmerited favor bestowed upon the undeserving by one who has the means, power, and willing to distribute it.

- **Saving grace.** *Ephesians 2:8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.*
- **Sustaining grace.** *Philippians 4:19 But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*
- **Living grace.** *John 15:5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.*
- **Super abounding grace.** *But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.*
- **Dying grace.** *Philippians 1:21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*

7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

4:7 submit. The heart submits to God by saying, “Yes” to His will and then by doing the same.

4:7 resist the devil. The heart resists the devil by saying “No” to his will and then by not doing whatever the evil impulses tempt. To encourage the believer to resist the devil, the promise is given that he will leave the area of conflict. Satan is a proud monarch and has little tolerance for unwilling subjects. Satanic resistance does not have to be traumatic or dramatic.

“The Prince of Darkness grim, we tremble not for him;
His rage we can endure,
for lo, his doom is sure,
One little word shall fell him.”

8 Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse *your* hands, ye sinners; and purify *your* hearts, ye double minded.

4:8 draw nigh. At Mount Sinai the people were told to stay back from the presence of the Lord let by the fire on the mountain they be destroyed. The terror of the law has given way to the reign of grace. The divine promise is given. Any heart that draws near to God will find that He moves near to the soul that is seeking Him. Each is drawn near to the other.

“There is a place of quiet rest,
Near to the heart of God.
A place where sin cannot molest,
Near to the heart of God.

O Jesus, blest Redeemer,
Sent from the heart of God,
Hold us who wait before Thee
Near to the heart of God.

There is a place of comfort sweet,
Near to the heart of God.
A place where we our Savior meet,
Near to the heart of God.

There is a place of full release,
Near to the heart of God.
A place where all is joy and peace,
Near to the heart of God.”

4:8 Cleanse *your* hands. There is a personal responsibility associated with holiness. The Christian himself is not to give his hands to acts of defilement or his heart to any element which would not make it pure in the sight of God. Unfortunately, James realizes it is possible for a Christian to be double minded in the matter of sanctification. The flesh desires to be fulfilled while the Spirit moves the heart toward holiness. Unless the heart is united on the matter of holiness it cannot stand.

9 Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let *your* laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness.

4:9 mourn. While the gospel does not compel people to be morbid, the gospel does demand repentance. What the gospel commands grace gives the ability to perform. The soul is to be self afflicted over sin, and will be, when the essence of sin is soberly reflected upon.

10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

4:10 humble yourselves. God does know how to humble the proud as He did in the life of Nebuchadnezzar. God knows how to debase the wicked as he destroyed King Ahab. But on others, God waits and invites the believer to humble himself. The person who will stand in honest self-judgment on his own passions and sin shall know great mercy and grace. *“For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged”* (1 Corinthian 11:31).

4:10 he shall lift you up. *“Sing unto the LORD, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness. 5 For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning”* (Ps 30:4-5).

11 Speak not evil [injuriously] one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law [of silence], and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge.

12 There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?

4:11-12 speak not evil. Of all the commandments given in *Scripture* this is among the most difficult to honor. Nevertheless, every attempt must be made to honor this for the reason stated. When a person stands in judgment upon another person he assumes the prerogative of God who alone is the One Lawgiver. No one knows the motives of another person. No one can discern the heart. Any attempt to do so violates the known will of the Lord. The day will come when *“God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel”* (Rom 2:16).

13 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:

4:13 Life is to be lived in humility and dependency upon God and not presumptuously. *“Psalms 19:13 Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.”*

14 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.

15 For that ye *ought* to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.

16 But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon clarifies what presumptuous sinning is.

- A sin that is committed willfully against manifest light and knowledge is a presumptuous sin.
- When a man continues long in sin, and has time to deliberate about it, that also is a proof that it is a presumptuous sin.
- A presumptuous sin also is one that is committed through an imagination of fancied strength of mind.

17 Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

4:17 it is sin.

- **Imputed sin.** *Gen 3:6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. 7 And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.*
- **Inherited sin.** *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:*
- **Personal sin.** *Romans 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.*

Individuals know what good to do based on the moral law of God placed in the conscience so that everyone is without excuse. *Romans 2:14 “For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: 15 Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another.”*

Leader's Study Guide

Questions on James 4

1. What is one origin of conflict in the church?

Answer.

“Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?”

2. List five spiritual accomplishments through the Holy Spirit.

Answer.

- Divine guidance
- Mortification of sin
- Waiting for righteousness
- Built up in Christ.
- Obeying the truth.

3. List the various types of grace God gives to His people.

Answer.

- Saving grace
- Sustaining grace
- Living grace
- Super abounding grace
- Dying grace

4. List three characteristics of presumptuous sins.

Answer.

- A sin that is committed willfully against manifest light and knowledge is a presumptuous sin.
- When a man continues long in sin, and has time to deliberate about it, that also is a proof that it is a presumptuous sin.
- A presumptuous sin also is one that is committed through a hardihood of fancied strength of mind.

5. Identify the three types of sin.

Answer.

- Imputed sin
- Inherited sin
- Personal sin

Personal Application and Reflection

1. Have you ever been guilty of starting a church conflict or partaking in one that has proven to be led by selfish men with sinful motives? If so, have you repented?
2. If you had to stand before God today to be judged would the record reflect a spiritual heart of adultery based upon an inappropriate friendship with the world?
3. If you struggle with a particular setting sin do you have any hope of overcoming it? Why or why not?
4. Are you a humble person? Would others agree?
5. Are you guilty of speaking evil [injurious] of another brother or sister? Have you repented of this evil?

Memory Work

James 4:7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8 Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. 9 Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. 10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

JAMES 5

1 Go to now, *ye* rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon *you*.

2 Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten.

3 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.

5:1-3 rich men.

Reasons why the Rich Should Mourn

- There is a day of divine retribution. “*Your miseries that shall come upon you.*”
- Riches become corrupted.
- What riches buy does not last.
“*Your garments are moth-eaten.*”
- The desire for wealth ignites a fire of covetousness that burns in the heart. “*Your gold and silver...shall eat your flesh as it were fire.*”
- There is a false sense of security. “*Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.*”

4 Behold, the hire of the labourers 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 sabaoth.

5 Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter.

6 Ye have condemned *and* killed the just; *and* he doth not resist you.

5:4-6

The Misuse of Wealth

- Refusing to pay a just compensation for honest labor.
- Refusing to listen to the cries for financial relief.
- Using the resources to live in self-pleasure and unbridled passions.
- Allowing acts of personal pleasure to multiply not caring the soul is being made ready for divine judgment, in a similar way an animal has been deliberately fattened for the slaughter.
- Condemning the voice of righteous protest and killing the opposition.

7 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.

5:7 early rain. Near the end of October heavy rains begin to fall in Palestine. These early rains mark the beginning of the agricultural year. The hard soil is loosened and the farmer can begin to plow. Sporadic rains continue to fall until the end, after which the water falling increases through December, January, and February. By March the rainfall diminishes and is almost over by the middle of April.

5:7 latter rains. The heavy rainfalls of March and April come just before the harvest and the onset of summer. They are very important for summer droughts can make the water supply scarce.

8 Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

5:8-9 Be patient. In a cruel world of economic imbalance and social injustice what is the Christian to do? The answer in part is to be patient and wait for the coming of the Lord when all wrongs shall be made right and any injustice shall be evaluated. By being patient, a Christian testimony is given, and an impact is made on the world. It was English Bishop Hugh Latimer (1485 -1555) who said that a drop of rain made a hole in a stone, not by violence but by continually falling. So the Christian needs patience and perseverance.

9 Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door.

5:9 grudge not. Because the Christian has been the object of much grace, grace is to be extended to others. In 1989 Zita, the last empress of Austria and the last queen of Hungary, died. She was buried in the royal crypt in Vienna where the other Hapsburgs lie. When the procession arrived at the church, someone knocked on the door. One of the friars asked who was there. They answered, *"Zita, Empress of Austria, Queen of Hungary and of Bohemia, Princess of Bourbon-Parma."* They were denied admittance. A second time someone knocked. *"Who's there?"* *"Empress Zita,"* was the answer. Still she was not admitted. There was a third knock. *"Who's there?"* *"Zita, a poor sinner,"* was the answer. Then the procession was allowed to enter. Oh Christian, never forget you are but a poor sinner. Never say to another sinner, *"I have no respect for you,"* for if you are not careful the Righteous Judge will one day fling your words back upon you in just condemnation. *"Behold, the judge standeth before the door."*

10 Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience.

5:10 an example.

Select Examples of Suffering and Patience

- Abel murdered
- Noah mocked
- Abraham A stranger in a strange land
- Sarah A bearer of a child of promise in her old age
- Moses Endured the reproach of an unthankful people
- Rahab Moved to save the lives of two spies
- Esther Petitioned the king for her people at great risk
- Elijah Hunted by a jealous queen
- Jeremiah Cast into a dungeon
- Isaiah Cut in half

11 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 [extremely compassionate], and of tender mercy.

5:11 the end. As far as the record goes Job was never informed about the angelic conflict of which he was the target. It did not matter. Job's testimony was to bow in humility before God, exclaiming, *"I repent in dust and ashes"* (Job 42:6). *"Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him"* (Job 13:15).

5:11 the Lord is. When the question is asked, *"What is God like?"* the answer in part is this: *"God is very pitiful and of tender mercy."*

Those on Whom God will Have Mercy

• The house of Judah	Hosea 1:7
• Those who have known no mercy	Hosea 2:3
• Those who are spiritually sick	Matthew 9:13
• Those who are physically sick	Matthew 12:7
• Those whom He sovereignly chooses	Romans 9:15

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.

5:12 swear not. Carelessly taking an oath is prohibited for the Christian. Calling God to be a witness to something that He has not authorized is also to take His name in vain. Those of the “*name it and claim it*” or “*blab it and grab*” religious philosophy come perilously close to taking the name of the Lord in vain for some testify to healing, or health, or wealth, in the name of God which He has not promised.

13 Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? Let him sing psalms.

14 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:

5: 13-14

What do to Under Certain Circumstances

• When afflicted	pray
• When happy	sing psalms
• When very ill	call for the Elders and be anointed with oil in the name of the Lord

15 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.

5:15 shall save the sick. While the importance of faith should never be minimized, care must be taken not to make any passage of *Scripture* mean more than intended. To teach that God wants all people to be healthy and the only reason why Christians are sick is lack of faith is not only unbiblical, it is cruel. God is the God of pain and suffering as well as health and prosperity. His sovereignty is absolute over His universe. *And the LORD said unto him [Moses], Who hath made man's mouth? Or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? Have not I the LORD? (Exodus 4:11).*

God has told people to prepare to die. *Hebrews 9:27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.*

Apart from the Second Advent or an accident that suddenly takes a life, all shall grow old, and grow sick, and eventually step from time into eternity. Nevertheless, let gospel obedience take place. Let the elders be called. Let the oil be anointed. Let prayer be offered and if God is pleased to answer prayer then it will be through faith. If God wills, the sick shall be delivered from infirmity and weakness. If the sickness is related to a particular sin, sins shall be forgiven. For a biblical example of this see John 5:1-14.

Notice the language of verse 14 in particular, John 5:14. “*Afterward Jesus findeth him [the crippled man] in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.*” Because of sin associated with the careless taking of the Lord’s Supper, many became sick and weak and some died (1 Cor. 11:30).

16 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.

5:16 confess your faults. The story is told of three ministers who agreed to confess their faults one to another. The first began by saying, “*I sometimes drink a little too much alcoholic beverages.*” The second said, “*I sometimes slip a little money out of the offering plate.*” And the third man said, “*My sin is gossip and I cannot wait to get out of here.*” Care should be taken in this matter of confession one to another lest opportunity be given for other transgressions. The wicked will prey upon the weak, especially when sexual sins are in view, or an opportunity for blackmail arises. There is also the danger of intellectually voyeurism being committed. Unholy passions can be stirred that were dormant. With this word of caution the biblical command remains. Faults are to be acknowledged and prayed over, for confession is good for the soul. There is a measure of humility when faults are conceded to. There is accountability. Finally there is the possibility for a greater degree of spiritual maturity to be achieved and physical healing to take place.

17 Elias [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.

18 And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.

5:18 rained not. It is a bold thought but a spiritual truth that the prayers of the righteous can affect the course of nature including rain or drought.

*“Only believe, only believe,
All things are possible,
only believe.”*

19 Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him;

20 Let him know, that he which converteth [turns] the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.

5:19 converteth the sinner.

What is Possible

- It is possible for a Christian to embrace doctrinal or moral error. “*Brethren, if any of you do err...*”
- It is possible for an erring brother to be turned from their doctrinal or moral error through the efforts of a concerned Christian.
- It is possible to be encouraged in the work of turning someone from their error by two strong motives: a soul shall be saved and a multitude of sins shall be covered. “*Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord*” (1 Cor. 15:58).

Leader's Study Guide

Questions on James 5

1. Why should those who are wealthy be told to mourn?

Answer.

The wealthy should mourn because of the following.

- There is a day of divine retribution. “*Your miseries that shall come upon you.*”
- Riches become corrupted.
- What riches buy does not last.
“*Your garments are moth-eaten.*”
- The desire for wealth ignites a fire of covetousness that burns in the heart. “*Your gold and silver...shall eat your flesh as it were fire.*”
- There is a false sense of security. “*Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.*”

Answer.

2. On whom will God have mercy?

Answer.

- God will have mercy on those who need His grace.
- God will have mercy on the house of Judah. Hosea 1:7
- God will have mercy on those who have not been shown mercy. Hosea 2:3
- God will have mercy on the spiritually sick. Matthew 9:13
- God will have mercy on those who are physically sick. Matthew 12:7
- God will have mercy on those whom He sovereignly chooses. Romans 9:15

3. What should a Christian do when they are afflicted, happy, or very ill?

Answer.

- When afflicted pray
- When happy sing psalms
- When very ill call for the Elders and be anointed with oil in the name of the Lord

4. Why should Christians confess their faults one to another?

Answer.

In order for mental and physical healing to occur.

5. List two motives for gospel counseling an erring brother.

Answer.

A soul shall be saved and sin shall be covered with love.

Personal Application and Reflection

1. Do you envy the rich? Why or why not? Have you seen the rich abuse their wealth?
2. Do you believe the prayers of the righteous can control the weather? Why?
3. Has God taught you the virtue of patience? In what way? Do you long for the Second Advent of Christ?
4. Do you believe God wants everyone to be perfectly healthy? Is there no place for pain and suffering for the saints in the plan of God? Why or why not?
5. Have you ever tried to convert or turn someone from the error of their way? What was the end result?

Memory Work

James 5:14 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: 15 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. 16 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.