

## James Chapter 1

Arthur: James the Just, Brother of Jesus (*John 7:2*)

Date: Definitely before 70AD

Theme: Testing of Christian Faith

### James brothers did not believe

James the just - called this because of his holy life

Surprisingly, although they grew up with Him and observed firsthand His sinless, perfect life, Jesus' brothers did not at first believe in Him. John records their unbelief exhibited by challenging Jesus to reveal Himself openly:.

**John 7:2-5** Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand. His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judaea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest. For *there is no man that* doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. **If thou do these things, shew thyself to the world. For neither did his brethren believe in him.**

What happened to change His sceptical, unbelieving brothers into devoted followers? Paul gives the answer in 1 Corinthians 15:7, noting that after Jesus' resurrection, "He appeared to James." Doubtless as a result of that personal, post-resurrection appearance, James came to saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Counterfeiting is a major problem in our society. Forged money, credit cards, jewelry, works of art, and virtually everything else of value are passed off as genuine to deceive the unwary. Consequently, valuable commodities must be carefully examined to determine their genuineness. That is also true of the most valuable commodity of all—saving faith.

It seems clear that James was profoundly influenced by the Sermon on the Mount—the truths of which he doubtless heard in person from Jesus, either on that occasion or others—and many of its themes have parallels in his epistle. In fact, the book of James may well be viewed as a practical commentary on that sermon.

## James Chapter 1

The Purpose of Testing	Chp 1:1 - 1:18
The Test of Obedience	Chp 1:19 – 1:27
The Test of Partiality	Chp 2:1 – 2:13
The Test of Works	Chp 2:14 – 2:26
The Test of the Tongue	Chp 3:1 – 3:12
The Test of Ambitions	Chp 3:13 – 5:6
The Test of Patience	Chp 5:7 – 5:20

## James Chapter 1

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

James 1:1

*doulos - a bond slave*

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

**James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ** - In spite of his prominence, what stands out in the first verse of his epistle is James's humility. He does not describe himself as Mary's son and the Lord's brother, refer to his position as head of the Jerusalem church, or mention that the resurrected Christ personally appeared to him

**Servant** *doulos* - a bond slaves

**the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad,** - he addresses himself to Jews many of which resided outside of Israel

**Greetings** *Chairein* - means "rejoice," or "be glad," and was a common secular greeting. But to James the word was no mere formality; he expected what he wrote to gladden his readers' hearts by giving them means to verify the genuineness of their salvation.

### **Summary**

• Since trials are so productive, it is essential for us to respond rightly to them. James helps us greatly in this in 1:2-12 by giving five key means for persevering through trials:

- a joyful attitude (v. 2),
- an understanding mind (v. 3),
- a submissive will (v. 4),
- a believing heart (vv. 5-8),
- a humble spirit (vv. 9-11).
- He then tells us of the reward for perseverance (v. 12).

## Summary

### How to correctly react in trials

1. A joyful attitude (v. 2),
2. An understanding mind (v. 3),
3. A submissive will (v. 4),
4. A believing heart (vv. 5-8),
5. A humble spirit (vv. 9-11).
6. A view to the reward for perseverance (v.12).

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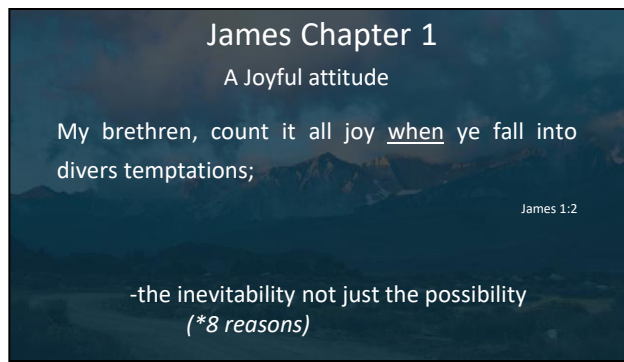
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## **Vs 2 My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations:**

### **a joyful attitude**

Many people have great confidence in their faith until it is severely tested by hardships and disappointments. How a person handles trouble will reveal whether his faith is living or dead, genuine or imitation, saving or nonsaving.

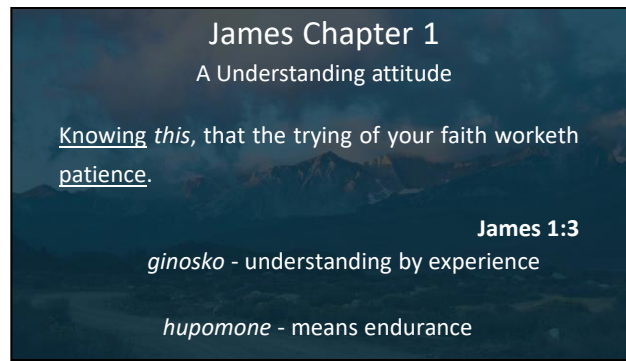
James's major emphasis in this present text, and in the entire letter, is that if a person's faith is genuine, it will prove itself during times of trouble,

**Count** *hegeomai* is an imperative because joy is not the natural human response to trouble

**When** *Hotan* is s in the subjunctive mood and carries the idea not just of possibility but inevitability.

Scripture mentions at least eight purposes for the Lord's allowing trials to come into the lives of His people.

1. To test the strength of our faith.
2. trials are given to humble us, to remind us not to let our trust in the Lord turn into presumption and spiritual self-satisfaction
3. in order to wean us from our dependence on worldly things
4. to call us to eternal and heavenly hope. The harder our trials become and the longer they last, the more we look forward to being with the Lord
5. to reveal what we really love
6. to teach us to value God's blessings
7. to develop in His saints enduring strength for greater usefulness
8. to enable us to better help others in their trials



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

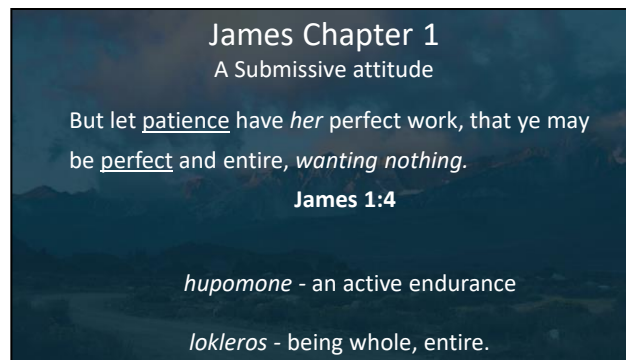
#### **an understanding mind**

**Knowing** - *ginosko* - carries the idea of full understanding of something that is beyond the merely factual and that often comes from personal experience

**Trying** *okimion*, has the basic idea of testing something in order to prove or disprove its genuineness or validity. The test is not so much a test of the Christian as it is a test of the Christians faith.

**Patience** *hupomone* - means endurance," but here connotes more the product, or consequence, of patience, which is endurance

Trials do not PRODUCE faith, but rather trials TEST faith that has been produced by the hearing of the word of God.



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

**a submissive will**

The only way out of a trial is through it. The Lord promises no bypasses. God cannot do His perfect and complete work in and through us without our willing submissiveness.

**Patience** *hupomone*. not a passive waiting, but an active endurance

our patience must not be an inch shorter than our trial

**Perfect** *teleios*, refers to that which is fully developed or mature

**Perfect** *holokleros*, carries the idea of being whole, entire.

**entire, wanting nothing** Emphasizes the point that the process of building patience will bring us to 100% of our spiritual capacity.



## James Chapter 1

A believing attitude

If any of you lack wisdom, **let him ask of God**, (Luke 6: 12) *that giveth to all men liberally*, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

James 1:5

*oneidizo* - rail at, chide, taunt

**Vs 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**

**any of you lack wisdom.** this refers to the kind of wisdom which is needed in time of trials.

**let him ask of God** asking for the specific wisdom which he needs; the very wisdom which is necessary for him in the particular case.

Before Jesus selected the 12, He spent all night in prayer

**Luke 6: 12** And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and **continued all night in prayer to God.** 13 And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them **he chose twelve**, whom also he named apostles

**that giveth to all men liberally,** The word *men* is not in the original text.

Alexander the Great gave a poor man a city; and when he modestly refused it as too great for him, Alexander answered, The business is not what thou art fit to receive, but what it becometh me to give."

**And upbraideth not** - Does not reproach, rebuke, or treat harshly. God does not coldly repel us, if we come and ask what we need,

## James Chapter 1

*But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.*

James 1:6-7

The one who is wavering

**James 1:6 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.**

**But let him ask in faith:** Our request for wisdom must be made like any other request - **in faith**, without doubting God's ability or desire to give us His wisdom.

The kind of heart we need in seeking God's wisdom from the Scriptures: a heart that believes God's word, and believes it speaks to us today

**For he that wavereth, is like a wave of the sea,** As the wave of the sea has no stability. It is at the mercy of every wind, and seems to be driven and tossed every way. If we approach to God with unsettled convictions and hopes, we are liable to be driven about by every new feeling that may spring up in the mind.

**James 1:7 For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.**

A man can hope for favour from God only as he puts full confidence in him. A man without faith will not receive the wisdom he is pursuing or anything else from God. God responds to faith.

## James Chapter 1

A humble attitude

A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.  
Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is  
exalted:

James 1:8-9

*dipsuchosis* - one who is wavering or irregular

### **James 1:8 A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.**

**A double minded man** - *dipsuchosis* one who is wavering or inconstant. It is applicable to a man who is controlled by passion; influenced by popular feeling; inclined to one opinion or course of conduct, and now to another.

### **James 1:9 Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted**

There is a great and important trial of faith in any reverse of circumstances; a trial in being elevated from poverty to riches, or from riches to poverty.

Rejoice because a trial is furnished which will show, in the new circumstances in which he is placed, whether his piety is genuine. There is almost no trial of religion which is more certain and decisive than that a sudden transition from poverty to riches from adversity to prosperity, from sickness to health.

## James Chapter 1

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

James 1:10

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

a Sudden transition from rich to poor is often the source of the deepest sorrow, but present a great trial of our faith.

The reasons for rejoicing in this manner, which the apostle seems to have had in view, were these:

- (1) because it furnished a test of the reality of religion,
- (2) because it would shows that all earthly glory may soon fade away.

## James Chapter 1

For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat,  
but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof  
falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth:  
so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways.

James 1:11

**James 1:11 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**

as the trial of the hot sun proves the grass and flowers, so do trials prove men. In the case of the grass & flower, they wither and fade.

**the rich man fade away in his ways** -That is, his splendour, and all on which he prides himself, shall vanish

## James Chapter 1

Blessed is the man that *endureth* temptation:  
(James 1:3) for when he is *tried*, he shall receive  
the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to  
them that love him.

James 1:12

*dokimos* – tested and approved.

**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**

**the man that endureth temptation (*is approved*)** He is a true believer, who perseveres and becomes the man who has been approved (by passing the test with faith intact).

It does not say, "Blessed is the man who is never tempted." or "Blessed is the man who finds all temptation easy to conquer." But blessed is he who endures temptation. There is a special gift of blessing for the one who can say "no" to temptation, thereby saying "yes" to God.

**for when he is tried: tried: dokimos** - is approved. Thus when he is tested, perseveres in the testing, and is thus approved

**James 1:3** Knowing *this*, that the trying TESTING of your faith worketh patience. ENDURANCE

**The crown of life which the Lord has promised:** James reminds us that it really is worth it to endure under the temptations we face. Our steadfastness will be rewarded as we demonstrate our love for Jesus (to those who love Him) by resisting temptation.

**the Lord hath promised to them that love him** The passions of sinful temptation can only really be overcome by a greater passion, a passion for the honour and glory and relationship with God.

## James Chapter 1

*Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:*

James 1:13

**James 1:13 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**

**Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God:**

Temptation does not come from God. God allows it, but He Himself does not entice us to evil.

Just as it is common to man to be tempted, it is also common for him to blame someone or something else, not only for his being tempted but also for his succumbing to it.

**For God cannot be tempted with evil**

temptation, does not pertain to God. Nothing can be presented to his mind as an inducement to do wrong, Temptation is a subject which does not pertain to God, He stands aloof from it altogether.

- God has no evil passion to be gratified,
- God has no lack of power, that might allure him to seek it
- There is no want of wealth, for he has infinite resources,
- There is no want of happiness, For he is self-sufficient.

## James Chapter 1

But *every man is tempted*, when he is drawn away of **his own lust**, and enticed. Then *when lust hath conceived*, it *bringeth forth sin*: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

James 1:14-15

### **James 1:14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed**

God cannot be tempted BUT EVERY man is tempted.

The fountain of all temptation is within man himself. There must always be some "lust," some desire; some inclination; something which is unsatisfied now, which is made the foundation of the temptation, and which gives it all its power

### **James 1:15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death**

**when lust hath conceived** Having identified lust in the nature of man, James now discusses it in practical terms. Here is the heart of his teaching about temptation.

Lust is itself morally and spiritually neutral, its rightness or wrongness being determined partly by the object that is desired and partly by how and for what purposes it is desired.

**it brings forth sin** for most of mankind simply wanting something justifies the effort to have it. It is at that point, James says, that lust has conceived. Lust has now conceived and brought forth sin.

At this stage our will, is involved & a our conscious decision to pursue the lust is arrived at. Because the will is involved, this is where the most guilt lies.

The battle must be fought in the mind, where sin is conceived. The truth of God which activates the conscience, the soul's warning system, must be heard



and not ignored.

## James Chapter 1

*Do not err, my beloved brethren. 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.*

James 1:16-17

### **James 1:16 Do not err, my beloved brethren**

The point on which he would guard them, seems to have been in respect to the opinion that God was the author of sin, and that the evils in the world are to be traced to him

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

**Every good gift and every perfect gift** The difference between good and perfect here, it is not easy to mark accurately. The greater thought is that what comes from God is not sin, but only every good thing given and every perfect gift

**The Father of lights** was an ancient Jewish title for God, referring to Him as Creator, as the great Giver of light, in the form of the sun, moon, and stars.

**with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning** Unlike those sources of light, which will eventually fade, God's character, power, wisdom, and love have no variation or shifting shadow.

## James Chapter 1

*Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth,  
(1 Peter 1:23) that we should be a kind of firstfruits  
of his creatures.*

James 1:18

**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**

**Of his own will begat he us** The idea is, that we are " begotten" to be his children solely by his will.

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

**with the word of truth.** - By the instrumentality of truth. It was not a mere creative act, but it was by truth seeded in our hearts.

## James Chapter 1

Wherefore, my beloved brethren, *let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.*

James 1:19-20

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

**Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:** We can learn to be slow to wrath by first learning to be swift to hear and slow to speak. So much of our anger and wrath comes from being self-centered.

Swift to hear is a way to be others-centered.

Slow to speak is a way to be others-centered.

"But hath not Nature taught us the same that the apostle here doth, by giving us two ears, and those open; and but one tongue, and that hedged in with teeth and lips?" (Trapp)

### **James 1:20 For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God**

In light of the nature of temptation and the goodness of God, we must take special care to be slow to wrath, because our wrath does not accomplish the righteousness of God. In fact, our wrath almost always simply defends or promotes our own agenda.

## James Chapter 1

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

James 1:21

**James 1:21 Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls**

**Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness** - This has in mind an impure manner of living. In light of the nature of temptation and the goodness of God, we are to lay aside all impurity.

**receive with meekness the engrafted word** - In contrast to an impure manner of living, we should receive the implanted word of God and do so with meekness, a teachable heart.

**engrafted** - **(1)** A horticulture term. to insert a scion of one tree or plant into another, for propagation: to engraft a peach on a plum whereby the plum tree sap now flows through the peach. **(2)** Surgery of living tissue.

**Which is able to save your souls** - It is not a weak and powerless thing, but it is the power of God, and is adapted to save.

## James Chapter 1

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

James 1:22-23

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

A teacher or preacher may minister the gospel but when the sermon is done, it is not done; something remains to be done by the hearers, There must be more than enjoying the emotional or mental treat, their must be practical application.

To take comfort in the fact you have heard God's word when you haven't done it is to deceive yourself.

### **James 1:23 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**

**a hearer of the word, and not a doer, As** a man who looks into a mirror and immediately forgets what he saw. The information he received did not do any good in his life.

**beholding his natural face in a glass** "The glass of the Word is not like our ordinary looking-glass, which merely shows us our external features; but, according to the Greek of our text, the man sees in it 'the face of his birth'; that is, the face of his nature. He that reads and hears the Word may see not only his actions there, but his motives, his desires, his inward condition." (*Spurgeon*)

## James Chapter 1

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

James 1:24-25

### **James 1:24 For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was**

He who looks into the perfect law of liberty: In the ancient Greek language, the word for "*beholdeth*" spoke of a penetrating examination.

**For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way,....** He takes a slight glance of himself, and departs in his own way and not the way of The Lord.

### **James 1:25 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**

**The perfect law of liberty:** This is a wonderful way to describe the word of God. In the New Covenant, God reveals to us a law, but it is a law of liberty, written on our transformed hearts by the Spirit of God.

He who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it . . . this one will be blessed in what he does: If we study the word of God intently, and do it (continue in it), then we will be blessed.

## James Chapter 1

If any man among you seem to be religious, and  
bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own  
heart, this man's religion *is* vain.

James 1:26

**James 1:26 If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain**

**any man among you seem to be religious.** If anyone among you thinks he is religious: Real religion is not shown by hearing the word, but by doing it. One way to do God's word is to bridle the tongue.

**this man's religion is vain.** This one's religion is useless: Your walk with God is useless if it does not translate into the way you live and the way you treat others. Many are deceived in their own heart regarding the reality of their walk with God.



## James Chapter 1

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.

James 1:27

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

**pure religion"** means that which is genuine and sincere, or which is free from any improper mixture.

**And undefiled before God and the Father** - That which God sees to be pure and undefiled. Not sullied moral impurity.

Pure religion produces two outward realities;

(1) that pure religion will lead to a life of practical benevolence;

(2) that it will keep us unspotted from the world. If these things are found, they show that there is true piety. If they are not, there is none.



## James Chapter 2

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

James 2:1

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

The faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, should never be associated with partiality (discrimination). The Lord of glory Himself shows no partiality.

**Rom 2: 11** For there is no respect of persons with God

The same sun which shines on Christians also shines on sinners

## James Chapter 2

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

James 2:2

**James 2:2 For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment**

In the Greek, the word *assembly* is literally *synagogue* (ie church)

**A man with gold rings:** In Roman society the wealthy wore rings on their left hand as a sign of wealth.

**a poor man in vile raiment** The reference here is not to the common members of the church, but to those who might accidentally drop in to witness the services of Christians

## James Chapter 2

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:

James 2:3

**James 2:3 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**

Religion does not forbid proper respect to rank, to office, to age, or to distinguished talents and services, but it does not require that should be regarded as not on the same level with all others.

## James Chapter 2

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

James 2:4

### **James 2:4 Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts**

**Are ye not then partial in yourselves?** - Meaning among yourselves. Do you not show that you are partial?

To Favor the rich man over the poor man in the way James described shows a deep carnality among Christians. Their evil thoughts are evident by their partial actions

## James Chapter 2

Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him? But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats?

James 2:5-6

**James 2:5 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**

Has God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom:

Riches can be an obstacle to the kingdom of God (Matthew 19:24), there is a sense in which the poor of this world are specially blessed by God.

**Hath not God chosen the poor of this world.** Thee poor are chosen . . . to be rich in faith because the poor of this world simply have more opportunities to trust God

**Has not God chosen:** the poor have fewer obstacles t(wealth, possessions) to the kingdom, in this sense God has chosen the poor.

**James 2:6 But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats?**

Some feel this verse is to read as an interrogation others feel it should be understood somewhat ironically: *(You despise the poor, do you, and honour the rich! Look then, and see how the rich treat you).*

**Do not rich men oppress you;** It is not a sin to be rich however with riches comes great responsibility towards your brother. The natural my man will use his riches to suppress the poor, the spiritual man will use his riches to bless the poor.

**draw you before the judgment seats** Justice in the honour ancient culture, as today, was apt to be in favour of the rich, if they chose to take advantage of their influence with legal authorities and the court system.

## James Chapter 2

Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the  
which ye are called?

James 2:7

*blasphēmeō* - to defame, rail on, revile, or speak  
evil of

### James 2:7 Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called

**Do not they blaspheme that worthy** The "worthy name" here referred to is, doubtless, the name of the Jesus.

**Blaspheme** *blasphēmeō* \*- to speak impiously: - (speak) blaspheme to defame, rail on, revile, or speak evil of

Many in that time and in modern times revile the name of Christ, by speaking contemptuously of him and Christianity.



## James Chapter 2

If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture,  
Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well:  
But *if ye have respect to persons*, ye commit sin, and  
*are convinced of the law as transgressors*.

James 2:8-9

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

James anticipated that there will be those who practiced partiality under the guise of loving one's neighbour.

**if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin.** The problem isn't that one is nice to the rich. The problem is that one shows partiality to the rich and mistreats the poor man. This action is sin.

**and are convinced of the law as transgressors.** the word "convinced" here does not refer so much to the effect produced on the mind itself, but rather that the law would hold such an one to be guilty;

## James Chapter 2

*For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.*

James 2:10-11

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

**whosoever** - defines this statement as having no exceptions, It is all inclusive.

**keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all** The law is not to be full of as a collection of rules. Rather it is like a large chain one link is broken then the entire chain is broken.

**James 2:11 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**

It is not so much the breaking of one commandment or another, but rather it is the breaking of the moral code of the law-giver.

## James Chapter 2

So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by *the law of liberty*. For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and *mercy rejoiceth against judgment*.

James 2:12-13

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

**The law of liberty** - Referring to the law of God or his will. See James 1:25  
Even though grace has taken away the penalty of the law as well as the law as a school teacher, the law still represents the moral code of God.

Our lives are free of the bondage of law, nevertheless the moral code of God has not changed.

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

Since we, ourselves stand through God's mercy, we ought to show mercy to those whom the Lord himself commends to us.

God promises that he will be merciful to us, if we be so to our brethren

**Matthew 5:7** - "Be ye merciful, as your heavenly Father is merciful."

**Matthew 7:2** - For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you.

**mercy rejoiceth against judgment** Justice demands, as what is her due, that the sinner should be condemned; mercy pleads that he may be saved - and mercy prevails.

## James Chapter 2

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

James 2:14

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

James is speaking to those who abuse the doctrine of justification by faith, by holding that good works are unnecessary to salvation, provided they maintain an orthodox belief.

faith which does not produce good works, nor a holy life, will save no one because it is not genuine faith.

## James Chapter 2

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

James 2:15-16

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

In the case of one who was hungry or naked, what he wanted was not good wishes or kind words merely, but the acts to which good wishes and kind words prompt

A mere confession without the fruit of a converted life is of no practical value for one in need of true Christian love.

## James Chapter 2

Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.

James 2:17-18

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

faith with out works is a mere dead, empty notion; of no more profit to him that hath it, than the bidding the naked be clothed is to him.

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

Yea, a man may say That is, it might perhaps be said that religion is not always manifested in the same way. Some may present with works others with faith and yet other with benevolence, etc.

## James Chapter 2

Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

James 2:19-20

**James 2:19-20 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?**

**Thou believest that there is one God** - There mere knowledge of God, which can no more connect man with God, than the sight of the sun carry man to heaven.

**Thou doest well.** - it is good and proper to believe there is one God, but it doesn't go far enough

**the devils also believe, and tremble.** - Even the devils believe in one God so this degree of knowledge that does not produce a life style is of no real consequence

The force of James position is that "faith alone", without works produced by the maturing of faith, is dead and useless

## James Chapter 2

Was not Abraham our father justified by works,  
when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?  
Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by  
works was faith made perfect?

James 2:21-22

**James 2:21-22 - Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?**

**Was not Abraham our father justified by works,** - James selects Abraham, who is the Father of faith and a perfect example of mature faith. Yet it was Abraham's works that proved the existence of his true faith.

**When he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar** - This was long after he believed, and was an act which, if any could, would show that his faith was genuine and sincere.

**Seest thou how** - The apostle means to say that this was so plain that they could not help but see it.



## James Chapter 2

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

James 2:23-24

**James 2:23 And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God**

**And the Scripture was fulfilled which saith** - The fair and full meaning of Scripture was expressed by this act, showing in that his faith was genuine; or His faith was confirmed or established by this act.

**Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness**

Abrahams faith in God was accounted to him as righteousness. The reason why it was counted to him for righteousness was, that it was such a strong, direct, and unwavering act of confidence in the promise of God

**James 2:24 Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only**

**Ye see then** - From the course of reasoning it should become very obvious that works are the natural outshoot of true faith and that it is by works that faiths maturity can be measured.

## James Chapter 2

Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent *them* out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

James 2:25-26

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

**Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works** In the same sense in which Abraham was, Rahabs faith was proven genuine, and that it was not a mere cold and speculative assent to the truths of religion.

**when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way**

**"when"** indicates a point in time that this justification occurred, not before. The proper faith of Rahab is commended, but not necessarily everything else that may have occurred on her life.

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

**as the body without the spirit is dead,-** The meaning here is the obvious one, that the body is animated or kept alive by the soul. The body has no life independent of the presence of the soul.

It is as much necessity that faith and works together define true religion, as there is that the body and soul united should define a living man.



The *evil* which the apostle seems to have referred to in this chapter, was a desire, which appears to have prevailed among those to whom he wrote, *to be public teachers*, and to be such even where there was no proper qualification.

## James Chapter 3

My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation. For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same *is* a perfect man, *and* able also to bridle the whole body.

James 3:1-2

### **James 3:1 My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation.**

**be not many masters** - "Be not many of you teachers." The word here rendered "masters" ( *didaskaloi*) should have been rendered " teachers."

**receive the greater condemnation** -The word condemnation," used here means judgment, trial, account;

The sense is that ministers must take the responsibility seriously, because their accountability is greater and they shall receive a stricter judgment.

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

**offend**, means to stumble, to fall; then to err, to fail in duty;

all were liable to commit error, and that this consideration should induce men to be cautious in seeking an office where an error would be likely to do so much injury.

the peculiar liability to commit error which James refers is to do wrong with the tongue. This liability is very great in an office where the very call is to public speaking.

**If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man** - Perfect in the sense that he is able to keep every other member of his body in subjection.

**able also to bridle the whole body** It is the tongue which gives expression to man's thoughts and passions; and if that is kept under proper restraint, all the rest of his members are as easily controlled as the horse is by having the control of the bit.

### James Chapter 3

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

James 3:3-4

#### **James 3:3 Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body**

as we control a horse by the bit - though the bit is a small thing - so the body is controlled by the tongue.

He who has a proper control over his tongue can govern his whole body, as he who holds a bridle governs and turns about the horse.

The Symbolism emphasize a small bit control a large animal.

#### **James 3:4 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**

This illustration is equally striking and obvious. A ship is a large object. It seems to be unmanageable by its vastness, and it is also impelled by driving storms. Yet it is easily managed by a small rudder; and he that has control of that, has control of the ship.

## James Chapter 3

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

James 3:5

**James 3:5 Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth**

**Even so the tongue is a little member** - Little compared with the body, as the bit or the rudder is, compared with the horse or the ship.

**Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth-** The sense is, that a very little fire can ignite a large quantity of materials, and that the tongue can do the same. A spark can kindle a large pile; and the tongue can set a neighbourhood "in a flame."

### James Chapter 3

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.

James 3:6

**James 3: 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**

**And the tongue is a fire** - In this sense, that it produces a disturbance and an agitation it may be compared with a huge fire produced by a small spark.

**A world of iniquity** - means "A little world of evil in itself". If all men would speak only that which ought to be spoken, what a change would come over the face of human affairs!

**So is the tongue among our members**, it defileth the whole body - It stains or pollutes the whole body.

**setteth on fire the course of nature**; the phrase means, *the wheel of birth* - that is, the wheel which is set in motion at birth, and which runs on through life

One naturally thinks, of a chariot driven with so much speed that its wheels by their rapid motion become self-ignited, and the chariot moves on amidst flames.

**And it is set on fire of hell** - that which causes the tongue to do so much evil derives its origin from hell.

The image is that of a torch which enkindles and burns everything as it goes along - a torch itself lighted at the fires of hell

### James Chapter 3

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

James 3:7-8

**James 3:7 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**

the power of the tongue, is measure by the fact that it is ungovernable, and that there is no power of man to keep it under control. Everything else but this has been tamed but not the tongue.

**James 3:8 But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison**

It would be possible to subdue virtually any kind of beasts, but this could not be done with the tongue.

**It is an unruly evil** - An evil without restraint, to which no certain and effectual check can be applied.

**Full of deadly poison** - That is, it acts on the happiness of man, and on the peace of society, as poison does on the human frame



### James Chapter 3

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

James 3:9-10

#### **James 3:9 There with bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God**

There with bless we God, ..... and therewith curse we men; both of these are done by the same tongue. This verbal organ, like all of the body, can be used for good or for evil.

#### **James 3:10 Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be**

The meaning here is that out of the mouth of man two such opposite things proceed.

No organ should be devoted to uses so unlike, and the mouth should be employed in giving utterance only to that which is just, benevolent, and good.

**My brethren, these things ought not so to be** - They are as inconsistent as it would be for the same fountain to send forth both salt water and fresh; or for the same tree to bear different kinds of fruit.

### James Chapter 3

Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet *water* and bitter? Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so *can* no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.

James 3:11-12

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

**Fresh water and salt,**

**fig tree, bear olive berries?**

**Either a vine, figs?** Such things do not occur in the works of nature, and they should not be found in man.

A fig-tree bears only figs; and so the tongue ought to give utterance only to one class of sentiments and emotions

The thought is that those who seek to be teachers, should have a self-discipline bridle on there tongue to avoid the damage the tongue can produce.

## James Chapter 3

*Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.*

James 3:13

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

**wise man and endued with knowledge** -The apostle means, that if there were such persons among them, they should be selected for that office, referred to in verse 1 (*ie public speaker or teacher*). It appears that reliance had been placed in them, which possessed the mere faculty of speaking only.

**Let him show out of a good conversation** - From a correct and consistent life and deportment.

**With meekness of wisdom** - With a wise and prudent gentleness of life; not in a noisy, arrogant, and boastful manner. True wisdom is always meek, mild, gentle; and that is the wisdom which is needful, if men would become public teachers.

### James Chapter 3

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

James 3:14

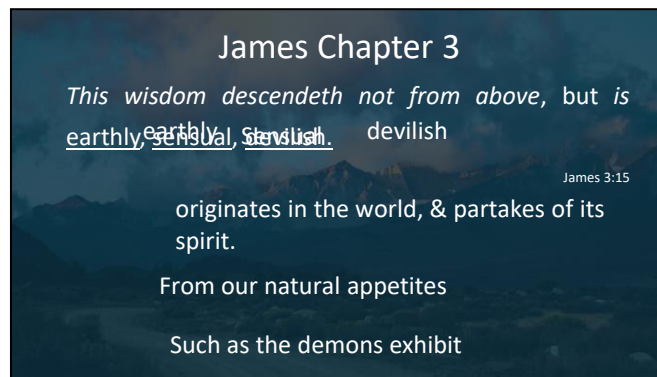
#### **James 3: 14 But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth**

**But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts** - If that is your characteristic. There is reference here to a fierce and unholy zeal against each other; a spirit of ambition and contention.

**Glory not** - Do not boast of your qualifications to be public teachers. Nothing would render one more unfit for such an office than such a spirit.

**And lie not against the truth** - it would be a lie to set up a claim to the qualified for such an office, if this is your spirit.

Men should seek no office or station which they could not properly seek if the whole truth about them were known.



**James 3:15 This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish**

**This wisdom descendeth not from above** - The wisdom here referred to is that carnal or worldly wisdom which produces strife and contention; that kind of knowledge which leads to self-conceit

**But is earthly** - Has its origin in this world, and partakes of its spirit. It is such as men exhibit who are governed only by worldliness and natural ambitions.

**Sensual** - " natural." meaning that which takes counsel of our natural appetites and propensities, and not of high and spiritual influences.

**devilish** - Demoniactal - Such as the demons exhibit. There may be indeed talent in it, but there is the intermingling of malignant passions, and it leads to contentions, strifes, divisions, and " every evil work."

## James Chapter 3

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

James 3:16

### **James 3:16 For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work**

**For where envying and strife is, there is confusion** - Everything is unsettled and agitated. There is no mutual confidence; there is no union of plan and effort; there is no co-operation in promoting a common object;

**And every evil work** - When a spirit of strife prevails all love and harmony are banished; all happiness disappears; Where this spirit prevails in a church, it is impossible to expect any progress in divine things;

## James Chapter 3

*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.*

James 3:17

**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**

**But the wisdom that is from above** - this does not refer to diplomas or degree but rather the wisdom which has a heavenly origin; the wisdom of God.

**Is first pure** - That is, the first effect of it on the mind is to make it pure. The influence on the man is to make him upright, sincere, candid, holy.

**Then peaceable** - The effect of the wisdom which is from above - will be to dispose a man to live in peace with all others

**And easy to be entreated** - The word here used means easily persuaded, compliant. Referring only to cases where it is right and proper to be easily persuaded and complying.

**Full of mercy** - Merciful; disposed to show compassion to others. This is one of the results of the wisdom that is from above; it makes us like God,

**And good fruits** - The fruits of the Spirit ( Gal 5:22) ;

**Without partiality** - The meaning seems be that the wisdom which is from above, or true religion, makes us impartial in our treatment of others: that is, we are not influenced by a regard to dress, rank, or station.

**And without hypocrisy** - meaning sincere. There is no disguise or mask. What the man presents himself to be, he is.

## James Chapter 3

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

James 3:18

### **James 3:18 And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace**

**And the fruit of righteousness** - Meaning that which the righteousness produces, or that which is the effect of true Christianity.

**Is sown in peace** - Is scattered over the world in a peaceful manner. It is not done amidst contentions, and brawls, and strifes.

**Of them that make peace** - By those who desire to produce peace, or who are of a peaceful temper and disposition.





The *evil* which the apostle seems to have referred to in this chapter, was a desire, which appears to have prevailed among those to whom he wrote, *to be public teachers*, and to be such even where there was no proper qualification.

## James Chapter 4

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

James 4:1

**James 4:1 From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members**

**From whence come wars and fightings among you?** The reference is to strifes and contentions of all kinds; and the question, is an important one, what was their source of contentions among them.

**Come they not hence, even of your lusts?** - This is the true source of all war and contention?

The word rendered "lusts" is in the margin rendered "pleasures." It denotes fighting's desire, appetite, lust, the indulgence of any corrupt propensity of the mind.

**That war in your members** - The word "member" denote the members of the body collectively; that is, the body itself as the seat of the desires and passions,

The word **war** here refers to the conflict between those passions which have their seat in the flesh and those righteous desire seated in the divine nature.

## James Chapter 4

*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.*

James 4:2

**James 4:2 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**

**Ye lust, and have not:** - you wish to have something to which you have no just claim, and this prompts to the effort to obtain it by force.

**Ye kill:** speaks of such a covetous desire for the possessions of others as to produce a murderous and bloody temper. All robberies and all wars are instigated by desire for wealth and possessions.

**desire to have, and cannot obtain** - states in a nutshell statement the cause of much of mans inhumanity to his fellow man.

**Ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not** - man engage sin contentions and strifes, yet does not obtain what is sought after. If you sought that from God which you truly need, you would obtain it, for he would bestow upon you all that is really necessary.

## James Chapter 4

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

James 4:3

### **James 4:3 Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts**

**Ye ask, and receive no** - It is not uncommon for men who go to war to pray, or to procure the services of a chaplain to pray for them. It sometimes happens that the covetous and the quarrelsome; that those who live to wrong others, and who are fond of litigation, pray.

**Because ye ask amiss** - Ye do it with a view to self-indulgence and carnal gratification.

**that ye may consume it upon your lusts** lusts makes reference to sensual gratifications, sensual pleasure, or carnal appetite.

## James Chapter 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.*

James 4:4

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

**Ye adulterers and adulteresses** - These words are frequently used to denote those who are faithless towards God, and are frequently applied to those who forsake God for idols,

the apostle doesn't mean that those to whom he wrote were literally guilty of the sins of adultery, but refers to those who were unfaithful to their covenant with God by neglecting their duty to him, and yielding themselves to the indulgence of their own lusts and passions.

**know ye not that the friendship of the world** this continue the thought of being unfaithful to their relationship with God the came into relationship with the world system

**Is enmity with God** - Is in fact hostility against God, since that world is arrayed against him. It neither obeys his laws, submits to his claims, nor seeks to honour him.

**Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world** - " Whoever" he may be, whether in the church or out of it.

**is the enemy of God** - Wherever there is a purpose to find our friends in the world rather than among Christians or a desire for smiles from the world rather than from God, there is enmity.

## James Chapter 4

*Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy? But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.*

James 4:5-6

### **James 4: 5 Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy**

**Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain** James did not refer to any particular passage, and did not mean to quote the words literally, but meant to refer to what was the current teaching or general spirit of the Old Testament;

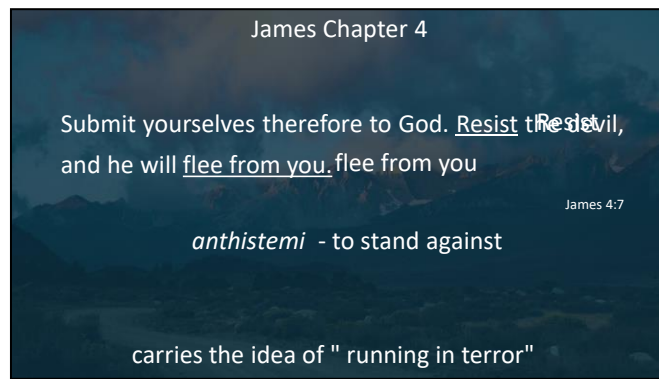
**The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy** mans spirit by nature is naturally prone to envy.

There is in man a strong inclination to look with dissatisfaction on the superior happiness and prosperity of others; to desire to make what they possess our own; or at any rate to deprive them of it by detraction, by fraud, or by robbery.

### **James 4:6 But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble**

**But he giveth more grace.** It is true that the natural man tends to envy, and thus leads to all the sad consequences of envy. But God gives grace so these feelings are subdued, and these consequences are prevented.

**God resisteth the proud** - The proud are those who have an inordinate self-esteem; who have a high and unreasonable conceit of their own excellence or importance.



**James 4: 7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you**

**therefore** links this phrase to the last statement. BECAUSE God does resist the proud, BECAUSE God does give grace to the humble THEREFORE submit your will to Him.

**Resist** comes from two Greek words: stand and against. ie "to stand against"

**Resist the devil,** - While you yield to God in all things, you are to yield to the devil in none. Resist comes from two Greek words: stand and against.

**he will flee from you** - the Greek translation of flee carries the idea of Satan "running in terror"

## James Chapter 4

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

James 4:8

### **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**

**Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.** - This declaration contains a great and important principle in religion. If we wish the favour of God, we must come to him; We can never hope for his Favor while we prefer to remain at a distance from him; none who in fact draw near to him will find him unwilling to bestow on them the blessings which they need

**Cleanse your hands,** - The heart is the seat of motives and intentions as the hands are the instruments by which we execute our hearts intention.

**Ye sinners** reflects James audience as having "dirty hands "and unclean intentions.

**purify your hearts,** - If the heart is wrong, nothing can be right. The thought is the hands are dirty because the heart is dirty.

**ye double minded** - The apostle here seems to have had his eye on those who were vacillating in their purposes; whose hearts were not decidedly fixed on holiness and submission.



## James Chapter 4

Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and *your* joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

James 4:9-10

### **James 4:9 Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness**

**Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep** - As we draw near to God, we will be convicted of our sin. So we are afflicted, and mourn, and weep under the conviction of sin, and we are compelled to find cleansing at the cross.

**let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness** It would seem that the persons referred to, instead of suitable sorrow and humiliation on account of sin, gave themselves to joyousness, mirth, and revelry.

It is often the case, that those for whom the deep sorrows of repentance would be appropriate give themselves instead to mirth and vanity

### **James 4:10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up**

**Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord** - be willing to take your appropriate place in the dust on account of your transgressions. As a God is the One against whom we have sinned and is the only one who can pardon, it is proper that we should humble ourselves before him.

**he shall lift you up** - And he shall lift you up - He will exalt you from the condition of a broken-hearted penitent to that of a forgiven child;

## James Chapter 4

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

James 4:11

*katalalia.* the sin of backbiting

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

**Speak not evil one of another** Humbling ourselves and getting right with God must result in our getting right with other people. When we are right with other people, it will show in the way we talk about them. So we must not speak evil of one another and not judge our brother.

**Speak evil** Gk: *katalalia.* the sin of those who meet in corners and gather in little groups and pass on confidential information which destroy the good name of those who are not there to defend themselves."

**He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law:** When we judge our brother, we put ourselves in the same place as the law, and in effect judge the law. This is something that we have no authority to do.

**but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge.** to set oneself as a judge of the law if different from following the law. To DO the law is to live a brother as oneself. To judge after the law is altogether different.

## James Chapter 4

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

James 4:12

### **James 4:12 There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another**

**There is one lawgiver** - There is but one who has a right to give law. all attempts to make other laws pertaining to religion binding on the conscience of Christians is a usurpation of Christ's prerogatives.

**who is able to save and to destroy:** - The idea here would seem to be, that he is able to save those whom you condemn, and to destroy you who pronounce a judgment on them.

**Who art thou that judgest another?** - " Who art thou, a weak and erring mortal, thyself accountable to that Judge, that thou shouldest interfere, and pronounce judgment on another, especially when he is doing only what that Judge permits him to do?"

There is nothing more decidedly condemned in the Scriptures than the habit of pronouncing a judgment on the motives and conduct of others.

There is nothing in which we are more liable to err, or to indulge in wrong feelings;

There is nothing which God claims more for himself as his peculiar prerogative

## James Chapter 4

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:

James 4:13

**James 4:13 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**

The phrase "**go to now**," ( age nun,) is a phrase designed to arrest attention, as if there were something that demanded their notice,

**Ye that say** - You that form your plans in this manner or that speak thus confidently of what you will do in the future.

**Today or tomorrow we will go into such a city** - That is, they say this without any proper sense of the uncertainty of life, and of their absolute dependence on God.

**And continue there a year** - designating the exact period during which they would remain, and when they would leave, without any reference to the will of God

**And buy and sell, and get gain** - It is not improbable that there is an allusion here to the commercial habits of the Jews at the time when the apostle wrote.

## James Chapter 4

Whereas ye know not what *shall be* on the morrow.  
For what *is* your life? It is even a vapour, that  
appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.  
For that ye *ought* to say, If the Lord will, we shall live,  
and do this, or that.

James 4:14-15

**James 4:14 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**

**Whereas, ye know not what shall be on the morrow** - They formed their plans as if they knew; what could not be known. They had no means of ascertaining what would occur; whether they would live or die; whether they would be prospered, or be impoverished.

**For what is your life?** - All plans must depend on the continuance of your life; but what a frail and uncertain thing is that!

**It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away**  
Life is compared to the vapor rising from a hot highway, as you approach it, it disappears. It is not only fleeing, it lacks real substance.

**James 4:15 For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that**

**For that ye ought to say** - Instead of what you do say, " we will go into such a city," you ought rather to recognize your absolute dependence on God, and feel that life and success are subject to his will.

**If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that** - This is proper, because we are wholly dependent on him for life, and as dependent on him for success. He alone can keep us, and he only can make our plans prosperous.

## James Chapter 4

But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil. Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth *it* not, to him it is sin.

James 4:16-17

### **James 4:16 But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil**

**But now ye rejoice in your boastings** - you boast of what you can do in yourself; your reliance on your own skill independent of Gods will and Word.

**all such rejoicing is evil** - It is founded on a wrong view of yourselves and of what may occur. It shows a spirit forgetful of our dependence on God;

### **James 4:17 Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin**

One is guilty of sin if he does not do what he knows to be good.

The meaning, in light of the prior verse would be: he who knows what sort of views he should take and how he should form his plans and still does not do it, but rather goes on recklessly, forming his plans boastingly and confident of success, is guilty of sin against God.



The *evil* which the apostle seems to have referred to in this chapter, was a desire, which appears to have prevailed among those to whom he wrote, *to be public teachers*, and to be such even where there was no proper qualification.

## James Chapter 5

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

James 5:1

**James 5:1 Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you**

**Go to now, ye rich men.** Come now, you rich: James has developed the idea of the need for complete dependence on God. He now naturally rebukes those most likely to live independently from God: the rich.

**weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you** Weep and howl: In the style of an Old Testament prophet, James tells the rich to mourn in consideration of their destiny (the miseries that are coming upon you). In the life to come, their riches will be revealed as corrupted, moth-eaten and corroded.



## James Chapter 5

Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.

James 5:2-3

**James 5:2-3 Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days**

James probably refers to the destruction of three kinds of wealth.

**Stores** of food are corrupted (rotted),

**garments** are moth-eaten, and

**gold and silver** are corroded.

Each one of them comes to nothing in their own way.

The corruptible nature of their riches will witness against them. On the day of judgment, it will be revealed that they have lived their lives in the arrogant independence of God, heaping up earthly treasure in the last days, when they should have been heaping up treasure in heaven

## James Chapter 5

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

James 5:4-5

**James 5: 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**

**They have withheld the wages of their laborers.** They have lived indulgently without regard for others (as the man in Jesus' story about the rich man and Lazarus, Luke 16:19-31). They have condemned and murdered & oppressed from their position of power.

The phrase " **who have reaped down your fields,**" is used to denote labour in general.

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

**Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth** - *Pleasure* is one of the things to which the rich are peculiarly addicted. Their wealth is supposed to be of value, because it furnishes them the means of seeking it.

**and been wanton** The Greek *spatalao* means, to live luxuriously or voluptuously and It does not refer necessarily to gross criminal pleasures. There is a close connection between the previous verses and the wonton lifestyle. The oppression of others, and the withholding of what is due to those who labour are commonly resorted to in order to obtain the means of luxurious living, and the gratification of sensual pleasures.

**ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter** The meaning is, that they appeared to have been fattening themselves, like stall-fed beasts, for the day of slaughter. As cattle are carefully fed, and are fattened with a view to their being slaughtered

## James Chapter 5

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

James 5:6

### James 5:6 Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you

**Ye have condemned and killed the just** - meaning that they had persecuted those who were Christians by their harsh treatment in withholding what was due to them, they had deprived them of the means of subsistence, and had, as it were, killed the righteous.

**he doth not resist you** - the "just man" whom they condemned and killed; meaning that they were so powerful that all attempts to resist them would be vain, and that the injured and oppressed could do nothing but submit patiently to their acts of injustice and violence.

## James Chapter 5

Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

James 5:7-8

**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**

**Be patient therefore, brethren:** James brought the issue of the ultimate judgment before us in his remarks about the ungodly rich and their destiny. Now he calls Christians (especially those enduring hardship) to patiently endure until 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** A farmer does not give up when his crop does not come to harvest immediately. He keeps on working even when the crop cannot be seen at all. Even so Christians must work hard and exercise patient endurance even when the harvest day seems far away.

**James 5: 8 Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh**

**Be ye also patient** - As the farmer is patient. In due time, as he expects the return of the rain, so you may anticipate deliverance from your trials

**Stablish your hearts** - Let your purposes and your faith be firm and unwavering. Do not become weary and fretful; but bear with constancy all that is laid upon you, until the time of your deliverance shall come.

**for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh** These things of which the Apostle speaks will probably continue in one way or another until the coming of The Lord. As long as they occur, Christians are to maintain patient endurance.

## James Chapter 5

Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door. Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience.

James 5:9-10

### **James 5:9 Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door**

**Grudge not one against another, brethren: lest ye be condemned:** Times of hardship can cause us to be less than loving with our Christian brothers and sisters. James reminds us that we cannot become grumblers and complainers in our hardship, lest we be condemned even in our hardship.

**behold, the judge standeth before the door:** Jesus comes as a Judge, not only to judge the world, but also to assess the faithfulness of Christians (2 Corinthians 5:10). In light of this, we cannot allow hardship to make us unloving towards each other.

### **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**

**Take, my brethren, the prophets** - That is, in your trials and persecutions. To encourage them to the exercise of patience, he points them to the example of those who had trod the same thorny path before them.

**an example of suffering affliction, and of patience** - That is, they showed us how evils are to be borne.

## James Chapter 5

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.

James 5:11

**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**

**Behold, we count them happy which endure,....** Affliction; for such shall be saved; they are happy now, and hereafter for the Spirit of God, and of glory, rests upon them;

**Ye have heard of the patience of Job** - As one of the most illustrious instances of patient sufferers. The book of Job was written, among other reasons, to show that true religion would bear any form of trial to which it could be subjected.

**And have seen the end of the Lord** - That is, the end or design which the Lord had in the trials of Job, or the result to which he brought the case at last

**Job 42: 12** So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning

## James Chapter 5

But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation.

James 5:12

**James 5:12 But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation**

**But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath:** The manner in which James speaks of the practice referred to here, shows that he regarded it as a sin of a very heinous nature; The habit of swearing by various things was a very common one among the Jews, and it was important to guard those who from among them had been converted to Christianity on that subject.

**but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay;** Let there be a simple affirmation, unaccompanied by any oath or appeal to God or to any of his works. A man who makes that his common method of speech is the man who will be believed.

The need to swear or make oaths, beyond a simple and clear yes or no betrays the weakness of your word. It demonstrates that there is not enough weight in your own character to confirm your words

**Lest you fall into condemnation** - *condemnation*, for profaning the name of God. "The Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain,"

## James Chapter 5

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

James 5:13

**James 5:13 Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.**

**afflicted** - *Ikakopatheí*. refers to suffering evil of any kind, sickness, bereavement, disappointment, persecutions, loss of health or property.

the form of the trial does not matter, the solution is always prayer. It is an inestimable privilege which all have to go to God in prayer.

**Is any merry** - merry refers to a state of mind free from trouble - the opposite of affliction - happy,

**let him sing psalms.** Praise is appropriate to such a state of mind. The heart naturally gives utterance to its emotions in songs of thanksgiving.



## James Chapter 5

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:

James 5:14

**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**

**Is any sick among you?** - In the previous verse the reference was to affliction in general,

**let him call for the elders of the church;** the apostle says they should " call" for the elders of the church; that is, they should send for them. They should not wait for them to hear of their sickness.

**Let him pray over him:** it is a privilege to have some one to lead his thoughts in devotion. Besides, the prayer of a good man may be of avail in restoring him to health,

**Anointing him with oil** - Oil, or unguents of various kinds, were much used among the ancients, both in health and in sickness. For the modern Christian oil is be employed as a point of faith. Their power is in prayer and not in the oil.

**In the name of the Lord** - By the authority or direction of the Lord;

**mark 16:17** And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover

## James Chapter 5

And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess *your* faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

James 5:15-16

**James 5:15 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**

**And the prayer of faith** - The prayer offered in faith. A belief that God will do what is best, and a cheerful committing of the cause into his hands.

**shall save the sick**, This must be understood with this restriction, that they will be restored to health if it shall be the will of God;

**James 5:16 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**

**Confess your faults one to another** - This seems primarily to refer to those who were sick, since it is added, " that ye may be healed." The case supposed all along here (see Jam 5:15) is, that the sickness referred to had been brought upon the patient for his sins, apparently as a punishment for some particular transgressions.

**And pray one for another** - One for the other; mutually. The apostle does not seem hereto refer particularly to the prayers of the ministers of religion, or the elders of the church, but refers to it as a duty pertaining to all Christians.

**The effectual fervent prayer** - The Greek word ( *energoumene*) would be better rendered by the word energetic, which indeed is derived from it. The word properly refers to that which has power; which in its own nature is fitted to produce an effect.

**Of a righteous man** - The quality on which the success of the prayer depends is not the talent, learning, rank, wealth, or office of the man who prays, but the fact that he is a " righteous man," ie in right standing with God by imputation.

**Availeth much** - *ischuei*. Is strong; has efficacy; prevails.

## James Chapter 5

Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.

James 5:17-18

**James 5:17 Elias 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**

**Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are** - The apostle is illustrating the efficacy of prayer. In doing this, he refers to an undoubted case where prayer had such efficacy. But to this it might be objected that Elijah was a distinguished prophet, and that it was reasonable to suppose that his prayer would be heard.

**and he prayed** All men are of like passions, but all do not pray. The reference here is undoubtedly to 1Ki 17:1.

**That it might not rain** - Not to gratify any private resentment of his, but as a punishment on the land

**James 5:18 And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit**

And the earth brought forth her fruit - The famine ceased, and the land again became productive. The case referred to here was indeed a miracle, but it was a case of the power of prayer, and therefore to the point. If God would work a miracle in answer to prayer, it is reasonable to presume that he will bestow upon us the blessings which we need in the same way.

## James Chapter 5

Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.

James 5:19-20

### **James 5:19 Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him**

#### **Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth -**

theologically, by embracing error; or  
practically, by falling into sinful practices.

Either of these may be called " erring from the truth," because they are contrary to what the truth teaches and requires

**And one convert him** - This does not mean " convert him as a sinner, or regenerate him," but turn him from the error of his way; bring him back from his wanderings; re-establish him in the truth

### **James 5:20 Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins**

**That he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way** - This is universal truth that he who turns a sinner from a wicked path does a work which is acceptable to God.

**shall save a soul from death,** The word *death* here must refer to eternal death. There is no other death which the soul is in danger of dying. The body dies and moulders away, but the soul is immortal.