

James Chapter 1

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

We see in this very first verse, that James did not mention the fact that he was the half-brother of Jesus in the flesh.

He was so humbled by the fact that, he had not immediately realized who Jesus was.

He, like Mary, was the family of Jesus in the flesh, but he fully realized that Jesus was his Lord.

He calls himself servant, that we see in the verse above, to show his total submission to the service of the Lord.

At the time James wrote this, the twelve tribes had not returned to Israel.

James, at the resurrection of the Lord, had submitted himself to not only salvation through Jesus, but had dedicated his life to His service.

It is easy to understand why James did not believe Jesus to be the Messiah at first, because they were raised together as children.

“Twelve tribes”:

A common New Testament title for Jews.

When the kingdom split after Solomon’s reign, 10 tribes constituted the northern kingdom, called Israel and Benjamin and Judah combined to form the southern kingdom, called Judah.

After the fall and deportation of the northern kingdom to Assyria (722 B.C.), some of the remnant of those in the 10 northern tribes filtered down into Judah and came to Jerusalem to worship (2 Chron. 29, 30, 34), thus preserving all 12 tribes in Judah’s land.

Although tribal identity could not be established with certainty after the southern kingdom was led captive by Babylon (586 B.C.), the prophets foresaw a time when God would reconstitute the whole nation and delineate each person’s tribal membership once again (Isaiah 11:12-13; Jer. 3:18; 50:4; Ezek. 37; Rev. 7:5-8).

“Scattered Abroad”:

The Greek word diaspora, which literally means “through a sowing” (John 7:35), became a technical term referring to Jews living outside the land of Palestine (1 Peter 1:1).

Besides the expulsions from the land by the Assyrians and Babylonians, many Jews were taken to Rome as slaves when the Romans conquered them (in 63 B.C).

In addition, during the centuries leading up to Christ’s first coming, thousands of Jews drifted out of Israel and settled throughout the Mediterranean world.

But James primary audience was those who were scattered because of persecution.

Verses 2-3

In this epistle on Christian living, James opens with a most crucial topic: the trials of life.

These verses describe the various testings, whether from the world and Satan, or from God, into which godly Christians fall.

These “negative” experiences are to be accepted with great joy, not for the sake of the trial itself but because of the positive work God can accomplish through the testing.

The words (that are both in verses 2 and 3; temptations and trying), are often regarded as virtually being synonymous.

If this were true, then trials themselves would produce spiritual maturity.

But they do not.

Often, testings make Christians bitter instead of better, with no spiritual growth occurring.

The Greek word for “trying - (dokimion), might be better translated as “approving.”

It is not merely one’s presence in such trials, but one’s victory over them that brings spiritual growth and maturity.

Those Christians whom God can use the most are those whom God has bruised the most.

James 1:2 "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;"

“Count it all joy”:

The Greek word for “count” may also be translated “consider” or “evaluate”. The natural human response to trials (see below), is not to rejoice.

Therefore the believer must make a conscious commitment to face them with joy.

“Brethren”:

Believing Jews among those scattered.

“Temptations”:

Also meaning trials and this word connotes trouble, or something that breaks the pattern of peace, comfort, joy and happiness in someone’s life.

The verb for trials means “to put someone or something to the test,” with the purpose of discovering that person’s nature or that thing’s quality.

God brings such tests to prove and increase, the strength and quality of one’s faith and to demonstrate its validity (verses 2-12).

Every trial becomes a test of faith designed to strengthen: If the believer fails the test by wrongly responding, that test then becomes a temptation, or a solicitation to evil.

James gets right to the subject of his letter in this verse.

There was much persecution in the church in this day.

James just says to face the problems that arise and grow from those problems.

James speaks to them as brothers in Christ.

It is difficult to see when we are facing temptations, but there is a lesson to be learned in each one of them.

Jesus faced every temptation when he went to the mountain and fasted forty days and nights.

The main lesson to be learned in the temptation is that God will help us face the problem.

He will see us through, if we will place our trust in Him.

1 Corinthians 10:13 "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God [is] faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear [it]." Knowing that we are to grow through this temptation should bring us joy."

James 1:3 "Knowing [this], that the trying of your faith worketh patience."

“Trying”:

This means “proof”, or “proving”.

Patience or endurance:

Through tests, a Christian will learn to withstand tenaciously the pressure of a trial until God removes it at His appointed time and even cherish the benefit.

Now we are looking at one of the benefits of temptations.

Most of us are not patient at all, before we are saved.

If we are to take on the likeness of Christ, then we must also become patient. We see a very good example of this in Job in the Old Testament.

He faced great temptation and patiently waited for an answer from God.

The end of the temptation was victory for him.

James 1:4 "But let patience have [her] perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."

“Perfect”:

Not a reference to sinless perfection (3:2), but to spiritual maturity (1 John 2:14).

The testing of faith drives believers to deeper communion and greater trust in Christ, qualities that in turn produce a stable, godly and righteous character (1 Peter 5:10; Gal. 4:19).

The natural response to adversity is to escape it.

But God uses trouble to mature His people.

When we pray, we usually want to see an instant answer to our prayer.

We are not instantly transformed into that perfect Christian that we all desire to be, and our prayers are many times not answered immediately either.

There is a growing process to become the person we want to be.

Ephesians 4:13 "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ:"

When we are saved, we have just entered the path that leads to righteousness.

We grow in the Lord and His righteousness as we are instructed in His Word.

We then must apply the instructions that we have learned to practical living so we then become that full Christian.

The Bible says that we must be fed milk and honey, until we grow into the mature Christian who can handle the meat of the Word.

We will see the victory, if we patiently wait for it.

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."

"Wisdom":

James' Jewish audience recognized this as the understanding and practical skill that were necessary to live life to God's glory.

It was not a wisdom of philosophical speculation, but the wisdom contained in the pure and peaceable absolutes of God's will revealed in His Word and lived out.

Only such divine wisdom enables believers to be joyous and submissive in the trials of life.

"Ask of God":

This command is a necessary part of the believer's prayer life (Job 28:12-23; Prov. 3:5-7; 1 Thess. 5:17).

God intends that trials will drive believers to greater dependency on Him, by showing them their own inadequacy.

As with all His riches, God has wisdom in abundance (see Romans 11:33), available for those who seek it.

This verse is not a blanket promise of wisdom for any situation.

In the context of life's trials, it probably speaks of the believer being granted;

(1)Wisdom as to the reason for his trials; and

(2)Wisdom to endure them.

Wisdom is a gift from God.

Knowledge is accumulated learning.

The best way to grow in the Lord then, would be to pray that God will give you the gift of wisdom and understanding.

Ask God for the Holy Spirit to be your Teacher and Guide.

Then study the Word of God, and grow in the Word, and in experience.

God is very willing to give good gifts to His children who ask.

When we ask, we must believe that we receive, and we shall have what we ask. God does not just indiscriminately pour out wisdom on everyone.

We must pray and ask, and then we will receive it.

God is not like man that would remind you constantly that he had given you a gift. God attaches no strings to the things He gives us.

He gives them to us, because He loves us.

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."

"Ask in faith":

Prayer must be offered with confident trust in a sovereign God.

"Not wavering":

This refers to having one's thinking divided within himself, not merely because of mental indecision but an inner moral conflict or distrust in God.

"Wave of the sea":

The person who doubts God's ability or willingness to provide this wisdom is like the billowing, restless sea, moving back and forth with its endless tides, never able to settle.

It is useless to pray and ask for something, if you do not believe you will get an answer from God to that prayer.

Faith is what causes the prayer to be answered.

When Jesus healed the sick, He said, your faith has made you whole.

Mark 11:24 "Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive [them], and ye shall have [them]."

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

This is speaking of the man that wavereth.

His faith is not constant.

His faith is like the tree that falls over when the slightest wind comes.

He says he believes, but he does not believe in his heart.

The following is what Jesus said to the man who came to him for help for his son.

Mark 9:23 "Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things [are] possible to him that believeth."

Now we see the correct thing to do, if we see that our faith is wavering.

Mark 9:24 "And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief."

He believed, but he wanted Jesus to help him believe even more.

This type of faith is honored by the Father, because the desire of our heart is to believe.

James 1:8 "A double minded man [is] unstable in all his ways."

"A double minded man":

A literal translation of the Greek expression that denotes having one's mind or soul divided between God and the world.

This man is a hypocrite, who occasionally believes in God but fails to trust Him when trials come, and thus receives nothing.

The use of this expression (in 4:8), makes it clear that it refers to an unbeliever. This is speaking of an unstable person, who cannot make up his mind.

He really does not truly believe anything.

His heart is not right with God.

Verses 9-11

At first sight, these verses seem unrelated to the larger theme of life's trials.

Yet money is a common cause of trials and "double-mindedness" (unreliability).

James is teaching us here to adopt a non-materialistic worldview.

Wealth is meaningless in the face of certain death.

Rather, we must focus upon God's view of exaltation and lowliness.

Both positions are true of all believers.

But the lowly need to be encouraged that they are exalted before God, whereas the exalted need to hear a message of humiliation.

Compare Paul's statement (in 1 Corinthians 7:22).

Verses 9-10 "Brother of low degree ... the rich":

Trials make all believers equally dependent on God and bring them to the same level with one another by keeping them from becoming preoccupied with earthly things.

Poor Christians and wealthy ones can rejoice that God is no respecter of persons and that they both have the privilege of being identified with Christ.

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

“Rejoice”:

Or glory.

This word refers to the boasting of a privilege or possession; it is the joy of legitimate pride.

Although having nothing in this world, the poor believer can rejoice in his high spiritual standing before God by grace and the hope which that brings (Romans 8:17-18; 1 Peter 1:4).

You do not have to be rich or even thought of highly in the community, to come to Christ.

Christianity is for whosoever will.

Brother means that he is a believer in Christ.

He may have a lowly task to do here on the earth, but that has nothing to do with his position with Christ.

Brothers in Christ are all the same in the sight of God.

They all have the same Father.

Christians are sons of God.

There are no class distinctions in Christ.

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

“He is made low”:

Refers to the rich believer who is being brought low by trials.

Such experiences help him rejoice and realize that genuine happiness and contentment depend on the true riches of God’s grace, not earthly wealth.

This is really speaking of those who trust in riches.

When we die, we do not take earthly riches to heaven with us.

The only wealth we have in heaven is the wealth we stored there while we were yet on the earth.

The rich man and the poor man came into the world naked, and they shall not carry anything with them when they leave this world.

The poor man will be brought up to the level of the rich, and the rich will be brought down to the level of the poor.

Our body, that we live in here on the earth, is not our eternal body.

This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. We will be changed, made suitable for heaven.

Our earthly body is like the grass; here today and gone tomorrow.

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."

“Grass ... flower”:

A picture of Palestine’s flowers and flowering grasses, which colorfully flourish in February and dry up by May.

A clear allusion to (Isaiah 40:6-8), which speaks of the scorching sirocco wind that burns and destroys plants in its path.

This picture from nature illustrates how divinely wrought death and judgment can quickly end the wealthy person’s dependence on material possessions.

It is best not to put your trust in earthly possessions that pass away.

We just use them for a little while on the earth, and then they pass on to someone else. Our earthly body is not made for eternity.

It is just a house we dwell in here on the earth.

This is not speaking of the Godly rich, but of those who have ways that cause them to be rich. This is speaking of those who are thinking, not of life eternal, but life in the here and now. The rich, who put their trust in their wealth, have no future with God.

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."

"Endureth temptation":

This means those who persevere patiently and stand firm under trial, victoriously passing the test of such pressure, will receive due reward for their faithfulness.

The "crown of life" (mentioned here and Revelation 2:10), is the special crown for martyrs.

In this context, endureth also describes the passive, painful survival of a trial and focuses on the victorious outcome.

Such a person never relinquishes his saving faith in God.

Thus, this concept is closely related to the doctrine of eternal security and also the perseverance of the believer.

"Blessed":

Believers who successfully endure trials are truly happy.

"Tried":

Meaning passed the test.

The believer has successfully and victoriously gone through his trials, indicating he is genuine because his faith has endured like Job's.

"Crown of life":

Best translated "the crown which is life".

In the ancient world, the term "crown" refers to a wreath of flowers presented to winners in athletic games and to special awards bestowed on statesmen, soldiers and distinguished citizens.

Here, it denotes the believer's ultimate reward, eternal life, which God has promised to him and will grant in full at death or at Christ's coming.

At the judgment seat of Christ, this promised crown will be awarded both to the martyrs and those who are victorious over severe temptations, persecutions, and adversities through both faith and dedication.

Mankind understandably may look on tragedy as the curse of God, as Job's friends did.

Trials are, however, the means through which God's blessings can come, where a person's endurance in and the victory over trials bring God's blessings.

Christians therefore, are not instructed to seek avenues of escape, God desires that they mature in the situation rather than move from it (Romans 5:3-5; 1 Peter 1:6-7).

He does however, promise to provide an escape if the testing becomes unbearable (1 Cor. 10:13).

God's people need to meditate more on (James 1:12 than 1 Cor. 10:13).

The reason for this, and why God allows trials in the lives of His people, is revealed in the Mosaic Law: "That he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end" (Deut. 8:16).

In this life, we have temptations, trials, and tribulation.

It is not the temptation that ruins the man, but his attitude toward the temptation.

We should willingly endure whatever temptation comes our way, like the good soldier of Christ that we profess to be.

Those who live and overcome the temptations they suffer, have awaiting them a crown of life.

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."

If we love Him, we will keep His commandments.

We will stay firmly rooted in Jesus Christ our Redeemer.

We will be built on the Rock that cannot be moved.

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

James Chapter 1

1. Who was the probable writer of James?
2. Why did the author speak of him as half-brother?
3. Name some of the men called James in the Bible.
4. Which James was killed soon after the resurrection of Jesus?
5. When did James, the brother of Jesus, become a Christian?
6. Why was James chosen to be the head of the church in Jerusalem?
7. What was different about the way Paul looked at Christianity, and the way James looked at it?
8. Why was there this difference, really?
9. Why was James taught the Jewish law?
10. Who was this letter addressed to?
11. Can the Christians value from it?
12. When was it written approximately?
13. Who does James call himself in the first verse?
14. Even though James was Jesus' half-brother, James still accepted Him as his _____.
15. Why had James not accepted Jesus as Messiah immediately?
16. What advice did James give these believers about their problems?
17. Why should we joy in temptations?
18. The trying of your faith worketh _____.
19. How do we become a full Christian?
20. How can we get wisdom?
21. What is knowledge?
22. Who should be our Teacher and Guide?
23. What two things should we grow in?
24. How are we to ask for wisdom?
25. Those that waver are like what?
26. If thou canst believe, _____.
27. What is double-minded speaking of?
28. How are Christian brothers, rich are poor, alike?
29. What is our shortness of physical life compared to in verse 10?

James Chapter 1 Continued

Verses 13-15

The temptation (of verses 13-15), differs from that (in verses 2-12), as the context shows.

Here the source is identified as internal, from one's own "lust", and the outcome is "death".

In verses 2-12, the "temptations" or trials have an external origin in that they fall on man.

The trials of verses 2-12, cannot be avoided, so believers are encouraged to endure them, and mature as a result.

The temptations of verses 13-15, must be avoided, according to God's express commandments analogy in the physical life cycle: conception, birth, maturity and death.

James uses the words with the same Greek root in verses 2-12 and 13-15, to express some different concepts.

Outwardly, trials and temptations may appear the same, and what may start as a trial may develop into temptation, if not properly answered by the Word of God.

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:"

The same Greek word translated "trials" (verses 2-12), is also translated "tempted" here.

James' point is that every difficult circumstance that enters a believer's life can either strengthen him if he obeys God and remains confident in His care, or become a solicitation to evil if the believer chooses instead to doubt God and disobey His Word.

"God cannot be tempted":

God by; His holy nature has no capacity for evil or vulnerability to it (Hab. 1:13; Lev. 19:2; Isa 6:3; 1 Peter 1:16).

"Neither tempteth he any man":

God purposes trials to occur and in them He allows temptation to happen, but He has promised not to allow more than believers can endure and never without a way to escape (1 Cor. 10:13).

They choose whether to take the escape God provides or to give in (2 Sam. 24:1; 1 Chron. 21:1).

We had been discussing in the last lesson the tribulations and temptations of man.

Temptations come to make us strong in the Lord.

God allows the devil to tempt us.

He does not bring the temptation Himself.

It is actually the lust of the flesh which tempts mankind.

We discovered in the last lesson that to withstand temptation of the flesh from the devil, brings us a crown of life.

Not only does it bring us a crown of life, but it makes us stronger with each temptation that we can overcome.

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

"Drawn or carried away":

The Greek word was used to describe wild game being lured into traps.

Just as animals can be drawn to their deaths by attractive baits, temptation promises people something good, which is actually harmful.

"Enticed":

A fishing term that means "to capture" or "to catch with bait" (2 Peter 2:14, 18).

It is parallel to "carried away".

"His own lust":

This refers to the strong desire of the human soul to enjoy or acquire something that will fulfill the flesh.

Man's fallen nature has the propensity to strongly desire whatever sin will satisfy it.

"His own":

This describes the individual nature of lust, it is different for each person as a result of inherited tendencies, environment, upbringing, and personal choices.

The Greek grammar also indicates that the "lust" is the direct agent or cause of one's sinning (Matthew 15:18-20).

We know this to be true, with the example of Adam and Eve.

The first mistake she made was to listen to that old deceiver Satan.

Then she looked upon that which was forbidden.

The lust of mankind has always been the thing that causes man to sin.

We have said it over and over in these lessons.

We must get our flesh under the control of the spirit to avoid sin in our life.

The temptation is sometimes very great, but our will to do God's will must be greater than the temptation itself.

It is not a sin to be tempted.

It is a sin to fall to the temptation.

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

Sin is not merely a spontaneous act, but the result of a process.

The Greek words for “hath conceived” and “bringeth forth sin” liken the process to physical conception and birth.

Thus, James personifies temptation and shows that it can follow a similar sequence and produce sin with all its deadly results.

While sin does not result in spiritual death for the believer, it can lead to physical death (1 Cor. 11:30; 1 John 5:16).

The wages of sin is death.

The only reason Christians do not have to pay those wages, is because Jesus paid it for us. "Conceived":

In the verse above, means catch, help, or take.

Then when lust has taken control, the person sins.

We must get the flesh under control.

Paul spoke of even whipping his body into line daily.

This probably did not mean a physical whipping, but a taming of his flesh.

The flesh of man is sinful.

“All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” (Romans 3:23).

We must receive forgiveness for our sins through the shed blood of Jesus Christ, and then go and sin no more.

James 1:16 "Do not err, my beloved brethren."

“Do not err”:

The Greek expression refers to erring, going astray, or wandering.

Christians are not to make the mistake of blaming God rather than themselves for their sin. This is just saying, walk in the salvation you have received.

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 ... perfect gift is from above”:

The two different Greek words for “gift” emphasize the perfection and inclusiveness of God’s Holy graciousness.

The first denotes the act of giving and the second is the object given.

Everything related to divine giving is adequate, complete and beneficial.

“Father of lights”:

An ancient Jewish expression for God as the Creator, with “light” referring to the sun, moon and stars (Gen. 1:14-19).

“No variableness, neither shadow of turning”:

From man’s perspective, the celestial bodies have different phases of movement and rotation, change from day to night and vary in intensity and shadow.

But God does not follow that pattern as He is changeless (Mal. 3:6; 1 John 1:5).

Three great principles are presented:

(1) God is the Father, or Creator, of the heavenly bodies;

(2) As their Creator, He is certainly more stable than they. With God, there is not even the slightest change, He is immutable;

(3) God is only good, and always good.

This third principle relates (verse 17), to the proceeding context.

It answers the implication (of verse 13), that God may sometimes tempt man to evil.

Though God tries the saints (John 6:6; Heb. 11:17), He never tries with evil intent to tempt them.

Immutability of God: Since all changes are either for the better or for the worse, God is unchanging because He is perfect and cannot get better nor become worse.

The Scriptures describe God’s nature, will and character as immutable or unchanging. To be immutable, does not mean to be immobile.

God also has the qualities of personality and can act, think, create, and make decisions. God is unchanging. Therefore, Christians can depend on His love and power, because God has not changed since biblical times. God is the same, today, yesterday, and forever.

God does not change.

God is the source of all Light.

Jesus called Himself the Light of the world.

The Light is so bright there is no shadow where God is.

Ephesians 4:8 "Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men."

These gifts that Jesus gave the believers are spiritual gifts.

Romans 6:23 "For the wages of sin [is] death; but the gift of God [is] eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Romans 11:29 "For the gifts and calling of God [are] without repentance."

Romans 12:6 "Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, [let us prophesy] according to the proportion of faith;"

Romans 12:7-8 "Or ministry, [let us wait] on [our] ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching;"

"Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, [let him do it] with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness."

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":

This phrase translates a Greek word that makes the point that regeneration is not just a wish, but an active expression of God's will, which He always has the power to accomplish.

This phrase occurs at the beginning of the Greek sentence, which means James intends to emphasize that the sovereign will of God is the source of this new life.

"Begat he us":

The divine act of regeneration, or the new birth.

"Word of truth":

Scripture, or the Word of God.

He regenerates sinners through the power of that Word (2. Cor. 6:7; Col. 1:5; 1 Thess. 2:13; Titus 3:5; 1 Peter 1:23-25).

"Firstfruits":

Originally an Old Testament expression referring to the first and best harvest crops, which God expected as an offering (Exodus 23:19; Lev. 23:9-14; Deut. 26:1-19).

Giving God that initial crop was an act of faith that He would fulfill His promise of a full harvest to come.

In the same way, Christians are the first evidence of God's new creation that is to come (2 Peter 3:10-13), and enjoy presently in their new life a foretaste of future glory.

All the redeemed are God's firstfruits in that they are the first step in God's redemption of all creation (Romans 8:18-23).

In the first chapter of John, we read that the Word was God.

We also read, that all things that were made were made, by that same Word.

On the day of Pentecost, when the Spirit fell on the 120 Christians, they became first-fruit offerings to the Lord.

Ephesians 1:13-14 "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," "Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."

We see in the verse following that those who follow the Lamb (Jesus Christ), are spoken of as firstfruits.

Revelation 14:4 "These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, [being] the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb."

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

"Swift to hear, slow to speak":

Believers are to respond positively to Scripture, and eagerly pursue every opportunity to know God's Word and will better.

But at the same time, they should be cautious about becoming a preacher or teacher too quickly.

This is a key verse because it expresses three topics that James develops later: hearing (verses 19-27); speaking (3:1-12), and wrath (4:1-12).

In view of the things he has already mentioned, James says, listen and don't talk too much.

Usually if we listen carefully to what someone is saying, before we speak, we will not get angry.

It is just a misunderstanding that causes wrath.

Let the other person explain, so you can avoid problems.

We are cautioned in Proverbs to listen and not talk so much.

It even says, if you listen more than you talk, they will believe you are smart, whether you actually are or not.

James 1:20 "For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God."

"Wrath":

From the Greek word that describes a deep, internal resentment and rejection, in this context, of God's Word (Gal. 4:16).

Trials require silence and patience because talk inflames anger, and anger inflames talk.

Anger also distracts from listening to God.

Jesus was slow to anger.

In fact, He was a very patient person.

If we are to be like our Leader, Jesus Christ, then we must be of a quiet nature as well. The Bible calls it longsuffering.

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."

"Lay apart":

Having put off, as one would do with dirty clothes.

The tense of this Greek verb stresses the importance of putting off sin prior to receiving God's Holy Word.

"Filthiness ... naughtiness":

The first term was used of moral vice as well as dirty garments.

Sometimes it was even used of ear wax, here of sin that would impede the believer's spiritual hearing.

"Filthiness" here refers to evil desire or intent. "Engrafted word":

This might better be translated "implanted word" and may reflect Christ's parable of the seed planted in the four different soils (Matt. 13:3-9).

Both Christ and James focus on the proper hearing of God's Word (Matt. 13:13, 19, 20, 22, 23). One needs to hear that Word, for it is "able to save your souls".

Though this phrase accurately describes the Word's ability to preserve and mature the Christians' life through trials.

"Superfluity":

This in the verse above, means abundance.

To lay aside the naughtiness in our life, would be to crucify this old man of flesh and let our spirit rule over the flesh.

It is the Word of God (Jesus Christ), who saves our soul.

This is speaking of being so full of Jesus and His Word (Bible), that we will have His Word implanted in our inner-most being.

Our heart will be stayed upon God and His Word, and that will cause us to live the way that we should live.

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

"But be ye doers":

The fact that James calls professing believers to be "doers," rather than simply to do, emphasizes that their entire personality should be characterized in that way.

"Deceiving":

Literally "reason beside or alongside" (as in beside oneself).

This word was used in mathematics to refer to a miscalculation.

Professing Christians who are content with only hearing the Word, have made a very serious spiritual miscalculation.

Even the scribes and Pharisees were hearers of the Word of God.

The devil spirits even heard and believed, but they were not doers.

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

They believe, but they decided to follow Lucifer instead of God.

We may say we are Christians, but the real test is, do we live what we profess? Are we just saying and not doing?

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:"

"Beholding":

A forceful Greek word meaning to observe carefully and cautiously, as opposed to taking a causal glance.

"Glass":

First century mirrors were not glass but metallic, made of bronze, silver or for the wealthy, gold.

The metals were beaten flat and polished to a high gloss, and the image they reflected was adequate but not perfect (1 Cor. 13:12).

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

"Forgetteth what manner of man he was":

Unless professing Christians act promptly after they hear the Word, they will forget the changes and improvements that their reflection showed them they need to make.

This really is speaking of someone who professes Christianity, but lives like the world. This is like people who get baptized and then go back to their old way of life.

When we repent and are saved, and baptized, we become a brand new creature. Old desires to sin should be gone.

We are not the image we were before we are in Christ.

What manner of man are you?

Are you Christ-like, or worldly?

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."

"Perfect law":

In both the Old Testament and New Testament, God's revealed, inerrant, sufficient and comprehensive Word is called "law" (Psalm 19:7).

The presence of His grace does not mean there is no moral law or code of conduct for believers to obey. Believers are enabled by the Spirit to keep it.

"Liberty":

Genuine freedom from sin.

As the Holy Spirit applies the principles of Scripture to believer's hearts, they are freed from sin's bondage and enabled to obey God (John 8:34-36).

It is a law of liberty because it frees from the principles of sin and death (Romans 8:2-3; Galatians 5:1, 13). James also describes it as the royal law (2:8), for it is the law of the messianic King (Gal. 6:2). Jesus said, if you love me, you will keep my commandments.

The key word is continueth.

He not only professes Christianity, but walks continuously in the salvation he has received. No one has to ask him if he is a Christian.

His way of life shows the world that he is a Christian.

Everything we do should be done as unto the Lord.

We are to work the work of an evangelist, until the Lord comes back.

Even minutes before His return, we should be trying to win one more soul to Christianity.

Verses 26-27

In (verses 22-25), James has rebuked mere listening, by the hearer who does not do.

In (verses 26 and 27), he rebukes mere doing, by the doer who leaves his inner life unchanged.

James offers not a formal definition but three key aspects of pure religion: controlled speech, altruistic service, and separation from the world.

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."

"Religious":

This refers to ceremonial public worship (Acts 26:5).

James chose this term, instead of one referring to internal godliness, to emphasize the external trappings, rituals, routines and forms that were not followed sincerely.

"Bridleth not his tongue":

"Bridle means "control," or as another translation renders it, "keep a tight rein". Purity of heart is often revealed by controlled and proper speech.

This is speaking of someone who is a Christian in form only.

The world may even look on him and think of him as a Christian, but unfortunately his heart is not right with God.

We have discussed before, that the words that come out of the mouth, spoken by the tongue, are what we are inside.

Out of the heart, the mouth speaketh.

You cannot curse and bless with the same tongue.

Evil words come from an evil heart.

The heart of man reveals what relationship he has with God.

Religion is something we do systematically.

We can be religious about most anything.

To be a true Christian, our heart must be washed in the blood of the Lamb. We must speak healing, peaceful words from a heart stayed upon God.

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 and undefiled":

James picks two synonymous adjectives to define the most spotless kind of religious faith, that which is measured by compassionate love (John 13:35).

"Fatherless and widows":

Those without parents or husbands were and are an especially needy segment of the church.

Since they are usually unable to reciprocate in any way, caring for them clearly demonstrates true, sacrificial, Christian love.

“World”:

This is describing the evil world system.

The two things Jesus said were the important commandments were to love God above all else, and to love our neighbor as our self.

You cannot be involved in the ways of the world and belong to God.

Christians are in the world, but are not of the world.

We must not get involved with the world.

We are to be a separated people.

The neighbors that we are most responsible for are the neighbors that cannot help themselves. The widows and orphans are the responsibility of the Christians.

Keep yourself stayed upon good things, and you will not have time to get involved with the bad. When you do for those who cannot help themselves, you are doing it unto God.

James Chapter 1 Continued Questions

1. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of ____.
2. What do tribulations come for?
3. Who, or what, actually tempts us?
4. What brings us a crown of life?
5. Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own ____.
6. What was Eve's first mistake?
7. How can we avoid sin in our life?
8. Sin bringeth forth ____.
9. Why do the Christians not have to die for their sins?
10. What is 1:16 really saying?
11. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from ____, and cometh down from the ____ of ____.
12. What is the gift of God?
13. The gifts and calling of God are without ____.
14. What are some of the spiritual gifts mentioned in Romans 12?
15. Who are the firstfruits of His creatures?
16. Who made all things?
17. What is the earnest of the inheritance?
18. Let every man be ____ to hear, ____ to speak, ____ to wrath.
19. What can usually stop an argument, before it gets started?
20. If we are to be like Jesus, what should our nature be like?
21. What does "superfluity" mean?
22. What does "engrafted" mean?
23. What is the Word?
24. Be ye ____ of the Word, and not a ____ only.
25. Jesus said, if you love me you will ____ my commandments.
26. What shows the world that you are a Christian without you telling them?
27. Describe pure religion, undefiled before God and the Father.

James Chapter 2

Verses 1-13

James begins this passage on partiality with an exhortation (verse 1), then a brief illustration (verses 2-4). Most of this discussion is an argument against partiality (verses 5-13).

First, partiality shows inconsistency in one's conduct: Those we spurn are the ones God has chosen (verse 5), and shows inconsistency in one's conduct: those we favor are the godless whom God rejects (verses 6-7).

Second, partiality is more than an error in judgment; it is an act of sin.

The one who shows respect of persons is a transgressor of the law.

The law is like a ring or hedge encircling those within.

When one breaks this ring, he stands outside (verse 10), becoming a transgressor, whether he commits adultery, murder, or shows partiality.

Third, James argues that partiality provokes God's judgment (verses 12-13).

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

"The faith":

This refers not to the act of believing, but to the entire Christian faith (Jude 3), which has as its central focus Jesus Christ.

"Our Lord Jesus Christ":

Christ is the one who reveals the glory of God (John 1:14; 2 Cor. 4:4-6; Heb. 1:1-3).

In His incarnation, He showed only impartiality (Matt. 22:16).

For example, consider the non-elite people included in His genealogy, His choice of the humble village of Nazareth as His residence for 30 years, and His willingness to minister in Galilee and Samaria, both regions held in contempt by Israel's leaders.

"Respect":

Originally, this word referred to raising someone's face or elevating the person, but it came to refer to exalting someone strictly on a superficial, external basis, such as appearance, race, wealth, rank or social status (Leviticus 19:15; Job 34:19; Deuteronomy. 10:17; 15:7-10; 2 Chronicles 19:7; Proverbs 24:23; 28:21; Matthew 22:8-10; Acts 10:34-35; Romans 2:11; Ephesians. 6:9; Colossians 3:25; 4:1; 1 Peter 1:17).

I believe what James is trying to say here, is that being a respecter of a person because of his station in life is not consistent with Christianity.

Jesus taught that we are not to be a respecter of persons, if we are Christians.

Luke 20:21 "And they asked him, saying, Master, we know that thou sayest and teachest rightly, neither acceptest thou the person [of any], but teachest the way of God truly:"

We see the same teaching from Peter in the following Scripture.

Acts 10:34 "Then Peter opened [his] mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:"

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;"

"Assembly":

Literally "a gathering together" or "synagogue":

Since James was writing early in the church's history to Jewish believers (1:1), he used both this general word and the normal Greek work for "church" (5:14), to describe the church's corporate meetings during that period of transition.

"Gold ring":

While Jews commonly wore rings (Luke 15:22), few could afford gold ones.

However, there are some reports that in the ancient world the most ostentatious people wore rings on every finger but the middle one to show off their economic status (some ancient sources indicate that there were even ring rental businesses).

“Goodly apparel”:

This word refers to bright shining garments and is used of the gorgeous garment Herod’s soldiers put on Jesus to mock Him (Luke 23:11), and of the apparel of an angel (Acts 10:30).

It can also refer to bright, flashy color and to brilliant, glittering, sparkling ornamentation.

James is not condemning this unbeliever for his distracting dress, but the church’s flattering reaction to it.

“A poor man”:

Although there were people of means in the early church, the church consisted mostly of common, poor people.

Throughout Scripture the poor are objects of God’s special concern.

We can easily see from this, that the church is not for just one class of people.

This also, shows that just because a man was rich, did not mean that he could not be saved. The fact that a person was very poor, did not keep him from joining the church either.

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:"

“Sit thou here in a good place”:

A more comfortable, prominent place of honor.

The synagogues and assembly halls of the first century sometimes had benches around the outside wall and a couple of benches in front.

Most of the congregation either sat cross-legged on the floor or stood.

There were a limited number of good seats; they were the ones the Pharisees always wanted (Mark 12:38-39).

James is showing them in this, that they had been showing preference to the rich. In God's sight, the rich should be given no more privileges than the poor.

There are many churches today that would turn away the poor man in this instance.

Vile raiment might be just enough to keep them not only at the back, but to keep them totally out of the church.

The outward appearance of a man does not reveal what is in his heart.

The heart determines whether you are a Christian, or not.

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

“Not then partial”: or “made distinction”.

The true nature of the sin in this passage, not the lavish apparel or rings of the rich man or that he was given a good seat.

“Judges of evil thoughts”:

This is better translated “judges with vicious intentions”.

James feared that his readers would behave just like the sinful world by catering to the rich and prominent while shunning the poor and common.

Church is not for the privileged few, but for all who seek God.

We are not to judge man at all, but if we did, we would not judge fairly.

We would be thinking of the flesh of man, and God looks at the heart of man.

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?"

“Hath not God chosen”:

Here James intends the kingdom in its present sense of the sphere of salvation, those over whom Christ rules, as well as its future millennial and eternal glory.

In the following Scripture Jesus says that it is hard for a rich man to enter heaven.

He did not say it was impossible, just difficult.

The reason for that is because the rich man has a hard time putting anything ahead of his riches.

God will not take second place.

Matthew 19:23 "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Matthew 19:24 "And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."

For a person to come to Christ, he must humble himself before God.

The humbling is much easier for the poor, because they are already in practice of being humble.

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

"Oppress":

Literally "to tyrannize."

"Draw you before the judgment seats":

A reference to civil court.

James is explaining that poor men seldom oppress anyone, but it is generally the rich who oppress the poor, not the other way around.

The rich sometimes hold important offices in government, and have more opportunity to oppress.

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

"Blaspheme that worthy name":

Probably a reference to religious courts.

Wealthy Jewish opponents of Christ were harassing these poor Christians (John 16:2-4).

Notice in the following Scripture, the holiness of the LORD.

Jeremiah 23:6 "In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this [is] his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."

The name that we are called is Christian, which means we are both followers of and also believers in Christ.

Ephesians 3:15 "Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,"

The family is made up of the sons of God.

Those who choose to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ are the sons of God.

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:"

James 2:8 "If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well:"

"Royal law":

This is better translated "sovereign law."

The idea is that this law is supreme or binding.

"Love thy neighbor as thyself":

This sovereign law (quoted from Lev. 19:18), when combined with the command to love God (Deut. 6:4-5), summarizes all the Law and the Prophets (Matt. 22:36-40; Romans 13:8-10).

James is not advocating some kind of emotional affection for oneself, self-love is clearly a sin (see 2 Tim. 3:2).

Rather, the command is to pursue meeting the physical health and spiritual wellbeing of one's neighbors, all within the sphere of our influence (Luke 10:30-37).

With the same intensity and concern as one does naturally for one's self (Phil. 2:3-4).

Jesus explained that loving God and loving your neighbor fulfilled all your obligations, if you were a Christian. Look with me at the following Scriptures on this.

Matthew 22:37-40 "Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." "This is the first and great commandment." "And the second [is] like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

James 2:9 "But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors."

"If":

Better translated as "since," the Greek construction of this conditional statement indicates that this practice was in fact happening among James' readers.

"Have respect":

The form of the Greek verb indicates that their behavior was not an occasional slip but a continual practice.

"Convinced of the law":

Specifically by the commands (in Deut. 1:17 and 16:19).

"Transgressors":

This refers to one who goes beyond the law of God.

Respect of persons makes one a violator of God's law.

If you respect someone because of their wealth or position in society, you have not kept the two laws Jesus said covered all the laws.

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

"Whole law ... one point":

The law of God is not a series of detached injunctions but a basic unity that requires perfect love of Him and our neighbors (Matt. 22:36-40).

Although all sins are not equally damaging or heinous, they all shatter that unity and render men transgressors, much like hitting a window with a hammer at only one point will shatter and destroy the whole window.

"Guilty of all":

Not in the sense of having violated every command, but is in the sense of having violated the law's unity.

One transgression makes fulfilling the law's most basic commands, to love God perfectly and to love one's neighbor as oneself, impossible.

This is speaking to those specifically who have not accepted the sacrifice that Jesus made as being sufficient for all sin, and are trying to keep the Mosaic law.

The keeping of the law saves no one, because they cannot keep it in its entirety.

The forgiveness through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ saves you.

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."

James is trying to show, in this, that by the keeping of the law, no man is saved.

The penalty for sin is death.

Jesus took our sin upon His body on the cross, if we are believers; we are not guilty of sin.

We have been pardoned by His great act of mercy.

The keepers of the law are not Christians, because they have not accepted the full pardon through the shed blood of Jesus for their sins.

These quotations are taken from (Exodus 20:13-14 and Deut. 5:17-18).

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

"Perfect law":

In both the Old Testament and New Testament, God's revealed, inerrant, sufficient and comprehensive Word is called "law" (Psalm 19:7).

The presence of His grace does not mean there is no moral law or code of conduct for believers to obey. Believers are enabled by the Spirit to keep it.

"Liberty":

Genuine freedom from sin.

As the Holy Spirit applies the principles of Scripture to believer's hearts, they are freed from sin's bondage and enabled to obey God (John 8:34-36).

The law of liberty in Jesus Christ is what Christians are under.

We are not perfect, just forgiven.

We are righteous in the sight of the Father, because we have been washed in the precious blood of Jesus Christ and made righteous.

We have taken on His righteousness in exchange for our sin.

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

A person who shows no mercy and compassion for people in need demonstrates that he has never responded to the great mercy of God, and as an unredeemed person will receive only strict, unrelieved judgment in eternal hell.

"Mercy rejoiceth against judgment":

The person whose life is characterized by mercy is ready for the Day of Judgment, and will escape all the charges that strict justice might bring against him because by showing mercy to others, he gives genuine evidence of having received God's mercy.

This is so similar to what the Lord Jesus taught.

Forgive, and you shall be forgiven.

If you will not forgive, then you shall not be forgiven.

Matthew 5:7 "Blessed [are] the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy."

Matthew 6:15 "But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

1 John 4:8-12 "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love." "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him."

"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son [to be] the propitiation for our sins." "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." "No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us."

Verses 14-17

"Can faith save him"?

This statement and others (in verses 14-26), persuade some critics that James is teaching salvation through faith and works.

Luther called this epistle "strawy," believing it emphasized works too much.

Today, some regard it as a late writing in which the author is reacting to Paul's doctrine of salvation by faith alone.

This is not the case.

James's teachings reflect neither a negative nor a positive response to Paul's teachings.

For Paul, faith practically equals salvation.

James however, sees two kinds of faith: saving faith and professing faith (much like the usage today).

For Paul, justification is by faith (Rom. 4:5).

For James, justification is by a faith that works, by a genuine faith that manifests itself in post-conversion works.

Before salvation, these Jews had believed in the efficacy of works.

Now some were reacting at the opposite extreme, imagining that works play no part in the salvation experience.

James retorts that the kind of faith that does not produce works is not saving faith.

As Calvin said, "Faith alone saves, but a faith that saves is never alone."

Thus, James's question is not simply can faith save?

But as the Greek text may suggest, "Can that faith save him?"

Can merely professed but undemonstrated faith save?

The Greek grammar expects a negative answer to the question that ends (verse 14).

Hence it can be rendered, "That faith (i.e., the one mentioned in verse 14a which is without works), cannot save.

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

"That a man say":

This important phrase governs the interpretation of the entire passage.

James does not say that this person actually has faith, but that he claims to have it.

"Faith":

This is best understood in a broad sense, speaking of any degree of acceptance of the truths of the gospel.

"Have not":

Again, the verb's form describes someone who continually lacks any external evidence of the faith he routinely claims.

"Works":

This refers to all righteous behavior that confirms to God's revealed Word, but specifically, in the context, to acts of compassion (verse 15).

"Can faith save him?":

Better translated, "Can that kind of faith save?"

James is not disputing the importance of faith.

Rather, he is opposing the notion that saving faith can be a mere intellectual exercise void of a commitment to active obedience (Matt. 7: 16-18).

The grammatical form of the question demands a negative answer.

We all know the answer to this is, that we are saved by faith and faith alone, but if we are saved, we will have works showing our faith.

The works are a manifestation of our faith.

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

The works of a Christian speak to the world of the faith he has.

James Chapter 2 Questions

- 1.What does the author believe James is saying in verse 1 here?
- 2.What did Peter have to say about the same thing?
- 3.How was the rich man described in verse 2?
- 4.What type of raiment did the poor have?
- 5.What lesson can the church today learn from James 2:2?
- 6.What did they say to the person in gay clothing?
- 7.Where did they tell the poor person to stand?
- 8.Church is not for the _____ few, but for all who seek God.
- 9.What is the difference in the way God looks at man, and the way man looks at man?
- 10.Why is it difficult for the rich man to be saved?
- 11.Who are the oppressors in this world, usually?
- 12.What name of God is in Jeremiah 23:6?
- 13.What does the name Christian tell about us?
- 14.What are you doing when you respect someone more than others, because of their wealth, or position?
- 15.What is the royal law?
- 16.On what two commandments, did Jesus say hang all the law and prophets?
- 17.Who is verse 10 really speaking of?

18. By the keeping of the law is _____ saved.
19. Why are the keepers of the law not Christians?
20. Who is under the law of liberty?
21. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love _____.
22. What is the answer to verse 14?

James Chapter 2 Continued

Verses 15-16

James illustrates his point by comparing faith without works to words of compassion without acts of compassion (Matt. 25:31-46).

James 2:15 "If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food,"

In the last lesson, we learned that works do not save you, but you will have good works, if you are saved.

The brother and sister here, are not brothers and sisters in the flesh, but in the faith.

This is speaking of those who are Christians.

This is not speaking of wants in their lives; this is speaking of their needs.

James 2:16 "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?"

James is saying in this, that just telling them to be filled will not fill that empty place that is in their stomach.

To wish them well, without giving them a coat to warm with will not keep them warm.

We must put action to our wishes.

Feed them and clothe them, and then wish them well, and you will have done something.

Matthew 25:42-43 "For I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave

me no drink:" "I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not."

Be doers of the Word, and not just hearers.

Be a sermon by the actions you take toward others.

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

"Faith ... is dead ... being alone":

Just as professed compassion without action is phony, the kind of faith that is without works is mere empty profession, not genuine saving faith.

We can say we have faith, but we will not be believed, unless we have works to match up with our faith.

The faith of Abraham was put into action when Abraham was about to offer his son, Isaac, as sacrifice to God.

Faith brings results.

Faith causes us to step out and do things we would not think of trying otherwise.

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."

"A man":

Interpreters disagree on whether

(1) "A man" is James' humble way of referring to himself or whether it refers to one of James' antagonists who objected to his teaching; and

(2) how much of the following passage should be attributed to this antagonist as opposed to James himself. Regardless, James' main point is the same: the only possible evidence of true faith is works (2 Peter 1:3-11). Look with me, at faith in action.

Hebrews 11:7-8 "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness

which is by faith." "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went."

Hebrews 11:29 "By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry [land]: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned."

All of these Scriptures show faith in action, or faith acted upon.

We must do the things of God, if we are of faith.

One of the very best examples of this is the parable about the 3 men who received talents from the Lord.

Two of them acted in faith and earned more for the master.

The third was afraid and hid his talent.

His Lord was angry and took it away from him.

Fear is the opposite of faith.

To be truly faithful, we must act upon our faith.

Just to sit down and say you have faith, without doing something about it, actually that shows lack of faith.

Verses 19-20

The reference to faith in "one God" probably alludes to Israel's great creedal statement (of Deuteronomy 6:4);

"Hear, O Israel" The LORD our God is one LORD." Adherence to a creed is not true faith.

Even the demons know and accept the truth of the creed, but they do not possess saving faith.

If one does nothing to enact his knowledge of God, so he is worse than the demons, for they at least tremble.

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

"Thou believest that there is one God":

A clear reference to the passage most familiar to his Jewish readers; the Shema (Deut. 6:4-5), the most basic doctrine of the Old Testament.

Deut. 6:4-5 "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength".

"Devils also believe":

Even fallen angels affirm the oneness of God and tremble at its implications.

Demons are essentially orthodox in their doctrine (see Matthew 8:29-30; Mark 5:7; Luke 4:41; Acts 19:15).

But orthodox doctrine by itself is no proof of saving faith.

They know the truth about God, Christ and the Spirit, but hate it and them.

Many believe that just to say you believe in God is enough, but without trust in God to act upon the faith, it becomes very questionable about whether you really have faith in God, or are just saying you do.

The devils believe, because they have seen God in heaven.

It takes no faith at all to believe something you have seen with your own eyes.

The true faith is believing in your heart in something you have not seen.

"Devils" here, is speaking of the angels that followed Lucifer out of heaven.

They tremble, because they know the terrible fate that awaits them.

James 2:20 "But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?"

"Vain man":

Literally empty, defective.

The objector's claim of belief is fraudulent, and his faith is a sham.

"Faith without works is dead":

Literally "the faith without the works."

James is not contrasting two methods of salvation (Faith versus works).

Instead, he contrasts two kinds of faith: living faith that saves and dead faith that does not (see 1 John 3:7-10).

Faith that is not acted upon brings no fruit.

Mark 4:8 "And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased; and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some a hundred."

Mark 4:20 "And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive [it], and bring forth fruit, some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred."

Those who profess faith must be like this fruitful tree.

Christians that are silent are not fulfilling the great commission to go into all the world and preach the gospel.

It is not our obligation for them to listen, but it is our obligation to tell them, if we have faith.

To have faith and do absolutely nothing about it, is no faith at all.

Verses 21-24

These verses present the crux of the issue: Is a man "justified by works?" Do Paul and James contradict each other?

Several factors demonstrate that they do not.

First, as was already noted (in verses 14-17), the apostles use the word for faith with various different meanings.

Second, they use "justified" in different senses.

It is customary to identify all nuances of this word with the theological idea Paul popularized. That is, God's act of declaring all believers righteous on the basis of Christ's redemptive work.

But a common Old Testament and gospel usage involves demonstrating or showing something to be righteous (Psalms 51:4; Luke 7:35; Rom. 3:4); it is this usage that James follows.

Third, though both men use Abraham as an illustration, they focus on different aspects of his life. Paul shows that Abraham was declared righteous by faith when he trusted God (Gen. 15:6). James declares that he was shown to be righteous by his offering up of Isaac (Gen. 22:9). Fourth, even the terminology of these two apostles differs.

Paul then constantly speaks against the works of the law, as being a false use of those works to merit salvation.

James, however, is speaking of works of love that follow belief.

Fifth, the two apostles are discussing totally different subjects, since they are confronted by different problems.

Paul's, opposing the Judaizers, seeks to prove that the Gentiles can be saved and sanctified apart from circumcision or any other work of the law.

James, opposing merely nominal, professing Christians, seeks to show that true faith confirms itself by deeds of love.

If James were fighting Paul over law and grace, or faith and works, surely the subject of circumcision would have arisen, since it lies at the core of that issue.

James and Paul are not face to face fighting each other, they are back to back by the fighting opposite foes!

Verses 21-26

James cites 3 illustrations of living faith:

(1)Abraham (verses 21-24);

(2)Rehab (verse 25); and

(3)The human body and spirit (verse 26).

James 2:21 "Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?"

"Justified by works":

This does not contradict Paul's clear teaching that Abraham was justified before God by grace alone through faith alone (Rom. 3:20; 4:1-25; Gal. 3:6, 11).

For several reasons, James cannot mean that Abraham was constituted righteous before God because of his own good works:

(1) James already stressed that salvation is a gracious gift (1:17-18): and

(2) In the middle of this disputed passage (verse 23). James quoted (Gen. 15:6), which forcefully claims that God credited righteousness to Abraham solely on the basis of his faith; and

(3) The work that James said justified Abraham was his offering up of Isaac (Genesis 22:9, 12), an event that occurred many years after he first exercised faith and was declared righteous before God (Gen. 12:1-7; 15:6). Instead, Abraham's offering of Isaac demonstrated the genuineness of his faith and the reality of his justification before God.

James is emphasizing the vindication before others of a person's claim to salvation.

James' teaching perfectly complements Paul's writing, salvation is determined by faith alone (Eph. 2:8-9), and demonstrated by faithfulness to obey God's will alone (Eph. 2:10).

Abraham's faith was tested to see if it was really faith, or just talk.

He acted upon his faith, and God saved his son Isaac.

Abraham had great faith.

His faith had grown into complete trust in God.

He knew in his heart, God could raise him from the dead.

Hebrews 11:17-19 "By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten [son]," "Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called:" "Accounting that God [was] able to raise [him] up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure."

Abraham's faith was strong enough to stand the test.

James 2:22 "Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?"

"Made perfect":

This refers to bringing something to its end, or to its fullness.

Just as a fruit tree has not arrived at its goal until it bears fruit, faith has not reached its end until it demonstrates itself in a righteous life.

The faith of Abraham was made perfect in the action he took.

He proclaimed his perfect faith and trust in God by his actions.

Had the test of offering his son for sacrifice to God never arisen, we would not have realized how great faith Abraham had in God.

His act of faith helps us in difficult situations to act upon our faith.

We might be like the man who brought his son to Jesus for healing.

He said he believed, but help his unbelief.

Each person has a portion of faith, but to let it grow, we must use it.

Our faith grows with every use.

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."

This is (quoted from Genesis 15:6).

"Called the Friend of God":

Abraham is so called (in both 2 Chronicles 20:7 and Isaiah 41:8), because of his obedience (see John 15:14-15).

"Imputed":

Used in the usage here, means counted.

The belief of Abraham was counted unto him for righteousness.

Without faith, it is impossible to please God.

Without acting upon the faith that we have, it is not faith at all.

To be the Friend of God would be the highest honor we could be paid.

God had great regard for Abraham.

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

The works spoken of here, are an evidence of the faith the person has.

Faith saves us, but the works are a by-product of our faith.

When we stand before Jesus on judgment day, He will say to His own, well done, thy good and faithful servant.

Servants serve.

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?"

"Rahab the harlot":

The Old Testament records the content of her faith, which was the basis of her justification before God.

She demonstrated the reality of her saving faith when, at great personal risk she protected the messengers of God (Joshua 2:4, 15; 6:17; Hebrews 11:31).

James did not intend however, for those words to be a commendation of her occupation or even her lying.

Just as James presents two examples of spurious faith (verses 16, 19), he concludes with two examples of genuine faith: Abraham and Rahab.

One was a Jewish patriarch of great sanctity, whose faith was perfected by his works.

The other was the lowest citizen of a condemned Gentile city, whose newfound faith was dramatized by her works.

No matter whether one has the mature faith of an Abraham or the baby-like faith of a Rahab, there must be evidence of that faith.

The actions that Rahab took revealed that she had faith in God.

She helped the messengers, because her faith in God was greater than her fear of men.

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

The point of this analogy that is between the body and one's faith is that both require an energizing element.

The absence of that element renders the other component dead.

The spirit within the body is the real you.

It is the spirit that is alive, quickened by the Lord Jesus Christ.

The body is just the house that the spirit lives in here on the earth.

When a person's spirit leaves the body, the body is dead.

Jesus dismissed His Spirit from His body, and the body died on the cross.

The spiritual body that lives within this body of flesh is the part of us that will live on. When the spirit leaves the body, the life is gone.

Faith that is not acted upon is like this empty shell of the body.

Faith is not real, until the actions show the faith of the person.

James Chapter 2 Continued Questions

- 1.What in verse 15, lets us know these are Christians?
- 2.This is not speaking of _____ in their lives, but _____.
- 3.What had they said to the needy in verse 16?
- 4.Faith, without works, is _____.
- 5.What proves our faith?
- 6.Show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my _____ by my _____.
- 7.Who were some others who showed their faith by their actions?
- 8.What parable does the author think is a very good example of faith at work?
- 9.Thou believest that there is One God; thou doest well: the _____ also believe, and tremble.
- 10.Why do the devils believe?
- 11.Who are these "devils", spoken of here?

- 12.What is the parable of the fruit, in Mark, about?
- 13.What is wrong with silent Christians?
- 14.What does verse 21 say, that Abraham was justified by?
- 15.What did Abraham believe God would do, if he sacrificed Isaac?
- 16.By _____ was faith made perfect.
- 17.How can we have more faith?
- 18.Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for _____.
- 19.Abraham was called the _____ of God.
- 20.What does "imputed" in verse 23 mean?
- 21.What is a by-product of faith?
- 22.What harlot is mentioned as being justified by works?
- 23.What did the actions Rahab took show?
- 24.The body without the _____ is dead.
- 25.Faith without _____ is dead.
- 26.What are the two bodies that we have?

James Chapter 3

Verses 1-2

The word "masters" (Greek didaskaloi), would today be translated "teachers."

The theme of chapter 3, often regarded as the tongue, is more properly the teacher".

The chapter progresses from the teacher to his primary tool, the tongue (verses 2-12), then to the source of his teaching, his wisdom (verses 13-18).

James must warn the many who were seeking to teach in the church, since in the early church it was an easy matter to teach in the synagogue as well.

Both Jesus and Paul demonstrate that even strangers could teach (Acts 13-15).

Anyone who thought he had the "gift" to teach would also want to use it (1 Cor. 12:8, 28), and it was misused (1 Cor. 14:26; 1 Tim. 1:7).

James's warning is twofold:

(1)The teacher will receive greater scrutiny from God, because the teacher often passes judgment upon his hearers; and

(2)The primary teaching tool is the tongue, which no one can control sufficiently.

In this passage, James used the common Jewish literary device of attributing blame to a specific bodily member (Rom. 3:15; 2 Peter 2:14).

He personified the tongue as being representative of human depravity and wretchedness.

In this way, he echoed the scriptural truth that the mouth is a focal point and vivid indicator of man's fallenness and sinful heart condition (Isaiah 6:5; Matthew 15:11, 16-19; Mark 7:20-23; Romans 3:13-14).

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

"Masters":

Meaning teachers, a word that refers to a person who functions in an official teaching or preaching capacity (Luke 4:16-27; John 3:10; Acts 13:14-15; 1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11).

"Greater condemnation":

Or stricter judgment.

The word translates "judgment" usually expresses a negative verdict in the New Testament and here refers to a future judgment:

(1)For the unbelieving false teacher, at the second coming (Jude 14:15); and

(2)For the believer, when he is rewarded before Christ (1. Cor. 4:35).

This is not meant to discourage true teachers, but to warn the prospective teacher of the role's seriousness (Ezekiel 3:17-18; 33:7-9; Acts 20:26-27; Heb. 13:17).

This is a possible reminder to those who take authority upon themselves that has not been ordered of God. This is James speaking to, possibly, the Jews who wanted to teach the newcomers to the faith.

James includes himself in the last part of this, where he says that the teachers, who should know more, are in greater condemnation for the sins that they commit, because they are operating in full knowledge.

This is a warning to all teachers to not think of themselves above those they teach.

The true Teacher of all of us is the Holy Spirit of God.

He will teach us all truth.

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."

Scripture contains much about all the evil which the tongue can cause.

The tongue has immense power to speak sinfully, erroneously, and inappropriately, human speech is a graphic representation of human depravity.

"Offend":

This refers to sinning, or offending God's Person.

The form of the Greek verb emphasizes that everyone continually fails to do what is right.

"Perfect man":

"Perfect" may refer to true perfection, in which case James is saying that, hypothetically, if a human being were able to perfectly control his tongue, he would be a perfect man.

But, of course, no one is actually immune from sinning with his tongue.

More likely, "perfect" is describing those who are spiritually mature and thus able to control their tongues.

We have spoken in other lessons of the tongue being the vilest part of the body. This is why it is so important to allow God to control your tongue.

The words that proceed out of a man's mouth reveal what he really is.

1 Peter 3:10 "For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile:"

The tongue can do a great deal of harm, if it is not controlled of God.

The tongue, controlled of God can do great good.

When the tongue is controlled by God, the whole body is under the control of God. The words of the tongue originate in the heart of man.

The heart is either, stayed upon God, or desperately wicked.

Verses 3-5

James provided several analogies that show how the tongue, even though small, has the power to control one's whole person and influence everything in his life.

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

This is just showing that the tongue, controlled of God, is part of a body controlled by God. When the bit is in the horse's mouth, the rider can turn him with just a gentle pull on the reins. This is saying then, that a tongue controlled by God can cause the whole body to follow God.

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."

We see a very large ship is guided by a very small part of the entire ship.

This is true of us, as well.

The heart is what we really are.

The mouth, speaking from that heart, reveals to the world where we stand with God.

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

Words we speak affect those around us.

If we speak evil, we will stir up strife among others.

If we speak soothing words, the fire of hate and anger will be extinguished.

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."

"Tongue is a fire":

Like fire, the tongue's sinful words can spread destruction rapidly, or as its accompanying smoke, those words can permeate and ruin everything around it.

"Defileth":

This means "to pollute or contaminate" (Mark 7:20; Jude 23).

The course of nature":

Better translated "the circle of life", this underscores that the tongue's evil can extend beyond the individual to affect everything in his sphere of influence.

"Hell":

A translation of the Greek word Gehenna (or valley of Hinnom).

In Christ's time this valley that lay southwest of Jerusalem's walls served as the city dump and was known for its constantly burning fire.

Jesus used that place to symbolize the eternal place of punishment and torment (Mark 9:43, 45).

To James, "hell" conjures up not just the place but the satanic host that will someday inherit it, they use the tongue as a tool for evil.

The tongue is a system (world), of iniquity that sets on fire the whole course of life, and is even set on fire by Satan (3:15).

James is speaking of a tongue which has not been dedicated to God.

Cutting words can destroy people.

Before we are saved, we all have a wicked tongue.

I have always said, the reason it is so important to be baptized in the Holy Spirit, is because in so doing we turn the most evil part of our body over to the control of the Spirit of God.

When He has your tongue, He has you.

Verse 6 above, is speaking of the tongue, before we turn it over to the Spirit of God.

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 word "tamed" (Greek damazo), that occurs in only one other New Testament passage (see Mark 5:4). About the maniac of Gadara, which helps us to establish the proper meaning of the word in the book of James.

The "taming" has nothing to do with domesticating animals or training them to perform.

The meaning is control or dominion.

Mankind can control every lesser creature, but no one can control his own tongue.

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

"Can no man tame":

Only God, by His power, can do this (Acts 2:1-11).

In the verses above (verse 7 included), we see that the tongue is the most difficult thing in the world to tame. In fact, man cannot tame the tongue.

Only God can tame the tongue.

Here are a few verses on the evil of the tongue and what we are to do about it. Psalms 34:13 "Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile." Psalms 50:19 "Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit."

Peter 3:10 "For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile:"

The only way that any of us can speak pure words is with a heart, mouth, and tongue dedicated to God. Let Jesus wash your heart in the blood of the Lamb (Jesus Christ), and speak pure words from a pure heart.

James 3:9 "Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God."

"Bless ... curse":

It was traditional for Jews to add "blessed be He", to any mention of God's name (see Psalm 68:19, 35).

However, the tongue also wishes evil on people made in God's image.

This points out the hypocritical inconsistency of the tongue's activities.

"Made after the similitude of God": Man was made in God's image.

James explains that man is made in God's image (Gen. 1:26, 27; 5:1), so to curse people and yet bless God is inconsistent.

Though the fall of mankind has marred that image or likeness, James teaches that it still exists (as do Gen. 9:6 and 1 Cor. 11:7).

How can this be?

We know that a pure heart speaks beauty to all, not just to God.

In our society, we would call this two-faced.

Jesus gave two commandments that covered all.

Mark 12:30-31 "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this [is] the first commandment." "And the second [is] like, [namely] this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these."

Matthew 22:40 "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

It is an impossibility to love God and hate His creation.

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

To say we are a Christian is not enough.

We must become Christlike, to truly be a Christian.

When He was persecuted, He blessed.

If our heart is truly stayed upon God, there would be no evil proceed from our mouth.

Verses 11-12

Three illustrations from nature demonstrate the sinfulness of cursing.

The genuine believer will not contradict his profession of faith by the regular use of using unwholesome words.

James 3:11 "Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet [water] and bitter?"

A well does not produce both bitter and sweet water at the same time.

The well that is spoken of here, is the heart of man.

Look at what Jesus said about this.

Matthew 12:34 "O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

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

It is more than obvious in all this; a tongue that speaks evil comes from an impure heart.

James 3:12 "Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so [can] no fountain both yield salt water and fresh."

The last clause (of verse 12), differs from those that precede it.

The former are questions that attempt to illustrate; this one is a statement to teach.

As salt water cannot make sweet water, so the person who curses others cannot bless God.

The cursing of people truly indicates what lies within a person.

There are many who profess Christianity who is not truly sold out to Christ. We are what we are in our inner man.

The heart of man is the determining factor.

This is one of the main reasons why I believe a person who is sold out to God cannot be possessed of a devil.

Light and darkness cannot dwell in the same place; the darkness is overcome by the Light. We must decide whether we will follow God, or whether we will follow Lucifer.

We cannot do both.

The Light of God, within us, does away with all darkness.

The Light represents the sweet water.

Darkness and salt water go hand in hand.

Verses 13-18

In (verse 13), James makes a transition from discussing teachers and the tongue to dealing with wisdom's impact on everyone's life.

He supports the truth of Old Testament wisdom literature (Job to Song of Solomon), that wisdom is divided into two realms, man's and God's.

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":

"Wise" is the common Greek word for speculative knowledge and philosophy, but the Hebrews infused it with the much richer meaning of skillfully applying knowledge to the matter of practical living.

The word for "understanding" is used only here in the New Testament and means a specialist or professional who could skillfully apply his expertise to practical situations.

James is asking who is truly skilled in the art of living.

"Meekness":

This is the opposite of arrogance and self-promotion.

The Greeks described it as power under control.

Beginning (at verse 13), James says that godly wisdom is necessary in a teacher. The teacher must exhibit a meek and practical application of the truth.

One cannot teach what one does not live.

Wisdom, the kind that comes only from God, is a gift from God.

Those who have wisdom, and the Holy Spirit has given them knowledge of God's Word, show the world by their actions and their speech, they are believers.

This is just saying, your life and your speech will reveal to those around you, who you are in Jesus Christ.

Bragging of your position with Christ has no place.

Those who truly have a wonderful relation with Christ do not need to brag. They are generally humble people who just love God.

Verses 14-18

Two wisdoms are expounded by teachers.

The one from God is pure and promotes peace, ending in righteousness (verses 17-18).

But the other is natural and demonic, visible in the teacher as jealousy and ambition (strife, Greek eritheia).

The result of such teaching is evil living and confusion.

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

"Bitter envying":

The Greek term for "bitter" was used of undrinkable water.

When combined with "jealousy" it defines a harsh resentful attitude toward others. "Strife":

This refers to self-seeking that engenders antagonistic and factionalism.

The Greek word came to describe anyone who entered politics for selfish reasons and sought to achieve his agenda at any cost.

I.e. even if that means trampling on others.

Each of us has his own special place with Christ.

He has not called us to the same job as someone else.

We should never look at someone else and be jealous, or want what they have.

To want something someone else has, even if it is their relation with Christ, is coveting. God called each of us to do a job for Him that He could entrust us with.

James 3:15 "This wisdom descendeth not from above, but [is] earthly, sensual, devilish."

"From above":

Self-centered wisdom that is consumed with personal ambition is not from God. "Earthly, sensual, devilish":

A description of man's wisdom as:

(1)Limited to earth;

(2)Characterized by humanness, frailty, an unsanctified heart, and an unredeemed spirit; and

(3)General by Satan's forces (1 Cor. 2:14; 2 Cor. 11:14-15).

Bitterness and strife of all kinds come from the devil.

All things that please the flesh are earthly, or of this earth.

The spiritual things are not based on things of the earth.

Lucifer was jealous and wanted to be God.

You can see that this type of earthly wisdom and power is not spiritual.

We must come out of the world (Egypt), before we can go to the Promised Land (heaven). We must do away with all desires of the flesh to be of God.

James 3:16 "For where envying and strife [is], there [is] confusion and every evil work."

"Confusion":

This is the confusion that results for the instability and chaos of human wisdom. "Every evil work":

Literally "every worthless (or vile), work."

This denotes things that are not so much intrinsically evil as they are simply good for nothing. The natural man does not receive the things of God.

Envy and strife are of the flesh.

We must crucify the flesh to live with Christ.

Envy causes many other sins.

Christians are in this world, but we should not be controlled by earthly desires.

James 3:17 "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, [and] easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy."

"Pure":

This refers to spiritual integrity and moral sincerity.

Every genuine Christian has this kind of heart motivation (Psalm 24:3-4; 51:7; Matt. 5:8; Rom. 7:22-23; Heb. 12:14).

"Peaceable":

Means "peace loving" or "peace promoting" (Matt. 5:9).

"Gentle":

This word here is rather difficult to translate, but most nearly means that it is a character trait of sweet reasonableness.

Such a person will submit to all kinds of mistreatment and difficulty with an attitude of kind, courteous, patient humility, without any thought of hatred or revenge (Matt. 5:10-11).

"Entreated":

Meaning willing to yield.

The original term described someone who was teachable, compliant, easily persuaded, and who willingly submitted to military discipline or moral and legal standards.

For believers, it defines obedience to God's standards (Matt. 3:5).

"Full of mercy":

The gift of showing concern for those who suffer pain and hardship, and the ability to forgive quickly (Matt. 5:7; Rom. 12:8).

"Without hypocrisy":

The Greek word occurs only here in the New Testament and it does denote a consistent, unwavering person who is undivided in his commitment and conviction and does not make unfair distinctions.

Notice the word "but" in the verse above.

It shows a direct contrast to the earthly man.

This has jumped to those who are sold out to God.

The wisdom from above comes to the believers.

This wisdom is stored in a heart that is pure.

Knowing of the security that is in Christ brings peace.

When we are at peace with God and man, we are gentle.

If we expect God to be merciful to us, we must be merciful to others.

Christians should bear good fruit.

You cannot be a Christian and a hypocrite at the same time.

A true Christian is 100% the Lord's.

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

"Fruit of righteousness":

Good works that result from salvation (verse 17, Matt. 5:6; Gal. 5:22-23; Phil. 1:11). "Them that make peace":

Righteousness flourishes in a climate of spiritual peace.

Matthew 5:9 "Blessed [are] the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."

John 4:36 "And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together."

James Chapter 3 Questions

1. Why does it say in verse 1, they shall receive greater condemnation?

2. What is this a possible reminder of?

3. Who is the true Teacher of all?

4. If any man offend not in word, the same is a _____ man.

5. What is the vilest part of the body?

6. The tongue can do a great deal of harm, if it is not controlled of _____.

7. The words of the tongue originate in the _____.

8. Why do we put bits in the horses' mouths?

9. What changes the direction of a ship?

10. What reveals to the world where we are with God?

11. The tongue is a _____, a world of iniquity.

12. What is wrong with the tongue in verse 6?

13. What difficult things, to be tamed, were tamed in verse 7?

14. What is the unruly, evil tongue full of?

15. How is the only way any of us can speak pure words?

16. Therewith bless we the Father, and _____ men.

17. What were the 2 commandments that Jesus gave that covered all?

18. It is an impossibility to love God and hate His _____.

19. In verse 10, what did James say, ought not to be so?
20. To say we are a Christian is not enough. We must be _____.
21. Doth a fountain send forth at the same place _____ water and _____?
22. What is the well, spoken of in verse 11?
23. Why does the author believe that a true Christian cannot be possessed of a devil?
24. Wisdom is a _____ from ____.
25. What 2 things reveal to the world what you are in Christ?
26. What one word describes what wanting something that belongs to someone else is?
27. Where does bitterness and strife come from?

James Chapter 4

Verses 1-3

In chapter 3, the scripture ended by stressing the peace that results from heavenly wisdom.

Now James emphasizes the strife so common among his readers, stemming from their unsatisfied, selfish desires.

Instead of wrestling with God in prayer, these believers are striving with one another.

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

“Wars and fightings among you”:

Quarrels; these are between people in the church, not internal conflict in individual people.

“Quarrels” speaks of the conflict in general; “conflicts” of its specific manifestations.

Discord in the church is not by God’s design (John 13:34-35, 17-21; 2 Cor. 12:20; Phil. 1:27), but results from the mix of tares (false believers), and wheat (truly redeemed people), that make up the church.

“Lusts”:

Or could be translated “pleasures”.

The Greek word (from which the English word “hedonism” derives), always has a negative connotation in the New Testament.

The passionate desire for worldly pleasures that mark unbelievers (1:14; Eph. 2:3; 2 Tim. 3:4; Jude 18), are the internal source of the external conflict in the church (1:14-15).

“Your members”:

Not church members, but bodily members.

James, like Paul, uses “members” to speak of sinful, fallen human nature (Rom. 6:19; 7:5, 23).

Unbelievers (who are in view here), fight (unsuccessfully), against the evil desires that they cannot control.

The strongest statement someone can make is usually in the form of a question.

It gets us to thinking about figuring out what the problem is.

James is speaking to them about the “fightings” being caused, because of the worldliness they still have in their lives and their walks.

If we are dead in Christ, there should be no reason to fight the brethren.

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."

“Kill”, here meaning murder, is the ultimate result of thwarted desires.

James had in mind actual murder and the gamut of sins (hate, anger, bitterness), leading up to it.

The picture is of unbelievers so driven by their uncontrollable evil desires that they will fight to the death to fulfill them.

“You ask not”:

True joy, peace, happiness, meaning, hope, and fulfillment in life, come only from God.

Unbelievers however, are unwilling to ask for them on His terms, they refuse to submit to God or acknowledge their dependence on Him.

James is speaking here, supposedly to believers in Christ.

It is unbelievable that Christians would be this caught up in the flesh.

Lust is of the flesh, and not of God.

It seems they want things so badly that are not their own, that they even kill to get them.

The real truth here, is these people may profess Christianity, but they really are not Christians. They have not crucified the flesh and its lust.

He gives them the secret in the last few words of the verse.

Christians, do not fight to get the things you want, pray for them instead.

If they are good for you, the Lord will give them to you.

The answer is prayer.

They do not have these things, because they have not asked in prayer.

James 4:3 "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume [it] upon your lusts."

"Ask amiss":

This refers to acting in an evil manner, motivated by personal gratification and selfish desire. Unbelievers seek things for their own pleasures, not for the honor and glory of God.

Sometimes we, like these Christians, pray for things that would not be for our own good, or the good of those around us.

God will not answer a prayer to fill our greed.

He will, however, answer a prayer for our needs.

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."

"Adulteresses":

A metaphorical description of spiritual unfaithfulness (Mat. 12:39; 16:4; Mark 8:38).

It would have been especially familiar to James' Jewish readers, since the Old Testament often describes unfaithful Israel as a spiritual harlot.

James has in view professing Christians, outwardly associated with the church, but holding a deep affection for the evil world system.

"Friend of the world":

The Greek word describes love in the sense of a strong emotional attachment.

Those with a deep and intimate longing for the things of the world give evidence that they are not redeemed (1 John 2:15-17).

"Enemy of God":

The necessary corollary to friendship with the world.

The sobering truth that unbelievers are God's enemies is taught throughout Scripture.

As Israel was a spiritual adulteress, unfaithful to God, so the church is a spiritual adulteress when she is the unfaithful bride of Christ. (see Hosea 2:5, 19, 20; Matt. 12:39).

One cannot be both a lover of God and a lover of the world.

Adultery is one of the worst sins a Christian could commit, because it is a sin of the body.

The Christian, filled with the Holy Spirit, would be involving the Holy Spirit in the sin.

A person, who is still involved in adultery, is not a friend of God.

They have chosen the way of the flesh.

The flesh, or the spirit, rules over our will.

If the flesh rules over your will, you are of the flesh.

Verses 5-6

Although many believe that (verse 5), refers to the positive ministry of the indwelling Holy Spirit, yearning jealously over the believer, the tenor (of verses 4 and 5), is negative, speaking of man's envy.

The good work of God begins at verse 6 (in contrast to 4 and 5), as the conjunction indicates.

“But He giveth more grace”:

This is literally “greater grace” (Greek *meizona*).

God gives grace that is greater than the world’s attraction of (verse 4), and the inner lust of (verse 5; Romans 5:20), and so can withstand both.

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

“Scripture saith”:

The quote that follows is not found as such in the Old Testament; it is a composite of general Old Testament teaching.

This difficult phrase is best understood by seeing the “spirit” as a reference not to the Holy Spirit, but to the human spirit, and translating the phrase in the negative sense of “lusts to envy”.

James’ point is that an unbelieving person’s spirit (inner person), is bent on evil (Gen. 6:5; 8:21; Prov. 21:10; Ecclesiastes 9:3; Jer. 17:9; Mark 7:21-23).

Those who think otherwise defy the biblical diagnosis of fallen human nature; and those who live in worldly lusts give evidence that their faith is not genuine (Rom 8:5-11; 1 Cor. 2:14).

God will not share you with any other.

You are either 100% His or you are not His at all.

To lust with envy would not be Godly.

We must choose today whom we will serve.

Is it God, or the fleshly lust, that we serve?

2 Corinthians 11:2 "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present [you as] a chaste virgin to Christ."

If we are God's we will not lust with envy.

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

“More grace”:

The only ray of hope in man’s spiritual darkness is the sovereign grace of God, which alone can rescue man from his propensity to lust for evil things.

That God gives “greater grace” shows that His grace is greater than the power of sin, the flesh, the world, and Satan (Rom. 5:20).

The Old Testament quote (from Prov. 3:34; 1 Peter 5:5), reveals who obtains God’s grace, the humble, not the proud enemies of God.

The word “humble” does not define a special class of Christians, but encompasses all believers (Isa. 57:15; 66:2; Matt. 18:3-4).

When we humble ourselves before God, we are in a place to receive from Him.

1 Peter 5:6 "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:"

We are saved by the grace of God, and we have nothing to be proud about.

Salvation for us is a free gift.

His grace is sufficient for me.

“Wherefore”:

The exhortations that follow logically result from the conditions (in verses 1-6).

“Resist the devil”:

Do not submit to, fear, or flee from Satan, but stand against him (1 Peter 5:8-10).

Satan cannot lead into sin against one’s will.

“Draw nigh”:

God will not be unmoved; His welcoming response is always near (Deuteronomy 4:7; Lamentations 3:57; Luke 15:20).

“Hands and hearts”:

The cleansing of one's life must involve both our outward deeds and our inner thoughts (see Psalms 24:3-4).
Verses 7-10

In a series of 10 commands, (10 imperative verbs in the Greek text), James reveals how to receive saving grace.

These verses delineate man's response to God's gracious offer of salvation, and disclose what it means to be humble.

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

"Submit":

Literally "to line up under."

The word was used of soldiers under the authority of their commander.

In the New Testament, it describes Jesus' submission to His parents' authority (Luke 2:51), submission to human government (Romans 13:1), the church's submission to Christ (Ephesians 5:24), and servants' submission to their masters (Titus 2:9; 1 Peter 2:18).

James used the word to describe a willing, conscious submission to God's authority as sovereign ruler of the universe.

A truly humble person will give his allegiance to God, obey His commands, and follow His leadership (Mat. 10:38).

"Resist the devil, and he will flee from you":

The flip side of the first command, "Resist" literally means "take your stand against."

All people are either under the lordship of Christ or the lordship of Satan (John 8:44; Eph. 2:2; 1 John 3:8; 5:19); there is no middle ground.

Those who transfer their allegiance from Satan to God will find that Satan "will flee from" them; he is a defeated foe.

This is just saying that it is within the willpower of every man to resist the devil and the temptations that he puts before him.

We have been given the power of attorney to use the name of Jesus to defeat the devil.

The temptations that the devil brings before us are really temptations of the flesh.

The temptation will leave, if we say no to it.

God will not over-rule our will.

He gives us the power to choose.

We must decide right, or wrong, for ourselves.

The minute you emphatically say no to the devil and his temptations, he will go on to someone else and leave you alone.

Flee means leave in a hurry.

A heart and will that is controlled by God will have no difficulty in saying no to the devil and all of his temptations.

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":

Pursue an intimate love relationship with God (Phil. 3:10).

The concept of drawing near to God was associated originally with the Levitical priests, but eventually came to describe anyone's approach to God.

Salvation involves more than submitting to God and resisting the devil; the redeemed heart longs for communion with God (Psalms 27:8; 42:1-2; 63:1-2; 84:2; 143:6; Matt. 22:37).

"Cleanse your hands":

The Old Testament priests had to ceremonially wash their hands before approaching God (Exodus 30:19-21), and sinners (a term used only for unbelievers), who would approach Him must recognize and confess their sin.

“Purify your hearts”:

Cleansing the hands symbolizes external behavior; this phrase refers to the inner thoughts, motives, and desires of the heart.

To be double minded means you cannot make up your mind just what you want to do.

We see from the following verse, that we cannot ride the fence.

We must decide who we will serve, God or man.

Luke 16:13 "No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other.

Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

Cleansing of the hands means the work you put your hands to must be clean, as well as your heart being pure, stayed upon God.

When we make a step toward God, we will find that He has been there to help us all along.

He just wanted us to reach out to Him.

James 4:9 "Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and [your] joy to heaviness."

“Be afflicted”:

Be afflicted and wretched.

This is the state of those truly broken over their sin. “Mourn”:

God will not turn away a heart broken and contrite over sin (Psalm 51:17; 2 Cor. 7:10). Mourning is the inner response to such brokenness.

This is speaking of true repentance from the heart.

Worldly laughter and worldly joy must change into a true repentance for sin.

The joy that comes later is from God, not worldly pleasures. “Weep”:

The outward manifestation of inner sorrow over sin (Mark 14:72). “Laughter”:

Used only here in the New Testament, the word signifies the flippant laughter of those foolishly indulging in worldly pleasures.

The picture is of people who give no thought to God, life, death, sin, judgment, or holiness. James calls on such people to mourn over their sin (Luke 18:13-14).

To be a sinner and to be truly sorry for the sin means a grieving, a mourning, and even crying out for forgiveness.

The new life that true repentance brings is not a life of worldly pleasures, but of Godly joy.

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

See Psalm 75:6; Matthew 23:12.

This final command sums up the preceding 9 commands, which mark the truly humble person. “Humble” comes from a word meaning “to make oneself low.”

Those conscious of being in the presence of the majestic, infinitely holy God are humble (see Isaiah 6:5).

When we are down as far as we can go, we look up and see Jesus who gave His body on the cross that we might be lifted up.

He will lift us up from the depths of despair.

Psalms 147:6 "The LORD lifteth up the meek: he casteth the wicked down to the ground."

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”:

This means to slander or defame.

James does not forbid confronting those in sin, which is elsewhere commanded in Scripture. Rather, he condemns careless, derogatory, critical, slanderous accusations against others. “Speaketh evil of his brother ... speaketh evil of the law”:

Those who speak evil of other believers set themselves up as judges and condemn them (2:4). So they defame and disregard God's law, which forbids such slanderous condemnation. "Judgeth the law": By refusing to submit to the law, slanderers place themselves above it as its judges. Thank goodness, we are not the judge, Jesus is.

How can we judge another?

We are free from sin ourselves, only because we are forgiven.

Judge not, that you be not judged.

The very best thing we can do is live our own life as free from sin as we can, and leave the judgment up to Jesus.

We do not fully understand the law, or grace, how could we judge fairly?

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

"One lawgiver":

God, who gave the law (Isa. 33:22).

He alone has the authority to save those who repent from its penalty, and destroy those who refuse to repent.

When we pass judgment on someone else, it is as if we think we are perfect ourselves, and we are not.

I love what Jesus did when the accusers had the woman caught in adultery, and were about to stone her to death.

I truly believe that Jesus wrote their sins in the sand, and that is why they left.

He had said, you without sin cast the first stone.

They all had to leave, because they were not without sin.

1 John 1:8 "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." We Christians are justified (just as if we had never sinned), in Jesus.

Jesus as Judge, decides who are saved and who are lost.

He is the just Judge.

Verses 13-14

This one is a fool, for he thinks he knows something that he doesn't.

He presumes he has the resources to control his destiny (Prov. 27:1; Luke 12:13-21).

James 4:13 "Go to now, ye that say, Today or tomorrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain:"

James does not condemn wise business planning, but rather planning that leaves out God.

The people so depicted are practical atheists, living their lives and making their plans as if God did not exist. Such conduct is inconsistent with genuine saving faith, which submits to God.

James 4:14 "Whereas ye know not what [shall be] on the morrow. For what [is] your life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away."

"Know not what shall be on the morrow":

See Proverbs 27:1.

James exposes the presumptuous folly of the practical atheists he condemned (in verse 13), those who do not know what the future holds for them (Luke 12:16-21).

God alone knows the future. (Isaiah 46:9-10).

"Vapor":

This refers either to a puff of smoke or one's breath that appears for a moment in cold air.

It stresses the transitory nature of life.

We see from this, that we do not even know whether we will be alive tomorrow or not.

Our life is of God.

We are born when and to whom the Lord has planned for us to be.

Our death is the same.

There is an allotted time for each of us to die.

We leave this house of flesh when the breath of life that God put in it leaves.

We leave at the time that God has chosen, and not at our own choosing.

We leave not one second before our allotted time.

Man's days are numbered as the hair on his head.

Let me share what Jesus had to say about this very thing.

This is about a rich man, who had no idea he was about to die.

He had a very big harvest, and we will see what he did with his abundance.

Luke 12:17-20 "And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?" "And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods." "And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, [and] be merry." "But God said unto him, [Thou] fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?"

We do not have control of how long we live, God does.

Make good of today, it may be the only day you have.

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

"If the Lord will":

The true Christian submits his plans to the lordship of Christ.

"This or that":

This verse teaches that God does have something for Christians to do and that they should plan accordingly.

James condemns only elaborate planning that omits God (Prov. 16:9).

It is a very rash statement on our part to say what we will do tomorrow.

Only God knows if we will be alive tomorrow.

The only truthful statement we can make is, if it is the Lord's will, I will do it.

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

"Boastings": Arrogant bragging about their anticipated business accomplishments. Why should we boast?

We know that God has control over everything and everyone.

Then where is there room for boasting.

We do not control even our own life and death.

Knowing this, we should be humble above all men.

To think of our self too highly is sin.

In fact, it is the same sin that got Lucifer thrown out of heaven.

James 4:17 "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth [it] not, to him it is sin."

"Sin":

The implication is that they also did what they shouldn't do.

Sins of omission lead directly to sins of commission.

"To do good" here requires including God in one's plans. Omitting God is not merely bad planning; "it is sin".

This is saying that not only the bad things we do are sin, but we can sin by omitting to do good. Sin is anything displeasing to God.

When we know to do good and do not do it, it is displeasing to God.

Then, it is sin.

The sin here, is in full knowledge, so that would make it worse.

James Chapter 4 Question

1.What caused the fightings among them?

2.What is one of the strongest ways to make a point?

3.If we are _____ in _____, there should be no reason to fight.

4.Ye have not, because ye _____.

5.Who is James speaking to in this book?

6. Lust is of the _____, and not of God.
7. What is the extreme that they will go to, to fill their lust?
8. Instead of fighting for what we want, we should do what?
9. In verse 3, they ask _____.
10. God will not answer a prayer to fill our _____.
11. Friendship of the world is _____ with God.
12. Why is adultery such a terrible sin for a Christian.
13. The _____, or the _____, rules over the will.
14. What percentage of you must the Lord have?
15. God resisteth the _____, but giveth grace to the _____.
16. _____ the devil and he will flee from you.
17. What have we been given power of attorney to do?
18. What will cause the devil to leave you alone?
19. What does being doubleminded mean?
20. What is the mourning in verse 9?
21. Who is the Judge of the world?
22. What did Jesus do when the woman caught in adultery was brought before Him?
23. Why should we not say for sure what we are going to do tomorrow?
24. What happened to the rich man, in Luke chapter 12, who thought he would live forever?
25. What should we say regarding the things we are going to do?
26. What got Lucifer thrown out of heaven?
27. What, besides the commission of sin, is sin?

James Chapter 5

Verses 1-6 "Ye rich men":

James's common address, "brethren": is not found once in this section.

By contrast, it occurs four times (in verses 7-12).

James is now addressing wealthy, unsaved Jews who have poor Jews working for them. They have mistreated the poor, so God's judgment will fall on them.

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

"Rich":

Those with more than they need to live.

James condemns them not for being wealthy, but for misusing their resources.

Unlike the unbelieving rich in Timothy's congregation (1 Tim. 6:17-19), these are the wicked wealthy who profess Christian faith and have associated themselves with the church, but whose real god is money.

For prostituting the goodness and generosity of God, they can anticipate only divine punishment (see verse 5).

The rich man spoken of here, is the rich man who has no regard for others.

This would be a rich man that would be cruel to his employees.

This would be also, a man who would push any of his fellowmen down to acquire his riches.

The only problem this man has is not just that he is rich, but is the fact of what he is doing with his wealth.

The miseries that will come upon him are for the way he has treated his fellowman.

Verses 2-3

"Corrupted ... motheaten ... rust":

James points out the folly of hoarding food, expensive clothing, or money, all of which is subject to decay, theft, fire and other forms of loss.

James 5:2 "Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten."

We know that the rich man here, must have attained the riches in a corrupt manner. This would be a man who put his wealth ahead of everyone and everything.

It is not the riches that are evil, but the use of the riches by this corrupt man.

James 5:3 "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."

"Last days":

The period between Christ's first and second comings.

James rebukes the rich for living as if Jesus were never coming back.

Ironically, they have stored up treasure for their "last days" (retirement), which God will use against them in the last days.

Look with me at the following Scriptures, and see what Jesus had to say about this very thing.

Matthew 6:19-21 "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:" "But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:" "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

We do know that there is nothing wrong with silver and gold in their selves.

God established them as blessings from God, back in Genesis.

He established gold, silver, and cattle as true value.

Even the fact that silver means redemption and gold symbolizes the purity of God, tells us that the metal is not bad.

It is our use, or rather misuse, that is bad.

We see (in verse 3 above), that this rich man, spoken of here, is putting his faith in the gold and silver, rather than in God.

All of the gold and silver in the world will not save a person from the wrath of God. It is not wrong, however, to own silver and gold.

In fact, they are the only true money.

James 5:4 "Behold, the hire of the laborer's 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."

"Hire ... you kept back":

The rich had gained some of their wealth by oppressing and defrauding their day laborers, a practice strictly forbidden in the Old Testament (Lev. 19:13; Deut. 24:14-15).

"The Lord of Sabaoth":

Meaning the Lord of Hosts (i.e. of armies), this describes the omnipotent, avenging character of the God.

The One who hears the cries of the defrauded laborers, James warns, is the Lord of hosts (a name for God used frequently in the Old Testament), the commander of the armies of heaven (angels).

The Bible teaches that angels will be involved in the judgment of unbelievers (Matt. 13:39-41, 49; 16:27).

Now, we see where the sin comes in.

This man is so greedy that he has not even paid the wages to the people who harvested his fields.

God will not let this go unnoticed.

In our society today, this is the first thing a person must pay.

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."

"Lived in pleasure ... been wanton": "lived in pleasure":

This leads to vice when a person becomes consumed with the pursuit of pleasure, since a life without self-denial soon becomes out of control in every area.

After robbing their workers to accumulate their wealth, the rich indulged themselves in an extravagant lifestyle.

“A day of slaughter”:

Like fattened cattle ready to be slaughtered, the rich that James condemns had indulged themselves to the limit.

This is a vivid depiction of divine judgment, in keeping with the metaphor likening the overindulgent rich to fattened cattle.

We see the character of this rich man is under attack here.

"Wanton":

This means to live in pleasure.

You can see that this is extreme, because it is expressed twice in the verse above.

This means that this man throws extravagant parties and lives extravagantly, as well.

He has no regard for the feeling of others.

His earthly pleasure is all that interests him.

This day of slaughter, reminds us of the Scripture speaking of the days of Noah. They were eating, and drinking, not having any regard for God.

This seems to be the life style here as well.

This is a very fleshly man who pleases only his own flesh.

James 5:6 "Ye have condemned [and] killed the just; [and] he doth not resist you."

“Condemned ... killed the just”:

This describes the next step in the sinful progression of the rich.

Hoarding led to fraud, which led to self-indulgence.

Finally, overindulgence has consumed the rich to the point that they will do anything to sustain their lifestyle.

“Condemned”:

This comes from a word meaning “to sentence.”

The implication is that the rich were using the courts to commit judicial murder (2:8). This is just how bad this man's sin has become.

Of course, this could be not only saying that this man killed to get his money, but also, he helped nail Jesus to the cross for his sin.

In the case of Jesus (the Just One), we all nailed him to the cross with our sin.

Verses 7-8

“The coming of the Lord”:

Few doctrines concerning Jesus Christ are taught in James.

His vicarious death and resurrection are omitted, yet Christ’s return is cited for us to encourage patient endurance.

“Early and latter rain”:

Farmers in Palestine absolutely depended on two rainy seasons, both late fall and mid-spring, for their crops.

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."

“Patient”:

The word emphasizes patience with people (1 Tim. 5:14), not trials or circumstances (as in 1:3).

Specifically, James has in mind patience with the oppressive rich.

“The coming”:

The second coming of Christ (Mathew 24:3).

Realizing the glory that awaits them at Christ’s return should motivate believers to patiently endure mistreatment (Rom. 8:18).

“The early and latter rain”:

The “early” rain falls in Israel during October and November and softens the ground for planting.

The “late” rain falls in March and April, immediately before the spring harvest.

Just as the farmer waits patiently from the early rain to the latter for his crop to ripen, so must Christians patiently wait for the Lord’s return (Gal. 6:9; 2 Tim. 4:8; Titus 2:13).

We see from this an encouragement to wait patiently on the coming of the Lord.

It seems in this part of the world that James is writing to, the rain came early in planting time and then the rains came again at harvest time.

Many believe the early and latter rain, spoken of here, is speaking of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit of God. In the Spiritual sense, this could certainly be.

The fruit of the Spirit goes along with the outpouring of the Spirit of God. It is the rain (Spirit), which makes the beautiful fruit.

We also know, that those you win to Christ, many times are spoken of as the fruit of the harvest.

We should not get impatient, when we plant the seed (Word of God), it takes time for it to take hold and produce fruit.

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

“Stablish your hearts”:

A call for resolute, firm courage and commitment.

James exhorts those about to collapse under the weight of persecution to shore up their hearts with the hope of the second coming.

“Nigh”:

The immanency of Christ’s return is a frequent theme in the New Testament (Romans 13:12; Heb. 10:25; 1 Peter 4:7; 1 John 2:18).

James, as many other of the penmen, realizes that the great work of salvation which takes place in the heart. It is the heart that must be stayed upon God.

2 Thessalonians 3:5 "And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ."

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

"Grudge", in the verse above, means to murmur.

God does not like murmuring.

He does not like anyone holding a grudge either.

He says, when you come to the altar, forgive others first, and then come to the altar.

James pictured Christ as a judge about to open the doors to the courtroom and convene His court.

Knowing that the strain of persecution could lead to grumbling, James cautioned his readers against the sin (Philippians 2:14), lest they forfeit their full reward (2 John 8).

Judge not, that ye be not judged.

Whatever judgment you make on others, is the same judgment God will use on you. The Lord Jesus is the Judge that standeth at the door.

He is the True Judge.

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."

Job is the best example I can think of for patience and enduring suffering.

He kept the faith in terrible suffering in the loss of his children, and even unto the pain and suffering in his own body.

His suffering was not in vain.

God rewarded him greatly for keeping the faith.

Most of the prophets were martyred for their belief.

The historians tell us that Isaiah was sawed in two.

All of the prophets before us are examples to us that we can wait with patience.

The following is what Jesus said about this very thing.

Matthew 5:11-12 "Blessed are ye, when [men] shall revile you, and persecute [you], and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great [is] your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."

James Chapter 5 Questions

1. Why will the rich man in verse 1 weep and howl?
2. What kind of man is this rich man of verse 1?
3. Why will these miseries come upon him?
4. Your riches are _____, and your garments are _____.
5. It is not the riches that are evil, but what?
6. He had heaped treasure up for when?
7. Where your treasure is, there will your _____ be also.
8. What does silver mean spiritually?
9. What does gold symbolize?
10. What is paper money?
11. What had reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth?
12. What is the man's real sin?
13. What does "wanton" mean?
14. The fact that something is said twice in one Scripture indicates what?
15. Describe this rich man's life style.
16. What is the only thing this man is interested in pleasing?
17. How bad had his sin become?
18. Who really nailed Jesus to the cross?
19. _____ therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord.
20. What do many believe the early and latter rain are speaking of?
21. What does the fruit of the Spirit go along with?
22. What could the rain be speaking of here?
23. James told them to stablish their _____.
24. Why were they to do this?
25. Why should you not grudge against another?
26. What does the word "grudge" mean here?
27. What are we to do, if we have anything against someone, before we come to the altar?
28. How will we be judged?
29. Who, in the Old Testament, is a very good example of waiting patiently and of overcoming suffering?

James Chapter 5 Continued

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":

Job is the classic example of a man who patiently endured suffering and was blessed by God for his persevering faith.

James reassured his readers that God had a purpose for their suffering, just as He did for Job's (read Job chapter 42).

"Very pitiful, and of tender mercy":

Remembering the Lord's character is a great comfort in suffering.

The Scriptures repeatedly affirm His compassion and mercy (see Luke 6:36). In the last lesson, we spoke of the patience of Job.

He was, perhaps, the most patient person in persecution in all the Bible. "Endure":

Has a meaning which means continuance.

To endure means to last until the end.

We do know that the Lord is full of mercy and grace.

It is by His mercy that any of us are given the opportunity of salvation.

Over, and over, in the Bible, we see statements where the Lord has heard the cries of His people and answered them.

He is there in time of need for all of us.

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."

"Above all":

Or "especially."

As he has done repeatedly in his epistle, James stressed that a person's speech provides the most revealing glimpse of his spiritual condition (1:26; 2:12; 3:2-11; 4:11).

"Swear not ... any other oath":

As Jesus did before him (Matt. 5:33-36; 23:16-22), James condemned the contemporary Jewish practice of swearing false, evasive, deceptive oaths by everything other than the name of the Lord (which alone was considered binding).

"Yea be yea":

Again, echoing Jesus (Matt. 5:37), James called for straight-forward, honest, plain speech.

To speak otherwise is to invite God's judgment.

"Above all things":

James is not saying that the pronouncement of oaths involves his greatest teaching in the book.

But he connects it (with verses 7-11; possibly also verses 1-6), as an important instruction concerning the suffering of affliction.

He admonishes believers not to curse or invoke God's wrath on those who mistreat them.

We know of the warning in the Sermon on the Mount about swearing.

Matthew 5:34 "But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne:"

Matthew 5:36 "Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black."

Anything more than a simple yes or no is presuming that we have more power than we do.

We do not want to be condemned of God for thinking too highly of ourselves.

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

"Afflicted":

In the verse above, means to undergo hardship.

We see then, if we are undergoing hardship, we are to pray.

I love to sing the Psalms.

It is exciting to sing the Scriptures.

So much of the music today is influencing our children in the wrong things.

Music influences the lives of the people listening.

If you listen to songs that promote drugs, alcohol, homosexuality, and other sin: you will soon find yourself involved in one, or more, of these activities.

On the other hand, if you listen to beautiful Scriptures, set to music, it will cause you to draw closer to God.

There is a joy in the Lord that is far greater than any happiness from worldly things.

The antidote to the suffering caused by evil treatment or persecution is seeking God's comfort through prayer (Psalms 27:13-14; 55:22; Jonah 2:7; Phil. 4:6; 1 Peter 5:7).

"Let him sing psalms":

The natural response of a joyful heart is to sing praise to God.

Verses 14-15

“Healing”:

One of the Old Testament names of God is Yahweh-Rapha, meaning “The LORD That Heals” (Exodus 15:26). The healing power of God is evidenced in a number of instances in Scripture.

God heals by preserving health (Deut. 8:4), and advising good nutritional habits (Exodus 15:26; Leviticus 11), and a healthful life-style (Leviticus 12-14); and through the application of medical treatment (James 5:14), forgiveness of disease-causing sin (Numbers 12:13), and the prayer of faith (James 5:15).

Although God does not always choose to heal, He sometimes does.

When a Christian is sick, he should confess his known sins, and God may heal him if the sickness is caused by sin.

He may also be led to ask his elders to anoint him with oil and pray for his healing.

Some diseases experienced by Christians today could be prevented by trusting God as Yahweh- Rapha, and allowing Him to deal with those things in their lives causing stress, anger and worry.

Verses 14-15

“Sick”:

James directs those who are “sick,” meaning weakened by their suffering to call for the elders of the church for strength, support and prayer.

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:"

“Anointing him with oil”:

Literally “rubbing him with oil”:

(1)Possibly this is a reference to ceremonial anointing (Mark 6:13);

(2)On the other hand, James may have had in mind medical treatment of believers physically bruised and battered by persecution.

Perhaps it is better to understand the anointing in a metaphorical sense of the elder’s encouraging, comforting and strengthening the believer.

Though God often heals through medicine, the use of oil here is mainly symbolic because;

(1)It is applied “In the name of the Lord”;

(2)It is the Lord who will “raise him up;” and

(3)Luke 10:34 uses a different Greek word to describe the medicinal anointing of an injured traveler.

All believers in Christ have been given authority to use the name of Jesus to heal the sick.

John 14:12-14 "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater [works] than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." "If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do [it]."

It is the name of Jesus that heals the sick.

It is very important for the person who is sick to call for prayer.

This shows that he believes he can receive healing.

Jesus said, when he healed, Your faith has made you whole.

The anointing with oil symbolizes the Holy Spirit of God.

This cannot be just any oil in your cabinet.

This must be pure olive oil.

Olive oil symbolizes the Holy Spirit of God.

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."

“The prayer of faith”:

This entails both the prayer of the sick person and the prayer of the elders who in faith meet the requirements of this passage.

But it suggests much more, because this faith is effectual.

Some sick have had little faith, yet have been healed (Acts 3:4-8); others, like Paul, have had great faith, yet have not been healed (2 Cor. 12:7-10).

Further, those who possessed the gift of healing in the early church were at times unable to perform healing as they may have wished (2 Tim. 4:20).

The Greek text might suggest this reading: "The prayer produced by that faith will heal."

The prayer that results for true faith is effective.

Elijah experienced this prayer of faith (verses 17-18).

Elijah knew God's Word and will, and so persistently prayed (1 Kings 18:36, 37, 42-46).

"Save the sick":

Deliver them from their suffering because they have been weakened by their infirmity, not from their sin, which was confessed.

Faith is people acting in accordance with God's known purpose (1 John 5:14).

The prayer of faith does not include a gift of healing.

It does not exert extraordinary spiritual strength (Acts 3:12); otherwise all spiritual Christians would be healthy (3 John 2).

Nor does it merely involve the ritual (of verse 14).

The prayer of faith discerns God's will and perseveres until it is accomplished.

God's will, however, is not to heal in every case, and true faith can discern and accept that (Romans 8:26-27).

Not only must the elder who is praying believe, but the person being healed, as well.

In some instances, a member of the person's family can stand in for them.

If they are not available, it is permissible to have a believer stand in for them.

Whoever is being prayed over must believe to receive the healing.

There are exceptions to this, but this is generally speaking.

Sometimes a non-believer will be healed as a sign from God.

Some people believe everyone who is sick has sin that caused the sickness.

That is true in some cases, but not always.

Notice the word "if" in the verse above.

"Committed sins ... be forgiven":

Not by the elders, since God alone can forgive sins.

That those who are suffering called for the elders implies they had a contrite, repentant heart, and that part of their time with the overseers would involve confessing their sins to God.

We also know that people like Paul had an illness not caused by lingering sin in his life.

We will see in the next few verses the explanation of this very thing by Jesus.

John 9:1-3 "And as [Jesus] passed by, he saw a man which was blind from [his] birth." "And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?" "Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him."

I love the statement, "His sins shall be forgiven him".

God does a perfect work, when He heals.

He heals the Spirit, as well as the body.

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":

Mutual honesty, openness and sharing of needs will enable believers to uphold each other in the spiritual struggle.

“Effectual fervent prayer ... availeth much”:

The energetic, passionate prayers of godly people have the power to accomplish much (see Numbers 11:2). This answers many questions about prayer.

To be truly forgiven for our sins, we must express a sorrow for committing them. This is what the confessing one to another is all about.

This is not confession to a minister, but to a friend in Christ.

This helps us get it out in the open and deal with it.

We are to pray for each other.

We must not just pray for ourselves, but for others.

Many times, God takes care of the needs in our lives as we pray for someone else. This healing is body, mind, soul, and spirit.

We are not just to pray, but to pray over and over, until we get an answer. This effectual fervent prayer just means that we are earnestly seeking God. It means that we are to continue in this prayer for an answer.

Notice also, that the person doing the praying is righteous (in right standing with God).

He or she, is righteous, because they have taken on the righteousness of Christ and been made sons of God.

God hears the prayers of His children, and answers them.

Verses 17-18

“Elijah ... prayed ... he prayed again”:

Elijah provides one of the most notable illustrations of the power of prayer in the Old Testament. 7

His prayers (not mentioned in the Old Testament account), both initiated and ended a 3 year, 6 month drought (Luke 4:25).

James 5:17 "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."

This is speaking of Elijah.

This just explains that Elijah was a human being as we are.

We do know that he had great faith and was a righteous man in the sight of God.

You can find the Scriptures covering this (in 1 Kings Chapters 17 and 18).

It is very interesting to me that this covers a period of 3-1/2 years (the same amount of time in Revelation, seven years broken into two 3-1/2 year periods).

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

This withholding of the rain was for a very good purpose.

After the purpose was fulfilled, Elijah prayed and it rained.

Notice, the fruit comes after the rain.

As I said earlier, this rain could, also, symbolize the Spirit of God, which brings forth fruit, as well.

Verses 19-20 “Any of you”:

Since James is addressing Christian readers; the errors he mentions may be any of those discussed throughout this epistle.

“Convert”:

This does not here mean to save, but to restore (as in Luke 22:32). “Death”:

This is the physical death by which God sometimes punishes His disobedient people (Acts 5:5- 10; 1 Cor. 11:30; 1 John 5:16).

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

“If any of you”:

This introduces a third category of people in the church (verses 13-14), those professing believers who have strayed from the truth.

“Err from the truth”:

Apostatizes from the faith they once professed (Heb. 5:12 – 6:9; 10:29; 1 John 2:19).

Such people are in grave danger (verse 20), and the church must call them back to the true faith.

This is speaking of someone who believes in error.

"Err":

This means go astray.

Perhaps, this is speaking of the backslidden Christian, as well as the one who has never known 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."

"Sinner":

A word used to describe the unregenerate.

James has in mind here those with dead faith (2:14-26), not sinning, true believers.

"The error of his way":

Those who go astray doctrinally (verse 19), will also manifest an errant lifestyle; one not lived according to biblical principles.

"Save a soul from death":

A person who wanders from the truth puts his soul in jeopardy.

The "death" in view is not physical death, but eternal death, eternal separation from God and eternal punishment in hell (Isa. 66:24; Dan 12:2; Matt. 13:40, 42, 50; 25:41, 46; Mark 9:43-49; 2 Thess. 1:8-9; Rom. 6:23; Rev. 20:11-15; 21:8).

Knowing how high the stakes are should motivate Christians to aggressively pursue such people.

"Hide a multitude of sins" (see Psalm 5:10).

Since even one sin is enough to condemn a person to hell, James' use of the word "multitude", emphasizes the hopeless condition of lost, unregenerate sinners.

The good news of the gospel is that God's forgiving grace (which is greater than any sin; Rom 5:20), is available to those who turn from their sins and exercise faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:8-9).

This is speaking to the brethren (of verse 19).

Those who lead others to the Lord will have great rewards in heaven.

1 Peter 4:8 "And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins."

It is enough reward to know that someone you have ministered to will be saved, but God has more reward for you than that.

We will be judged according to the way we have dealt with our fellowman.

If we lead someone to the Lord, it is because we love them.

We have put ourselves behind, and are thinking more of their needs than our own.

To the world, ministering to others is foolishness, but to God it is the tool that helps to lead them to salvation.

1 Corinthians 1:18 "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God."

1 Corinthians 1:21 "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."

If you care enough for others to help them find God, God will forgive you of your sins.

James Chapter 5 Continued Questions

1. Who is mentioned in verse 11 who had great patience?

2. The Lord is very _____, and of _____.

3. What does endure mean?

4. It is by God's _____ that we are given the opportunity of salvation.

5. What did James say, was above all?

6. What might happen, if you swore?

7. Where do we find the warning about swearing (Sermon on the Mount)?

8. What are we really saying, when we answer with more than a yes or no?

- 9.What should we do when we are afflicted?
- 10.What should we do when we are merry?
- 11.What does afflicted in verse 13, mean?
- 12.Music _____ the lives of the people listening.
- 13.What should the sick do?
- 14.What should the elders do, before praying for you?
- 15.Who has the authority to pray in Jesus' name?
- 16.What is the only oil permissible to use for anointing?
- 17.What does olive oil symbolize?
- 18.What saves the sick?
- 19.What other wonderful blessing comes from this prayer?
- 20.Name some things that must happen for a prayer to be answered.
- 21.Is everyone who is sick, sick because of a sin in their life?
- 22.What did Jesus have to say about this in the 9th chapter of John?
- 23.What does "effectual fervent prayer" mean?
- 24.Who are the righteous?
- 25.Why does God pay more attention to these prayers?
- 26.Who prayed and caused it not to rain for 3 and 1/2 years?
- 27.What did the author relate this 3-1/2 year period to?