

BIBLICAL VIEWPOINTS
LECTURESHIP
1987



THEME

James: A Handful of Precious pearls

JAMES, A HANDFUL OF PRICELESS PEARLS

(By Clayton Winters)

INTRODUCTION

- A. "One of the Jewish words for preaching is *charaz* which literally means "stringing beads." Rather than a string of beads, the book of James is more like a handful of priceless pearls that are dropped one by one into the mind of the hearer or reader."
- B. We will try in this lesson to give an overview of this book, these priceless pearls; then succeeding lessons will go into considerably more detail.

I. THE AUTHOR OF THE BOOK OF JAMES

- A. Four people in the New Testament were called James.
 1. Two of the apostles: James, son of Zebedee and brother of John, and James the son of Alphaeus, identified also as James the Less.

"Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus; Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him." (Matt. 10:2-4; see also Mark 3:16-19; Luke 6:14-16; Acts 1:13.)
 2. James the brother (or probably the father) of Judas.

"And Judas the brother (son of, NIV) James, and Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor." (Luke 6:16.)
 3. James, the Lord's brother, one of at least six children belonging to Mary and Joseph. He is also called an apostle in a special sense (Gal. 1:19). He is no doubt the author of the book of James.

"Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things?" (Matt. 13:55,56; see also Mark 6:3.)
- B. James as a leader in the early church.
 1. At first he did not believe in Jesus; he thought He was out of His mind.

"For neither did his brethren believe in him." (John 7:5.)
"And when his friends [family, NIV] heard of it, they went out to lay hold on him for they said, He is beside himself." (Mark 3:21.)
 2. The Lord seems to have made a special appearance to him after his resurrection.

"After that he was seen of James; then of all the apostles." (1 Cor. 15:7.)
 3. He was present with the disciples before Pentecost. (Acts 1:13,14.)
 4. Paul visited with him in Jerusalem three years after his conversion, then again fourteen years later, when he found him to be a pillar in the church.

"Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother." (Gal. 1:18,19.)

"And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me the right hand of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision." (Gal. 2:9.)

5. He seems to have held a leading position in the church at Jerusalem. (Acts 15:13-21.)
6. He, along with the elders at Jerusalem, requested Paul to take a vow to prove that he was not teaching the Jews to abandon Moses. This is one of the more controversial points in the life of James. (Acts 21:18-25.)
7. Josephus says that James was stoned as a lawbreaker by the Jews. (p. 598.)

II. A HANDFUL OF PEARLS FROM JAMES

- A. The pearl of persecution. Should be a matter of joy (1:2), requires patience and wisdom to overcome (1:3-12), temptation comes when lust goes uncontrolled (1:13-15).
- B. The pearl of the precious word. Begotten by the word of truth (1:18), able to save our souls (1:21), to be obeyed (1:21,22), provides a means of self-examination (1:23-25.)
- C. The pearl of pure religion. (1:26,27.)
- D. The pearl of impartiality. (2:1-13.)
- E. The pearl of productive faith. (2:14-26.)
- F. The pearl of the perfect man--tongue control. (3.)
- G. The pearl of providence. We spend our time in lustful acquisition, rather than in divine submission. This causes our lives to be filled with adultery (4:4), pride (4:5-10), and harsh judgments of others (4:11,12).
Our lives should be lived within the framework of, "If the Lord will." 4:13-17.)
- H. The pearl of patience. Patience under the domination of the rich (5:1-7); patience in waiting for the Lord's coming (5:8,9); patience exemplified by the prophets (5:10,11); patience in prayer and affliction (5:13-20).

WERE JAMES AND PAUL IN CONFLICT?

(Wesley Simons)

INTRODUCTION

- A. Must a man do anything to be saved?
- B. Must a Christian do anything to stay saved?
- C. Was James mistaken in James 2:24?

D. How do you reconcile Paul's statement in Ephesians 2:8,9 with James 2:24?

E. Notice the following:

I. ARGUMENTS MEN HAVE MADE CONCERNING THE ALLEGED PROBLEM BETWEEN PAUL AND JAMES

A. Some say Paul had turned loose of Judaism but James had not fully done so.

1. Where is Bible proof for the aforementioned theory?
2. Paul was just as steeped in Judaism as was James (Phil. 3:3-8).
3. This destroys inspiration. Is James 2:14-26 inspired?
4. Did the Holy Spirit have a falsehood written?

B. Some say that Paul was the apostle to the Gentiles, thus taught salvation by grace through faith, while Peter and James taught the Jews a system of works.

1. Did Peter teach the Jews one thing (Acts 20:27-42), and the Gentiles something else (Acts 10:1-48)?
2. Are there two gospel? (Eph. 4:5).
3. Cf Luke 24:45-47
4. When did the laws change?
5. Which one did Paul obey?
- 6 Gal. 1:23 says Paul preached the gospel which once he destroyed.
- 7 If Paul and Peter worked together, which gospel would they preach?
8. What about 1 Cor. 1:10?

C. Some believe that James and Paul actually contradicted one another.

1. No Scripture correctly understood contradicts another.
2. This view destroys the inspiration of the word of God.
3. All Scripture is inspired of God (2 Tim. 3:16,17). This includes James 2:14-26 and Eph. 2:8,9.
4. The Holy Spirit revealed both James 2:14-26, and Eph. 2:8,9.
5. Man had rather reflect on the word of God than give up his false doctrine.
6. Did Paul contradict himself in Eph. 2:8,9 and Gal. 5:6; 2 Cor. 5:10. *(Each which word: by ~~law~~ judged by what he had done when in good works)*

D. Some say that Paul tells us how to become a Christian and James tells us that we are to work because we are Christians.

1. They are saying that there are no works in becoming a Christian.
2. Faith is a work (John 6:28,29).
3. Peter said, "All who fear God and worketh righteousness is accepted with him" (Acts 10:34,35).
4. Paul taught works in Acts 26:20. *(the works must for repentance)*

II. A LOOK AT TRUTH

A. What does Rom. 4:1 teach?

1. That Abraham was saved without the works of the law.
2. That we are saved without the works of the law.

B. What does Eph. 2:8,9 teach?

1. That man is saved by grace through faith.
2. That works are excluded, but what kind?
 - (a) Works of merit - Eph. 2:8,9.
 - (b) Works of the law - Gal. 2:16.
 - (c) works of self righteousness - Matt. 5:5-7.
 - (d) After man commits one sin, he cannot do enough works to be save on the merit of those works alone.

III. WHAT WE ARE NOT SAYING

- A. We are not saying one can work his way to heaven (Acts 10:1,2).
- B. We are not saying God owes us salvation because of our great works (Luke 17:10).
- C. We are not saying that one must live a perfect life (1 John 1:7-10).
- D. We are not saying that we do not need the grace of God (Titus 2:11).
- E. We are not saying that we do not need the blood of Christ (Rom. 5:8).

IV. WHAT WE ARE SAYING

- A. That we must improve our talents - Matt. 25:14-30
- B. That we must be prepared when Jesus comes - Matt. 25:1-13.
- C. That we must help others - Matt. 25:31-46.
- D. That we must obey God - Heb. 5:8,9.
- E. We are saying works are important because:
 1. Through them we glorify God - Matt. 5:16.
 2. Through them we are accepted with God - Acts 10:34,35.
 3. Belief is a work - John 6:28,29.
 4. Works make faith come to life - James 2:24-26.

CONCLUSION

- A. Faith and works go together. They are not mutually exclusive.
- B. May God give us the courage to have a faith which works by love - Gal. 5:6.

THE TRIAL OF FAITH

(Joe Galloway)

TEXT: James 1:1-15

INTRODUCTION

A. Definition of topic:

1. Trial--testing; specifically refers to our being subjected to conditions that help bring out our real character.
2. Faith--confidence and conviction based on the dependable and reliable testimony of God's word (Heb. 11:1; 2 Cor. 5;7).
3. The trial of faith--means by which man's devotion to God is gauged and determined.

B. Such "trials of faith" have been a prominent feature of God's dealings with man from the beginning (Examples: Abraham, Job, Paul).

DISCUSSION

I. OUTLINE OF TEXT: THE TRYING OF OUR FAITH (1:2-18)

A. Trials from without (1:2-12).

1. The proper attitude toward trials (2-4).
2. Obtaining wisdom to help in trials (5-8).
3. Trials are common to all (9-11).
4. The reward of faithful endurance (12).

B. Trials from within (1:13,14).

1. The source of temptation to sin (13,14).
2. The result of yielding to such temptation (15,16).
3. A true view of how God affects us (17,18).

II. TWO KINDS OF TRIALS

A. Non-sinister trials--events of life that tax our will to be what God wants us to be.

1. Such things as sorrow, sickness, pain, disappointment, hardships, losses, problems, and difficulties.
2. Two views of such trials:
 - (a) The unspiritual view such as tragedies.
 - (b) The spiritual count such "joy" (of value) (James 1:2).
 - 1) Are suffering as did Christ (1 Pet. 4:1,13).
 - 2) God is dealing with us as his *children* (Heb. 12:3-11).
 - 3) Will help us toward maturity ("worketh patience") James 1:3).
 - 4) Results in eternal reward (James 1;12).

B. Temptations--enticements to sin that arise from our desires.

1. While true that God proves true Christian character by trying our

- faith (Gen. 22:1), He does not seduce to do evil.
- (a) Adam, basically, charged God with this (Gen. 3:12).
 - (b) God is completely holy--He and evil are eternally opposed to each other (James 1:13).
2. We are to blame for sinning.
- (a) We like to blame fate, society, circumstances.
 - (b) We are morally free to choose either to do right or wrong.

III. THE RELATIONSHIP OF GOD'S COMMANDS TO THE TRIALS OF OUR FAITH*

- A. Trials of faith necessitate there being a basis or standard of faith; therefore, requirements or commandments.
- B. Two distinct kinds of commands:
 - 1. Moral commands (matters which are right within themselves--which commend themselves to all good people as right or wrong in the very nature of things).
 - (a) Examples: commands forbidding lying, murder, stealing, adultery.
 - (b) Obedience to this type command does not necessarily show one to be considerate and loyal to God.
 - 1) Many live this way without any design of obeying God.
 - 2) May live moral lives because of society's approval and personal well-being.
 - 2. Preemptory commands (arbitrary matter, originating in the will of God, and right because God has spoken them).
 - (a) A sure test of faith because:
 - 1) Such causes one to act apart from selfish considerations which may motivate the world.
 - 2) Such obedience arises only from a devout desire to serve and please God.
 - (b) Three elements of such commands:
 - 1) We are unable to see the connection between what is required and the blessing dependent on it (Ex. 12:1-13).
 - 2) In addition, the command may involve elements that are distasteful to us (1 Kgs. 5).
 - 3) An additional matter with Abraham's offering Isaac was that the thing commanded would have been sinful, but for the fact that God commanded it.
 - 3. Denominationalism ignores preemptory commands, thinking they can show their faith by doing the moral commands while rejecting such preemptory commands as baptism for the remission of sins.

CONCLUSION: Let's show our faith by:

- A. Doing God's will.
 - 1. In the way he said to do it.
 - 2. For the purpose he said do it.
- B. Doing God's will in spite of hardships and persecutions that may accompany our faithful obedience.

*This section is based on an editorial, "Tests of Faith" in the April 4, 1985 *Gospel Advocate* by Guy N. Woods.

WORD OF TRUTH
(Jeff Trotter)

TEXT: James 1:16-25

I. GOD LOVINGLY PROVIDES INSTRUCTION FROM ABOVE (VS. 16-18)

God has given all mankind the capacity to think and learn. However, man is not capable of his own intellect to formulate a plan of rightness before God (Jer. 10:23). God as teacher instructs in life by means of several classrooms.

A. *We look to God for the lesson of blessings (vs. 16-27).*

Most people look upon God's faithful blessings as something to be received but not responded to. God's general blessings are shared with all (Matt. 5:45). Yet His goodness should motivate the receiver to look beyond the gift to the giver and His desire for their life (Rom. 2:4). Understanding the blessings for this life helps us to successfully graduate to the life ahead.

B. *We look to God for the lesson of begatting (vs. 18).*

One who is sensitive to and appreciative of the blessings of God should seek Him as their spiritual Father, for only God can bring about a spiritual birth. Such a spiritual birth is required before we have hope for eternity (John 3:7). Just as physical life is found within the seed, so spiritual life abides within the seed, the word of God (1 Peter 1:23). When a man applies himself to the word in obedience, he can truly be said to be the Father's child, free from the bondage of sin (John 8:32).

II. WE MUST DEVELOP MOTIVATION FROM WITHIN (VS. 19-21)

God has supplied ample instruction in which to base a life-long commitment. However, even as a Christian one must daily check as to who's will we are following (Luke 9:23).

A. *Inwardly we experience the battle between the will of man versus the will of God (vs. 19,20).*

Outbursts of wrath reveal not only a lack of personal control, but also the lack of a person's being controlled by the will of God. Instead of being overcome by evil, we are to overcome evil with good (Rom. 12:21). God will rectify any inequities in His own time and in His own way (Rom. 12:19).

B. *The will of man can only be vitalized by the will of God (vs. 21).*

God is the giver of all physical life and all spiritual life through the gospel (2 Tim. 1:10). To participate in the joy of spiritual life one must receive the word with the proper motive, in the proper mind, looking to one's proper mission.

III. WE MUST DEMONSTRATE APPLICATION FROM WITHOUT (VS. 22-25).

The receiving of instruction coupled with the development of motivation should produce results that are both visible and meaningful.

A. *We must be aware of the danger of deception (vs. 22).*

God does not want to hear promises but see results. If one thinks God can be coerced into accepting less than His word teaches, he will reap the results of such foolish thinking (Gal. 6:7).

B. *We must be aimed at the design of direction (vs. 23,24).*

The word of God tells us who we are and who we can and should be. Only through the direction of the Scriptures can the blemishes and disfigurements of sin be corrected. The doer seeks diligently the transformation (Rom. 12:2), while the hearer does not even observe that a change is needed (Acts 28:26,27).

C. *We must be activated by the demands of doing (vs. 25).*

There is much for all to do in the service of God. The word of God provides for us a beginning but also a continuing as daily decisions are made and great good is accomplished (Phil. 3:12-14). The work to be accomplished is important and the need is urgent (John 9:4). Who will say "Here am I, send me" (Isaiah 6:8)!

A PURE AND UNDEFILED RELIGION

(Eddy Craft)

TEXT: James 1:27

INTRODUCTION

- A. James 1:27 has been a very controversial passage of Scripture for years among brethren. Why is this so? Is it because some brethren have taken a Scripture to uphold a false doctrine?
- B. I believe that James 1:27 is as easy to understand as Mark 16:16. One would have to have help to misunderstand the passage.

I. APPLICATION OF JAMES 1:27

A. To what do the following terms apply?

- 1. "PURE" religion:
 - Church only
 - Individual only
 - Both
 - Neither of these
- 2. "UNDEFILED BEFORE GOD" religion
 - Church only
 - Individual only
 - Both
 - Neither of these

3. "TO VISIT THE FATHERLESS AND WIDOWS" religion Church only
 Individual only
 Both
 Neither of these
4. TO KEEP HIMSELF UNSPOTTED FROM THE WORLD" religion Church only
 Individual only
 Both
 Neither of these

B. From the above I believe that we can clearly see that the passage is both church and individual action.

II. IS JAMES 1:27 INDIVIDUAL OR COLLECTIVE?

A. To answer we must consider the context.

B. Usages of *adelphoi* (brethren) in James:

King James translation	Relation of <i>adelphoi</i> to the passage
1:2 My brethren	Introduces new thought - enduring trials
1:16 My beloved brethren	Continues thought
1:19 My beloved brethren	Introduces new thought - practice of true religion
2:1 My brethren	Introduces new thought - danger of showing partiality
2:5 My beloved brethren	Continues thought
2:14 My brethren	Introduces new thought - faith and works
3:1 My brethren	Introduces new thought - Problem of tongue
3:10 My brethren	Continues thought
3:12 My brethren	Continues thought
4:11 Brethren	Introduces new thought - sin of judging other
5:7 Brethren	Introduces new thought - admonition to patience
5:9 Brethren	Continues thought
5:12 My brethren	Introduces new thought - prohibition of oaths
5:19 Brethren	Introduces new thought - restoration of erring

NOTE: The above table shows how *adelphoi* is used in James. Nine of its fifteen occurrences are used to introduce NEW MATERIAL. The purpose of *adelphoi* (brethren) as used in this epistle is not only to address its recipients (plural), but to introduce paragraphs of thought.

C. Regarding James 1:27.

1. *Adelphoi* is used in 1:2, 1:16, 1:19. The material surrounding James 1:27 is addressed to a plurality of members.
2. Thus, the general context and general structure of the book support the interpretation that includes both the individual and the collective as the intended recipients of the passage.

III. ARE THE FOLLOWING PASSAGES INDIVIDUAL EXCLUSIVELY?

- A. 2 John 9-11
- B. 1 Corinthians 16:1,2
- C. Ephesians 5:19
- E. The above passages are written to the individual as James 1:27. But these are applied to the individual and the collective.

CONCLUSION

- A. Brethren, I see nothing in James 1:27 that would indicate individual action only.
- B. The context teaches very clearly that James 1:27 is individual and collective action.

THE ROYAL LAW (Timothy Hall)

TEXT: James 2:8-13

INTRODUCTION

- A. Is there any organization upon earth in which you can "pick and choose which rules you will follow?"
- B. Why is it that men think they may do the same with our Lord's church? They obey what they like, and ignore the rest.
- C. In this passage, James helps us to see the nature of citizenship in the kingdom of Christ.

DISCUSSION

I. IN THE KINGDOM WE ARE UNDER LAW

- A. Many in religion today think this is not so. They believe "grace" is incompatible with the concept of "law":
 - 1. Romans 6:14 - Is that not what Paul said? We are not under law, but under grace!
 - 2. Therefore, reason many, there is no law in the church. And this leads to all sorts of problems.
- B. But it is not true that "law" has vanished from God's realm:
 - 1. A close study of the book of Romans will reveal that Paul had in mind "the" law, i.e. the law of Moses. His message was that Christians were no longer subservient to that law.

- 2 Many passages show we do indeed live under law:
 - a. Galatians 6:2 - The law of Christ.
 - b. 1 Cor. 9:21 - the law of Christ.
 - c. Romans 13:10 - the law of love.
 3. "Law" means a system of rules, restraints. If there were no restraints, we would have license. That is not true of the Christian dispensation.
- C. In our text, James shows the presence of law for Christians:
1. Note: "Law" is used in five of the six verses in the text.
 2. James 2:8 - The royal law - a familiar precept that Jesus had given. Was this to be part of Christ's kingdom? Yes!
 3. James 1:25, 2:12 - The perfect law of liberty - Again, it is indisputable that this law was part of the kingdom.
- D. One who teaches, therefore, that law has vanished, and now is a time of grace only, shows his lack of understanding.

II. THE NATURE OF THE "ROYAL LAW"

- A. James 2:8 - James applies the title, "royal law", to the command to love our neighbors. Why the term "royal"?
1. Perhaps because this law stands as "king" over all other precepts of the Bible, except one. Matthew 22:36-40 lends support to this idea.
 2. Perhaps because following this law would make anyone a "royal" person. 1 Pet 2:9 teaches that those who follow God's will are a "Royal priesthood".
 3. Perhaps because this is a law that came straight from the King, Jesus Himself. If Jesus Himself taught this, then it is of utmost importance that we give heed to it.
- B. But what is this "royal law"?
1. James 2:8 - It is the command to love others as ourselves.
 2. James 2:9 - It is to avoid the tendency of the world to "have respect of persons". Literally, this would translate "face-accepting". It is to judge a person by his appearance, rather than judging by the manner of person.
 3. James 2:13 - It is to be one who shows mercy to anyone, rich or poor, black or white, educated or ignorant.
- C. This seems to be the essence of the royal law: To be a people who show mercy to anyone, regardless of their "face":
1. Some events in Christ's ministry show what "mercy" is:
 - (a) Matthew 9:27 - The two blind men cry out for mercy. Do they desire forgiveness, or help in overcoming their blindness?
 - (b) Matthew 15:22 - The Syro-Phenician woman begs for mercy on her daughter. Does she want forgiveness, or help?
 - (c) Matthew 17:15 - A man pleads for mercy on his son. Had his son sinned? Maybe, but the man wanted assistance.
 - (d) These and many other incidents show what mercy is at its most basic level: A willingness to help, whether it be forgiveness, or some other sort of aid.

2. Jude 22 -- This is the real meaning of mercy. "Compassion" in the KJV is translated from the same word that normally translates "mercy." If a person has mercy, will they help?
- D. Therefore, the "royal law" is a summons to the citizens of Christ's kingdom to be willing to help anyone at any time:
1. Luke 16:19-25 - The rich man begged for help in his Hadean home. But had he shown mercy to Lazarus on earth?
 2. Luke 10:37 - After giving the parable of the good Samaritan, Jesus asked, Who was the neighbor? "He that showed mercy"!
 3. Matthew 5:7 - "Blessed are the merciful."

III. BUT THE CITIZENS OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM DON'T ALWAYS SHOW MERCY

- A. This was the real problem behind James chapter 2:
1. James 2:1-4 - The problem: The Christians would show preference to the rich, and ignore the poor.
 2. Leviticus 19:15 - This ran counter to all God had ever taught His people. Don't respect persons!
 3. Leviticus 19:18 - Long ago, God had issued the royal law.
- B. A related problem was trying to justify their sin:
1. James 2:8 - This verse anticipates their rationalization: "We are honoring the rich only because we are trying to fulfil the royal law to love others."
 2. James 2:9 - James knows this is not the case. They are trying to justify their sin by the law. The very law convicts them as lawbreakers!
 3. James 2:10 - We cannot "Pick and choose"! To wilfully offend in one point is to be guilty of breaking the law in general. It is the same in our system of justice.
 4. James 2:13 - The royal law is inescapable. To ignore the law of mercy is to choose to forfeit our own mercy.
- C. The point: If you accept any part of the law of Christ, then you must also accept the royal law - the law which teaches us to judge no one on the basis of appearance. All are to be given mercy when they need it.

CONCLUSION

- A. Rejoice! We live under the "perfect law of liberty." The idea is that this is a law that gives us freedom. It is similar to the difference between living under the laws of America and the laws of Russia.
- B. But a choice to live under the perfect law of liberty is also a choice to live under all the law. Including the royal law.

HOW GREAT MATTER A LITTLE FIRE KINDLES

(Wayne Miller)

TEXT: James 3:1-12

INTRODUCTION

In this study we are considering a popular and oft quoted section in the book of James. Human speech is a wonderful ability given by God but who hasn't had, and probably still has problems with his tongue? Everyone realizes the devastating effect of an uncontrolled tongue. Someone has said: "The tongue is in a really wet place and it is really easy for it to slip."

When a person goes to the doctor, one of the first things that he does is ask you to stick out your tongue. Why? Because he can tell a lot about your health by looking at this little member. Jesus points out that our speech reveals the condition of one's heart and is an indication of his real character (Matt. 12:34-37).

Let us give attention to James' teaching about this small but powerful member of the human anatomy.

I. ILLUSTRATION OF RESTRAINT (VS. 3,4)

James would do his best to illustrate and simplify from everyday life the lessons he taught. He paints word pictures to drive the point home of how the small controls the large.

A. bits (v. 3).

This first illustration would readily be understood by people of James' day. No doubt, on many occasions they had seen or ridden the big, powerful horse. However, the direction of this big animal could be controlled by a small bit.

James is using this illustration to prove that by regulating our words we can regulate our whole life and actions. Our body will follow the leadings of the tongue.

A. Ships (v.4).

In comparison to the hull, the size, and weight of a ship, the rudder is very small. Yet, it is able, upon being moved by the steersman, to completely change the course of the ship from one direction to another. Even in rough, turbulent weather, the small rudder is able to guide the large vessel safely to port. Just as the fate of a ship is dependent upon proper guidance of the rudder, so also is the fate of man's life dependent upon proper guidance of the tongue. The small controls and gives direction to the large.

II. INJURY WHERE THERE IS NO RESTRAINT (VS. 5-8)

James knew full well some hurting and lasting consequences that followed in the wake of an uncontrolled tongue. He now shows the uncontrolled tongue to be:

A. A. destructive as fire (vs. 5,6).

A spark of fire is able to produce a raging inferno. Each year millions of acres of timber are destroyed because of small sparks from a fire. Homes and businesses are destroyed by the careless use of fire. On the other hand, lest we forget, a fire produced by a spark can be of great value. The key is to keep it under control. The tongue, like a fire, risks the danger of getting out of control. When it does, it is destructive like a forest fire.

B. Dangerous as animals (v. 7).

Surely no one desires to be in a cage with an untamed and uncontrolled wild animal. One places his limbs and life on the line by such contact. There is always danger in an animal turning on the owner and bringing damage to his life. The tongue is just waiting for the moment when it can spring forward and do its deadly work. Never trust your tongue. It will turn on you when you least expect it! Be on guard!!

C. Deadly as poison (v. 8).

Who among us does not want clear warnings relative to poison? We try to keep such away from children and even adults take certain precautions when a thing is marked poison. We know the possible effects and just don't want to take chances.

The tongue is full of deadly poison. Like a snake hiding in the grass ready to strike, the tongue lurks within the mouth ready to strike. The most frequent venom expelled from the tongue is gossip. We must see the effect of it and not take chances with this deadly poison

III. INCONSISTENCY WHEN THERE IS NO RESTRAINT (VS. 9-12)

Inconsistencies have already been shown in the book of James. The one who claims to have the faith of Christ and shows respect of persons is inconsistent. The one who says he has faith and has not works is inconsistent. In like manner the one who says he has faith and does not control his tongue is inconsistent. James shows such to be:

A. Improper in the Christian (vs. 9,10).

It is a grave inconsistency to bless God and then turn and curse a man created in the image of God (Mal. 2:10). A man involved in such hypocrisy is a spiritual Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.

B. Impossible in nature (vs. 11,12).

James continues to drive home the point on consistency. He now uses several illustrations from nature to show that consistency is the rule of action in the natural realm created by God. Contrary effects from the same cause are ridiculous and against God's whole order of things.

Therefore, it should be the rule of action within the spiritual realm. A good and uniform heart will strive to produce consistency.

CONCLUSION

The tongue is little, but it's loud. It is tiny, but can say some terrible things. It can break hearts and homes, and can destroy families and friendships.

The tongue is a small but powerful member. The Christian must always remember this, and ask God for help and wisdom in controlling this small but important member..

PATIENCE IN THE BOOK OF JAMES

(Ernest L. Bentley)

INTRODUCTION: James 1:3,4

I. PATIENCE IN PRAYER (CHAPTER 1)

- A. Faith unwavering (v. 6).
- B. In temptation (v. 12).
- C. Wait upon a perfect God (v. 17).
- D. Self-examination.
 - 1. Slow to wrath (vs. 19,20).
 - 2. Pure speech (v. 26).
 - 3. Pure life (v. 27).
- E. Work while waiting (v. 27).

II. PATIENCE IN UNDERSTANDING (CHAPTER 2)

- A. Relationship of faith and works (v. 14).
 - 1. No respect of persons (vs. 1-9).
 - 2. Judgment without mercy (vs. 15,16).
 - 3. Examples (vs. 21-25).

III. PATIENCE IN USE OF TONGUE (CHAPTER 3)

- A. Hasty words (vs. 2,5,6).
- B. Controlled by self.
 - 1. Horses (v. 3).
 - 2. Ships (v. 4).
 - 3. Living creatures (v. 7).
- C. Wisdom in use (v. 13).
 - 1. Can cause strife or peace (vs. 14-17).
- D. Fruit of righteousness (v. 18).

IV. PATIENCE IN SELF-CONTROL (CHAPTER 4)

- A. Lusts of flesh (vs. 1-3).
- B. Friendship with world (vs. 4-6).
- C. Life in submission to God (vs. 7-10).
- D. Each day for itself (v. 13-15).
- E. Service to others (v. 17).

V. PATIENCE IN TRIBULATION (CHAPTER 5)

- A. Riches can cause trials (vs. 1-7).
 - 1. Wise use of that which we have.
- B. Trials of the flesh (vs. 13-15).
- C. Tribulation with brethren.
 - 1. Grudges against (vs. 9,10).
 - 2. Love for (vs. 16,19,20).

CONCLUSION: Summary of the book of James

PATIENCE IN THE BOOK OF JAMES (Martha Bentley)

INTRODUCTION: James speaks to women

I. PATIENCE WITH GOD (CHAPTER 1)

- A. Count it all joy.
- B. Ask in faith.
- C. Trust God's Way.

II. PATIENCE WITH FELLOW MAN (CHAPTER 2)

- A. No partiality.
- B. Love for neighbor.
- C. Our mercy vs. God's mercy.
- D. Individual responsibility.
 - 1. Toward husband.
 - 2. Children.
 - 3. Regardless of others' actions.

III. PATIENCE WITH SELF (CHAPTER 3)

- A. Responsible for own action.
- B. Sins of tongue.
- C. Spiritual wisdom.

IV. PATIENCE WITH BRETHREN (CHAPTER 4).

- A. Lack of prayer.
- B. Envy.

- C. Humility.
- D. Judging brethren.
- E. Do good to all.

V. PATIENCE IN HOPE (CHAPTER 5)

- A. Unimportance of material possessions.
- B. No grudges.
- C. Earthly tribulations.
- D. Humility toward each other.

CONCLUSION: James 5:7: "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord."

FRIENDSHIP OF THE WORLD

(Joe Scroggin)

TEXT: James 4:1-12

INTRODUCTION

- A. In these passages, James addressed an area of concern in the lives of first century Christians as well as in the lives of 20th century Christians.
- B. In this lesson we want to examine four areas in order for us to have the proper understanding regarding "friendship of the world":
 1. What is the friendship of the world? (4:4). *essentially a self-love*
 2. Why is the friendship of the world a curse? (4:1-4). *the enemy of the soul*
 3. What causes one to be a friend of the world? (4:1-5). *the flesh*
 4. What is the cure for the friendship of the world? (4:5-10). *the word of God*

I. WHAT IS THE FRIENDSHIP OF THE WORLD?

- A. What is meant by the term "world"?
 1. The word "world" is the physical universe, the earth in contrast with heaven (Matt. 5:14; John 3:16; 17:15a; Mark 16:15).
 2. The word "world" is the things of this life. Things that are only earthly (John 15:19; 17:14,16; 1 John 2:15-17).
 3. This is the context in which the word "world" is used in James 4:4. This not only includes immorality but one's general attitude toward the world.
- B. What is meant by the term "friendship"?
 1. The Greek word for friendship is *philia*. This word is akin to the word *philos*, one of the four Greek words for love.

2. Roper states, "In and of itself, this Greek word carries no suggestion of anything that is unsavory, lewd, or immoral."
 3. Mayor says it involves "the idea of loving as well as being loved" (John 15:19).
 4. Friendship is that which one desires, or with which one associates.
- C. Summary: the friendship of the world is exalting the things of this life above the things of God.

II. WHY IS THE FRIENDSHIP OF THE WORLD A CURSE.

- A. Because it places the world above God (James 4:4; Matt. 6:33).
- B. Because it hurts the church. This happens when the world cannot see the difference in the life of children vs. one who is not a Christian.
- C. It is a curse to the Christian in that it causes one's soul to be lost.

III. WHAT CAUSES ONE TO BE A FRIEND OF THE WORLD?

- A. Flesh winning the battle against the Spirit.
 1. In James 4:1 and 2 wars and fights indicating this takes place in various areas.
 2. There is a battle that takes place within an individual. The battle is one of what is right vs. what is wrong. One becomes a friend of the world when the flesh wins the battle.
 3. Galatians 5:16,17--the two sides are evident.
 4. Paul fought to keep the world out of his life (Rom. 7:15).
- B. Self causes one to be a friend of the world. Fourteen times in the first four verses of James 4, you or your is used.
 1. Desires of self (4:1,2a).
 2. Evaluation of self above God (4:2).
 3. Selfish prayers (4:3).
 4. Self deceived by world (4:4).

IV. WHAT IS THE CURE FOR THE FRIENDSHIP OF THE WORLD? (4:6-10)

- A. Return to your dependence on God and not self.
 1. Submit to God (4:7).
 2. Draw near to God (4:8). It has been said, "The more we are like God, the nearer we are to God."
- B. Acknowledge and cease the sin (James 4:6; Ps. 51).
- C. Purify your heart (4:8; 2 Tim. 2:21,22).
- D. Humble yourself (4:6).
 1. Put self in the proper place.
 2. God hates pride (Pro. 6:16,17).

3. God is near the humble (Ps. 34:18).
4. God evaluates the humble (James 4:10).

CONCLUSION

- A. James is imparting to Christians great gems of wisdom that will help us live a full and abundant life.
- B. We can overcome the world, when we turn our lives over to Him (Rev., 12:11; 1 John 5:4,5).

WAGES KEPT BACK BY FRAUD (Joe Collins)

TEXT: James 5:1-8

THESIS: To show the fallacies and misconceptions of riches and the results of trusting in them.

INTRODUCTION

- A. God never condemns a person for merely having riches; he is no respecter of persons (Rom. 2:11; Acts 10:34,35).
- B. There were faithful men in the Scriptures who had riches. examples: Abraham (Gen. 12-25), Job.
- C. The Bible condemns those who trust in riches (Matt. 19:23,24; Mark 10:24; 1 Tim. 6:9,10).
 1. The parable of the rich fool (Luke 12:16-21).
 2. Rich man lost in Hell (Luke 16:19-31)

DISCUSSION

I. WRONG ATTITUDES TOWARD RICHES

- A. Trusting in them (Mark 10:24).
- B. Laying up treasures (Matt. 6:19-21; James 5:3).
- C. Money can buy anything. But cannot buy eternal life, because eternal life is a gift from God (Rom. 6:23).
- D. If I get enough of this worlds goods, I will be secure (James 4:13).
 1. Security can only be found in doing the Lord's will (James 4:15)
 2. Life does not consist in abundance of possessions (Luke 12:15).
- E. If I were rich then I would be happy. But Godliness is great gain (1 Tim. 6:6).

II. WRONG WAYS OF OBTAINING RICHES, JAMES 5:4-6

- A. "How I get my money is my business."

1. Denies an absolute standard of right and wrong (John 12:48; 2 Cor. 5:10).
 2. Denies the golden rule (Matt. 7:12)
 3. Denies being honest with our fellows (2 Cor. 8:21).
 4. Denies the principle of fairness (Rom. 13:9).
- B. Defrauding employees (James 5:4-6)
1. Workers were hired and paid by the day.
 2. There were no legal contracts.
 3. The laborers worked but did not receive their pay, a practice that has always been wrong (Jer. 22:13).
- C. Defrauding employers.
1. Not giving an honest day's work for an honest day's wages.
 2. Not really working the hours that are punched on the time clock.
 3. Giving the employer the idea that we are working harder than we really are (preachers need to be aware of this problem).
- D. Bribery (Ex. 23:8).
1. Judas Iscariot (Acts 1:16-18).
 2. The guard at the tomb of Jesus (Matt. 27:62-66; 28:11-15).
- E. Gambling.
1. Wasting our substance in riotous living--gambling can be included in riotous living (Luke 15:13).
 2. Raffles state lotteries, betting on sports, etc.
- F. Cheating and dishonesty.
1. IRS returns.
 2. Misuse of business expense accounts.
 3. When clerk gives too much change back and we do not return it.
 4. This is nothing more than lying to fellowman and God (Rev. 21:8).
- G. Occupations that contribute to sins of others.
1. Bartenders, beers salesman, cocktail waitresses, working in breweries, dance instructor, owning a video store that rents immoral movies.
 2. We are to abstain from all appearances of evil (1 Thess. 5:22).
 3. We are not to partake of or contribute to other men's sins (1 Tim. 5:22).
- H. One who holds back his contribution to the Lord's church.
1. A sin committed by the people of Israel (Mal. 3:8).
 2. The Lord's kingdom must be first (Matt. 6:33).

III. SINS PRODUCED BY TRUSTING IN RICHES

- A. Covetousness.
1. Covetous practices (2 Pet. 2:14).

2. Jesus tells us to beware of covetousness (Luke 12:15).
 3. Ahab's sin of covetousness over Naboth's vineyard (1 Kgs. 21:1-4)
- B. Lying: Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11).
- C. Stealing: Achan (Josh. 7).
- D. Murder: Jezebel ((1 Kgs. 21:10-14).
- E. Prostitution (Eph. 5:5; Rev. 21:8).

IV. RESULTS OF TRUSTING IN RICHES

- A. Dissatisfaction.
1. Those that feel that gain is godliness (1 Tim. 6:5).
 2. The rich fool could not be satisfied (Luke 12:16,17).
 3. This is the basic attitude of many in our affluent society.
- B. Discontentment.
1. Contentment for the rich can be found only in more riches.
 2. The apostle Paul teaches us the meaning of real contentment (1 Tim. 6:6; Phil. 4:11-13).
- C. Disappointments.
1. In life: pierce themselves with many sorrows (1 Tim. 6:10).
 2. In death: "Whose shall these things be?" (Luke 12:20,21); all will be left behind (1 Tim. 6:7; Luke 16:25).
- D. Deprivation.
1. Those who trust in riches deprive themselves of the abundant life found only in Christ (John 10:10; Eph. 1:3).
 2. They deprive themselves of the riches of God's grace (Eph. 1:7).
- E. Departure from the faith.
1. Those who trust in riches depart from the faith (1 Tim. 6:10).
 2. Become unfruitful (Matt. 13:22).
 3. Judas Iscariot departed from the lord and betrayed Him.
 4. Demas forsook Christ for this world (2 Tim. 4:10).
- F. Depression.
1. Many people who trust in riches live depressed and lonely lives: consider the life and death of Howard Hughes.
 2. True happiness can be found only in Christ (Matt. 5:1-12).
- G. Disagreements in business, home, and religion.
- H. Lack of esteem for others (1 Tim. 6:17).
1. Trusting in riches can cause one to be haughty, arrogant, self-complacent, conceited.
 2. We are to esteem others better than ourselves (Phil. 2:3).

I. Deception of one's spiritual self.

1. Many people will trust in riches thinking that they can accomplish this as well as be a faithful Christian (Matt. 6:24).
2. Some people think that riches will benefit them after death. They forget all earthly things will be destroyed (2 Pet. 3:10,11).
3. They have deceived themselves because they have forgotten that every good and perfect gift comes from God (James 1:17).

J. Despise the name of Christ by oppressing the poor saints who believe in Him (James 2:6,7).

K. Destruction.

1. Physical destruction: high blood pressure, heart attacks, anxiety, mental illness, suicide (Judas Iscariot, Acts 1:18; many rich men committed suicide in the 1929 stock market crash).
2. Eternal destruction (Rom. 6:23; James 1:13,14).
 - (a) The rich fool (Luke 12:16-21).
 - (b) The rich man in Luke 16:19-21.
 - (c) The destruction of these rich men described: riches corrupted, garments moth eaten, gold and silver cankered, and rust as a witness against them (James 5:1-3).

CONCLUSION: JAMES 5:7,8

- A. The Christian is to be patient though oppressed by the rich.
- B. The coming destruction of Jerusalem was near and the rich would reap what they had sown.
- C. The fruit of the labor of Christians, God's husbandmen, would still be seen after the destruction had taken place.
- D. The lesson applied to us today as Christians: lay up treasures in heaven (Matt. 6:20); seek the crown of righteousness laid up in heaven (2 Tim. 4:4-8).

