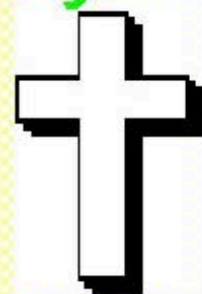


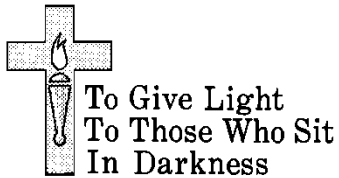
JAMES



Faith
on
Trial

Rev Mike Jones
Minister Ministry





MINISTER MINISTRY

Minister Ministry is a non-profit, faith-supported ministry that exist in order to assist Ministers and to expand the Gospel of Jesus Christ unto the entire world.

- **Our Mission:** To Minister to others that they may more effectively Minister for Christ by providing Biblical Information and Literature to as many people as possible, using as many methods as God provides, so that everyone possible can come to **Know Christ** as Savior and then **Show Christ** in their Changed Life

BOOKLET MINISTRY- We presently give away many books each year. Some are Bible Studies of specific subjects. Some are studies of books of the Bible. Some are development books (such as our Riches for the Righteous Book) and some are devotional books (such as our Prayer Book and the booklets containing our weekly newspaper article devotions.

- Pray that God would give the wisdom needed to write these books.
- Pray that God would give the ability and finances to print and distribute these books.
- Pray that God would use these books to convert the lost, as well as encourage and enlighten the saved.

NEWSPAPER MINISTRY- Our weekly newspaper devotional articles local newspapers in several states and presently reach thousands of people each week. Pray that God would direct in everything that is written and pray that God would open more doors to this ministry.

INTERNET MINISTRY- Our Weekly Newspaper Devotional Articles are sent to hundreds of people each week via email and also posted to friends on Facebook. They are also available on our web site- www.ministerministry.com. Our web site also contains many sermons and Bible Study helps with more added regularly. Using the World Wide Web is indeed an easy way to reach the World with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

- **Our Finances:** This is a FAITH Ministry depending on God for provision- II Cor 9:8 *God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.*

- The ministry expands or contracts purely on the provision of God. As funds become available, Bibles or other Christian literature are purchased and distributed to those whom it is felt will benefit the greatest from such material. Materials are also printed and then distributed. Some finances are used to encourage and assist Ministers of the Gospel by providing meals and emergency needs. Distribution is made without regard to race, religion, or national origin
- No salaries are paid and operational expenses are kept as low as possible in order that all money received can be used to advance the work and word of God.
- A yearly Financial Statement is issued to all contributors detailing all expenditures and tax receipts are issued for all gifts received.

Our Ministry Verses are - *But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.* (Mark 10:43-45)

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AUTHOR

I. Author - James, the brother of Christ (?)

1. Only identifies himself as James (1:1) (Apparently so well known to readers until unnecessary to identify himself more.) (Reveals a strong Jewish background)

2. New Testament speaks of 4 men named James:

A) James, son of Zebedee & Brother of John, one of the 12. (Probably killed before the epistle was written-Acts 12:2)

B) James, the father of Judas "Not Iscariot" (Entirely unknown except as father of 1 of the 12)

C) James, son of Alphaeus, one of the 12

D) James, the Lord's brother

[Some contend that the last two are the same person and "cousin" is used for "brother" in this case (Scofield holds this position). They say:

(1) Cleophas of John 19:25 and Alphaeus of Matt 10:13 are 2 different forms of the same Aramaic name- thus the same man is meant in both cases.

(2) John 19:25 refers to only 3 women thus making "his mother's sister" to be "Mary, the wife of Cleophas".

(3) Thus when the Bible speaks of James as the brother of the Lord it actually means a cousin.]

However, It seems most logical to believe that James, the Son of Alphaeus was not related to Jesus and that the epistle was written by James, the brother of Jesus:

(1) It seems unlikely that 2 sisters would have the same name.

(2) There are actually 4 women in John 19:25- The virgin Mary; her sister; Mary, wife of Cleophas; and Mary Magdalene.

(3) The brothers of Jesus did not believe on him until after his death so he could not be one of the 12. John 7:5

(4) I Cor 15:5-7 indicates that Christ revealed himself to a James who was not one of the twelve after the resurrection; this was probably his brother, and brought about his conversion.

(5) In Gal 1:19 Paul speaks of James the brother of Jesus as having equal authority with apostles.

(6) In Gal 2:9 Paul speaks of James as a pillar of the Church (events of Gal 2:9 recorded in Acts 13:3 while death of John's brother recorded in Acts 12:2).

(7) As brother of Jesus, James would have much authority; as evidently he did

(8) Attempts to deny that Jesus had any brothers comes from Catholic teaching about Mary remaining a "virgin" after the birth of Christ.

II. Probably first of the New Testament Epistles (around 45 AD).

Written from Jerusalem to Christian Jews that were saved as a result of Pentecost or had left Jerusalem due to persecution.

III. Interesting Facts

1. Some things NOT in James:

A) No mention of Incarnation, atonement, or future life

B) No mention of suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus

C) No information about author except name

2. Characterized by abundant use of illustrations from nature

3. More similarities to the Sermon on the Mount than any other book of the New Testament

4. Offers a picture of Christian Faith as held by Jews during early chapters of the book of Acts.

OUTLINE OF JAMES

The Author- James

- I....The Trying of your Faith 1:1-4
 A) 4 Parts of Victory 1:2-4
 B) Why Problems Remain 1:12-16
- II....Temptation 1:13-18
- III...True Religion as shown in:
 A) Our Relationship to the Word 1:21-25
 B) Our Relationship to the World 1:21-2:9
 C) Our Relationship to Works 2:10-26
- IV....The Tongue 3:1-12
- V....True Wisdom 3:13-18 1:5-8
- VI....Troubles 4:1-10 "What's Your Problem"
- VII...Tomorrow 4:11-17
- VIII..The Ruin of the Rich 5:1-6
- IX....The Need of Patience 5:7-12
- X.....The Sick 5:13-16 "Healing in Answer to Prayer"
- XI....The Principles of Victorious Praying 5:16-18
- XII...The Backslider 5:19-20 A) Enduring

4 ESSENTIALS FOR VICTORY

James 1:2-4

1. A Joyful Attitude- "count it all joy"

An accounting term- Your Outlook goes a great way in determining the Outcome
 Not IF but WHEN ye fall. Some trials come because we're people; some because we're careless; some because we're Christian (If you live only for the present, trials will make you bitter instead of Better).

2. An Understanding Mind- "Knowing this"

Faith must always be tested; The testing proves the Faith and matures the Believer. The real examinations that develop us come in real life situations; not in classroom studies.

Endurance is not learned, it is practiced. That means we need Trials!

Patience is not a passive acceptance of circumstances, It is a courageous perseverance in the face of suffering and difficulty.

You need Wisdom not to waste the opportunities of a Trial. Remember, you are given a Test UNTIL YOU PASS IT !!

3. A Surrendered Will- "But let"

Take the example of Weaning a child- The child thinks it is harmful to be deprived of his mother's milk but actually it leads to freedom and growth.

God cannot build our Character without our cooperation. We must surrender in order to be successful.

4. A heart that wants to believe- "Let him ask in faith"

Your Troubles can Defeat you or Develop you- it depends on your Faith in God's Love and care. You can rise and fall like a wave of the sea or you can stand on the Rock. Real Faith will cause you to rest in God's love even when you can't see His face.

THE TRYING OF YOUR FAITH

James 1:1-4

James is writing to Jewish Christians who had suffered severe persecution because of their stand for Jesus. Many had been disowned by their family, had lost their job, and had been forced to relocate. As a result of this severe persecution some of the people were questioning why God would allow this; some were even being tempted to turn away from God.

James begins by telling that this trying of their faith is actually a blessing instead of a burden. He knew that we are saved by Faith and that the just shall live by Faith. Anything that is this important needs to be put to the test to prove it is genuine (How sad it would be to spend your life walking toward something and then find it was a mirage when you arrived!). James tells us the results of such a trial and what our response to such a trial should be.

I. THE REASONS FOR TRIALS

Note the difference between Trial (1-12) and Temptation (13-14). The first comes from without, the second from within. God sends trials to bring out the Best in us, Satan sends temptations to bring out the Worst in us. Trials are allowed by God to test our Faith, strengthen us, and make us eligible for rewards. Temptations are due to man's own sinful nature and are controlled by man's will.

1. To test Our Faith- It assures us, and God, that our Faith is genuine. Sometimes people's Faith is in favorable circumstances or in their "Faith"; instead of in God. When conditions change or self doubt comes the person falls by the wayside (See Mk 4:16-17).

Some Bible examples of Faith on Trial:

---These passed the Test

- a. Abraham was called upon to sacrifice his son of promise and he did so believing that God could raise him from the dead if necessary (Heb 11:17-19)
- b. Moses by faith forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.
- c. Job when he lost his fortune and his family said, *The Lord gave and the Lord takes away, blessed be the name of the Lord.* When he also lost his health he said: *Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.*

---These failed the Test

- a. The children of Israel failed because they looked at the circumstance instead of relying on the Promises of God.
- b. Lot followed a man of Faith but didn't exercise his own and lost his family and fortune.
- c. Jonah wasted his trial and acted like a spoiled child because he didn't like what God was doing.

2. To Strengthen Us. Problems can build us (the example of the widow problems that resulted in election of Deacons in Acts 6) or destroy us (the example of numerous church splits over unimportant items).

- a. Testing gives knowledge and experience- "knowing this"
- b. Testing produces and results in patience (endurance)- "worketh patience"
- c. Testing leads to full maturity of Christian Character-"may be perfect and entire, wanting (lacking) nothing."

Trials strengthen us because they drive us to greater dependence on God. There are 2 important truths about God you should remember in trials:

---God's Sovereignty. A definition by Peg Rankin is as good as any: "God can do anything He wants to do, anytime He wants to do it, anyway He wants to do it, and for any purpose He wants to accomplish." God is God; He is answerable to no man. If God is not sovereign then He is not God.

There are 2 areas of Trial that we need to recognize the Sovereignty of God in:

(1) The Powers that be. They are ordained of God (Rom 13:1) and, like Nebuchadnezzar, people need to learn that *the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will, and setteth up over it the basest of men* (Dan 4:17).

(2) The Problems of the World. Amos 4 says that God sent Disease, Death, Drought, and Destruction on Israel to drive them back to Him. The book of Habakkuk is about a man who learned to trust God even when his world was collapsing.

God worketh all things after the counsel of His own will that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ (Ep 1:11).

---God's Righteousness. *Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?* (Gen 18:25)

(1) If God did wrong He would cease to be God and the world would collapse because "by Him all things consist (are held together)" (Col 1:17)

(2) Some People seem to think God loves them less after Salvation than before. God loved them enough for Jesus to die for them but when a problem comes along they think God has forgotten them or is allowing something to happen to them that is not for their good. God remains steadfast in His righteous care of us and love for us no matter what circumstances come our way.

3. To Reward Us- *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.* (vs 12)

II. THE RESULTS OF TRIALS- Patience

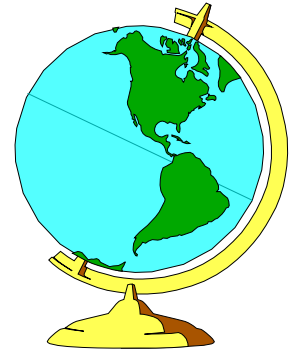
Patience is not a passive acceptance of circumstances. It is a courageous perseverance in the face of suffering and difficulty. Patience teaches us to look beyond present circumstances to the future promises (If you lack wisdom about the purpose or plan of trials then ask God- vs 5). The ultimate goal is Perfect Patience-- A Mature Christian who is usable in whatever way God wants.

III. THE RESPONSE TO TRIAL- Count it all Joy (Not because you're in the trial but because of the RESULTS of the Trial).

Remember some things about Trials:

1. They come suddenly- fall into means "Encounter around a corner"
2. They are varied- divers trials
3. They test our Faith- and in order to do so it must be a real test or it is no test.
4. They develop us as Christians.

Is your Faith on Trial? Are you failing that test?? Will you bow before God and acknowledge your trust in, and love for, Him regardless of the Circumstances?.



Why Problems Remain

James 1:12-16

Why do we continue to be tried and tempted? Why doesn't God throw Satan into Hell and throw away the key? Why are Christians beset with troubles and tribulations? Why can't we have Heaven on Earth?

I think there are 3 Basic Reasons that Problems remain:

I. THE SOURCE OF TEMPTATION-SELF

God cannot get rid of the Problem without getting rid of the Person! If self were like a toe or a finger then God could maybe cut it off and solve the problem but you cannot remove the bad without removing the good also:

- Hunger is right and necessary but uncontrolled it is a problem
- The tongue is a need to communicate but it is also *a fire, a world of iniquity* (James 3:5).
- Imagination is necessary to invent good but it also invents evil.

The control of Self is simply the Will yielded to God. God will not force us to do right- He will only ask that we deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow him.

II. THE SCHOOL OF TRIALS

Troubles many times are our teachers. They are a necessary part of our development.

The 4 reasons the Heathen Nations were left in Israel show some of the lessons we learn:

1. To Punish Israel- *Ye have not obeyed my voice:... wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before you; but they shall be as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare unto you* (Judges 2:2-3).

Some people learn more from Defeat than they ever will from Victory! Paul's thorn in the flesh showed him that when he was weak then he was strong (II Cor 12:10).

2. To Prove Israel- *I also will not henceforth drive out any from before them of the nations which Joshua left when he died: that through them I may prove Israel, whether they will keep the way of the Lord to walk therein, as their fathers did keep it, or not* (Judges 2:21-22).

If there were no test in school many would not attempt to learn. Anything of value should be able to withstand the Test. If your faith cannot stand the trials of life then I would surely hate to face death with it.

3. To Provide experience in Warfare- *Now these are the nations which the Lord left, to prove Israel by them, even as many of Israel as had not known all the wars of Canaan: only that the generations of the children of Israel might know, to teach them war, at the least such as before knew nothing thereof* (Judges 3:1-2).

I know a great deal about the Bible today because I started Teaching and Preaching at 14 and I had to know what to Teach in order to teach. Most Christians never win a soul to Christ and live inconsistent lives because they've never been forced to learn to do right or they have never put themselves in a place where they need to witness to another person.



4. To Prevent the land from becoming a Wilderness- Deut 7:22 *And the Lord thy God will put out those nations before thee by little and little: thou mayest not consume them at once, lest the beasts of the fields increase upon thee.*

We must GROW in the Grace and Knowledge of Christ. If we have more responsibility than we have knowledge then we fail in our responsibility. Learn to deal with today's Problems today and you'll be able to deal with tomorrow's problems tomorrow.

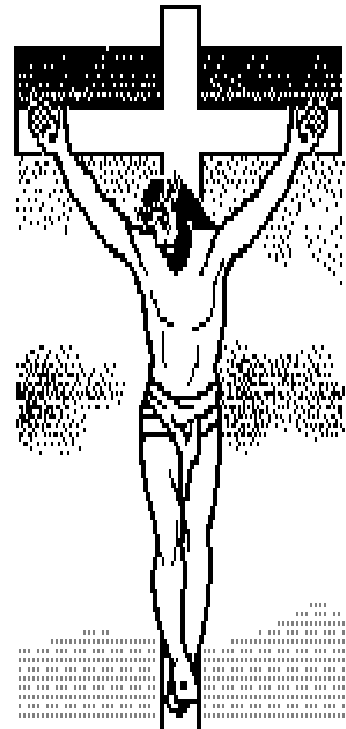
III. THE SACRIFICE OF TRUST- "When he is tried". The Cross must come before the Crown. We must learn to deal with the Problems before we can enjoy the Privileges. But this trust in the midst of Troubles shows God our:

A) Love- 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.* Satan says we love God only because of our Possessions (Job 1:9-11) and it pleases God when we show our love for Him by choosing to serve Him above Self.

B) Faith- Rev 2:10 *Fear none of these 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.* Fear is the enemy of Faith. How it must please God when we cling to Him as the "roaring Lion" roams around. Troubles and Trials that come our way will either drive us to God in Faith; or From God in Fear.

But the amazing thing is that when we give God our Love and Faith we find them returned many fold. As we live thru the Problems we find that what we considered Burdens God can change into Blessings (as one man said, "When life gives you lemons, make lemonade!").

Problems can Develop you or Destroy You. You need to see God's purpose in them and let them bring you into a deeper Fellowship than ever before.



TEMPTATION

James 1:13-18

James now goes from examining Trials without to looking at Temptations within. The reason he did this is because many times the pressure of an outward trial will cause us to be tempted to do wrong. (Abraham went thru a trial of Famine that led him to fall to the temptation of going to Egypt. Pressures at Home, at work, from companions, etc may cause the child to seek escape in Drugs and the parent to seek escape in Drink.)

I. THE ORIGIN OF TEMPTATION 13-14

A) Not from God

1. God cannot be tempted with evil (It is impossible for God to consider doing wrong. That is why the present intercessory ministry of Christ is so important. As a man he was *tempted in all points like as we are tempted, yet without sin* (Heb 4:15) and now he is able to show God the Father the frailty of Flesh)

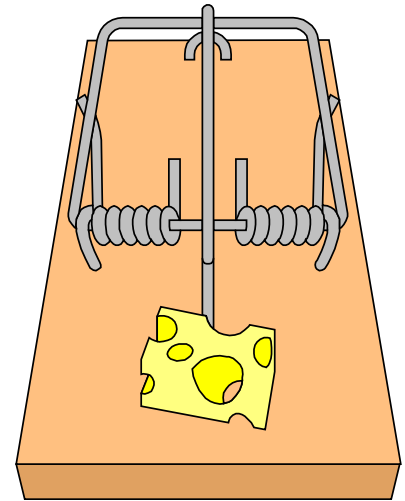
2. God does not tempt any man. Trials from without are allowed by God. The inward temptation to sin is wholly of Self. God can not and will not make a man sin. That would make God a sinner!!

B) From within Self

1. A common Problem-**EVERY** man (See I Cor 10:13). The Sin Nature we inherited from Adam is within all of us. Every person must contend with it.

2. An enticing Problem-Bait is used to lure you. Sin never shows the naked hook! The trap allows you to see the Bait but not the Bite of Sin.

3. A varying Problem- drawn away of his own Lusts (One man's worm may be another man's Bait!!)



Look at the Temptation of Jesus and see the Variation of Temptation:

1. Tempted to accomplish a good thing in bad way- Jesus was told He would receive the world if He would Worship Satan. It's right to want to pass the exam; but it's wrong to cheat to do so.

2. Tempted to accomplish a good thing out of time-Jesus told to turn stones to bread; Later Angels would minister but not now. Sex is part of God's plan for man but only within Marriage.

3. Tempted to accomplish a doubtful goal in a doubtful way.- Jesus told to prove God by jumping from the Temple. Many People seem to think that the way to change people is to gossip about them! (Bear in mind that Satan is the Accuser of the brethren. Rev 12:10). They don't need Gossip, they need the Gospel!

DESIRE MUST BE OUR SERVANT; NOT OUR MASTER

II. THE ORDER OF TEMPTATION 15

A) Tempted- Something excites our Desire (This is not Sin-you can't keep the bird from flying overhead but you can keep him from building a nest. And you can keep out of his flight path!)

B) Lust conceives- The temptation is embraced by Sinful Self and a "Baby" is conceived. The downward process has begun.

C) Sin (Disobedience)- The "Baby" of Lust (Desire) now grows strong enough to withstand God's directions in your life.

D) Death- The "Baby" is now full grown and looks for payment- The Wages of Sin is Death. These wages must be paid! Either by the shed blood of Christ or by you in Hell forever.

WHEN YOU PLAY WITH TEMPTATION YOU PLAY WITH DEATH

III. THE OVERCOMING OF TEMPTATION 16-21

A) Consider the Folly of Sin vs 16 *The fear of Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death* (Prov 14:27). Look beyond the "Bait" to the trap. Is the "Pleasure" worth the Price???

B) Consider the Faithfulness of the Father vs 17

1. He gives you the good you need- *No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly* (Ps 84:1). He does not keep anything from You if it's for your good.

2) He does not change-you can trust Him. Rest in the Rock.

"Cometh down" means keeps on coming down. The good you need keeps on coming regardless of outward circumstances.

C) Consider the Responsibility of being a First fruit 18-21 First fruits are the best "samples" of the Harvest. We are examples to the rest of the universe of what God's Grace can produce and of the benefits of righteous living.

1. Born Again by God's Grace through God's Spirit (By means of the Word of God).

The indwelling Holy Spirit then gives us the power we need to withstand sin.

2. Patient- So you won't take things into your own hands. *Be not overcome of Evil, but overcome evil with good* (Rom 12:21).

3. Put away the World/Receive the Word-*Thy word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against thee* (Ps 119:11)

Great peace have they which love thy law; and nothing shall offend them (Ps. 119:165).

IF YOU'VE SINNED- *If we confess our sin he is faithful and just to forgive us our sin and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness* I John 1:9

IF YOU WANT VICTORY- James 4:7-8 *Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.*

Our Relationship to the WORD

James 1:21-25

Having listed the benefits of Trials and the source of Temptation James now goes on to describe True Religion. His main emphasis is that True Religion is Practical in its Relationship to the Word (1:21-25), to the World (1:26-2:9), and to Works (2:10-26). Today let's look at our Relationship to the Word.

I. OUR FIRST OBLIGATION IS TO RECEIVE THE WORD vs 21

A) How are we to Receive it?

1. *Lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness.* Put away anything that is unclean or even that appears to be evil. There must be a turning from the World if there is to be a turning to the Word.
2. Receive it with meekness-Accept the Word of God with Humility: to be obeyed, not to be debated or argued with.

B) Why are we to receive it? To Save your Soul

1. The Engrafted Word- The Word takes root and becomes part of our life. (Rom 10:17) *Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*
2. The Enlightening Word:
 - a. For Salvation 1:21
 - b. As a Mirror 1:23
 - c. As a Guide for Christian Living 1:25
 - d. As a basis of Judgment 2:12

As we are exposed to the Word of God it should cause us to turn from Sin to the Savior and this Faith in Jesus Christ will produce Salvation.

II. OUR SECOND OBLIGATION IS TO PRACTICE THE WORD vs 22-25

Our obligation does not end at simply receiving the Word. A new life has begun and now it must be lived; Precepts must become Practice

A) Not just Hearers- 4 kinds of hearers in Mk 4:14-20

1. No understanding-Having ears to hear they hear not
2. No Root-Emotion but no devotion. Troubles cause to wilt
3. Crowded out- "Becometh unfruitful". Cares replace conviction, Riches replace Righteousness, and Lust replaces Love.
4. Fruitful Followers- Their heart is in it.

B) Not just Lookers- The Word is a Mirror:

1. For Examination- To see ourselves as we are
2. For Restoration- Jn 15:3 *Now ye are clean through the Word which I have spoken unto you.* Having seen the dirt we find how to get clean thru the Word.
3. For Transformation- II Cor 3:18 *But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.* What purpose is there in seeing the fault if you're not going to correct it???

C) A Doer of the Work-

1. A Continuing Process- "Continueth Therein"
2. A Learning Process- "Not a Forgetful Hearer"
3. A Fruitful Process- "Blessed in his deeds"

ARE YOU A DOER OF THE WORD AS WELL AS A HEARER OF THE WORD??

If not, then what you have is worthless!!!

RELATIONSHIP TO THE WORLD

James 1:21- 2:9

There are multitudes of Religions in the World today (Everyone has some type of Religion). Some are false: Cults, Idol worship, Moslems, Homosexual "Churches", etc. And some are True: In these we see Hell bound sinners born again by Faith in Jesus Christ; we see drunkards become good dads, drug users become good children, adulteresses become good moms, and lives transformed by the power of God.

But sometimes it is difficult to distinguish the Good from the Bad. How can we tell which Religion is right and which is wrong?

I. 3 MARKS OF A FALSE RELIGION vs 26

1. False Religion is Hypocritical- "seems to be religious"

A) A Hypocrite is an Actor. He wears a "mask" and appears to be what he's not (Do you have a "Church Mask" that you wear when you want to appear religious? Jesus said the Pharisees looked fine on the outside but within they were full of dead men's bones- Matt 23:27). Are you religious to impress the World, or do you truly worship God???



B) The Testing Point is the Tongue- "Bridleth not his tongue"

Remember that *out of the abundance of the heart the mouth*

speaketh (Matt 12:34) and *by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned* (Matt 12:37).

Does it Confess Christ? *With the heart man believes and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation* (Rom 10:10)

Is it Clean? *He that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile* (I Pet 3:10)

Does it cause Confusion? *Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people* (Lev 19:16)

Will your Religion stand the Test of The Tongue???

2. False Religion is Self Deceiving- "deceiveth his own heart" How sad to trick your own heart into believing you're safe when you're not- like the ostrich that hides his head in the sand and thinks it's safe!

A) You're deceived if you hear the Word but don't do it- vs 22. If you think that Christianity means simply coming to Church then you're deceived about what it's all about. Yet most people seem to think they have accomplished God's will for their life if they sit thru a couple of sermons a week!

B) *If a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself* (Gal 6:3). Many people measure their Righteousness against other men instead of against the Word of God. Jesus told of some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others (Luke 18:9) but he condemned them because they didn't measure up to God's standards.

Are you deceived about your relationship with God because you look at man's standards instead of God's Standards??

3. False Religion is Worthless- "This man's religion is vain"

A) It doesn't bring Peace- That's why he has tongue Trouble. Christianity brings Peace with God and with Self and this peace with conquer most of your tongue problems.

B) It's an empty Promise- There is no Change of heart, and, like the man who built his house on the sand, it will not stand the storms of life. What a sad thing to hear Jesus say *I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.* (Matt 7:23)

II. 3 MARKS OF TRUE RELIGION 1:27-2:9

1. A Compassionate Heart- "Visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction"

True Religion causes us to go from Selfish Absorption to Caring Concern (Compare this to many "Religions" whose main emphasis is to get you to look within and "find yourself").

A) Manifest in Problems- "Visit ... in their affliction". When Christianity comes to a community Caring, Compassion, and Concern follow-- *By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another* (I Jn 13:35)

B) Magnified in Prejudice- "have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ...with respect of persons" The Pharisees rejected Christ because he was from the wrong town, had not gone to school, associated with the wrong crowd, and didn't observe the same traditions as they did.

James says that the Royal Law is-- love your neighbor as your self and if you have respect of persons you commit sin.

If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen (I Jn 4:20).

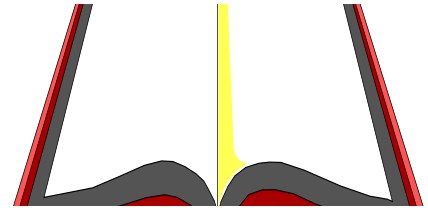
2. A Clean Life- "Keeps himself unspotted from the World"

How can a religion effect a man's life without effecting the way he lives??? Who wants clean water from a dirty glass? This means staying away from the dirt and washing when you get dirty.

3. Based on the Word of God- vs 21 *Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God.*

The Guidelines for Living are in the Bible- they are not based on Public Opinion or Private Preference.

This means that True Religion uses the Word of God for it's Foundation, it's Guidelines, and it's hope for the Future.



CAN YOU DIE WITH THE RELIGION YOU HAVE???

DO YOU LIVE THE RELIGION YOU HAVE???

OUR RELATIONSHIP TO WORKS

James 2:10-26

James has been dealing with various aspects of True Religion. He has told us that the Word of God must be used for our Foundation but he also told us that we had to DO the Word as well as Hear it. Then He showed us how we could be deceived unless our LIVES bore out what our LIPS said. He concludes this theme by showing that a right relationship to the Law and Faith requires proper works.

I. THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE LAW 10-13

A) The Law Requires Perfection

1. One sin makes us guilty of all
2. The Law does not differentiate between sins
3. The Law will be the basis of Judgment
4. The Judgment of the Law does not show any mercy, yet Mercy can overcome Judgment.

B) James is trying to show that to have respect of persons is to commit sin (vs 9) and that as far as the Law is concerned the sin of respect of persons requires judgment just as much as adultery or murder does. (Remember that John said, *Whosoever hateth his brother is a murder*: I Jn 3:15). He wanted them to see that their claim of righteousness by the keeping of the Law would not hold up to close examination. When a man resorts back to the Law for Justification he also finds Condemnation (See Gal 5:4). For the Law requires that all of our works be perfect and any fault condemns the whole. This makes the works of the Law beyond our reach.

II. THE REQUIREMENTS OF TRUE FAITH 14-26

A) A man is saved by Faith apart from works. Christ paid the price for our sins and there is nothing we can do to earn Salvation. It is ours as a free gift by Grace through Faith.

B) But this Faith will produce works - or it is not real Faith. Three times James says that Faith without works is dead, bring alone (2:17, 2:20, 2:26) and each time is preceded by a way to demonstrate that Faith.

1. We demonstrate Faith in our care of others--14-17. Too many people are like the Priest and the Levite in the parable of the Good Samaritan. They could DEFEND their Faith, yet they did not DEMONSTRATE it (Luke 10:25-37).

2. We Demonstrate Faith by Godly Living--18-20. Even the devils believe IN God but they don't obey Him. They talk the talk without walking the walk.

3. We demonstrate Faith by our confidence in God's Word 21-26

A) The Example of Abraham (A Jew)- Willing to offer his son because God said so

B) The Example of Rahab (A Gentile)- Willing to hide the messengers because she trusted God's Word.

"Faith is not some kind of mysterious feeling we work up; Faith is confidence that God's Word is true, and conviction that acting upon that word will bring God's Blessings" (Warren Wiersbe).

A Faith that works is:

Profitable (vs 16), Visible (vs 18), Made Perfect (vs 22), and the Saving Kind (vs 14, 24).

THE TONGUE

James 3:-

James has dealt with Trials, Temptations, and How to identify True Religion and now he deals with the most dangerous member of our body. It is natural that this subject should come up now because True Religion is not just Saying but Doing --yet it is manifested in what we say. Too often people seek to conform their lives to the right standards but fail to control what their lips say. James tells us how bad this is and what can be done about it.

I. THE TROUBLE WITH THE SOURCE 3:1-12

A) The Demands of the Tongue 1-2

--Responsibility brings accountability (vs 1) and this is especially shown in the instructions given by those in charge. They must be able to give orders, criticism, and praise and YET NOT OFFEND!! Remember this when you seek a position.

--The mark of a Mature Person is that they are able to control the Tongue (Prov 17:28 *Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise: and he that shutteth his lips is esteemed a man of understand*). For if a man is able to control the tongue he is able to control the entire body.

(Remember that *out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh* (Matt 12:34) and if the heart is transformed the life is transformed; which is shown by our control of the tongue.)

B) The Direction of the Tongue 3-4

1. The Example of the Bridle- used to make a horse go in the direction we desire.

2. The Example of the Ship's Helm-used to control giant ships even though fierce winds try to change their course. We fail to realize that this one small part of the body has such an influence over the rest of the body. The Tongue gives directions that:

A. Control us- Practical: "Stop That!", "Be Quiet!"

Personal: "I Love You", "You're Fat"

b. Comfort us- Encouragement, Sound of your voice

c. Condemn us- Prov 10:19 *In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise.*

Prov 18:21 *Death and life are in the power of the tongue*

Matt 12:37 *By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned*



C) The Destruction caused by the Tongue 5-8

1. The Example of Fire

a. Starts small and grows- "Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth"

b. Destroys- "The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity" Loose lips sink ships...and lives!!

c. Defiles (smoke)- "Defiles the whole body" Sometimes the smoke is more harmful than the fire.
Gossip can ruin Reputation, Influence, and Authority

d. Spreads- The more fuel you give it the more it burns. *Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth* (Prov 26:20).

2. The Example of Wild Beast

- a. Need to be tamed. So you can turn destructive force into useful force. Control is the key.
- b. Like a snake the bite is dangerous because of the Poison injected. And no man can tame a snake so that his bite is not poison. There must be a change from within. So God must change a man's heart if he is to change his talk (Man may be able to Control his talk for a while but only God can "tame" his tongue.)

D) The Divisiveness of the Tongue 9-12

1. As shown by Blessings and cursings from the same mouth. You Bless God and curse man made in God's image. "My brethren, these things ought not so to be"
2. As shown by the fountain's inability to bring forth sweet water and bitter. The bitter water would taint the sweet causing it to become bitter also.
3. As shown by the Fruit of the Tree
 - A fig tree does not bear olive berries.
 - A grape vine does not produce figs.
 - The type of tree determines it's fruit (Remember the story of the man who wondered why the small vine had big watermelons and the big Oak had little acorns until he wandered under the Oak and an acorn fell on his Head!).

DO YOU HAVE TONGUE TROUBLE???



If so you need to see:

- if you've got True Religion- 1:26
- if you're growing in the Lord- vs 2
- if the control of your life is
 - under God's Direction
- if you are the one trying to tame your lips
 - or if you're looking to God for a change of heart
- if the fruit is wrong. If it is then you'd better check on what kind of tree you are!

TRUE WISDOM

James 3:13-18 1:5-8

James has been dealing with the problem that had arisen because many in the church wanted to be in the leadership position but were not willing to accept the accountability that went with such a responsibility. First he dealt with their Tongue Trouble and now he's dealing with their head/heart trouble. They thought Wisdom came from accumulating Worldly knowledge but James shows them the source of True Wisdom.

I. THE SOURCE OF WISDOM (Wisdom= the use of knowledge)

A) It's Origin. There are 2 types of Wisdom:

1. Earthly Wisdom (Sees things from Earth's point of view) Earthly Wisdom has it's origin in 3 different sources:

a. The World System- Man has accumulated vast stores of knowledge but he doesn't know what to do with it. He invents great inventions but they are used to kill, rob, or maim.

b. The Flesh- The word used is the base word for Philosophy and means wisdom based on Human Emotion. This is the peace at any price, Dr. Spock, free sex type "wisdom" that man invents to justify his lusts (See Solomon's Example in Ecclesiastes).

c. The Devil- Who invented Humanism (Man is God), Communism (State is God,) and "Religion" (Works are God).

BE AWARE- The Wisdom of this world is not dumb!! *The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light* (Luke 16:8). (See Gen 4 where it is Cain's Children who built cities, became musicians and artist, and developed industry. Seth's Children Prayed and Produced Children). We're not talking about the Success of Earthly Wisdom; we're concerned about it's Source.

2. Heavenly Wisdom- (Seeing things from God's point of view) This is the Wisdom that is ours in Christ (I Cor 1:30) [*For in him are hid all the treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge* (Col 2:3)]. Seeing things with Heavenly Wisdom means doing it God's way regardless of how the world sees it- Noah built an Ark when it had never rained, Abraham's Child at 100, Jesus' death as the only Sacrifice for Sin. The principle to remember is that the Wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.

B) It's Obtaining

1. Earthly Wisdom is obtained from earthly sources. It is increased by Study and mental application.

2. Heavenly Wisdom is obtained by:

a. Faithful Praying: James 1:5-6

b. The Holy Spirit's Teaching: *Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual* (1 Cor 2:13).

c. Study of the Word of God: *Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of Truth* (II Tim 2:15).

DO YOU GET YOUR WISDOM FROM REASON OR REVELATION??

One will give you Honor but the other will show you Heaven.

II. THE SIGNS OF WISDOM

A) Earthly Wisdom

1. Bitter Envy- Jealousy, selfish ambition
2. Strife in the heart- hate, rivalry
3. Confusion- Tumult, Division- preference becomes reference
4. Every evil work-educate the man who stole a board off a railroad car and soon he'll steal the Railroad!

Never has the world been "wiser" and never has it been worst!
Professing themselves to be wise, they become fools (Rom 1:22).



B) Heavenly Wisdom

1. Lives right-A wise man shows out of a good conversation his works
2. Is Humble- With meekness of wisdom. "If you think you know it all you've got a lot to learn!"
3. Is Pure- Wisdom is like the tongue; it can accomplish great things as long as it's not polluted.
4. Is Peaceable-Heavenly Harmony because your goal is God's Glory
5. Is Gently- Delicate and yet decisive
6. Easy to be entreated- Understanding
7. Full of mercy and good fruits- concern, which is evident
8. Without Partiality- accepting people as they are
9. Without Hypocrisy- Being what you are (Because God has a Plan for you and you're in it)
10. Sows the peaceful fruits of righteousness instead of the Works of Wrath.

WHEN SOMEONE READS YOUR 'SIGNS' DO THEY POINT TO HEAVEN OR HELL???

Paul's Declaration about "Wisdom" I Cor 1:17-21

For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.

Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom know not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

Salvation is by FAITH.
 Not by Works or by Wisdom.
 Are you Saved???

What's Your Problem

James 4:1-10

James now brings the people face to face with why they are having problems and what can be done about them. The first step in solving a problem is admitting that you have a problem. The second step is to see the problem for what it is rather than what you want it to be. James strips away the outer layer and exposes the real problem and then he gives a workable solution to the problem.

I. THE PROBLEMS 1-6

A) Restless Heart vs 1-2 James says the people were at war with themselves and everyone else. Nothing seemed to satisfy them and they blamed everyone else because they were dissatisfied. Can't you see a crying baby here that doesn't know what he wants but he wants everyone to know he wants SOMETHING! Restless hearts are caused by:

Lack of Love- "The heart is a lonely hunter seeking only Love" The first

Lust of the Flesh- Seeking to satisfy the flesh not realizing the flesh only wants "more". (Drugs, lust, Etc). Lust will NEVER be satisfied; it will only seek more quantity and variety

Looking at Others- Thinking the grass on the other side MUST be greener! When you finally "catch up with the Jones" you find they're as lonely as you.



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Restless hearts are manifested in:

Wars and fightings-Nations, Churches, Families

Backbiting and gossip- Seeking to bring people down to your level.

Do you have a Restless Heart?? Jesus said, "*Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.*"

B) Religious Hypocrisy vs 3

Many seem to think God is the great "Santa Claus" in the sky. They serve him because of what they can get out of it (Remember the reason for trial in Chapter 1). They think of God as a bank machine where you put in your card and the right formula and get money in return - and wonder why it works for others and not for them.

The greatest enemy you'll face is Religion; for it takes the place of Relationship and leaves you empty and lifeless instead of giving you an abundant Life.

When's the last time God answered your prayers?? Why do you want them answered?

C) Wrong Harmony vs 4

The World is your friend and God is your enemy! You're supposed to be the Bride of Christ but you love this world and you give it all of your time and energy. The World is supposed to persecute you but instead it pleases you. You're supposed to be marching to the beat of Heaven's drum but you're tuned to the world's beat. Like the Prodigal Son, you think you'll find happiness in the world and instead you find a Hog pen!

Do you think I'd have a happy marriage if I had to be forced to come see my wife and then spent most of the time we were together talking about another woman?? How often do you come to Church?? What do you talk about before and after Church??

D) Resisting Holy Spirit vs 5-6

Our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit (I Cor 6:19) and he wants to guide us into all truth (Jn 16:13) but we Quench Him (I Thess 5:19) by failing to follow his instructions and Grieve Him (EP 4:30) by the wrong things we do. He has to cease His ministry THRU us and go to a ministry TO us. Instead of being a Helper we're a Hinderer of the work.

Do you follow the Spirit's leadership or do you chart your own course??

II. THE CURE 7-10

James gives us a 7 fold cure for these dreadful and deadly problems. The completeness of the 7 makes us realize that the Cure is Christ. All of the following actions are based on a right Relationship to God thru Christ.

1. Submit yourself to God- He is the potter, we are the clay.
You'll never find peace, joy, or meaning to life unless you are submitted to God's plan for your life.
2. Resist the Devil and he will flee from you- Don't yield to Satan's suggestions. Tell him a definite NO and make him back down. (*Remember, greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world*).
3. Draw Nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you- Seek God with the assurance that He will be found. *He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him* (Heb 11:6).
4. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners- Clean up any thing in the flesh that displeases God. (Burn your books-Acts 19)
5. Purify your heart, ye double minded- Clean up the inside; for that determines what the outside does. Don't try to love two opposite things as once. Love God with ALL your heart.
6. Be afflicted and mourn- Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to heaviness. Seriously mean business. This is no game!!
7. Humble yourself in the sight of God and He will lift you up- Serve the Lord and wait on his time. You must be under before you can ever be over.

**DO YOU HAVE A PROBLEM??
CHRIST IS THE CURE**

TOMORROW

James 4:11-17

Because of the Problems that occurred in 4:1-10 James now has to deal with another issue- Overconfidence in SELF, SUBSTANCE, and "SPIRITUALITY" (instead of Christianity). The "Wars" that were going on were using Tongues instead of Tanks; and the Tongues were far more dangerous! The "Lust for things" was becoming a dangerous disease as men walked according to their desires instead of God's direction. And the people had gotten so busy talking about how good they were compared to others until they had become "Talkers" instead of "Walkers" for God.

NOTE- in each of these cases the underlying issue was the attempt by people to be "God". (1) They set themselves up as Judges as if they were God- *But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.* (Rom 14:10) (2) They made their plans without regard for God- see Luke 12:16-21. (3) They thought their job was to issue the orders instead of serve the Savior.

I. PUTTING DOWN 11-12 The command is very straight forward- "Speak not evil one of another." Two reasons are given:

1. When you "Put down" your brother you become a judge of the law's application instead of applying the law's judgment.

2. There CAN ONLY BE ONE JUDGE; and that is God (See I Cor 4:3-5). We are not qualified to judge our Brother's Motives or, to some degree, his Methods (See I Cor 9:19-22); we can only judge his fruit (Matt 7:15-20). Jesus' command on this is very clear, *Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment* (John 7:24).

Are you more interested in PUTTING DOWN your Brother than you are in BUILDING HIM UP. One day YOU will change from "Judge" into the Judged. It may make you feel superior today to "look down your nose" at your brother but what will you do "Tomorrow" when you must look into the piercing eyes of Jesus???

II. PUTTING ON 13-16 In order to impress others the people were into "Bragging" about their ability to make Profit. James reminds them that (1) they didn't know what "Tomorrow" held so how could they count on it's Profit (How many people buy a house one day and get their lay off notice the next!?) and (2) the length of their life is in the hands of God- at it's longest, it is as a vapor in comparison to eternity.

James makes it clear that although the world may "rejoice in your boastings:" yet in the eyes of God "All such rejoicing is evil". Are YOU more interested in people's WORDS about you than about God's WILL for you??? Do you take Tomorrow for granted??

III. PUTTING OFF 17 Earlier in the letter James had exhorted the people to be Doers of the Word and not Hearers only; now he is warning them about the Perils of Procrastination. The average Christian today knows much more than they do!!! And most of them plan to start doing better "Tomorrow". James lets us know exactly what this is- SIN (Remember that Sin is missing the mark of God's will for your life. Many Christians sin by wanting to see ALL of God's plan for their life before they do ANY of it. God shows us a step and, only after we take that one, does He show us the next).

Are YOU living for God TODAY??? Tomorrow may be too late!

THE RUIN OF THE RICH

James 5:1-6

James has just finished scolding people for making their plans apart from God and now he shows them the folly of accumulating and depending on Riches. The greatest temptation you'll face is not the furnace of fire but the bed of ease. (David as fighter conquered the giants - as king he fell to lust.)

The thing to remember is that the Bible does not discourage saving or investing but it does condemn hoarding. It is good to have riches in your hand provided they do not get into your heart- *If riches increase, set not your heart upon them* (Ps 62:10). It is not the amount of money you have; It is the amount money has you.

I. THE DECLARATION vs 1 Wealth equals Weeping.

Most people think that wealth brings happiness but James says to weep and howl for the misery that shall come as a result of the way the riches were gained and used. Are YOU seeking riches or righteousness???

II. THE DECAY vs 2-3 Rust and Rags

The Treasures that they have heaped together for the last days are "rusting and decaying". Those they were depending on were slipping away from them. 2 things are mentioned:

A) Gain - One of the world's richest men (Solomon) declared that *When goods increase they are increased that eat them: and what good is there to the owners thereof, saving the beholding of them with their eyes* (Ecc 5:11) and Haggai said that he that *earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes* (Hag 1:6). Inflation and extra expense comes with riches and the more you have the more you must have to keep what you've got!

(The Church needs to remember that the Church that made God sick was one that thought it was rich! Rev 3:17)

B) Garments- Isaiah warned the women about the Folly of Fashion (Is 3:16-24) and Peter admonished the women to *let not your adorning be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel:* (I Pet 3:3). Paul also admonished the women to *adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array.* (I Tim 2:9)

Is it right for People to spend large amounts of money to be fashionable while the Lord's work goes lacking? Is it right for a dad to take 2 jobs, or the Mother's main reason for working, to keep themselves and their children in fashion?

Remember that we won't need clothes in Heaven and if you have houses full of clothes it won't help you when you face God.

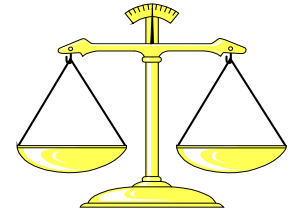
NOTE- This does not mean that sloppiness is spiritual. Modest clothing is decent and in order. It also does not mean that you should buy the cheapest clothes- Sometimes the most economical clothes are those that cost a little more but last a lot longer. James is simply telling people that their Gain or their Garments will pass away but their relationship with their God won't.

III. THE DECEIT vs 4, 6

James had condemned these rich men because of the way they were resting on their riches and now because of the way they had acquired their riches.

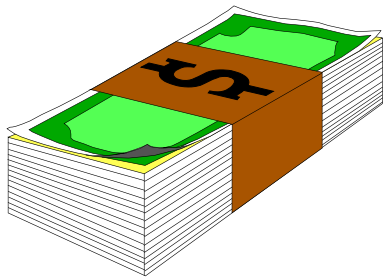
They had defrauded their workers and, because of their riches, were able to defeat them in court. This took away all hope that the worker had and even led to the death of some.

The Worker has an obligation to do a good job but the Employer has an obligation to treat him fairly (EP 6:5-9). Do you treat people fairly no matter which side of the paycheck you're on?

**IV. THE DEBAUCHERY** vs 5

These rich men went beyond Resting in their riches, and acquiring them wrongly, to using them wrongly here and now.

James condemns them because they have used their riches to gratify self and meet their every whim as if they had no purpose on earth except to receive Pleasure. Paul said that this was the way those live who have no hope- They eat and drink; for tomorrow they die (I Cor 15:32). And Jesus told the story of the man God called a fool because he thought his profit was simply for his pleasure (Luke 12:16-21).

DO YOU USE YOUR RICHES? OR DO YOUR RICHES USE YOU??**How should we handle riches??**

I Tim 6:17-19 Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, or trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.

Men who have made a mark for God have been men who have committed themselves and their resource to God. Jesus calls disciples who are willing to lay aside their "nets and account book" and put Him first.

Sadly, however, many are like the rich young ruler who chose money over the Master and lost his soul.

PATIENCE

James 5:7-12

Having exposed the ruin of the rich, James now tries to show the Brethren how to have patience in poverty and pain. This deals with some of the greatest problems and temptations that a Saint must live with - How to be in the world and yet not be of the world and How to live by Faith in a world that you must be the enemy of - James 4:4 (A world that persecutes you because of your relationship to Christ - Jn 17:14).

James shows us how to let patience guide us during these difficult times.

*IN YOUR PATIENCE
POSSESS YOU YOUR
SOUL - LUKE 21:19*

I. PATIENCE IS NEEDED FOR SEASONAL FRUIT vs 7

The example is given of the farmer who must plant and then wait until the time of fruit. If he tries to harvest early he will destroy the work already done and accomplish nothing. Likewise the Christian needs to learn patience in the matter of fruit:

A) Don't become envious of those who receive a reward now - it may be the only reward they get. Look to the future - *These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth* (Heb 11:13).

B) Don't be discouraged if you don't get instant fruit - the farmer must have long patience as he waits on the fruit. He must continue to be instant in season and out of season (II Tim 4:2). (Don't become impatient for fruit like Abraham did with Ishmael). If you abide in Christ the fruit will come - *I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing* (Jn 15:5).

II. PATIENCE IS NEEDED FOR STABILITY vs 8

The fact that the Lord will return soon should stabilize our heart as we realize who is in charge. It should also bring us comfort (I Thess 4:18) and cause us to live clean (I Jn 3:2-3)

III. PATIENCE IS NEEDED FOR STRIFE AMONG BRETHREN vs 9

The Royal Law is that we love our neighbor as ourselves (Jn 2:8) and we need to be aware that the "Judge" hears the words we speak and even the thoughts we think about our brother. Don't allow a grudge to build up - it poisons your relationship with your brother and it poisons you, as well. Be patient with your brother as he grows in the Lord.

IV. PATIENCE IS NEEDED WHEN SUFFERING AFFLICTION vs 10-11

A) Follow the example of the prophets. Look at how we honor them since their death.

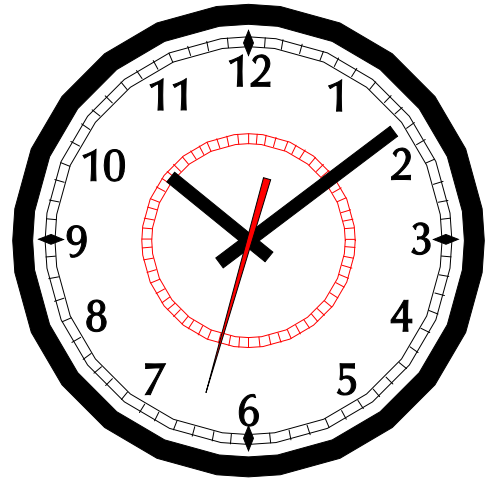
B) Follow the example of Job - Know that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy. He loves you and although you may not understand why you are suffering, you can rest in His love.

V. PATIENCE IS NEEDED FOR STEADFASTNESS vs 12

In a world that is changing faster than we can comprehend; we need to rest in the rock, Jesus Christ, and show the world that we have what they need. If we keep changing with every wind we have nothing for the world to cling to.

A practical example of how this works - Mary, the sister of Lazarus. There are 3 times that Jesus uses Mary's patience to teach valuable lessons.

1. Luke 10:38-42 Mary had learned to wait patiently on the Lord even while her sister Martha is rushing about preparing supper. Martha was not willing to wait on the Lord's time; she felt she had to do things on her own. (No time to wait on fruit. Could not he that fed the multitude have fed this family also? But Martha was not willing to wait). Martha was also cumbered about with much serving (She had no stability because she was trying to do things on her own instead of in God's time with God's help.) and this caused her to have strife with her sister Mary ("Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone?"). Martha chose the good (serving physical food to her guests) while missing the best (obtaining spiritual food from the Master) because she had not learned to be patient.



2. Jn 11:- See especially vs 28-29. Lazarus had taken sick and died while Jesus delayed his coming (Patience when suffering). When He came, Martha ran to meet Him to find out why He hadn't come. Mary patiently waited until Jesus called for her. Martha heard Jesus say he was the resurrection and the life, Mary saw Him raise Lazarus!! Patience in suffering means we know God loves us and we get into His heart and He gets into ours. It was after Jesus met with Mary that "Jesus wept".

3. Jn 12:1-8 Mary anointed Jesus' feet with ointment and wiped them with her hair. Judas rebuked her but Jesus commended her because she had anointed him for burial. Jesus had told the disciples he was going to die but they seemed not to understand. Mary was willing to steadfastly serve him even though He died - for she had set at His feet and knew that death could not hold Him.

In a busy world where everyone seems to be rushing around like Martha we need to learn the lesson of Mary's patience as we wait on God's time and God's method. The true test of faith is that it is able to wait as well as work.

HEALING IN ANSWER TO PRAYER

James 5:13-16

James has tried to show the Church the need of Patience in the midst of suffering and being treated wrongly. He now shows how to reconcile this patience with sickness. Many a person has fell to doubt while their body was given over to sickness and James wants us to recognize this trial and to triumph over, or in, it.

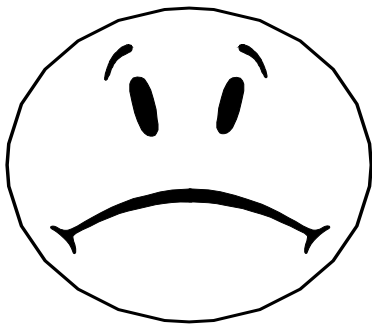
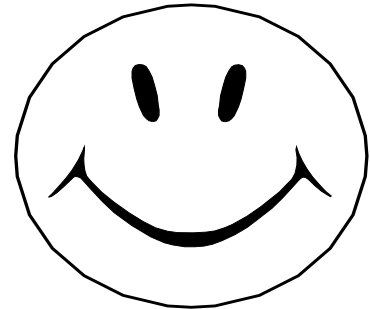
I. THE CIRCUMSTANCES vs 13 It is important to realize what the problem is before we attempt to find a cure. Many people are frustrated spiritually because they're doctoring the wrong problem. (I once almost traded a car because the Windshield appeared to leak and I could not get it to stop. One day I noticed a pin hole in the chassis and when I repaired that the problem was solved.)

A) Affliction- (The word means to undergo hardship, suffering). God told Israel that He had chosen them in the furnace of affliction (Is 48:10) and there are some problems and sicknesses that God allows for His Glory (Job).

Solution- Let Him Pray, (for wisdom to know God's purpose in it and to be submitted to God's will. James 1:5).

B) Joyful (Merry)- a contrast to show that affliction and sickness are not the only situations you'll face. A land without rain becomes a desert but the sunshine is needed also. *To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: a time to weep, and a time to laugh;* (Ecc 3:1,4)

Solution- Let him sing Psalms. See Ep 5:19 where such is a sign of the Spirit filled believer.



C) Sick- From a word meaning to become faint. The idea is that some sickness has come upon the person and they are in a weakened state as a result (James seems to be conveying the thought that afflictions are in God's will but certain sicknesses are not. If God allows a problem in our life it is for our good and His glory or we can ask for and get relief).

Solution - Call for the Elders, and let them pray over him.

II. THE CURE vs 14-16 The Guidelines seem to limit these directions to a person who is sick as a result of sin in their life.

1. Let him call for the elders of the Church

a. Shows faith on the sick person's part
 b. A private meeting - not a public performance
 c. The Elders of the Church (Pastor- I Pet 5:11 , I Tim 5:17 and possibly the Deacons. Not some busybody in the Church that goes from sick to sick telling them about their special gift and berating the sick for lack of Faith). The confession that goes with the Cure seems to be the main reason the Elders are called.

2. Let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.

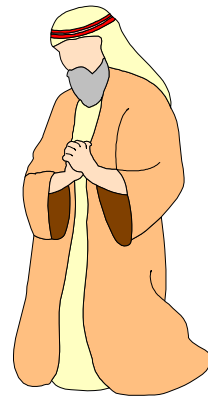
a. Joint Prayer is urged (2 or 3 gathered together in His name)
 b. Anointing with oil:
 (1) Oil represented the Holy Ghost who will do the healing
 (2) Oil was used to symbolize setting a person apart for God
 (3) Oil had a medicinal use (The Lord does not require medicine although He sometimes uses it. Is 38:21)
 c. The authority for the Prayer was the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. (The Elders should meet and pray and seek God's will in the healing of the person before they pray over the person). God's will for some of His choicest servants had been for their sickness to bring Glory to Him (Paul in II Cor 12:9, Fanny Crosby, etc.) and God would not give Faith to expect healing when it was not in His will.

3. The Prayer of Faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed.

a. The Prayer of Faith- This is the faith of the Elders! (See Mk 2:5). Confident in God's will for the person they approach God with certainty of results.

b. Shall save (restore) the sick, and the LORD shall raise him up.

c. *If he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed.* If the sickness is a result of sins then the sick is to confess and repent so that he may be healed. Confessed sins are to be prayed for- not gossiped about. The cure is positive- "The Lord shall raise him up". Confession and curing go hand in hand- which may be the reason we see so little curing going on!!



PRINCIPLES OF VICTORIOUS PRAYING

James 5:16b-18

James now uses the example of Elijah to show us the results when one man prays- and from Elijah we gain some Principles for Victorious Praying.

I. THE PROMISE- *The Effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much*

- A) Effectual- effecting God because it's in His will
- B) Fervent- Earnest, heartfelt, continued
- C) A Righteous Man- a Child of God
- D) Availeth Much- Makes tremendous power available
It Can accomplish much.

II. THE PASSION- *Elijah was a man subject to like passions as we are.* In the Amplified Bible this reads- "Elijah was a human being with a nature such as we have (with feelings, affections, and constitution as ourselves);". This means these Prayer Promises are available to EVERYONE- not just some "Super-Saint".

III. THE PRAYER-

Elijah prayed for the rain to stop and it did;
He prayed again for it to start and it did.

What Principles did he follow??

1. He had PURPOSE to his prayer- He prayed earnestly. He knew what he was praying for and expected to get results. (We need more people to pray with the same intensity the Rich man used in Hell- "I need water. My Brothers need Salvation").

2. His prayer brought him into CONFLICT with Satan in the person of Ahab. Prayers are not pretty words; they're spiritual conflict. We wrestle against Satanic Powers and he does everything he can to hinder the answer to our Prayers (Dan 10:12-13).

3. His prayers caused him to SEPARATE from the world. He first went to the brook Cherith and then to the widow of Zarephath's home. Jesus said we were to fine a "Prayer closet" (Matt 6:5-6) so that our prayers would not be to impress men but rather to communicate with God.

4. His Prayers gave him the LEADERSHIP of the Spirit. God told him where to go, when to go, and what to say. If the purpose of your prayers is not to get you to know and do God's will then your prayers are in vain.

Elijah got results from his prayers. He was able to bring REVIVAL to the nation by showing them a need and then showing them God's power over Satan. He was also able to bring REFRESHMENT in the form of rain. That's what a sin cursed world is looking for- Revival and Refreshment.



BRETHREN, LET US PRAY.

The Backslider "Can a Saved Man Be Lost??"

James 5:19-20

James has devoted an entire book to showing us some of the things that try our Faith- Testings, Temptations, Prejudices, Lack of works, the Tongue, Life's Problems, Riches, and Sickness. He now gives us a word of admonition about a brother who has allowed the testing of his faith to lead him astray.

NOTES:

1. James is talking to Fellow Christians- "Brethren, if any of you."
2. This Fellow Christian had erred (wandered) from the truth
3. The Solution was for the Fellow Christian to be "Converted". Convert here carries the idea of turning from an evil course. It is illustrated in Jesus' desire to see Peter change his course of Fleshly Wisdom and instead look to Heavenly Wisdom-- *I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not; and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren* (Luke 22:32). James now calls him a "sinner"??
4. The result of turning this man from the error of his ways would be to save a soul from death and hide a multitude of sins.

This brings us face to face with the doctrine of Eternal Security. James did not say that this man would lose his testimony; he said his soul would die. Can a saved man then be lost; and, if so, what would cause it to happen??

I. THE DOCTRINE

A) Explained. There are 2 basic Beliefs about the Security of Believers-

(1) Calvinism, as set forth by John Calvin, which basically states that God elects those whom he wants to be saved and then saves them and will not allow them to be lost. This does away with man's Free Will and makes him only a "plaything" of God. It also does away with the need of Evangelism (If God is going to save whoever He wants then why should we put forth the effort to share the Gospel with them?) and Sanctification (If you cannot be lost then it does not matter what you do!).

This is generally given as the "Tulip" Doctrine:

Total Depravity - Man is too sinful even to accept God

Unconditional Election- God chose men as He wanted without man's input

Limited atonement-Christ died only for elect

Irresistible Grace-Whom God calls cannot refuse

Preservation of the Saints-God will not let the Elect perish

(2) Arminianism, based on the doctrines of James Arminius, which opposed the doctrine of John Calvin. Arminius taught that man must respond to God's call and that he COULD respond because the elect are those who respond (Not some preselected group) thus making the Gospel message that "whosoever will may come". Arminius agreed that God must keep the Christian or he would be overcome by Satan but this keeping was based on continual Faith in God. In other words, the Christian is not only saved by Faith (Ep 2:8-9) but he also must live by Faith (Heb 10:38). [Some groups have modified this so that it is man's Faithfulness instead of his Faith that saves him. They also say that a person can be saved and lost and saved and lost over and over which is in direct contradiction to the word of God (Heb 6:4-6)].

Summary of Free Will Baptist Doctrine: Anyone who hears the message of the Gospel and in whose heart a desire arises to respond can repent of their sin and turn in Faith to Jesus Christ as Savior. They are at that moment born again by the Spirit and their bodies become the Temple of the Holy Spirit. As a new creature in Christ he is now able to walk in Fellowship with God and produce Fruit for God. But he can and will commit acts of sin (I Jn 1:10). This sin will hinder his fellowship and his fruits and bring the chastening hand of God. It should immediately be confessed and repented of (I Jn 1:9) so that Fellowship can be restored.

Was this man lost when he sinned? Yes and No but basically No. A man is saved by Faith without works. This means that there is no work he can do that will save him and no work that he can do that will "Lose" him. Had he died at that moment he would still have gone to Heaven based on his faith in Christ (If this were not so then all of us would have no assurance or hope because we would always be afraid we'd be caught between the sin and the confession). The "Yes" part comes from the fact that if that man would have willfully continued on in sin disregarding the call of God then he would be treading on dangerous grounds.

Faith in Christ is a belief IN God not just ABOUT God (James 2:19-20). If a man loves sin and worldliness (James 4:4, I Jn 2:15) then we must judge his fruit (Matt 7:17-20) and proclaim him to have never been saved or else to be an apostate (Someone who has renounced Faith in Christ and who has no help or Hope).

B) Examples

1) Angels Fell- Jude 6

2) Sinless Adam Fell

3) God's chosen nation of Israel Fell. They were saved from Egypt by the blood of the Passover. They "did all eat the same spiritual meat and drank the same spiritual drink" (I Cor 10:3-4) but they were cast aside and not allowed to enter into the promised land because of unbelief (Heb 3:7-12). And Paul said that they were an example and warning to us-*Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall* (I Cor 10:12)

4) The Watchman's Warning- *When the righteous turneth from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, he shall even die thereby* (Ez 33:18)

5) Jesus' warning to the Church that He would blot their name out of the Book of Life-- *He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.* (Rev 3:2) (How can one be the overcomer Jesus is talking about here? *This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.* I Jn 5:4).

II. THE DUTIES

If we Know that there is a possibility of falling from grace (Gal 5:4), we need to know what to do to prevent such a tragedy.

A) Guard against anything that would lead away from faith in Christ:

1. Cults- *Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils (I Tim 4:1).*
2. Worldliness- *The cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lust of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful. (Mk 4:19).* Men get so involved in the world until they cease to produce fruit and that is dangerous. *Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away... and it withereth; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. (Jn 15:2,6)*

B) Grow in Grace and Knowledge of Christ.

Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (II Pet 3:17-18).

This is why church attendance, prayer, Bible study, etc. are so important in a Christian's life. These are his source of strength and growth; and as we grow in the graces of God we can rest assured that we will never fall! (See II Pet 1:5-10)



III. DEVOTION TO CHRIST IS THE ONLY SURE FOUNDATION

The Church at Ephesus was working and witnessing (Rev 2:2-3) but Jesus said that He would remove them from being a church unless they returned to first love (Rev 2:4-5).

When Peter had left the work of God to go back fishing the question Jesus used to warn him of the trouble he was in was, "Peter, do you love me more than these?" (Jn 21:15).

Faith in Christ is the only way to Heaven and we need to guard against anything that would steal our heart from Him. *Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life (Jude 21).*

God will never leave nor forsake me and no one is able to pluck me out of His hand (Jn 10:28-29). There is no power that can conquer me because I rest in the power of God (Rom 8:35-39). As long as I love and serve Him then I have Eternal Assurance and can find rest and peace. Knowing it's possible to walk out of God's palm or power does not drive me FROM God but instead draws me closer TO Him in Love and Faith.

Has your love cooled? Has your Faith dimmed?? Come back to Christ before Satan blinds your eyes (II Pet 1:9) and He who is now your Savior becomes your Judge (Heb 6:6).

ENDURING

One of the main problems the church faces today is defections in it's ranks. People will make a profession of Faith in Christ but when the going gets a little rough or even inconvenient then they fall by the way side. Where are our Cross-Bearers? Where are the soldiers of Christ who fight the good fight of Faith? Where are those who endure unto the end? *And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness; and have no root in themselves, and so endure for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended* (Mk 4:16-17).

I. WHAT IT IS TO ENDURE (The Greek meanings define the Word)

A) To Stay Under- *He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved* (Matt 24:13). The idea being to remain faithful even though Pressures and Problems remain and even increase. Jesus said in Jn 16:33 that as long as we were in this world we would have tribulations (Pressures) but to be of good cheer because he had overcome the world. *The trying of your faith worketh patience. When you are tried you shall come forth as gold* (When you are tried in the furnace of affliction just remember that God said that in all your afflictions He was afflicted. He never leaves you and underneath are the everlasting arms.)

B) To be Strong- *By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the King; for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible* (Heb 11:27). Strong enough to Forsake Sin, not to Fear the King, and to live by Faith.

C) To undergo Hardship- *Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ* (II Tim 2:3). *But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry* (II Tim 4:5). A Soldier is under command in reference to Location, Job, dress, etc. It's not personal preference but obedience to command.

D) To be Long Spirited- *And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise* (Heb 6:15) *In your patience possess ye your souls* (Lu 21:19)

E) To Hold Oneself up against- *So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure: which is a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer* (II Thess 1:4-5). *Stand and having done all, Stand* (Ep 6:13).

II. WHY SHOULD WE ENDURE???

A) For our own Salvation's sake- *And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved* (Mk 13:13). Beware of the Possibility of Apostasy when we renounce Faith because of the Pressures and Pains of this life.

B) For Others' Salvation's Sake- *Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sake, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory* (II Tim 2:10). Jesus DIED for men to be saved. I should be able to endure persecution to get them the Gospel.

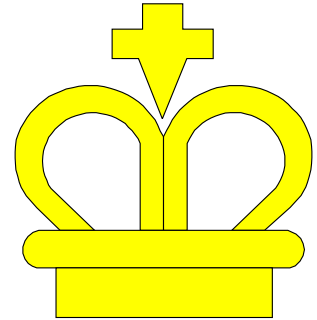
C) To Build our Character- *If ye endure Chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?* (Heb 12:7). *He chastens us for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness* (Heb 12:10).

D) To encourage other Christians- *Take, my brethren, the prophets who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy* (James 5:10-11).

E) For Conscience's Sake- *For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully* (I Pet 2:19). May the Lord deliver us from "Jelly-fish" Christians who aren't willing to stand for anything if it involves any suffering.

F) For the Crown of Life- *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* (James 1:12). No Cross, No Crown

G) For the Joy to Come- *Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds* (Heb 12:2-3). Heaven will surely be worth it all!!.



III. HOW CAN WE ENDURE??

1. Pace Yourself Gen 33:14. Remember that we Renew Strength as you Wait on the Lord (Is 40:31). You don't want the Father to take you out of the "oven" while you're "half-baked".

2. Seek Help from others- Ex 18:23: Moses' Father-in-law told him to get help so that he wouldn't wear away. Seek support from Family, Friends, and Fellow Christians. They can help with Concern, Advice, and Prayer Support (Remember that Jesus in the Garden wanted His disciples to Pray with Him)

3. Remember who's in Control- *Weeping may endure for a night, but Joy cometh in the morning* (Ps 30:4-5). God knows how hot the "oven" is and He won't allow the "biscuits" to be burned (I Cor 10:13). **NOTE**- Be aware that God told Satan he could not go beyond certain boundaries in the life of Job (Job 1:12, 2:6) but those boundaries allowed Satan to kill Job's children, destroy Job's property, and inflict Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown!! Don't allow Satan to tell you God has forgotten you simply because the water is hotter than you thought it would be.

It was only after his furnace of affliction that Job went from knowledge ABOUT God to Fellowship WITH God (Job 42:5). And that's God's Goal for each of us (Jn 17:3).

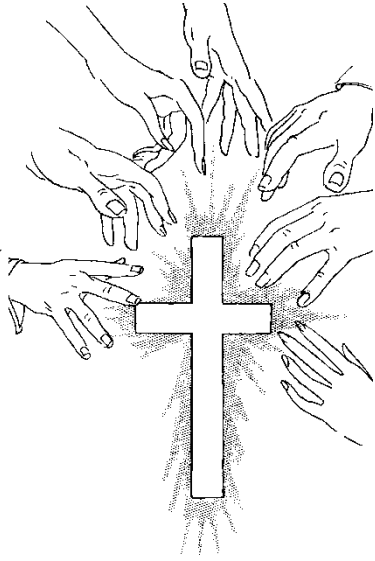
4) Let Love Control- *Love endureth all things* (I Cor 13:7).

A) Love God and rest in His Love

B) Love others as yourself and you can forgive them.

WARNING- *Can thine heart endure, or can thine hands be strong, in the days that I shall deal with thee? I the Lord have spoken it, and will do it* (Ez 22:14). *For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God* (I Pet 2:20). If Sin brought the heat then let it cause you to seek the cool shelter of the Rock- Jesus Christ

ARE YOU ROOTED IN THE ROCK?? SO YOU CAN ENDURE LIFE'S STORMS.



The most important decision you will ever make is your decision about receiving Christ as your Savior. It's the most important decision you'll ever make because:

1> It's an **ETERNAL DECISION**- Heb 9:15 *For this cause Christ is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.*

1 John 5:13 *These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.*

The decision you make about Christ will effect you NOW and for ETERNITY. This is not something to be treated lightly or put off until a later time.

2> It's a **NECESSARY DECISION**- Heb 9:27 *it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:.* Every person MAKES A DECISION about Christ- Either to Accept Him as Savior or reject Him and be lost. EVERY man must Die, EVERY man must face the Judgment. Only the Blood of Christ can deliver us from Condemnation.

WHO SHOULD BE SAVED: ROM 3:23 *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;*
ROM 3:10 *As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:*

WHY YOU SHOULD BE SAVED: ROM 6:23 *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.* ROM 5:12 *Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.*

WHEN TO BE SAVED: ROM 5:8 *God commended his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

THE WAY TO BE SAVED: ROM 10:9-10 *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

HOW TO LIVE AFTER YOU ARE SAVED: ROM 12:1-2 *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*

Have you Accepted Christ as Savior?

If you need help or follow up booklets then contact--

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