

Senior Enlisted Training Manual

A Study of the Book of James



Introduction

James was the brother of Jesus. As I read through this book, James reminds me of the senior enlisted guy who is always there to provide us with warnings and direction as we progress through our enlistment. Sometimes his countenance could be rough, but his direction always came from a place of concern for the wellbeing of you individually, the team, and most importantly the mission. His lessons didn't often stem from book knowledge but from the experience of having lived through it at some point in his life. James gives us that same type of no nonsense experienced based direction throughout this entire book. During our service we learned to respect guys like James because when we followed his direction, things always worked out better. I encourage you as you go through this study of James to heed his words and follow his direction for the same reasons.

Lessons

1. Trials, Temptations. And Bad Things
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5. What Type of Faith Do You Have
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Lesson 1

Trials, Temptations, and Bad Things

James 1:1-18 1James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting.2My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;3Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.4But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.5If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.6But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.7For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.8A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.9Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted:10But the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away.11For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways.12Blessed 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.13Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:14But every man is tempted, when he is

drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.¹⁵Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.¹⁶Do not err, my beloved brethren.¹⁷Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.¹⁸Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

- Have you ever heard or maybe even said: Why do bad things happen to good people?
- Scripture doesn't hide the fact that we are going to have trials, on the contrary it specifically tells us that we will have trials and He tells us how to grow from them, which is the purpose of trials.
- Sometimes trials come in the form of correction, sometimes trials come in the form of preparation, but trials are always for the purpose of training.
- In every trial we can either look back at something we did that it's correction for, or to the future to see something it is preparing us for.
- The key to training is how we respond to training.

- In our text the key word is temptation. In Greek the word is “*peira*” and is translated into English as trials, tempt, tempted.
1. **The good news concerning trials:** 2My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;
 - A. Notice he doesn’t say if, he says when.
 - B. Why in the world would you consider trials joyful? Because God is in control of every trial whether self-imposed for correction or preparation for something God is planning for you.
 - C. If these types of trials are occurring there is joy to be had because its confirmation that you belong to God, you are His child.
 - D. Our attitude during trials determines what we gain, and the duration of the trial/training God is putting us through. When verse 2 says “count it all joy” it is not a request, it is a directive on how to best approach our trials.
 - E. The trial itself is not necessarily joyful, however, when we approach it properly it is extremely joyful in that we know where it comes from and that it is for our betterment

because He loves us and wants what is best for us.

F. Fight against Gods plan or comply with Gods plan for your life, the choice is ours but if we comply, we get to forgo the trials of correction and know we are in the perfect will of God.

2. **What is the purpose of trials:** 3Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.

A. God uses our trials to accomplish His perfect plan for your life.

B. Correction – When we are headed in a direction or have gone in a direction that is not beneficial to our lives or the lives of our families God will correct us.

C. Preparation – When God wants to use us in a specific area God may put us through trials in that area to train us in that area.

3. **The benefit of trials:** 4But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.5If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.6But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea

driven with the wind and tossed.7For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.8A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.9Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted:10But the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away.11For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways.12Blessed 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.

- A. **Patience v4** Properly viewing our trials produces patience, as many of our correcting trials stem from our lack of patience.
- B. **Wisdom v5** Just like King Solomon asked God for wisdom and is even today known as the wisest man ever if we ask for wisdom and follow God, He will give us wisdom liberally.
- C. **Faith v6** God supplies trust when we apply faith. He tells us to ask in faith with nothing wavering and He will supply our request. He also explains in verse 7 & 8 that we shouldn't expect anything if we don't ask Him with faith that he is going to do it. Be mindful that

He will not give us things that he knows are not good for us, which brings us to contentment in verse 9.

D. **Contentment v9** When we trust God for our needs our perspective changes, as do our desires, therefore creating contentment. At this point the desires for our life align with Gods desires for our life and as we pointed out in verse six He will give us our desires if we ask with unwavering faith that He will supply it to us.

E. **Endurance v12** “Blessed is the man that endureth temptation” we know that this temptation is translated trials. This passage tells us that blessed is the man that utilizes these tools that we have discussed and endures his trials.

4. **The enemies trial trap:** 13Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:14But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.15Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.16Do not err, my beloved brethren.17Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness,

neither shadow of turning.¹⁸Of his own will
begat he us with the word of truth, that we
should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

- A. Sin temptation. Where in the first half of our text, temptation was interpreted as trials, this interpretation of temptation refers to being tempted to sin.
 - B. God is clear in verse 13 that he is not behind temptation to sin. If we follow our rule that there are only two controlling interests in the world, it forces us to look at the enemy Satan.
 - C. God's temptation results in life more abundantly, Satan's temptation to sin results in destruction.
 - D. Our responsibility is to be living close enough to God to discern who is behind it and make the right decision based on which controlling party is behind it.
5. A perfect illustration of this lesson is our relationship with our children.
- A. Because we love them, we want what is best for them, so we train them.

- B. When they **don't** follow our direction, we train them with corrections.
- C. When they **do** follow our direction, we train them with preparation.
- D. The best way for them to benefit from our training is to know our desire to train them stems from our love for them, and based on that information, they should be joyous that they have us.
- E. If they accept and follow our training, they may have some trials as they learn but the benefit is patience, wisdom, faith, contentment, and endurance. When they don't expect correction.
- F. Just like with us, God, and Satan, they will have outside influences that will attempt to lead them astray. We will never lead them astray.
- G. If they follow outside influences over our direction, they alone are responsible.
- H. The best way to prevent the pitfalls is to stay as close to us as they can.

Summary:

1. Take joy in trials and the knowledge that you have a Heavenly Father that cares about you. He will not only carry you through them but make you better for them.
2. Have you ever heard the adage “some people have to learn the hard way because they won’t listen to advice”? That’s what God is saying in James chapter 1.

Lesson 2

Act On Your Training

James 1:19-25 19Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: 20For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. 21Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. 22But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. 23For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: 24For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. 25But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

- Have you ever had that guy that you give directions to, and it seems like he just never gets it.
- Initially you think maybe he is just slow and needs some extra help, so you put in the time and give him extra attention, but that doesn't work.

- You know he hears your direction; you know he understands your direction he just never follows it.
- Ultimately you determine it isn't the direction or the method you present it, it's just simply that he doesn't follow direction.
- That happens because his desire to do something else is greater than his desire to do what you and him both know is best for him.
- Our text today describes that situation in our spiritual life.

1. Why would we want training and direction from God? Because he is all knowing and controls everything. We have struggles and He has the answers.

2. How do we obtain training from God? The Holy Spirit directs us through Prayer, Preaching, Teaching, Scripture, Brothers and Sisters. The ways the Holy Spirit can direct us are unlimited.

3. How do we prepare ourselves to receive training from God?

19Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: 20For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. 21Wherefore lay apart all

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

- A. First, I want to note how James refers to the people he is speaking to.

“19a my beloved brethren”. This goes to the spirit in which he is delivering the training to his people. He is telling them this because he loves them.

- B. Then he tells us what the most difficult part of training for all of us, just listen.

“19b let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.”

- C. What is the result of not listening and laying wrath? The righteousness of God is not worked in your life.

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

- D. Why is it so difficult for us to set aside our wrath and just listen? Because our flesh’s natural desire is self and anytime something or someone attempts to direct us in a way that doesn’t satisfy our flesh the response is rebellion and wrath.

“21 Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with

meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls."

- E. How do we do verse 21? It begins by lowering our defenses and humbly asking God to help you with it, you can't do it alone! And then immediately and humbly lower your defenses toward others and follow that direction wherever it comes from.

4. What do we do with the direction we receive from God?

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

- A. Now that we've got ourselves properly prepared to receive God's direction we must act on God's direction.
- B. As we act on God's direction, we must continually be mindful that because we are now doers of the word, it doesn't mean we are not still hearers also. Training never stops and we are now part of the training of others, so we must replicate in our lives the things we learned in initial training to those behind us in the process.
- C. Scripture is packed with things that doers should be doing, most specifically reaching others with the gospel.

D. Our enemy, through our flesh, will have us to believe that all those doer things are just made-up rules designed by God to take the comfort and fun out of our lives. Don't believe him. The doer things are what actually brings comfort and joy to your life.

5. What happens if we don't prepare ourselves and follow the direction God gives us?

23For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: 24For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.

- A. More of the same. Misery, struggle, disappointment, discontentment.
- B. Often, we humble ourselves in a moment due to conviction and get to the point where we can take direction and then once we are no longer under conviction, we change nothing because we allow the filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness to regain control.
- C. We know the real us and we are looking in a mirror and know what we need to do to make things better. *"23b he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass:"*

D. We often see what we need to do and do nothing. *“24For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.”*

E. You see the enemy doesn't have to change us, we are born the way he wants us, he just has to keep us from following Gods direction. If we want more of the same stay the same.

6. What happens if we follow the direction God gives us?

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

A. The answer to our question is clear and our only obstacle is ourselves reacting to what scripture tells our soul instead of what the enemy tells our flesh.

Summary:

1. My beloved Brethren lets be doers of the word together, for our sake, for our family's sake, and for the sake of the Kingdom of GOD.
2. Humble ourselves and take direction from wherever God gives it!

Lesson 3

Operational Security

James 1:26-27 26If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain. 27Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.

- Who can tell me what operational security or OPSEC is?
 - OPSEC – measures are put in place to protect people, sensitive material like movements, technology, weapon capabilities, ect.
 - I'm sure every branch and operation has OPSEC campaigns to some degree. Its purpose is two-fold, 1 to ensure we didn't unknowingly become an asset to the enemy and 2 bring to light any threats or potential threats to our mission.
 - You can kind of view this week's text James 1:26 & 27 as Christian OPSEC, in that it warns us about the threat and what to be looking for to ensure the enemy hasn't infiltrated.
1. **What is the purpose of this passage?** *"If any man among you seem to be religious"*

- A. Usually when we say religious we view it as a negative, however James is using it in an uncorrupted way in this passage.
 - B. This phrase indicates that James is warning us to be on the lookout for a specific type of individual in our ranks.
 - C. It also warns us to keep our heads on a swivel because the enemy will attempt to turn us if he finds a way to do it and in that he is warning us tells us that we may not recognize it if we do not heed his warning.
2. **How do we recognize these people, including ourselves that have been turned?** James says to look for those that *“bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart,”*
- A. *“Bridleth not his tounge”* indicates that he doesn’t have himself under control and *“But decieveth his own heart”* indicates that he doesn’t even recognize the situation that he is in.
 - B. Ever know the guy that thinks and acts like he’s squared away but his actions reveal that he is not? Lose lips sink ships.

- C. The fact that James is warning us that the individual in question has deceived his own heart requires continuous self-reflection on our part to ensure we are squared away.

3. What's the problem of having these individuals in our ranks? *"this man's religion is vain"*

- A. It diminishes our ability to execute our mission.
- B. It's a threat to the morale of the entire force.
- C. It opens the door for the enemy to influence mission.
- D. It opens the door for the enemy to turn others in the ranks.

4. How do we measure ourselves to ensure we have not been compromised?

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

- A. **Serve the Lord** – *"To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction"*
 - 1) In their affliction references taking on their burden not just a physical visit.

2) Do you carry a burden and are you active in the effort.

B. Inspection – *“keep himself unspotted from the world”*

1) It’s important to not only inspect ourselves but to also inspect each other for the good of our brothers and the entire unit.

2) Ever stand a uniform inspection and take a hit? You can do everything possible to be squared away and undoubtedly you will take a hit when someone else looks at you.

Summary:

1. Protect the Operation.
2. Hold yourself and those you serve with accountable.
3. Get in and stay in the fight.

Lesson 4

Respect Character Not the Uniform

James 2:1-13 1My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons. 2For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; 3And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: 4Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts? 5Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him? 6But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats? 7Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called? 8If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: 9But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors. 10For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. 11For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law. 12So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty. 13For he shall have judgment without

mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.

- We often meet someone and immediately place them in a box based on our initial assessment of how they look, clothing, car, family, smell. Then they stay in that box forever more.
- We are extremely bad about this in church, aren't we? Often, we don't even have to meet someone, we can just see them and put them in a box and seal it up forever.
- James warns us and gives us some insight into why this happens and the damage that it causes.

1. James asks, do you, who believe in Jesus, treat some people with more respect than others because of status?

1My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons. 2For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; 3And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool:

A. He's not asking do we treat people differently because of their behavior or any

other character attribute. He is referring to the initial assessment of prosperity. Scripture is clear that character is a different matter.

- B. This illustration portrays the rich man in the negative however, we often do the same in reverse. Depending on the circles we live in, sometimes we socially elevate poor above the rich simply because they are prosperous.
 - C. Church folks are horrible at being a respecter of persons when someone takes a fall to sin even after they repent and recover, we forever remember them by their failure.
 - D. Keeping in mind our mission of reaching everyone with the gospel, do you think God would be just as upset if we did the opposite? If we regarded the poor over the rich or any other attribute of man over another?
 - E. Which controlling interest do you think we are allowing to influence us when this happens?
- 2. When we respect one over another, who are we actually elevating?**
4Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts? 5Hearken, my

beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him? 6But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats? 7Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called?

- A. Aren't we actually elevating ourselves to a position of the judge of who is worthy and who is not worthy based on what we think?
- B. We don't do that because we want to elevate the more prosperous person, we do that for the sole purpose of elevating ourselves.
- C. Verse 7 is clear to say, we put down the poor and elevate the prosperous even though they are not good to us, and they blaspheme God. Why, because our flesh wants to be prosperous also.

3. What's the big deal?

8If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: 9But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors. 10For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. 11For he that said, Do not

commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.

A. James tells us this is as much a sin as murder or adultery.

B. What happens when we are a respecter of people for any reason?

1) We feed our flesh and commit sin.

2) We improperly give power to those that persecute us and blaspheme God.

3) We limit the spiritual potential of those we view as less valuable in our eyes who may be a extremely valuable to God's plan.

4) We convey this way of viewing the world to our children and those that look to us.

5) We are providing aid to the enemy.

4. So, what is our direction?

12So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty. 13For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.

- A. We have no idea why they are in the destitute situation that they are in. I think of Job, if we had only met him in the midst of his trials with Satan which box would we have put him in.
- B. “Liberty of Law” in Verse 12 refers to what James said in Chapter 1 verse 19 through 26 when he warns us about our religion being in vain.
- C. Verse 13 warns us that if we show no mercy with people, that is the way the Lord is going to judge us. I sure don’t want to be judged by God the way that I have judged people sometimes.
- D. “mercy rejoiceth against judgment” Those who practice mercy have no fear of judgement, it cant condemn them.

Summary:

1. So are we going to say I don’t care what God says I’m going to continue to elevate myself above others or do I want to rejoice in Gods mercy.
2. The first lie the enemy will tell you to get you to continue is “I don’t do that”, we all have done it, it’s our nature.

3. We cannot complete the mission God gave us if we are a respecter of persons.
4. Strive for mercy from God and we do that by not elevating ourselves and showing mercy to others.

Lesson 5

What type of Faith Do You Have

James 2:14-22 14What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? 15If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, 16And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? 17Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. 18Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. 19Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. 20But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? 21Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? 22Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? 23And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. 24Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. 25Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? 26For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

- This is a flash bang passage. The enemy uses this passage to confuse and disorient the gospel to the degree that entire denominations have been created based on the confusion of this passage.
- Some would say that James is talking about a backslidden Christian who is saved but doesn't serve The Lord, others will say that James is saying that to be saved you must do some works in addition to your faith. Both are incorrect.
- We would have to exclude all other scripture to agree with either of these beliefs.
- So, let's break it down and determine exactly what James is telling us in this passage.

1. Who is James talking to and who is James talking about?

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

- A. I think we can clear up a lot of the confusion by looking at who James is speaking to and who James is talking about.
- B. James is speaking to "brethren" about a "man". If he was talking about a saved man, they would also be brethren. It tells us that he is not talking about saved people at all,

because he refers to “brethren” in a different regard than just a “man”.

- C. The way that he differentiates the two is very important and is foundational to determining what James is talking about in this passage.

2. What is James talking about?

14b though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?

- A. This is the topic of the entire passage. **Is a faith that does not cause works a salvation faith?**
- B. Spurgeon said this on the topic: *“It is a faith which produces works which saves us; the works do not save us; but a faith which does not produce works is a faith that will only deceive, and cannot lead us into heaven.”*
- C. The conclusion is that there are two levels of faith.
 - 1) A Faith that causes you to believe something.
 - 2) A Faith that causes you to believe something so strongly that you do something. (works)

- D. Now you can disagree with me on this, but we will see as we move further in this passage that you are incorrect.

3. How do I know which faith I have?

15If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, 16And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? 17Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. 18Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.

- A. Verses 15 and 16 are not the test, it's an AD45 example of the test. This is important because the enemy would lead us to think, oh I would help that person so I must be saved. This is what Spurgeon meant when he said a *"faith that will only deceive, and cannot lead us into heaven."*
- B. The test is found in verses 17 & 18 and it is this: Are there works in your life that is evidence of your faith?

- C. **I believe in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus so strongly, it has caused me to do _____.** (works)
- D. The work we do because of our faith may often feel burdensome and test us. That's ok, we have an enemy and flesh to contend with, but we do the work anyway because our faith requires it of us.
- E. We can do work for reasons other than our faith. Glorification, we enjoy the activity, or simply because we think it's what we are supposed to do. We must be careful not to let the enemy confuse this point, it requires great personal examination. The test is, are you doing anything because your faith is so strong it requires you to do it.

4. Is faith number one enough for salvation?

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

- A. At this point in the lesson, one might say I don't believe it. I've been told all I must do is have faith enough to believe it happened. James could not be clearer in answering that thought in verses 19 & 20, and I love how he does it.

- B. James essentially answers that by saying “oh you believe there is a God, that’s nice, so do the devils, and it scares them to death”.
- C. James goes on to say, “You may think that, but let me tell you this Mr. know it all, your faith without works is dead”.
- D. Unless it causes you to make a change in your life is it really even faith, if you really believed it, it would cause a change in thought which would cause a change in action.

Summary:

1. Number two faith requires that you believe it so much you act based on your faith and nothing more.
2. Do it a few times and your faith will turn to trust, and it is even easier.
3. Evaluate your faith position and just believe God.

Lesson 6

Abraham's Greatest Test

Genesis 22:1-14 1And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am.2And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.3And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him.4Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off.5And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.6And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together.7And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?8And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together.9And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the

altar upon the wood.¹⁰And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.¹¹And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I.¹²And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.¹³And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son.¹⁴And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovahjireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen.

WHY WE MOVED TO GENESIS:

- We are in the middle of studying the book of James, however, in our last lesson James uses Abraham as an example of how our faith, if it is salvation faith, forces us to perform works.

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

- Last week we said if you have true salvation, it forces you to perform works because you believe in it so strongly.

- James gave us the example of Abraham so let's look at that example before we move on in James.
- Today we will see that God gave Abraham a very strange command that would be a difficult test for any person to endure, and we will see how Abraham responded and be reminded that God can always be trusted.
- God had fulfilled His promise and given Abraham and Sarah a son, who they named Isaac. By the time of chapter 22, Isaac was most likely 20-25 years old.
- God also promised Abraham that he would make of him a great nation. Isaac was the beginning of that promise. Then God asks Abraham to do the unthinkable.

1. God's Command (vs. 1-2)

1And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am.2And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

- A. We know from our lesson two weeks ago in James 1:13-15 that God will not tempt us to sin, and it would have been sin for Abraham not to have followed Gods direction.
- B. When this passage uses the word tempted it means tested.
- C. Now God knows everything and knew what Abraham was going to do, so for whose benefit was the test? Abrahams
- D. Do you know that God does this for the benefit of growing our faith, because it gives Him the opportunity to prove our faith, which grows our faith to the point it becomes trust.
- E. Our problem is that we too often never take that first step of faith, meaning there are no works, because we don't have the salvation strength of faith we spoke of last week, therefore our faith never grows to trust.

2. The command didn't make sense.

- A. We know that God condemned human sacrifice and God previously told Abraham that he would be the father of

a great nation, however, God just told Abraham to kill his only son.

- B. In Abraham's mind God's command made no sense based on the plan and promise that God had given him previously.
- C. It's the same for us. God tells us to live our lives trusting Him and it makes no sense to us sometimes.

3. Abraham's Obedience (vs. 3-8)

3And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him.4Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off.5And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.6And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together.7And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?8And Abraham said, My son, God will

provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together.

- A. Although I'm sure Abraham had questions and concerns about the consequences of obeying the Lord, he had no hesitation.
- B. He prepared what he was going to need to perform what the Lord had told him to do and left in the direction the Lord told him to go.
- C. Remember last week when we talked about a faith that causes you to do something. Abraham exhibited this type of faith in this passage, that is why James used it as an example.
- D. We see in verse 8 the peace that comes with total faith on God when Isaac asks about the lamb and Abraham simply says God will provide it.
- E. This is where we stumble. We say we have faith; God tempts us, we may take a few steps but then we begin to start to question things and would have bought a lamb along the way because we don't have faith that causes works.

4. God's Care & Plan (vs. 9–14)

9And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood.10And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.11And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I.12And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.13And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son.14And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovahjireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen.

- A. It was now the moment of truth. Try to picture the scene in your mind. Isaac (the son) allows Abraham (the father) to bind him (vs9). Abraham is over 100 years old, Issac in his 20s. Why do you think Issac allows this to happen?

- B. I am sure this isn't the first example Issac has seen of Abraham trusting God and God providing. Have we allowed God to

prove Himself in our lives to the point that our children would have behaved in the same manner as Issac?

- C. In complete obedience Abraham brings the knife up to slay his son, still not knowing Gods plan, but having faith that whatever Gods plan was it was not only the best thing for his life but also Issacs life. (vs10).
- D. In verse 11, the angel of the Lord stops Abraham in the act! Abraham had passed the test (12)! They looked up and God had provided a ram for the burnt offering (13).
- E. Abraham calls the place Jehovah-Jireh – the Lord will **provide**.

Summary:

1. Abraham had no idea that God planned to use his actions that day to teach us the same lesson for thousands of years.
2. Do you think it was more, or less difficult, for Abraham and Issac to trust the Lord after trusting Him this time and Him proving Himself?

3. Do you think it will be more or less difficult for you to trust the Lord after you step out on faith, and He proves Himself in your life?
4. Abraham had no idea what the result of his actions would be, but we can now see: God provided, Issac was affected, Christians for thousands of years have been affected, the nation of Israel wouldn't be what it is but for his actions.
5. The same applies to us. We don't see the entire war; all we see is our individual battle. God sees not only your battle, but He also sees everything that has ever happened, and will ever happen in the entire war. Trust your orders.
6. Do you see the Gospel?
 - Isaac carrying the wood as Jesus carried His cross...
 - Isaac obeying His Father and placing himself on the altar like Jesus obeyed His Heavenly Father and willing gave His life a sacrifice...
 - God providing a ram for Abraham as He provided us the Lamb 2000 years later.

- And it all occurred on the mountain that many believe Christ was crucified on 200 years later.

Lesson 7

The Source of our Speech

James 3:1-12 1My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation. 2For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body. 3Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body. 4Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth. 5Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! 6And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. 7For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: 8But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. 9Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. 10Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. 11Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter? 12Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive

berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.

- Have you ever had a leader who could say anything he wanted to you and no matter how critical it didn't make you mad because you knew it came from a place of concern for you.
- My first Captain was like that, he could say anything he wanted to me and even if I disagreed with him, it caused me to question myself, not him.
- On the other hand, I have had skippers who could say the exact same thing to me, and it paused me and even if I knew he was correct I had a much different response.
- Our speech is extremely powerful, it can motivate positively and negatively, in large part the determination is based on where what we are saying comes from.
- Where your speech comes from is determined by where your heart is. If my heart's desire is to see veterans come to know the Lord, what I say to a lost veteran will come from a place focused solely on that goal. If my heart's desire is something else, my heart's desire will also reveal itself and have a different and detrimental effect.

- The source of our speech determines what we say, how we say it, when we say it, why we say it, and because of that the response that comes from what we say.
- Our text discusses this heart-to-speech principle and gives us a warning and direction on the subject.

1. The Warning

A. Vs 1-2 We are all offensive

1My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation. 2For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.

- 1) James begins by saying “be not many masters” which means, not everyone should teach.
- 2) Not everyone should be a teacher because “we shall receive the greater condemnation” the punishment or problem is greater when you mess up.
- 3) The punishment is greater because “For in many things we offend all.” That

means that when one who teaches says something he better make sure its correct because it is going to affect everyone he is teaching.

- 4) He goes on to say you are not going to say everything perfectly, because there is no perfect man.

2. The Problem

A. Vs3-4 Horses, and ships, and tongues oh my!

3Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body. 4Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth.

- 1) Bits are akin to horses as helms are akin to ships, but nothing is akin to a bit and helm, as it relates to tongues. James is comparing the tongue to the ship and horse, not the bit or the helm.

B. Vs5-6 The tongue is powerful.

5Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! 6And the

tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.

- 1) Although the tongue is small it is extremely powerful.
- 2) He goes on to say the tongue is like the kindling that started Hell.

C. Vs 7-10 You cannot control your tongue.

7For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind:

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

9Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. 10Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.

- 1) Man has been able to control everything, every kind of beast, birds, snakes, fish, we tamed it all.
- 2) James makes it very clear that you cannot control your tongue, it's so bad that we bless God and curse those he

created in his image with the same tongue.

- 3) James essentially tells us that there is no hope of controlling our tongue so just stop trying, but then he goes on to say that we shouldn't be this way. It's seemingly very confusing.

3. The Solution

A. Vs 11-12 Our tongues are the speakers of our hearts.

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

- 1) The tongue is controlled by the heart, so whoever controls your heart.
- 2) There are only two options for who controls your heart, God, and Satan.
- 3) If Satan controls your heart, it will manifest itself in attempts to elevate self.
- 4) If God controls our heart, it will manifest itself in attempts to elevate God.

Summary:

1. Be careful what you say as nobody is perfect, and we will say things improperly or in the wrong way.
2. What we say is powerful whether it be negative or positive. It can change someone's eternity.
3. Ensure God is controlling your life and heart.

Lesson 8

Counterfeit Wisdom

James 3:13-18 13Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. 14But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. 15This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. 16For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. 17But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. 18And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.

- James is extremely practical. As a pastor, he understood that we face challenges, trials, and temptations in our everyday lives.
- Because James is so in touch with his people, he understands what his people are going to deal with as they live in this world and are influenced by God and Satan, the enemy.
- James knows it's going to take wisdom to negotiate this life and like everything else that God gives us, the enemy will counterfeit it to promote his agenda.

- In today's text, 3:13-18, James is going to tell us about the counterfeit wisdom produced by the enemy and then contrast it with the wisdom available to us from God.

1. If you have wisdom use it.

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

A. If you have Godly wisdom show it.

B. How do you show it? You Share it. How do you share it? You share your wisdom through conversation, by your works, applying it to your life, and letting others see it in your life. Godly wisdom is deployed with meekness, so it is conveyed properly, and if it's not it's not Godly wisdom.

C. You can understand Godly wisdom and not share it or put it to use in your life. James is telling us if you have it put it to use and properly share it.

2. Worldly Wisdom (vs. 13-16)

14But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.
15This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. 16For where envying

and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.

- A. So, in verse 13 he just explained Godly wisdom is conveyed through meekness and prompted us to use it. Then he begins verse 14 with the word “but” and then goes into some attributes that aren’t Godly wisdom. As to say if you think you have Godly wisdom, but these things are present, you in fact do not have Godly wisdom.
- B. James goes on to say that not only are these indicators of not having Godly wisdom, but they are also actually attributes of enemy influenced worldly wisdom.
- C. He clearly tells us that although we think that we are operating on Godly wisdom it’s really part of the tactic the enemy uses, and he then makes it clear by describing that it is actually “devilish”.
- D. James further describes this type of wisdom as “sensual”, which means self-serving, subject to one’s own appetite.
- E. Worldly wisdom is based on information gained through life experience or education for the purpose of elevating or progressing yourself.

- F. The result of the world's wisdom is "envying, strife, confusion, and evil work". This is because the goal you are striving for, self-elevation, is not attainable, as there is always something else to attain.

3. Godly Wisdom (vs. 17-18)

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

- A. Again, beginning with the "but", James makes another contrast in Verse 17 and 18 as he describes the Godly wisdom that we need to live a satisfying life. James gives us three points that bring out the contrasts with what he has already said about worldly wisdom:
 - B. **First**, Godly wisdom comes from Heaven. Verse 17 says it "is from above." Which contrasts with worldly wisdom that is "devilish".
 - 1) We don't get wisdom from intellectual effort or practical experience as much as you get it from being with God.

- 2) Heavenly wisdom sees things from God's perspective which allows us to get a glimpse of the entire war not just the current battle in front of us.
- C. **Second**, in contrast to the struggle that comes with worldly wisdom, Godly wisdom changes the way you operate. It makes you first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated (asked of), full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.
- 1) Wouldn't it be nice to replace the frantic fear, worry and work of worldly wisdom with how James describes those who have Godly wisdom?
- D. **Thirdly**, Godly wisdom results in peace and righteousness (vs. 18) instead of the envy and strife of worldly wisdom.
- 1) God's wisdom produces that which is right, that which is pleasing to God, and that which is good for the people of God, that which is good for your life.

- 2) What are the results of your wisdom?
What is your wisdom producing in your life, your relationships, etc.?

Summary:

1. How do we obtain Godly wisdom? We trust, get to know, and spend time with God.
2. First, we find it in His Word. The Word of God is the Wisdom of God, spend time reading the Word, studying it, and applying it to your life. As we spend more time in God's Word, we begin to think more biblically.
3. Second, we find it in God Himself. Back to James 1. If we lack wisdom, we should pray and ask God for general for wisdom. Make this a daily prayer request. Make this a request before important events during the day.
4. Third, realize your need for God's wisdom as you walk through life. Stop and ask yourself when a question rises in life, what would God say about this? What would He have me to do? Who profits if I go This way or that?
5. Consult those who you know to have Godly wisdom.

Lesson 9

Draw Nigh to God

James 4:1-10 1From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? 2Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. 3Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. 4Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. 5Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy? 6But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. 7Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. 9Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. 10Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

- Remember the context of James. He is a pastor writing to his church that has been scattered throughout the Roman Empire. Christianity was new and they needed direction. They didn't

have scripture to guide them, they were writing scripture.

- Last week we spoke about worldly wisdom verses Godly wisdom. We discussed how the two conflicted, in that worldly wisdom was self-edifying and resulted in more turmoil, and Godly wisdom focused on edifying God and resulted in peace.
- This week we find James explaining how to obtain our desires. Which also has conflicting approaches, one being God centered and the other being self-centered.
- One might think that if we are talking about how to obtain our own desires that it should be self-centered but that is not correct.
- Again, we will see that for everything God gives us the enemy will create a way to distort it, in hopes that we will fall for his deception.

1. Where do all our problems stem from?

1From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? 2Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not.

- A. Verse 1 tells us that if we drive down to the root of every problem we have, it stems from our desire for something.
- B. Knowing that scripture tells us our desires are the root of our problems, who do you think is behind the constant messages in life that tell us things like: “have it your way”, “you can do or be anything”, or “follow your heart”.
- C. Our desires may lay dormant, existing as just something we want, until someone or something stands in our way of obtaining them, then, as explained in the later part of verse 1 that is where the desires become lust that prompt conflict with whatever tells us we can’t have our desires.
- D. Think about the last disagreement you had with someone. You desired something, for whatever reason they desired something else. Both parties acting on their individual desires created conflict in both parties’ lives.
- E. We spend our entire lives desiring, conflicting, waring, maybe getting a piece of what we want and counting it a victory, only to repeat the process because we always desire something else.

- F. As we do this our entire life the only party that wins is the enemy because he has kept us from obtaining anything we desire, from being profitable for God for our entire life, and he has tricked us into teaching our children to live their lives the same way.

2. Why do we not get what we ask God for?

3Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. 4Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

- A. One might say it seems contradictory to pray for things if our desires are the root cause of all our conflict, wars, discomfort, and are a trap laid by the enemy? In fact, that is part of the enemy's tactic to confuse it.
- B. Verse 3 tells us that we can ask God for things, and he will provide them, we are just doing it incorrectly.
- C. We are asking incorrectly because our desires are based on our relationship with the world. We are friends to the world; therefore, our desires align with the world.

- D. Think of it this way, if your child's school told your child they needed something to be successful, but you knew it to be contrary to what is best for your child, but your child asked you for it and truly believes they need it, would you give it to them? As it pertains to us, and our desires, God is not going to give us things the world says we need, and we believe we need, if He thinks it's not best for us.
- E. If your child is an ungrateful spoiled brat and asks for something, are you going to foster that bad attitude and give them what they want. Our heavenly father isn't.
- F. However, if our children's desires align with ours based on what we believe is best for them, sure we will do everything we can to provide not only their needs but also their desires. God will do the same for us.

3. So, how do I get things from God?

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

- A. Verse 5 tells us that the spirit within you (Holy Spirit/God) wants our desires to align with his desires, just like we want our children's desires to align with ours because we know that's what is best for them.

- B. To get everything that we want from God, we must be willing to, like we want our children to do, align our desires with God's desires.
- C. One might say, well then those wouldn't be my desires but Gods desires, and that's is not fun or enjoyable. That sounds like something our kids would say when we tell them no, I would also argue that it's more fun than the misery of constant struggle.

4. How do I align my desires with God's?

6But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.7Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. 9Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. 10Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

- A. Verse 6 tells us, that just like with our children, we must humble ourselves and stop thinking that we know more about what is best for us than God does. Humble ourselves to God.

- B. How do we humble ourselves to God? We must set aside our desires and submit ourselves to the idea that we want what God wants because He knows what is best for us.
- C. Recognize that initially it isn't going to be easy because we have an enemy, and he will attack, however flee from him. Remove the things that cause your desires. "Resist the Devil and he will flee from you". If your desire is a new car, don't look at car ads.
- D. Verse 8 says "draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you". The closer you get to God the more you will see Him and his direction for you, and it will get easier.
- E. "Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded" refers to the double mindedness of trying to be His child and at the same time listen to the world for what's best for you.
- F. "let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness" doesn't mean you will be unhappy but that you recognize your mistake, are repentful and sorrowful for you mistake.

- G. The result of recognizing the enemy's trap, reversing course, and aligning with God is explained in verse 10 "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up."
- H. That is how you obtain your desires. Get close to God and your desires will change, and you will very quickly start getting everything you actually want from God, because your desires align with God's desires for your life.

Summary:

1. When the flesh is in control of us our fleshly desires are always in conflict with God's will.
2. As impossible as it seems, if we align our desires with God's will for our life everything aligns properly and because it is God's will all our desires are met.
3. The key is continually aligning our desires and God's will, because the second we stop focusing on God's will, our fleshly desires will creep back in along with our unhappiness.

Lesson 10

Not Your Brothers Judge

James 4:11&12 11Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge. 12There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?

- How much value do you think there is for your life in simply following the direction of scripture.
- Now the enemy will attempt to corrupt this and try and make you believe that because of this passage we are restricted in holding each other accountable. That is not what this passage is saying and to the contrary scripture is clear that we are to hold one another accountable but there is a clear process for accountability (Mat 18:15-20). It doesn't include speaking evil and does include going to the person personally.
- On a side note, although we are specifically talking about speaking evil of our brothers, as a Christian whose mission is the great commission, it is mission negative to speak evil of the lost. They are not the enemy, but the victim of the enemy and the war prize.

1. How are we to speak of our brothers a sister?

11a Speak not evil one of another, brethren.

- A. James is talking about how we speak about our brothers in Christ.
- B. What are some examples of speaking evil against a brother?
- C. Why do you think it is that we speak evil against a brother? Jealousy, you want to reveal your jealousy and elevate another then speak evil of a brother.
- D. So, why do you think it is that God doesn't want us to speak ill of each other?
 - 1) Damage the integrity of leadership, limiting their ability to lead.
 - 2) Damage the view of those not saved, limiting our ability to progress the great commission mission.
 - 3) Damage the discord of the church, limiting our ability to progress the mission.
 - 4) Damage the training of those we are discipling, limiting future of the effort.

5) Damages our individual credibility.

2. What are we doing when we speak evil of a brother?

11b He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law:

- A. Let's be clear that we are specifically talking about speaking evil of our brothers and sisters. We are not talking about the lost world and speaking about evil.
- B. Scripture commands us to "judge righteous judgement" and you don't do that by speaking evil of our brothers or lost people. (John 7:23-24)
- C. More so, we do not know why or may not be mature enough in the faith to know why a brother is doing something that we chose to judge them for. God may be directing them, and we just not understand it.
- D. Essentially, when in that scenario we are judging God.
- E. What does the law say? "Love thy neighbor as thyself" (Lev 19:18) If we loved each other as much as we loved ourselves, we

wouldn't get anything else done, because we sure love ourselves.

F. That is precisely why we so easily judge each other, isn't it?

3. You cant be a doer of the law and a judge of the law.

11c but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge.

A. When we speak ill of our brothers, we are not following the law, but judging someone who is covered by the law of salvation, one of Gods children.

B. Imagine what would happen if I saw one of your children doing something that I disagreed with and took it upon myself to spank him. That wouldn't go over very well. So why do we think its okay to do it to Gods children.

C. God through James is clearly telling us if we judge our brothers' actions, not only are we violating the law ourselves, but we ourselves are not following the law. Meaning if we are speaking evil of a brother, we are clearly in the enemy's camp and against Gods efforts in this world.

4. How does God view us when we speak evil of a brother?

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

- A. When we speak evil of a brother, we are not elevating ourselves above our brother, we are attempting to elevate ourselves above God.
- B. Who are we to judge Gods direction.
- C. God is the only entity who has the duty of judging and the power to destroy us for our actions.
- D. When we judge one another, we are putting ourselves in the place of God, and isn't that exactly what Satan did to get kicked out of Heaven?

Summary:

1. Don't allow the enemy to diminish or destroy our ability to reach and disciple others though our own sinful arrogance.
2. If we do, not only have we left our brother lying on the battlefield, but we have then joined him as a victim of the enemy.

Lesson 11

Who is planning your life?

James 4:13-17 13Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: 14Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. 15For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that. 16But now ye rejoyce in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil. 17Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

- What are your plans for the new year? Has anyone made any resolutions?
- What do you think it is that causes us to feel like we need to make plans for ourselves in the future?
- Planning and following those plans are stressful, setting goals and planning for the future, and then striving and worrying about meeting the plans we set for ourselves.
- We have been told our entire life that we must set good goals and then work hard to attain those goals, if we don't we will be failures.

- What if I told you that you've been lied to your entire life about the need to set goals and strive to attain them.
- What if I told you the entire thing, planning, goals, worry, and striving to meet them is all tactic of the enemy to direct us from Gods will for our life.
- Our goals vs Gods Direction

1. Who is James speaking to?

13Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain:

- A. *"Go to now"* is an expression to get attention. It's like saying Hey Listen up.
- B. Who is James speaking to? *"13b ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain:"* James is speaking to those who are making plans for your life, right.
- C. We all just said or thought about some plan, agenda, idea that we have for next year, so I think James is speaking to us also.

2. James asks, how can you make plans for your life?

14Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.

- A. *“14a Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow.”* How often do you formulate a plan for your life or your children’s life, and it doesn’t work out? It usually happens because something you didn’t or couldn’t plan for happens that causes you to change your plan or goal all together. Because of this the value of your goal is diminished if you obtain the goal.
- B. *“14b For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.”* We live our life as if it is the only thing that matters. This passage clearly tells us that that in the grand scheme of things our life is pretty miniscule.
- C. We often improperly apply this verse to mean that it’s only telling us that life is short. Its actually telling us two things, life is short, *“that appeareth for a little time”* and our life in the grand scheme of Gods plan is a minuscule *“a vapour”*.

- D. The fact is that very little, if anything, we do or say will matter for very long after we are in the ground. Except what we do carrying out Gods plan, which will in fact matter for eternity.
- E. So why then do we do all this planning? For ourselves, to elevate ourselves, to please ourselves, to value ourselves.
- F. Everyone wants to be valued, how are we valued?

3. How will I know what to do if I have no plan?

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

- A. The only way our life is more than a vapor and is meaningful is for us to determine Gods plan for our life and follow His plan. Then we enjoy the full force of the Holy Spirit supporting our plans and our life becomes more than a vapor as the things we do are part of Gods eternal plan.
- B. Align your plan with God’s plan. Seek His direction on your planning. Ask God to open and close doors and more importantly to give you the patience and desire to follow His plan and not try to kick open His closed doors.

- C. Seek Gods desire for your life and never make another plan simply follow His.
- D. One might say I could never be happy doing that. I would submit that you're not happy now making plans you have no control over and stressing and striving and fighting to achieve them for a diminished reward.
- E. The value obtained by following Gods plan isn't only obtained in eternity but even now through the comfort and joy of this life.

4. Now you know, SO.....

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

- A. Your plans for your life and the striving to accomplish them is sin.
- B. It is sin because it is contrary for Gods plan and because it is contrary to Gods plan it supports the enemy's plan.
- C. Therefore, our plans for our life and striving to accomplish them is a tactic of the enemy to counter Gods plan and as we continue to make and act on our plans it is sin.
- D. God wants every one of us to be generals or, if you are really intelligent, Admirals in His

plan. But you can't be a general or an Admiral if our desire to satisfy self is stronger than our ability to take and follow orders.

Summary:

1. *"Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."*
2. What are you going to do?

Lesson 12

Corrupted Riches

James 5:1-6 1Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. 2Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten. 3Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. 4Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth. 5Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. 6Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you.

- In today's lesson (vs. 1-6) we will see a warning to those who trust their riches and not the Lord.

- Question: How much money does someone need to be rich?

- If you make \$50,000 a year, you are in the richest 1.8% of the global population.

- The poverty line in the US is \$14,580. That group (poor by our standards) is in the richest 14.3% of

the global population. That means they have more money than 85.7% of the world.

- How does that reality hit you? *Allow for some discussion...*
- We think of the rich as millionaires, we measure our wealth against other Americans, but when we consider that God, through scripture, is speaking to a global audience, we must see that James is warning you and me!

1. James issues a harsh warning.

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

- A. Again, we see James use the phrase “Go to now” to get attention, as to say everybody listen up, I have something to say.
- B. We see that James is specifically speaking to the rich in this passage.
- C. He then gives them a warning that he hasn’t explained yet, seemingly to get their attention. He says “weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you”
- D. Based on the numbers we reviewed in the beginning we would do well to listen up.

2. Is it wrong to have a large income?

2a Your riches are corrupted,

A. First let me say that James is not saying that it is wrong to have a large income. God blesses us with income and why would we turn down a large income, if what we do to earn it doesn't inhibit our service to God.

B. James is speaking specifically of riches "your riches are corrupted". What is the difference between riches and income? The difference is earning income and hoarding riches.

3. What is the problem with riches?

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

A. God gives us our worldly possessions that we may honor him and do good with them, but if instead we sinfully hoard them up, we have created undue affection towards them.

B. Additionally, when we hoard up our treasures it shows a distrust of the providence of God for the future, this will be witnessed against us by the very rust and

corruption of the treasure we save up. They are moth eaten, cankered, and rusted.

- C. The result of our hoarded moth eaten, cankered, rusted treasure becomes our sole focus in life. We then focus on nothing more than repairing the corruption and gaining more treasure to replace that which was devalued.
- D. “Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.” And what is the point in that, as in the last day it is completely devalued, and we are left with no treasure for eternity because we haven’t earned any because we focused on corrupted treasure.

4. The things we do to hoard our treasure.

4Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth. 5Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. 6Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you.

- A. The things we will do to maintain wealth.
“4Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept

back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth.”

- 1) To increase our wealth often we do things that are not positive to other people, and it causes others hardship.
 - 2) “the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth.” This is powerful, Those that we took advantage of to hoard our treasure have prayed to God because of their destitute, and you are the cause of those prayers.
- B. “5Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter.” Have you ever thought about the life of a beef cow. Their entire life is for the purpose of their death. I wonder if they knew the reason for all the extra feed was to fatten them up for slaughter, would they have eaten it. Arnt we as dumb as a beef cow when we focus so much on our current fatness and forget about the slaughter to come.
- C. 6Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you. This is Christ, we have condemned and killed him because of

our sin. All this we have done and continue to do. However, He does not resist us if we change.

Summary:

1. Are we going to rethink the way we live our lives, what is important, what we strive for?
2. What are some things that cause you to believe you must hoard up some money, how much stress does it cause you thinking about it, what does it take you away from doing, and who do you think is behind it?

Lesson 13

Waiting for the End

James 5:7-20 7Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. 8Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. 9Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door. 10Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. 11Behold, 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. 12But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation. 13Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms. 14Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: 15And 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. 16Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

17Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. 18And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit. 19Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; 20Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.

- Here's the question of the lesson, in these times, when the world seems to be totally against Biblical Christianity, how are Christians to think and act as we wait for the Lord's return?

1. Patiently wait on the Lord's return but be ready.

7Be Patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. 8Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

- A. *"Be Patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord."* Just slow down and take it easy. Have you ever had to tell your children to be patient and you can just see the suspense killing them? I can only

imagine that's the feeling The Lord has with us as we say things like, this world can't get any worse The Lord must come back soon.

- B. *“stablish your hearts:”* Stablish means to prepare ourselves, serve Him, and be ready as we patiently wait for The Lord's return. Don't stress over it, just do your job until He does.
- C. I will be back when I'm ready, and in the meantime get your heart right.
- D. Who is behind our impatience?

2. Endure your brothers and sisters.

9Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door. 10Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. 11Behold, 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.

- A. *“Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned:”* The guy who causes discord is the weakest link in any team. Don't be that guy.

- B. *“behold, the judge standeth before the door.”* This is not a slack matter as The Lord tells us, if we have a grudge and cause discord, He will condemn us, and He is standing at the door ready to walk in. Another words, if you are that person fix it quickly.

- C. *“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.”* Job endured his annoying brethren for 42 chapters and held no grudge. God expects us to have the same pity and mercy concerning our brethren and sisters.

- D. When we hold grudges within a team, the guy who annoys you isn't the weakest link, the guy holding the grudge is. When you limit the team, you limit God's mission for the team. Which means you are the enemy.

- E. Who is behind our annoyance with one another?

3. Mind your language.

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

- A. *“But above all things, my brethren, swear not,”* Our language is important because it is the tool that we use to carry out our mission.
- B. If we use the same tool to swear that we use to witness, does it diminish or elevate what we say when we witness?
- C. This passage tells us that it is safest if we just said yes or no.
- D. Who is behind our desire to use improper language?

4. Communicate and depend on God for everything.

13Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms. 14Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: 15And 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. 16Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. 17Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. 18And he prayed again,

and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.

- A. *“13Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.”* The point of verse 13 is in good times and bad times communicate with The Lord.
- B. If your brethren are sick, pray for God to heal them.
- C. If you sin, ask God’s forgiveness.
- D. Confess your faults to each other. We fail so poorly at this because we are so vain and don’t want anyone to think we have faults. Because of our vanity we are unable to profit from this weapon that God has given us to help each other.
- E. Who is behind our desire to be independent from God?

5. Depend on each other.

19Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; 20Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.

- A. This passage requires a few things: Admit when we err. Be willing to listen to help when we err. Humble enough to tell the person who helped us that they helped us.
- B. Why is it important to tell the person who helped you? So you can rejoice together. So he knows he was used of God. To build relationships. Opens the door so he can come to you for help.
- C. Who is behind our inability to be humble and depend on each other?

Summary:

1. This passage tells us to stay close to God and each other as we progress His mission, and patiently wait for The Lords return.
2. Don't be the weakest link in the team.
3. Endeavor to perform this task and bring your team with you.