

THE BOOK OF JAMES

By

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Sermons on James

"James, a bondman of God and of the Lord Jesus Anointed, unto the twelve tribes which are in the dispersion, greeting"

James 1:1

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Grace Assembly is privileged to publish and post this commentary on our Web Site, www.graceassemblysandiego.com. We believe these commentaries rank among the best for Bible students who desire to learn about the Word of God and the Pauline Revelation. These commentaries were written during the early days of the latter rain outpour of God's Spirit and they continue to provide enlightenment to the reader. These are the original writings of the authors. Grace Assembly has not made any changes or additions to these writings other than format changes for the convenience of the Bible student. In the left-hand column, we have added the King James Bible version as it applies to the commentary on that page. Where the authors have referred to scripture references without quoting the scripture in the text, we have added the scripture as a footnote. In some places the authors have referred to Bible versions other than the King James. Since Grace Assembly holds to the King James Version as the preserved text, we, therefore, have added in the text the same scripture from the King James Version. We trust these ancillary changes will be helpful to the Bible student.

**FIVE FACTS ABOUT FAITH
PRELIMINARY**

Suddenly, on short notice, my spirit was stirred one evening to speak on James. After giving one address, I was persuaded that God was leading me to expound the epistle in succeeding sermons. This I did, and a stenographer took them down, so that they might appear in Grace and Glory. We are glad also to give them a place with our list of other publications. We believe that this treatise will clear away some fog that has gathered needlessly around the writings of the "apostles of the Lamb." Therefore, ask us for "Sermons on James."

If some of the quotations are different from the Authorized Version, it is because we quote another translation. These sermons have been out of print for some time; hence we include them with the notes on Hebrews to save expense and work. They go together nicely. - The Author.

INTRODUCTION

"James, a bondman of God and of the Lord Jesus Anointed, unto the twelve tribes which are in the harmony with Paul; though' he did not go as far in the truth. Therefore, I repeat that faith made practical is the gist of James' Epistle. Paul teaches salvation by faith. James comes along and exclaims, if you are saved by faith, prove it by your works and walk. Do not talk faith with your lips, while talking unbelief by your conduct. True it is that we find the word "grace" but twice, viz, chap. (4:6). And we find the words "faith" and "works" each fourteen times in this letter. Hence, **its theme-words are faith and works**. Paul emphasizes grace; because he puts God's side of salvation to the front. James here emphasizes works, not as a means of salvation, but as a proof of the possession of salvation. "Show thy faith by thy works," he shouts. If you believe in divine grace, demonstrate your faith therein by good works - deeds of kindness, etc.

Chapter Outline

Since I know of none better, I have adopted the following chapter headings of this letter. They are plain and unique.

1. The Trial of Faith - Chap. 1.
2. The Works of Faith - Chap. 2.
3. The Victory of Faith - Chap. 3.
4. The Dependence of Faith - Chap. 4.
5. The Power of Faith - Chap. 5.

We see a beautiful gradation, an unfolding and culmination in this outline. First, our faith is tried. Then tried faith works effectually. Effectual works of faith result in victory. Then the victory of faith becomes fiercely assaulted by Satan. Therefore, a deeper sense of need arises, and we learn the rare lesson of absolute dependence upon the Arm Omnipotent. Thus, we reach the fifth stage, and the divine power of faith becomes manifested, as we shall see in our study. Finally, faith shall triumph into glory through Christ's coming and His millennial reign.

"Sound doctrine that cannot be condemned," was the Apostle Paul's practice, and exhortation to other ministers. "Healthful teaching," is the revised version - ***Tit. 2:8**.

There is abundance of so-called doctrine, or teaching; but it is not sound, or healthful. It is not food suitable for the new creation. Years ago, the writer, not knowing the Scriptures, was entertained by such writings. They were interesting and entertaining at the time of reading them; but they left no lasting effect. It is very much like eating watermelon or drinking clabber; it fills up, but in an hour afterward, one feels hungry and faint. Men say and write bright things, even "truths culled," as one puts it; but saints are not fed and built up thereby. "Feed my sheep," was Jesus' exhortation. "Every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God," is the bill of fare from both the Old Testament (Deut.) and the New, even Jesus' own words - Matt. 4. Men give "truths culled," because of their own pampered appetites, the meanwhile opposing other portions of the blessed Book of God, portions which are absolutely necessary for full growth in Christ. Learning and brilliance receive a reward of human applause here; but what about the hungry hearts who are robbed of necessary nourishment? What about the reward of such teachers at the judgment seat of Christ?

*Titus 2:8

Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.

Chapter 1

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

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

1:3 Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.

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

THE TRIAL OF FAITH CHAPTER ONE

"Esteem it all joy, my brethren, when ye fall into divers temptations" – **(1:2)**. Though this Epistle was written primarily to Israel: yet it is replete with practical instruction and comfort for us. How do we come into temptations? We fall into them. Before we are aware of it, a conflict is on. We are driving at high speed, shouting the victory, and suddenly we take a tumble into temptation. Of course, we are dumb and feel fretted and perhaps look sad. James says, "Esteem it joy." God has allowed it. A victory is to be won, a lesson to be learned. What a bit of advice. Shall I say, I am having a fiery trial today, thank God? Everything is against me, bless the Lord. That is not easy to say. "No temptation for the present seemeth joyous, but grievous" – ***Heb 12:11**. Oh, it is very easy to rejoice when we get out; but that is not what the Apostle requires. But pray tell, why should we rejoice in the trial? God be praised, here is the answer –

"Knowing that the trying of your faith works out patience," or endurance – **(1:3)**. Patience is an indispensable trait of Christian character, and the only way it can be obtained is through falling under trial, or temptation. We learn to be patient with ourselves, with others and even with God; the meanwhile we are learning to cling to Him. We learn to give Him time to work for us. We cease our frettedness and complaint. We quit asking, Why does God not arise for me? Why is He so late? We are to count, though we cannot shout. The Lord sees that we need the test; therefore, He permits us to have it. He doeth all things well. "But let patience have its perfect work." Do not take the temptation into your own hands. Pray and let God act. Move with Him. Look for His steppings. Patience will have a perfect work if you remain in the trial till, He delivers you. To what end? "That you may be perfect and entire, lacking in nothing" – **(1:4)**. What is the difference? "**Perfect**" refers to each particular part. "**Entire**" refers to the whole, complete in every part. It is not enough to be perfect in some things - perfect in faith, etc. We should be perfect in love, perfect in obedience, etc., "**wanting in nothing.**" Is it possible that temptation is conducive to Christian perfection? Yes, for "it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness to those who are exercised thereby."

***Hebrews 12:11**

Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.

1:5 If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

1:6 But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.

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

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

"And if any one of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth freely to all and upbraideth not" – **(1:5)**. Surely, we need wisdom in time of temptation, to know what to do and what not to do. The importance of it is indicated by the attention that the Apostle gives to it here. Neither can anyone but Jehovah give us the wisdom that we need in the hour of trial. Here also we behold His grace. He giveth freely. He giveth to all. He does not reprove the petitioner. He is no respecter of persons. "But let him ask in faith, nothing doubting; for he that doubteth is like the wave of the sea, driven by the wind and tossed" – **(1:6)**. This does not sound like James was unduly given to works. With earnestness, he exhorts to believing prayer. Later on, he declares that "faith without works is dead;" but here with equal emphasis he shows that prayer without faith is dead, firmly asserting, "Let not that man think that he shall receive anything from the Lord" – **(1:7)**. Works of faith follow the prayer of faith.

The Two Creations Taught

"A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways" – **(1:8)**. We praise God for this verse in particular. Men make so much of the Gospel of Peter and James, but fail to see that they, as well as Paul, taught the two natures in a believer. The phrase, double-minded, is one compound word in the Greek, viz, "dipsuchos." It is from "dis," twice, double, and from "psuche," breath, life, spirit, heart, soul, especially the last. The sinner has only one life, that of the old Adam; but the believer on Jesus has two lives. He is two-souled, possessing at the same time the old Adam life and the new Adam, or Christ life. It is of unspeakable importance to see this truth and understand it. All the troubles and perplexities of believers are traceable to these facts. Therefore, James exhorts to "purify your hearts, ye double-minded" – **(4:8)**; and Paul exhorts to "reckon yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin" – ***Rom. 6:11**. "The flesh (the old life) lusts, or clamors, against the spirit (the new life, or soul); and these (two souls, or lives) are contrary the one to the other, so that ye may not do the things that ye would" - ****Gal. 5:17**. The old life wants one thing; but the new life wants some- thing else. No honest person can deny such an experience; not even they who boast so loudly that they are "sanctified wholly, sin taken out, root and branch."

***Romans 6:11**

Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

****Galatians 5:17**

For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

I am glad that James declares this doctrine. Oh, that his auditors would understand and receive it.

Will you believe me that this truth is taught plainly in the Old Testament? The Psalmist arraigns the double-minded, saying, "They speak vanity every one with his neighbor; with flattering lips and a double heart do they speak" - Psa. 12:2. The words, "double heart," in Hebrews are "leb va leb," heart and heart. In I Chron. 12:33, is a similar, but more powerful verse - "Of Zebulun, such as went forth to battle, expert (ranked) in war, with all instruments of war, fifty thousand, which could keep rank; they were not of double heart" (they were without a heart and heart, Heb.). Oh, beloved, consider what the Spirit says about the two-souled. They are unstable; they are easily storm-driven; they are doubters; they need to expect no answers to prayer: they are "double-tongued," or two-worded (dilogos) – ***I Tim. 3:8**. Their word is not to be relied upon; they are not safe in war; they may turn traitor; they cannot set the battle in array; they cannot handle weapons of war. Oh, beloved, have you learned to reckon the old Adam dead? Are you counting on the new life only? Do you firmly believe, and boldly declare that Christ is indeed your life? Is Paul's testimony yours? "It is no longer I that live; but Christ that, liveth in me" – ****Gal. 2:20**. Believe me; you never will have complete victory over sin and the world until you take that stand. You never will grow in grace and truth; you never will become of full age in Christ; you never will be of much substantial use to God until you count old Adam out entirely and Christ in as all-sufficient, though you be ever so active in religious service. Only thus can one be single-minded and hold "a single eye to the glory of God," which Jesus taught and lived.

When people agree with us today and with our enemies tomorrow, we know what ails them. When people can endorse our doctrine today and bid us Godspeed, and tomorrow have fellowship with those who are against the truth, we know they are double-minded. They who see no difference between meetings and meetings, between teaching and teaching, between folk and folk, but pronounce everybody good -- the Word declares them two-souled. They are not true to the first Adam, nor faithful to the Last Adam.

***I Timothy 3:8**

Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;

****Galatians 2:20**

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

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

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

1:11 For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways.

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.

In very deed, such are the saints whom James endeavors to haul on to the carpet and demand of them to live an overcoming life through faith in God's grace; as he remarks (4:6), "God giveth more grace, giveth grace unto the humble," that is, those who need and desire His aid. Behold, how beautifully this merges into the next statement. "Let the brother of low degree boast in that he is exalted" – (1:9). That is the one who feels his need, because of a sore temptation. He may be weak in body, defeated in spirit, poor in money, or learning, or influence. He may be bruised and bleeding through trial and trouble. He is helpless. But through the wisdom which God gives, he finds deliverance. Tears give way to laughter. Praise to God mounts the throne. The new man is in the ascendancy. "Sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under law, but under grace" – *Rom. 6:14. The voice of the flesh is hushed. The spirit of the new man reigns. Hallelujah! And let "the rich boast in that he is made low" – (1:10). They who are rich in themselves, self-sufficient, wise in their own conceits, is James' meaning; not simply they who possess houses and lands. Jesus said, "The rich He sent empty away" **Luke 1:53. Saints who really want the will of God but find that they have been strong in themselves and lifted up, will rejoice in their humiliation, which is probably wrought through temptation and defeat. They thank the Lord for arresting them and bringing them down, by means of the temptation. The Apostle's further words show how weak are the strong and how poor are the rich before a fiery trial: "for as the flower of the grass passes away" before the scorching sun; so fleshly strength and wealth quail before trouble. Then it is proven that "the lame take the prey;" (**Isa. 33:23) but "the rich in his goings shall wither" – (1:11). Dispensational facts are hidden here also. In the end of this age, the Jews in their helplessness, bending under the tribulation days, will cry to Jehovah and be delivered; while those enriched by their own efforts, aided by anti-Christ, will wilt and wither away forever. "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried he shall receive a crown of life, etc." – (1:12).

***Romans 6:14**

For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

****Luke 1:53**

He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away.

*****Isaiah 33:23**

Thy tacklings are loosed; they could not well strengthen their mast, they could not spread the sail: then is the prey of a great spoil divided; the lame take the prey.

Remember, that it is the weak who endure. They who are of "low degree" They who are of "low degree" and cry to God, endure by the wisdom and power that He grants them. The weak stand up under trial. That is a paradox indeed. "When I am weak, then am I dynamited, said Paul – (*2 Cor. 12:10). And as a reward for endurance, which God enables, such a one "shall receive the crown of life." Jesus said to the church in Smyrna, "I know thy works and tribulation and poverty (but thou art rich)" – **Rev. 2:9. Yes, the true wealth of this suffering, self-denying assembly is in parenthesis. It is hidden; but to her is promised "a crown of life." It is worthy of special note that the promises of rewards are never for mighty achievements, or stupendous miracles wrought, or, notable philanthropic deeds, but invariably for suffering, for endurance, for faithfulness, for love toward God, and especially for overcoming. These latter things are the essentials. Works, achievements, etc., are incidental.

1:13 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:

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

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

1:16 Do not err, my beloved brethren.

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

The Source of Temptation

"But every one is tempted, being drawn out and allured by his own desire" – (1:14). We dare not blame the Lord for our temptations; for He cannot be tempted of evil, neither can He tempt His creatures. Because we are still in a sinful body, selfish, or wrong desires may spring up within us. They may seem to be right, or wise; but spring up within us. They may seem to be right, or wise; but their fruit proves them otherwise. Such a desire becomes the mother of sin. The number of inordinate religious desires is "legion." And religious crimes are their offspring. Any marvel that spiritual death stalks abroad everywhere – (1:15)? For the Holy Spirit does not limit these sayings of James to common carnal conduct. "Do not err," he adds – (1:16). Do not blame God for everything in Christendom. "Every good act of giving and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights" – (1:17). There are acts of giving, which are not from the Father. Many gifts are bestowed, but they are not of God: hence, they are imperfect and not good. The most subtle temptations are pious deeds, freely offered. This is Satan's effective scheme to hinder men from getting the real saving and sanctifying truth

***2 Corinthians 12:10**

Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

**** Revelation 2:9**

I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are

1:18 Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

the synagogue of Satan.

today. Therefore, James exclaims, "Be not misled." The devil is actually making people liberal with their money and with their destructive literature.

There are many false lights in Christendom today. True, scriptural luminaries are born of God, "the Father of lights;" for saints "shine as luminaries in the world" – ***Phil. 2:15**. False lights are variable, turning to suit the occasion, producing the color most conducive to their purpose, like a chameleon. Divinely appointed luminaries are like God Himself, "with whom is no variation, nor shadow of turning" – **(1:17)**. They remind me of the street lamps in Grand Rapids, Mich., which are electric chandeliers of perhaps half a dozen lamps, suspended about 150 feet high, each one giving light to several blocks. They never turn, but steadfastly hang there and perpetually illuminate the city.

Israel's Place on The Program

"Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of His creatures" – **(1:18)**. God's sovereign dealings with men is overlooked continually. People think that they seek the Lord, when He comes to their aid. They do not know that "Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost:" that is, that God is the first seeker. "Noah found grace" with God, not because he was better than other men, but because God showed him grace. Abraham was sovereignly chosen of God and called out of idolatry for a distinct purpose. Israel were in His mind before they were in existence. If you doubt my word, slowly read Deut. 32:7 to 14, and verse 8 in particular. Hence, James writes, "Of His own will begat He us" – **(1:18)**. The natural birth is by the will of man; but the supernatural is not by the will of man, "but of God" - John 1:12. And thank God, "by the word of truth." The Holy Spirit is the power of the new birth; the Word is the instrument of the new birth. Calvary is the provision for the new birth, because it is God's will to save all who will believe. Dispensationally, "Israel is holiness unto the Lord, the first fruits of His increase" (Jer. 2:3): that is, the first product of redemption; and those saved from the Gentiles will be the after-fruits, or last fruits. "To the Jew first and also to the Gentiles," is the divine order. The mighty Pentecostal wave swept first over Israel (Acts 2 to 9); then it fell upon the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius - Acts 10.

***Philippians 2:15**

That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as

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

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

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

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

1:23 For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass:

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

1:25 But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

lights in the world;

And yet those of Israel, who will share in the translation, will be the last company seen at the marriage supper. Comp. ***Rev. 14:4** with ****Matt. 25:10**. Jesus also declared that "the first (Israel) shall be last; and the last (the Church) shall be first." Because Israel nationally refused to accept Christ and the Holy Spirit, they were broken off and the Gentiles came in. But God will graft them in again in the closing days of this age.

"Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath" – **(1:19)**. Because of such sovereign grace, such wonderful deliverance out of temptation and such a great reward, the following exhortations are exceedingly befitting. Men should be swift to hear God's Word of grace and receive it with meekness; for that Word alone is able to save the soul – **(1:21)**. Let the tongue be used for God's glory and let all the conduct be as becometh a righteous man. Neither should the Word be accepted as a theory only. Many hear the Word and are convinced of their wrong, seeing themselves in God's mirror, but turn away to live after the flesh still – **(1:22-24)**.

There is no blessing for them. "But he that looks into the perfect law of the freedom and continues in it (and takes not a side glance simply), he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work; this man shall be blessed in his doing" – **(1:25)**. Do you perceive how James emphasizes the importance of God's Word? For His Word of grace is that "perfect law of liberty." It is the mirror, looking into which gives us a clear, full view of the old creation, from which we turn away forever. On the other hand, by gazing perpetually into the same divine mirror, we behold the Christ, like unto whom we are fashioned, and we become changed from glory to glory. That "perfect law" makes a perfect people – **(1:25)**. The glorious Image, Christ, makes a glorious people. After saints stand before God's looking glass awhile, they become so entranced by the gracious and glorious Person which it mirrors, that they sit down before it forever. This is the effective way to heed the exhortations, which James enjoins. Thereby we imbibe the life that lived and walked perfect once on earth.

***Revelation 14:4**

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

****Matthew 25:10**

And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.

1:26 If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridled his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.

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

Chapter 2

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

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

2:3 And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool:

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

"If any man among you seemeth to be religious and bridled not his tongue; this man's religion is vain" – **(1:26)**. The Image in the mirror has not yet captured him. "He deceiveth his own heart," by pretending to be pious, the meanwhile he is employing his tongue for his own carnal ends. Christ is not real to him. Finally, salvation by grace through faith produces a "pure religion and undefiled before God the Father" **(1:27)**, a religion that is exemplified in good works, ordained of God for us to walk in – ***Eph. 2:10**. It visits the fatherless and widows in their affliction - not only when they are well to have an enjoyable time together. They who behold Christ effectively as He is, really live as He lived, pouring out their lives for others. Christ is reproduced in them. His life is lived again in this world. Thus, divine grace is proven to be entirely enough to save and keep. Faith is tried and proven to be the only necessary link between need and grace, between man and God, between earth and heaven. Brother, have you caught the vision? Do you see the Image, Christ, in the mirror, the Word? Has the Image seized your heart and blinded your eyes to all but Himself? "Looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of the faith," should be the mainspring of our lives.

THE WORKS OF FAITH CHAPTER TWO

MY BRETHREN, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Anointed (the Lord) of glory with respect of persons: for if there may have come into your assembly a man with a gold ring, in splendid apparel, and there may have come in also a poor man in vile apparel; and ye may have looked upon him that wears the splendid apparel and may have said to him, Sit thou here comfortably, and to the poor man, may have said, Stand thou there, or sit thou here under my footstool; did ye not also make a difference among yourselves and become judges of evil reasonings?" – **(2:1-4)**. In bringing out the practical side of a believer's life, James sets before us a number of practical, every-day events as illustrations of his meaning. He shows the experimental power of living faith in God. He resorts to this one, because there were men of means, as well as poor people, in the Jerusalem congregation and in others.

***Ephesians 2:10**

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works,

which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Barnabas, who became an apostle after Pentecost, was a possessor of houses and lands, which he cheerfully sold (according to Lev. 27) and laid it at the apostles' feet. He took the place of poverty and dependence upon the Lord and was sent out with Paul on his first Gospel journey. Barnabas always fared well thereafter. The faith that dares to pour out all its affluence into God's hands will never come to want; for "there is that scattereth, but increaseth" – ***Prov. 11:24**. Of course, we need to look deeper here than material wealth only. A man may be a millionaire in the natural; but if he is not born again, he is worth nothing in God's sight. Neither does He care how much men may seem to weigh in moral scales. Or if one is born again, but lean in spirit, weak in faith and love Godward, carnal in his conduct; he is of little value to the Lord, being poor spiritually, notwithstanding all his riches of money, or learning, or influence in this life. On the other hand, people may be poor in the things of this world, but "rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom." These are God's pets. It has been said that "God has no pets." Oh, yes, He has. John was called "the beloved disciple." James informs us (**2:23**) that "Abraham was called the friend of God." Who is "my darling" (****Psa. 22:20**) if not a choice company of saints? God puts a difference between cattle and cattle, or His "flock" - *****Ezek. 34:17-22**. By their talk and walk, they compel Him to do so. Does this not contradict what James is teaching here? Oh, no. Men's ungracious attitude to God's impartiality of grace necessitates Him to give them different rewards. Why does James exhort us to have no respect of persons? He read it in ******Deut. 10:17**,

***Proverbs 11:24**

There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.

****Psalms 22:20**

Deliver my soul from the sword; my darling from the power of the dog.

*****Ezekiel 34:17-22**

¹⁷ And as for you, O my flock, thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I judge between cattle and cattle, between the rams and the he goats. ¹⁸ Seemeth it a small thing unto you to have eaten up the good pasture, but ye must tread down with your feet the residue of your pastures? and to have drunk of the deep waters, but ye must foul the residue with your feet? ¹⁹ And as for my flock, they eat that which ye have trodden with your feet; and they drink that which ye have fouled with your feet. ²⁰ Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD unto them; Behold, I, even I, will judge between the fat cattle and between the lean cattle. ²¹ Because ye have thrust with side and with shoulder, and pushed all the diseased with your horns, till ye have scattered them abroad; ²² Therefore will I save my flock, and they shall no more be a prey; and I will judge between cattle and cattle.

2:5 Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?

***Deuteronomy 10:17

For the LORD your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward: where Peter also had read and from which he quoted in Cornelius' house, saying, "I perceive that God is no respecter of persons" - *Acts 10:34. He saves whosoever believes. There is another reason. Jesus was poor. You remember our sister preached that superexcellent sermon Thursday afternoon from Paul's words, "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that we through His poverty might become rich." Therefore, to show respect to people because they are rich in the things of this world, rich in money, or rich in influence, in position, in learning, or in any natural things; to show respect for people on these accounts is to reflect on the Lord Jesus Christ, who chose to be poor that He might make men rich. As James says here, we commit sin if we do so. It is as if I would say to a rich man, sit up here on the platform, and to the poor, you sit down there because you are poor. That would be having respect of persons and that would be committing sin. I am struck with the following question: "Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith" – (2:5)? I tell you that is so. Again, I remark, that the poverty here is not in dollars and cents primarily. The poverty here meant is a sense of need. God blesses people that feel their need, for they are poor in spirit when they come to Him. They acknowledge their helplessness, their need, and cry to Him. It may be that they feel their awful sinfulness and that their need is great. It may be that they are sick in body, down and out, and they need a touch from the hand of the Divine Healer. It may be that they are financially in need. Whatever their condition, there is a sense of need and they come to the Great Supplier, Jesus Christ. They keep on believing and become "rich in faith." God looks upon our faith. He acts and answers according to our faith. "When Jesus saw their faith," He healed the afflicted one. Thank God! He does not look at our clothes, or adornment. Maybe it never dawned on you that He beholds faith and pays His respects to our believing. Think of it, my friends. It is not a question of whether you are rich in brains, or rich in learning, or money, or talkativeness, etc. Do you believe God? Have you a bank account of faith in God? Have you sent a lot of believing on ahead? Are the shelves in the corridors on high stocked with faith from your little heart? Faith from a simple, little heart is what counts with God; not self-sufficiency from a supposed big fellow; not any natural gift apart from faith, and thus setting God aside.

2:6 But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats?
2:7 Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called?

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

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

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

2:11 For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.

***Acts 10:34**

Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:

James continues, as if to ask, Will you despise the poor, who need your love and aid? Will you respect the rich? He points out their arrogance and selfishness, saying, "Do not rich men oppress you and bring you before the judgment seats? Do not they blaspheme that worthy Name by the which ye are called" – **(2:6-7)**? Here the Apostle refers to the rulers and priests, who boasted in their wealth of authority and self-righteousness. The religious powers did these very things to Jesus and to His followers. However, "if ye fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture -- Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself - ye do well" – **(2:8)**. The royal law is the law, or rule of the kingdom of God. Jesus said that on the two commandments - love to God and love to man - hang all the law and the prophets. James here emphasizes the second. He shows that "love is the fulfilling of the law," and that if his Jewish auditors actually do as they claim to do, viz, keep the law, they will "love their neighbors as themselves." He teaches the impossibility of doing God's will without being born again, the very essence of which is love; for the new creation has a nature which cannot sin, because it is born of God. Paul teaches that "what the law (the Mosaic code) could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh (the old creation never can keep a holy law); God sending His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness (ordinance, requirement-comp. ***Luke 1:6**) of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" - ****Rom. 8:4**. James implies the same doctrine and declares that to show preference is to contradict it, and to be convicted as transgressors, by the very law which they claimed, or sought to observe – **(2:9)**.

"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend (or stumble) in one point, has become guilty of all" – **(2:10)**. This is certainly a hard blow at would-be law-keepers. Note exactly what the Apostle says. One sin, even showing respect of some natural superiority, breaks that holy law. One sin. Think of it. Just one act of sin separated Adam from God and placed him outside of the garden. Keeping all, but breaking one ordinance of the law, is like breaking one link of a chain; for God's law is one great chain of requirements. If you break one link of the chain, the chain is broken – **(2:10-11)**.

***Luke 1:6**

And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

****Romans 8:4**

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

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

That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

I was a farmer's boy. My father had some long chains of large links, each chain having a hook on each end. To break any one link rendered the whole chain useless till it was mended, or a new link put into its place. Just so, no matter what pretensions of keeping the law men may make; if they violate one item, they are not keeping the law. All their other good acts are as nothing. We see how fruitless in God's sight is all man's boasted law keeping. Comp. also ***Rom. 13:8-10**. "So speak and so do as men that are to be judged by a law of liberty" – **(2:12)**. Thank God for this exhortation. Though James shows that the law condemns sin; yet he shows also that saints will not be judged by the Mosaic code, but by the Word of grace. See notes on – **(1:25)**. Even of the sinner, Jehovah does not ask, what are you doing with my law? but what are you doing with Jesus, who is called the Anointed? "What think ye of Christ?" If we accept the perfect law of liberty and become fashioned by its mighty in-workings, we will be happy to be judged thereby; for we will be rewarded for living faith, which is daily being demonstrated by good works. If we show our faith by our works here, God will prove our faith by His reward over there. Hallelujah!

"For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath showed no mercy: and mercy rejoiceth against judgment" – **(2:13)**. God showed mercy to all mankind by giving His Son to die for them. They who accept that mercy receive the forgiveness of their sins and deliverance from the power of the devil. And they are expected to show mercy to their fellows by telling them of God's amazing grace. "Have you had a kindness shown? Pass it on. It was not given for thee alone; pass it on." On the cross, mercy rejoiced against judgment, when our sins were made to meet upon Christ, our sin-bearer; for there and then the righteous claims of justice against us were met and satisfied. Mercy triumphed over judgment for all who will believe on Jesus. Mercy shouts in behalf of all who receive her, saying to judgment, "Hush thy voice; thy demands are met. Christ hath died, the Just One for the unjust ones." Therefore, "there is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" - Rom. 8:1.

***Romans 13:8-10**

⁸Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. ⁹For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as

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

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

2:16 And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?

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

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

thyself. ¹⁰ Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

But they who show no mercy to their fellows, notwithstanding their religious boasts, will have no mercy shown to them in the day of the Lord. They prove by their conduct that they never accepted the judgment of God against their own sins. They really deny the need of a Redeemer and of deliverance from sin. For those who turn away from mercy's stream, now flowing; there will be no mercy hereafter, "but a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries" ***Heb. 10:26, 27**: for "NOW is the day of salvation." Tomorrow, after this life, will be the Day of Judgment. Let no one deceive you by a false future hope.

Faith Demonstrated by Good Works

"What doeth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith and have not works? Can faith save him?" – **(2:14)**. Someone may exclaim, James here contradicts Paul; for the latter teaches that "by grace are ye saved, through faith; not of works, lest any man should boast" – ****Eph. 2:8, 9**. Nay, there is no contradiction. Paul speaks of initial salvation and of our standing in Christ. James speaks of the progress and proof of salvation by our walk. Paul sees us justified before God. James wants us to be justified before men. "God justifieth the ungodly who believeth on Jesus" – *****Rom. 4:5**. Men justify the believers who prove their faith by good deeds. James' illustration is exceedingly practical and needs no explanation. "If a brother, or sister be naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body, what doth it profit" – **(2:15-16)**? Certainly, there is no profit, either to the sufferer, or to him who has it in his power to help. Hence, he adds, "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" – **(2:17)**. In other words, dead faith is no faith – **(2:18)**. With this, Paul agrees perfectly, instructing saints to labor with their hands, that they "may have to give to him that is needy" - *****Rom. 4:5**. When the kingdom apostles imagined that perhaps brother Paul was

***Hebrews 10:26, 27**

²⁶ For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, ²⁷ But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

****Ephesians 2:8, 9**

⁸ For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: ⁹ Not of works, lest any man should boast.

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

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

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

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

*****Romans 4:5**

But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

neglecting the poor, he declared that he "was forward in remembering the poor" - ***Gal. 2:10**. He gives two whole, long chapters on unselfish liberality in II Cor. 8 and 9.

The Apostle continues his argument, demanding the proof of faith by works, and adds, "Thou believest that God is one; thou doest well. Demons also believe and shudder; but wilt thou know, O empty man, that faith without works is dead?" – (**2:19-20**). There is an intellectual assent to the truth, because of conviction, but it affords no practical benefit. You see, friends, that men may believe, and yet not be saved. Christ did not die for demons; hence, there is no salvation for them, though they are convinced and admit that He is the Son of God. Men may do the same and yet never be saved. When men believe with the heart, they obtain salvation, which produces a holy awe, or reverence toward God. Hence, James insists that living faith, even "the faith of God," is intensely practical.

He brings forth from the Old Testament two invincible examples to vindicate his doctrine.

First, "Was not Abraham our father, justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?" – (**2:21**). Yes, of course he was; but he had been justified before God by faith many years prior, even when he believed God, who called him from Ur and started him toward Canaan. Comp. ****Gen. 12:4 and 15:6** with *****Heb. 11:8**. Now, remember that Abraham was 75 years old at that time, but 100 years old when Isaac was born. Then add 20 years, the age at least when Isaac was offered, and we find Abraham justified by faith in God's sight for 45 years before James speaks of him being justified by works in man's sight. Do you see it, my friends? James does not hereby teach that the patriarch was saved by offering up Isaac, nor that he was any more righteous before God after so doing, but that "his faith was made perfect" – (**2:22**). Thus "the Scripture - the whole record concerning Abraham - was fulfilled, which saith, Abraham believed God and it was imputed unto him for righteousness; and Abraham was called

***Galatians 2:10**

Only they would that we should remember the poor; the same which I also was forward to do.

****Genesis 12:4 and 15:6**

(12:4) So Abram departed, as the LORD had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran. (15:6) And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

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

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

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

*****Hebrews 11:8**

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

the friend of God." By his initial faith he was justified from sin and became a child of God; then by his perfected faith he became the friend of God. Comp. ***II Chron. 20:7** and ****Isa. 41:8**. For 25 years Abraham went on believing the Word of the Lord, walking in the light and learning God's will as it was unfolded to him, so that his faith reached its climax in offering up his son. Beloved, if you wish to become a friend of God, walk in the light as it comes to you. Do not yield to your own carnal thoughts and ambitions. Keep on trusting in the unfailing Arm and keep close to His loving heart. Imitate the patriarch, and never neglect the altar. Worship God and believe His Word continually. That was what Abraham did. You do the same, and your faith also will be perfected in due time – **(2:23-24)**. **Second**. "Likewise also, was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers and had sent them out another way?" – **(2:25)**. Paul declares that "by faith, Rahab received the spies with peace" - *****Heb. 11:31**. Who is right? Both are right without contradiction, each statement strengthening the other. As to her acceptance before God, she was justified by faith; hence, "she perished not." The scarlet line in the window was a symbol of the blood, by which all are provisionally justified – ******Rom. 5:9**. Doubtless she had heard that Israel were delivered out of Egypt by blood. Study *******Josh. 2:9-11**. God counted her faith to her for righteousness and saved her and her house. But James shows that Rahab's faith was not a dead faith, but a living, active faith. She showed her faith by her good works.

***II Chronicles 20:7**

Art not thou our God, who didst drive out the inhabitants of this land before thy people Israel, and gavest it to the seed of Abraham thy friend for ever?

****Isaiah 41:8**

But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend.

*****Hebrews 11:31**

By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.

******Romans 5:9**

Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

*******Joshua 2:9-11**

⁹ And she said unto the men, I know that the LORD hath given you the land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land faint because of you.¹⁰ For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto

the two kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed. ¹¹ And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for the LORD your God, he is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath.

She proved to the spies that she believed. She was justified by her heroic deed before the people.

Consider and Marvel

Let me startle you. Did you observe that James, who is considered a legalist, here employs two law-breakers to prove his point? They who use James to prove salvation, not by faith alone, but by works, overlook this fact. Abraham had two wives, which was a violation of the law, afterward given to Israel. He was guilty of adultery in the eyes of that law. Furthermore, the patriarch was guilty of murder in the sight of that law; for it said, "Thou shalt not kill." What do you think of an apostle using an adulterer and a murderer to demonstrate the faith of God by works? Ah, he simply proves what Paul boldly declares, that salvation is by faith apart from works. He shows that the Ten Commandments were not given to save men, nor as a rule by which saints are to walk. "The law was not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, etc." – ***I Tim. 1:9**. "The law entered that the offence might abound" – ****Rom. 5:20**. "It was added (to the promise to Abraham, 430 years after), because of transgression," that is, to expose it by provoking sin to the full – *****Gal. 3:19**. Then, "where sin abounded (that is, on the cross), because of the intervention of the law, grace did much more abound" through the death of Christ for us. Therefore, salvation is by grace through faith, wholly apart from works. From a legal point of view, Rahab was no fit illustration. She was a harlot. She lied to the city authorities; for she hid the messengers in the loft of her house but informed the authorities that they had left the city. How could God justify a harlot and a liar? This is how. He justifies the ungodly who believeth; and every man is ungodly until he believes. We all were sinners and ungodly until we believed on Jesus, no matter how amiable, how sweet, how kind we may have been in the natural. "All have sinned; there is none good, no, not one." All men need a Redeemer, a Savior. God delivered Rahab from death, not because she "quit her meanness," but because she

***I Timothy 1:9**

Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,

****Romans 5:20**

Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin

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

abounded, grace did much more abound:

*****Galatians 3:19**

Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.

believed in the God of Israel. Though' she prevaricated, yet she believed God; and James declares that she showed her faith by her works. James also teaches by these examples of faith that what men call good is not always good; and what men call evil is not always evil with God. The Lord authorized Abraham to slay Isaac and He allowed him, at least, to take Hagar, because those things "happened unto them for types" for our instruction - ***I Cor. 10:6, 11**. The same is true of Rahab. Because of ignorance concerning the Bible way of salvation and God's dealings with His people, men set up false standards of righteousness and seek to bring others under their "yoke," or rule of rectitude. Hence, there are scores of religious beliefs and all under the name of "Christian religion." God's Word to Abraham, who is "the father of all them that believe" (****Rom. 4:11**), is indeed our rule of action - "I am the Almighty God (the One all-sufficient); walk before me and be thou perfect" – *****Gen. 17:1**. Abraham was under grace and grace alone; and so are we. They who see the grace of God and believe it as did Abraham, "our father," do not abuse their liberty in Christ, "using it for an occasion to the flesh, but in love serve one another" – *****Gal. 5:13**. They appropriate God's grace to do for His glory what He requires, but they do not take advantage of it for selfish ends.

"For as the body apart from spirit is dead; so the faith apart from works is dead" – **(2:26)**. Again, observe that the Apostle James does not deny the wholesome doctrine of righteousness by faith, nor aim to teach salvation by self-effort. He seeks to shut the mouths of those who boast of their supposed faith, but really have none. Our spirit is the living, active energy in our body, the proof of life therein. Good deeds are the living, active proof of the presence of faith. If we believe that God heals the sick, we will not resort to medicine and doctors. If we believe that we should "live by every word of God"

***I Corinthians 10:6, 11**

⁶ Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.

****Romans 4:11**

And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also:

*****Genesis 17:1**

And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to

Chapter 3

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

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

Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.

******Galatians 5:13**

For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.

(***Luke 4:4**), we will be diligent in studying it. If we believe that God is our all-sufficient source and recourse of supply for all things, we will not "go down to Egypt for help," nor "lean upon the arm of flesh," but we will trust God absolutely and always.

THE VICTORY OF FAITH CHAPTER THREE

"Be not many teachers, my brethren, knowing that we shall receive greater judgment" – (**3:1**) There is nothing popish in this epistle. The Apostle addresses his readers fifteen times as "brethren, or my brethren," thus taking them on his heart as one with them. Accordingly, he begins this chapter with, "My brethren." Teachers (didaskaloi) is the correct word here. Teachers have graver responsibility than others; because they are in the place of Christ, the Great Teacher. If they teach error; if they mislead the people, they will suffer the greater loss. If they teach the truth and build up the people, they will obtain greater reward - "for we all (believers) shall receive for the deeds done in the body, whether they be good or bad." (Observe that the holy writers never discourage service. They never say, Be not many servants. Indeed, "he that is servant is greatest of all." If a teacher renders the best service in lowliness, he will receive the best reward.

"For in many things, we all stumble" – (**3:2**). The word here for offend (ptaio) means to strike the foot, make a misstep, stumble, blunder, fall. This is not skandalizo, which means to cause offence, or make one to offend, as in ****Matt. 15:12** or *** **I Cor. 8:13**. In this chapter, James teaches victory and shows that the main channel of failure is the tongue. Therefore, he adds at once, "If any one stumble not in word, this one is a perfect man, able to bridle also the whole body" – (**3:2**). Oh, what a useful, or harmful member is the tongue. That is why so much is said in the Proverbs about the use and misuse of the tongue. James shows that the tongue is the index to our inward condition.

Luke 4:4

And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.

Matthew 15:12

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

3:4 Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth.

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

3:6 And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.

Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying?

I Corinthians 8:13

Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.

If we have victory within, we will talk victory. If we are doubting and defeated, we will express it through this little member, in case we do speak. The victory gained also by controlling the tongue is declared in the following illustrations -- The bit in the mouth of the horse and the rudder in the stern of a ship – **(3:3)**.

With a bit and bridle, a boy can govern a strong horse, making him turn to the right or left at will. A man may pull a horse backward and make him sit down, by means of simply a bit and bridle. Thus, we should make our own bodies obey us by the right use of our tongues. The ship, which is tossed by a tempest and rocked on billows of the sea yet obeys the impulse of the steers - man as he turns the rudder at his will. Oh, think of it, my friends. Our safety is in the power of our own tongues. The perfection of our walk is dependent upon this little member – **(3:5-6)**.

"Even so the tongue also is a little member and boasteth great things. Behold, how large a matter a little fire kindleth; and the tongue is a fire, the world of the wickedness" – **(3:6)**.

Ah, the power of this member does not stop with the individual. Neither blessings, nor cursings go single-handed. Doubtless that is why the Greek word for stumble was translated "offend" in the Authorized Version. It either blesses, or curses others. If it boasts great things; if it teaches error with vehemence, its hearers are influenced to go wrong. One match may ignite a whole forest or set on fire an entire city. Thousands of acres of western prairie have been set ablaze by one spark from a passing locomotive. God alone can know the incalculable harm and destruction wrought by one word of wrong teaching. Hence, there is a hidden meaning to the Apostle's words here - "able to bridle also the whole body" – **(3:6)**. Paul wrote that "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" - Gal. 5:9. All the assemblies in Galatia, planted by his ministry, were afterward poisoned by the devilish doctrine of salvation by works, and thus they were plunged into bondage and darkness and falling away from grace. What was the instrument of scattering that leaven? The tongue of phariseism, of course. A flame of evil doctrine was kindled, which has not died out to this day. But, on the other hand, thank God; by the pure Word of grace, set forth in the sweetness and power and wisdom of the Holy Spirit, we may "bridle the whole body" of Christ. Each pastor has it in his

power to guide his own flock in the right way. And to the extent that the shepherds everywhere bridle their own individual bodies by the correct use of their own little member, and thus, direct their own flocks; to that extent the whole Church, or Body of Christ, will be guided and governed and landed finally into the glorious haven on high. The tongue may be a fire, flaming out good to mankind and blazing forth glory to God. If a little fire kindleth a great wood, or forest; this ought to encourage us to push on in our small spheres, giving out that Jesus Christ is the Great One, never slacking in telling forth the marvels of His grace. Each of us is starting a conflagration, which can never be extinguished. Your testimony to the truth is one small spark. The woman of Samaria gave one word of witness, and the whole city turned out to hear the Great Prophet, many of whom believed on Him. Hallelujah! If in the flesh we speak, we speak in vain. If in the Christ we speak, a reward we gain.

By saying that in many things we all stumble, the Apostle expressed the prevailing condition of believers; but he did not mean that there were none who do not stumble. He declared that the one who does not stumble in word, that one is a perfect man. He contrasts the "all" with the "one." The latter indicates the very small minority who use their tongue for the glory of God. Reader, to which do you prefer to belong? The uncontrollable little member is the one chief instrument of distributing wickedness throughout the world. James calls it, indeed, "The world of the wickedness" – (3:6). What a statement! When saints misdirect the tongue, they imitate the world; they move in the flesh. Not only does this apply to worldly things; but it applies to religious matters also. Men presume to speak forth spiritual things, not in the Holy Spirit, but in the flesh. Their carnal minds control their tongues. If anyone here does not believe in speaking in tongues, he surely has the proof positive before him that the speaking in other tongues is of God; for when the Holy Spirit gets absolute control of this unruly member it shows He has control of us for the time being. This is why the speaking in tongues is such a signal evidence, or the distinctive sign of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. It is the last part of our body to be surrendered to God. People surrender their knees and get down to an altar, but they are mum. After a while they surrender their mouth and begin to pray. Then they surrender their heads and raise them up. Maybe they surrender their backs, relax and take an easy position with the head on a pillow. By and by the Holy Spirit gets control of the uncontrollable member and turns it about wheresoever He will and makes it speak in a language it never

learned. We never know how unruly a member we have in the mouth until we endeavor to yield it wholly to the Holy Spirit.

What is The Bridle?

What is the bit and bridle which the Holy Spirit uses in our behalf? We find the answer in the 32nd Psalm. "Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding, whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle" – ***Ps. 32:9**. The Bible is the bridle. Each particular portion is a bit. The Lord says, "I will teach thee; I will instruct thee; I will guide thee with mine eye" – ****Ps. 32:8**. The horse has no understanding. You cannot teach him the Bible, though' you might teach him some funny carnal tricks. We have understanding. We can learn the Bible. It checks us up. The Word speaks to our hearts and turns us to the right, or left, or turns us back, if need be. One "bit" of truth spurs us on; another slows us down. Let us take God's truth into our hearts. The Holy Spirit will hold the reins and guide us unerringly. The Word will be to us a rudder and the Holy Spirit the Steersman, guiding our ship all our days over life's ocean. Multiplied times the Holy Spirit has whispered one little word into my heart, which turned my course of action. One "bit" of His guiding hand kept me from great trouble, or danger. Another "bit" started me in the direction of increased happiness, or enlarged usefulness, or broadened my vision of divine things. Thank God for the bit and bridle of His precious Word. Multiplied numbers of saints are defeated today and fail in their walk and in their service, because they do not yield to the Hand that seeks to check them up or turn them in the right way.

"The tongue defileth the whole body and setteth on fire the course (or wheel) of nature" – **(3:6)**. The damaging force of the tongue is like a wheel of eleven spokes; for eleven evil things are said about it in this lesson. Indeed, the tongue misdirected defiles the whole company of saints. If one person begins to gossip in a meeting, presently someone else picks up that gossip and passes it on. Presently the entire assembly is more or less defiled. If one introduces error, soon that pervades the entire body and it is doctrinally defiled. The whole meeting will need a fresh dip into the laver of cleansing - only the pure Word proclaimed in the unction of the Spirit or read, will cleanse it. If the unruly member is the inlet of disease into the physical body; if the very motions of the body are set aflame by an evil tongue: how terrible and far-reaching may be the operations of a tongue of strife and of heresy. One wrong word from one person may corrupt every department of an entire

***Psalms 32:9**

Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose

mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee.

****Psalms 32:8**

I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye.

religious system. When we meet with some religious people, with whom we may have much teaching in common, there may be a conscious difference, perhaps not to be accounted for by the majority. Why this? The one meeting has become saturated with error in doctrine, or practice, so that the spirit of defilement prevails, with which the pure, modest spirit of truth has no fellowship. It has to retire into its own sphere of moving on alone with its Author, God.

The Source of Evil Speech

"It is set on fire of gehenna" – (3:6). The word "hell" occurs at least 21 times in the New Testament. Ten times it is from the Greek word, "hades," and eleven times from the Greek word, "geenna," which is a transliteration from the Hebrew word "gehenna," meaning the valley of Hinnom in which the corpses of the worst malefactors were burnt. They who deny the eternal punishment of the wicked, endeavor to confine the word gehenna to this physical meaning. Even a casual reading of all its uses in the Gospels and here by James, proves such an attempt to be silly and futile. For instance, Jesus did not mean that men should pluck out the offending eye, or cut off the offending hand, literally, physically, but inwardly. No more did He mean that the disobedient would land in the valley of Hinnom – ***Matt. 5:29, 30**. Men might kill and cast others into the valley of Hinnom, but not into the gehenna of which Jesus was speaking. Did Jesus mean that the Pharisees made a proselyte "twofold more the child" of the valley of Hinnom than themselves? – ****Matt. 23:15**. Were the Pharisees born of the valley of Hinnom? Nay, yet such is the logic of some. Candidly, my friend, could a tongue be set on fire with error, or strife, or immorality from a burning of dead human bodies? Such a thought is preposterous. Therefore, there remains but one explanation of these citations where hell (geenna) is mentioned. The burning valley of Hinnom was used to illustrate the eternal burnings of Satan and rejected mercy. James means that an evil tongue is from the devil. Oh, how terrible is this.

***Matthew 5:29, 30**

²⁹ And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. ³⁰ And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

3:7 For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind:
3:8 But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.

****Matthew 23:15**

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.

All error, all strife, every destructive word flows from the father of lies. How eager we should be to know the truth and be filled with the Spirit of truth, that we may communicate burning words of living truth with flaming tongues, set aflame from heaven. Why not?

"For every species of beasts and of birds and of creeping things and things of the sea, is subdued and has been subdued by the species of the human; but the tongue no man is able to subdue" – **(3:7,8)**. What a contrast. Men have great menageries of various kinds of animals tamed and under their control. Men attempt to conquer their own tongue, but all in vain. Men declare in the morning that they will not swear that day. Nine o'clock has scarcely come, when they break forth in hotter rage than before. A new creation is the only remedy for a bad tongue. It has been said that the path to hell is paved with good resolutions, that is, with efforts to tame the unruly member. Man is a sinner. His nature is evil. A new creation only will produce a good tongue. Wild beasts may act devilish; but they do not have a devilish nature. Satan controls them and makes them do his bidding. Hence, when Satan and his hordes of demons shall be cast into the bottomless pit, then the lion will eat straw like the ox; the lion and the bear will lie down together and a little child shall lead them; the child also will play over the cockatrice's den. The ferocity of the lion will be gone. The cockatrice will be no more dangerous than a canary bird. They will be absolutely harmless; for the devil will not be here to control them. Yet, their natures will not be changed. But Satan has poisoned man's nature. He has ejected evil into our very being. Through redemption and salvation, God offsets that wicked nature by giving us a new nature, which is holy. The tongue of the new man never can speak wrong. Praise God! He can do what man cannot do. He can subdue the unsubduable member.

What, then, is the use of talking reform? What folly to preach a do-better religion, or turning over a new leaf? What have saints to do with reformatory schools? They may be necessary to prevent outlaws from harming other folk, but they never change the outlaws. All schemes and movements to change outward conditions belong to the world. God's people should not take part therein. "Let the dead (dead in sins) bury the dead" (physically dead), said Jesus – ***Luke 9:60**. Let the world look after its own.

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

***Luke 9:60**

Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.

"Go thou and preach the Gospel" – ***Mark 16:15**. Ours is to tell men that they may have a new nature, a new tongue. No marvel that James speaks in his first chapter, verse 18, of the new birth.

"Therewith we bless our God and Father and therewith we curse the men, who are made according to a likeness of God" – **(3:9)**. Here again, the Apostle teaches the two natures in a believer. With the same member, believers bless and curse. Saints get saved and filled with the Spirit. Then they exclaim, I am so happy; I am so free; oh, what peace and rest! I did not know that one could be so blessed. Of course, that is the new life. It now has control of the same tongue that the day before perhaps was cursing. But that life is not yet in a glorified and sinless body. It is still in a body of humiliation, which is more, or less subject to earthly surroundings. Possibly within a week, the above mentioned wonderfully blessed soul becomes ruffled, speaks harshly, being offended, or injured. Then probably the devil informs him that he never was saved, nor filled with the Spirit. His joyful experience was an illusion; it was all in his imagination. Of course, he is down and has no testimony. Others hearing him and not knowing the Scriptures, agree with the devil and exclaim, how can a man be saved and anointed with the Spirit and act like that? Oh, if the doctrine of the two creations were clearly taught, thousands of helpless saints would be kept on their way with the Lord: for they would soon understand themselves and the cause of their own contradictory experiences. Believers would have pity one for another and be able to help one another. James here shows the two creations and the need of a remedy. He declares that "these things ought not so to be;" but he does not set forth the remedy – **(3:9)**. We must call on Bro. Paul to help us out. We turn to the sixth pocket of his golden Roman handbag, where we learn that "our old man was crucified with Christ;" (***Rom. 6:6**) hence, those old habits have no rights about our new spiritual premises. As we reckon, or count, that is, agree with God, the members of our body and mind yield to the "new Man," even to Christ, who is our life. We actually find ourselves in a new realm of divine grace, where "sin shall not have dominion over us" (****Rom. 6:14**). We can boldly shout, "Sin shall not, SHALL NOT have dominion; for we are not under law, but

***Romans 6:6**

Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

****Romans 6:14**

For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

under grace." Instead of the little compass wagging for the world and the flesh, it warbles for God and His glory. Instead of the tongue being "an unruly evil, full of deadly poison," **(3:8)** it becomes a ruly and ruling good, full of living food. It becomes a continual instrument of blessing to others and of giving glory to God. It ceases to be said of us, "Therewith we bless God and therewith we curse men;" for we bless only and curse not. That is victory. That is an overcoming life. Above James said, "That is a perfect man."

We can hardly emphasize too much the need of knowing this doctrine of the two natures in believers. No matter who we are, nor how far we have gone on with Jesus; we have an old nature that does not love God, nor His Word. The old man, "the carnal mind, or mind of the flesh," is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. It is subject to death only; that is why we must count it dead. But in being saved, we have deposited within us, by the Holy Spirit, a new life, a life sent from heaven, a heaven-bound life, which loves God and His people. That is the new creature, which, unlike the beasts, "has understanding" and is teachable by the Lord. Let us put it in practice. Because we are in this unmanageable body of humiliation, we need the "bit," or "rudder" of the Word to guide us. The new man responds to the truth; the old man does not – **(3:10)**. If you say "No," to the call of the Scripture, when you read it, or hear it read; that is the flesh, or old man. If you say, "Thank God," or "Yes, Lord, that is the truth though it hurts me;" that is the new man. If a new ray of light strikes you and it seems that it would kill you, or at least strip you, and you say "Amen, praise God, I take it;" that is the new man gaining the ascendancy over the old man. You are growing in grace. If it comes into your mind to say something against someone, and a voice speaks within you, not to say it; that is the Spirit addressing your new man. Obey and you gain a victory. Christ is growing up in you. By and by your tongue will become a flaming instrument of richest and choicest blessing to mankind, for which you will obtain an eternal reward.

"Doth the fountain pour forth out of the same opening both sweet and bitter?" – **(3:11)**. "Well, Bro. Copley, I thought that you were reading about the tongue." So I am; but the tongue reaches clear down to the heart, the fountain of our being –

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

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

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

(3:12). Jesus said, "Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh" – **Matt. 12:34.**

***Matthew 12:34**

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

There is no poison, no fire, no life, no death in the tongue itself. It is only the outlet for the fountain, the heart. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he;" (***Prov. 23:7**) and as he speaks, so is he too. The spigot, or faucet, is simply the instrument of conducting the water from the reservoir, which is supplied from the river, or lake. Our tongues communicate the contents of our hearts, which are supplied from the inexhaustible Reservoir, Infinite Jehovah, as we trust Him and reckon with Him. The day of Pentecost is a powerful illustration of the communicative possibilities of the tongue. 120 men and women were filled with the Holy Spirit. Upon their heads, were seen sitting divided tongues as of fire, the indices of the new dialects with which they spoke as the Spirit gave them utterance. With burning words, those disciples spoke of the marvels of grace and the wonderful works of God. From the reservoir, the fullness of God on high, flowed down upon Israel the mighty Holy Spirit, "floods upon the dry ground;" (****Isa. 44:3**) and out from the mouths of those quickened saints, flowed streams of unspeakable blessing to the multitudes gathered there. Likewise, our tongues should be similar means of constant blessing; and they will be if we yield them to the Spirit of God is a splendid remedy against the wrong use of the tongue. "My son, give me thine heart and let thine eyes observe my ways" (*****Prov. 23:26**). That was not addressed to the wicked. That is no text from which to preach to sinners, as I often heard it used. A sinner is not a "son," until he becomes such through a new birth. The son is invited to commit his heart into the keeping of Almighty Love; then the tongue will never fail. As a brother remarked, When I feel weak and trust God I never fail.

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

Resultant and Concluding Exhortations

"Who is wise and understanding among you! let him show out of the good conduct his works in meekness of wisdom" – **(3:13).** The direction the ship goes, indicates the utility of the rudder. Likewise, our conduct indicates the use we have made of the tongue. Bitterness, envy and strife may be considered wise by the world; but such wisdom is not from above, not

***Proverbs 23:7**

For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but

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

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

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

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

his heart is not with thee.

****Isaiah 44:3**

For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring:

*****Proverbs 23:26**

My son, give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways.

from God. Instead, He says, it is "earthly," and can find no place in heaven – **3:14,15**. Only sweetness, meekness and harmony obtain there. The same are found also in a heavenly heart, though on earth. "Sensual," or soulish, or natural, is opposed to spiritual and supernatural. Spiritual people never strive, are never envious, nor bitter, even against their foes. "Devilish," or demoniacal, the ultimate source of bitterness, emulation and contention, is Satan himself. He is the parent of all evil – **3:16**.

Every evil work, though it appears ever so religious, is from Satan. Finally, with what a beautiful octet the apostle closes this chapter -- "But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, yielding, full of mercy and of good fruits, impartial and unfeigned" – (**3:17**). The wisdom from beneath may be tactful, sagacious, cunning, catchy; but it is not "pure." Wisdom from above has nothing satanic, or carnal in it. It is transparent and innocent, straightforward and guileless. It is not corrupt, nor corrupting. Of course, it is peaceable, or easy to get along with. It seeks peace; it pursues peace; it makes peace if possible. Purity and peaceableness are two happy p's in one pod.

"Gentle" and "yielding" with "peaceable" are triplets. They form a triangle of heavenly disposition, which only God can produce. Some folk are given to make disturbance. Some are hard on others, always sitting in judgment upon their actions. Some refuse to be taught or influenced by other saints. Certainly, such traits are carnal. They are foreign to the new man. These first five qualities overflow into the next - "full of mercy," a state of mind standing ready to bless the undeserving who are in any need. To show love to the unlovely and unlovable, to bestow kindness upon the unthankful and incorrigible, requires divine mercy indeed. That can only be of God. Any wonder that this characteristic is coupled with "good fruits?"

"Impartiality" is the sixth quality of the Christ spirit. This was emphasized in the second chapter. The wisdom from above allows no preferences to be shown to the wise and wealthy of this world. "God is no respecter of persons;" (***Acts 10:34**) neither is the life of Christ in saints. The tongue of divine wisdom speaks just as gently to the poor as to the rich. It reproves the wealthy in the same scathing terms as it does the

poor. It speaks instruction to the ignorant, whether they are in poverty or in affluence.

***Acts 10:34**

Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:

It speaks help to the needy, comfort to the oppressed, healing to the sick and deliverance to the captives, whatever may be their condition. The wisdom from above cannot dispense with the poor, nor is it dependent upon the rich of this world. And finally, this divine wisdom is "Unfeigned." Oh, the pretenses among some religious people. Oh, how men pose as pious. What sanctimonious airs they exhibit. What faith they pretend to have. Their fabulous results are all on paper, or in their own tongue. But their disguised boasting captures and carries away the untaught in divine things. As James intimates, "they boast great things;" but really never do anything else. They do not possess "unfeigned faith;" for they talk about believing God, but by begging and hinting for help, they prove their unbelief toward Him. They advertise their needs instead of advertising Jesus Christ as the Supply. The wisdom from above is unfeigned as to its purity (for there is a make-believe purity), as to its peaceableness, as to its gentleness, as to its yieldedness, as to its mercy and fruitfulness and as to its impartiality. Unfeignedness is the crowning virtue of them all. Oh, thank God, some saints are transparent. Their countenances are indices to their inner man.

A Final Sweet Verse.

"And the fruit of righteousness in peace is sown by those who are making peace" – (3:18). Bear in mind that the Apostle has been dwelling upon the misuse of the little indoor member. He showed the baneful consequences of envy, bitterness and strife, and that the tongue is the effectual instrument thereof. Now he closes this interesting and needful chapter by pointing out the possibility and blessed results of divine mastery over the tongue. Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God" - *Matt. 5:9. Imagine a large western ranch and a few men walking forth and back with grain sacks on their shoulders, scattering the grain broadcast, and you have a material picture of what James says. In a little while, hundreds of acres of land are covered with a rich carpet of green, without any weeds or grass. A few months later, those acres are proud of high standing, waving, golden grain, which invite the husbandman's reaping and gathering into the garner. Just so do those who proclaim the peace of God already made by Christ for men. Just so do those who endeavor to quell strife by sowing the Word of God.

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

Peace and quietness are maintained, even though at times a wagging tongue may operate.

***Matthew 5:9**

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

As Elisha cast some meal into the pot of poisoned pottage and allayed all harm; so, by casting the pure meal of divine truth amidst contention, both gossip and strife are made to flee. By making peace, we sow peace; and for sowing peace, we reap a bountiful harvest of peace. "Deceit is in the heart of them that imagine evil; but to the counselors of PEACE is joy. When a man's ways please the Lord, He maketh his enemies to be at PEACE with him" - ***Prov. 12:20 and 16:7.**

THE BURNING TRUTH

Discouraged? Yes, disheartened did I feel,
Because the truth, so wonderful,
So poorly to the saints did we reveal.
I ne'er again this world would tell,
But burning truth, no man can quell.

Discouraged? Yes, disheartened was my soul,
Because this message glorious,
So few would join in faith and might to roll.
O, who would dare the ranks to swell,
Whose burning message none can quell?

Discouraged? No! no more perplexed I feel,
Because the Grace and Glory band
Increases with the Master's fiery Seal.
With one accord we will repell
All wrong. God's fire no man can quell.

THE DEPENDENCE OF FAITH CHAPTER FOUR

WHENCE come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust and have not; ye kill and are emulous, but cannot obtain" – **(4:1,2).** The root-remedy for all ills is the dependence of faith, as proven by this fourth chapter. The first three verses express the prevailing state of believers to whom James is writing, even the religious people today, if I may so say – **(4:3).** Verses four and five show the Church flirting with the world. Verse six indicates that this condition is not necessary; for God "giveth

Chapter 4

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

4:2 Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not.

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

4:4 Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.
4:5 Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?

4:6 But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.
4:7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

more grace."

***Proverbs 12:20 16:7**

12:20 Deceit is in the heart of them that imagine evil: but to the counsellors of peace is joy. **16:7** When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.

Thus, the Apostle admits that the grace message alone can set matters right. One phrase - "double minded" (verse 8) - clearly declares what is taught throughout the chapter, viz, the two natures in a believer. Even in the sixth verse, he refers to the "proud" old man and the "humble" new man; for the old creation cannot be humble; nor can the new man be proud. Finally, from the seventh to the seventeenth verses we find ten exhortations whereby these conflicting conditions may be remedied.

It will help us, if we bear in mind continually, that the doctrine that Paul taught and the doctrine that James taught supplement each other. They are not contradictory of each other. Paul emphasized God's side of salvation, the divine provision for our salvation and the way to come into possession and into the enjoyment thereof. Then James writes to people that profess to enjoy the salvation of God and exhorts them to bring their state up to their standing, to walk according to their talk and talk according to their standing. This view simplifies the relation of James' writings to the writings of the Apostle Paul. Another thing will help us, friends, when we read this book, or hear it preached from, to bear in mind that it is not the writing of a man, or of men, but of the Holy Spirit. Now customarily we say that Paul wrote so and so, and John and James spoke so and so. That is true; but they were only the mouth pieces of God. John the Baptist said, "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness" (***John 1:23**), If that were not so, then we could not say that the Bible is inspired; but if this is the inspired Word of God, and if as Peter said, "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (****2 Pet. 1:21**), we need to regard these writings as the writings of holy men of God, who wrote as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. The disciplines and theological works of all the orthodox denominations exclaim, "The Bible is inspired."

Timothy gives us one verse which proves that "all Scripture was God breathed, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (*****2 Tim. 3:16**). Why is it that men are getting away from God? It is because they are denying the inspiration of the Scriptures; they

***John 1:23**

He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the

way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias.

****2 Pet. 1:21**

For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

*****2 Tim. 3:16**

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

are bringing them down on a level with other writings. Men want to get rid of the supernatural. They deny the miraculous conception and birth of the Lord Jesus Christ; and of course, the resurrection of Jesus Christ is a myth in their eyes. If that were true, we would have nothing but a strange book of fiction; that is all. If we burn the fiction and read the truth, we get something that will do us good for time and for all eternity. Thank God for the Apostle James. He was one of the 12 apostles that Jesus Christ chose to stand with Him, and Jesus said to James and the other 12 apostles, that they should sit on 12 thrones and judge the 12 tribes of Israel. Then also remember that James was a Pentecostal man. He was filled with the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, in the same fashion that the folks get filled now. He spoke with other tongues as the Spirit gave utterance. If there is anybody here tonight that does not like the tongues people, you better go home, because I am going to read a letter from a man that spoke with other tongues. Oh, that gives me courage. I am about to read a portion of a letter that a brother of mine, a brother in the Spirit, in the truth, wrote nearly 2,000 years ago, and God in His infinite goodness has seen to it that the devil was never able to destroy the little letter that James was moved by the Spirit of God to write.

James was writing to two classes in this chapter. He calls them "Brethren" – (2:1). This first verse sounds as if they were anything but brethren – (4:1). James was writing especially to Israel, the 12 tribes scattered abroad. The conduct of the people to whom he wrote, is expressed in this eighth verse, in which he addressed them as sinners and double minded. They were all professors of faith in Jesus Christ; but some of them were only professors; hence, he called them sinners. They had a profession without the possession; others made a profession because they had a possession; but they had not all learned the way of victory, over sin in the flesh; consequently, he called them double minded, or two-souled, as we saw in the second chapter (4:8). Now a sinner is not double minded. A sinner is single-minded. He has only one mind, and that is carnal and sinful. He is minded to do, as he pleases; he is minded not to yield to God; he is minded not to seek the Lord. But a double minded man has a new life, and there are times when the old life, which he also has, gets the ascendancy over the new life.

4:8 Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.

In the fifth chapter of Galatians, we read, "For the flesh lusteth (or desireth) against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye may not do the things that ye would" – (Gal. 5:17).

That is, a double minded man has a fleshly mind and a spiritual mind, the old man and the new man in one body. Notice that the cause of this state is given in the first verse - "From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence even of your lusts that war in your members?"(4:1) That word "lusts" means desires that operate in our members. Our feet want to go in forbidden paths; our hands want to steal; our tongues want to curse (the tongue is full of deadly poison); our eyes seek to see wrong objects. Oh, what things tempt the optic nerve. Our stomachs are tempted to eat more than is needful, and our ears to listen to things fleshly. We go in the direction of the sounds that attract our hearing. Jesus went right to the root and said, "Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh" (*Matt. 12:34). We read in the Old Testament, "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he" (**Prov. 23:7). That is, the conduct of our members has its roots in the depth of our being and that is the old creation. All the above-named evil flows out of the old creation. James is showing here that the conduct of the old creation in a believer, if it is uncurbed by the Spirit of God, is just as bad as in an unbeliever, and sometimes people act worse after they are saved than they did before. Why? because the Lord lets them act up and show off their old nature, that they may learn by experience how exceedingly sinful and weak is the old man.

Some years ago, a woman came to our meetings, who was a very beautiful specimen of ladyhood. She was nice and sweet and lovely and amiable and pleasing. It seemed that nothing ever disturbed that serenity. After she received the Holy Spirit, she began to do somethings which she herself did not understand. Those things made her ashamed. The woman could hardly believe that she was ever guilty of such things. When the truth was preached that the old man is the same in everybody, that we are all "chips out of the old block," and God sees no difference, but we are all the offspring of the one bad lump; that woman did not want to believe it. Therefore, God had to let her experience it. Well, so here now there is fighting and warring, envying and lusting, desiring everything, contending, all springing out of the old creation; for the new man never acts that way. Do you not remember how the last verse of the preceding chapter ended? "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, gentle, easily to be entreated, full of

***Matthew 12:34**

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

****Proverbs 23:7**

For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee.

full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy; and the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace." That is a description of the inner man, the new man that is born from above **(3:17,18)**.

Now notice that all of this evil spring out of "the desires in our members." It is "sin in the flesh." Then the people who yield to those desires, James calls "adulterers and adulteresses," not physical adulterers necessarily, but spiritual adulterers. The verse itself is self-explanatory. It goes on to say, "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God" **(4:4)**? So, to be a friend of the world is to be an adulterer in God's sight. If you want an extensive commentary on spiritual adultery, just open your Bible to the sixteenth chapter of Ezekiel. There God upbraids His ancient people Israel and charges home to them the terrible crimes of failing in love with the nations round about them and leaning on the arm of flesh. This chapter is fittingly given the heading of the dependence of faith, because true love depends upon its lover in whom it believes. But see the background of all this in the seventh verse. Friendship with the world is of the devil, whom you should resist. He will steal a march on you if he can **(4:7)**. If you have unwarranted desires after the things of this world, it is because the devil is working through your members. If you are wanting anything out of the will of God, the devil is using that to get you away from the Lord and get your mind off of Jesus and cause you to walk in the flesh. You will resist the leadership and the power of the Holy Spirit. You will be a friend of the world.

Then the Apostle points the way out, thank God forever! First, he says, God "giveth more grace" **(4:6)**. If you think you do not have grace enough to get the victory, "He giveth more grace." You may think James is a legalist; yet he talks about grace and "the law of liberty" (chap. 1); and then he speaks about faith and here he teaches that "grace" is the only remedy against sin. He proves it from the Old Testament by quoting, "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble" **(4:6)**. That reminds me of another point. Spiritual adulterers are proud; because pride is the nature of the old creation. That is, the way the chapter ends. Men glory in their vauntings, that they are having their own way and having a good time. They throw off the restraint of the Spirit and truth of God and go at

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

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

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

loose reins, and then boast in their vauntings; but the new creation is always humble, humility being its nature. James adds, "Submit yourselves therefore to God." When people yield to the Holy Spirit, they are always safe; for when people are yielding to God, they are resisting the devil and they are separated from the world. They are going in the way of the truth. They are bound to have the victory, because men cannot yield to the devil and yield to God at the same time. No one can serve two masters at the same moment.

"Draw nigh to God" (**4:8**). Those people who are away from God in experience are exhorted by James to draw nigh to Him. Here again we see the difference between the apostle Paul's provisional teaching and James' experimental teaching. James says we are to draw nigh to God by the blood of the cross. Paul says, Lay hold of this provisional grace, make the promises yours. We are near to God in Christ. Let us believe it. We were made nigh by the blood of the cross - Eph. 2. Many religious professors do not really believe. There may be two men in one pew, both professing Christ; one possesses Him, the other has only a profession; the one is a saint, the other is a sinner. The believer may be a full over-comer, or he may be a double minded believer like those to whom James was writing. "Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded" (**4:8**). He could not say that to the man who is walking in the light. If we are doing the will of God, we cannot get any closer to God than we are. We are as near as we can be. We are not only near provisionally; but we are near experimentally, and we walk and talk with the Lord and have fellowship with Him.

"Be afflicted and mourn and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to heaviness" – (**4:9**). James means the people that have grab-bag socials and necktie parties, etc., to raise money to pay for their synagogues and then have a jollification. They are going so far as to dance in the basement of the churches, tell funny jokes, play pranks on one another. To them James says, let your carnal hilarity be turned to weeping, to mourning and let your carnal joy be turned into an altar of penitence. James was not reproving them for being glad in the Lord. He would be at home with us in our happy meeting, when we are rejoicing and praising the Lord. If we were walking in the flesh, fighting and devouring one another, envious of one another, seeking one another's down-fall, talking evil and endeavoring to make trouble; then he would stand up and read this chapter to us. We read in the Proverbs, "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted and he that exalteth himself shall be abased." Jesus and Paul taught the same thing

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

as did Solomon **(4:10)**.

"Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge" **(4:11)**. The law justifies the righteous and condemns the guilty. Now if we judge a brother who is righteous, we are judging the law, we are condemning the law and sitting in the place of the Judge and of the Lawgiver. We are not to be judges, but doers, livers **(4:12)**. Notice they were yielding to the world, yielding to carnal desires, all of which are against God and cause men to seek one another's discomfort and take advantage of one another. Such a career goes on from bad to worse; then to the worst. Finally, those people say, we are going to St. Louis tomorrow, to straighten up a business there, stay a year and get gain. Have a prospect before me of making \$5,000 and I think it is a fine hit. This is the way saints often talk, never stopping to ask if God is in it, never praying about it and asking Him whether He is leading that way or not. They say, or think, just let me have that \$5,000 and I will be satisfied then. That might be their everlasting ruin.

A minister in Grand Rapids had a brother in Fort Wayne. That minister made a trip on purpose to talk salvation to his brother. He did get him quiet long enough from his maelstrom of business to talk about the Lord. He replied, "Brother, that is the truth; that is right; I know you are right; I am glad you are saved and on this way; but I am in such a maelstrom of business that I cannot get out of it." Why, he had a nightmare, day and night, because of his business. He was in such a terrible whirl that he could not be still long enough to think about God and eternal things and get really saved. Friends, you can thank God that you have been poor and that you have been hindered from getting rich. Your efforts have been defeated and you have been cast on the Lord and compelled to cry out to God in time of distress. Whatever the trouble, family trouble, or otherwise, all have been good for us, it being God's opportunity to help us. Just look at the millionaires today. They are crushed with their wealth. Many of them are on the way to hell because money has gotten them by the throat, and they are going pell-mell down to eternal destruction. The thing that troubles them, the thing that keeps them awake at nights is that they might lose their wealth. We can thank God that we are dependent on Him. Those to whom the Apostle wrote were getting their eyes off of the Lord and were becoming avaricious. They were lusting for better things financially, socially. James was warning them.

4:13 Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain:

4:14 Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.

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

4:16 But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil.

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

"Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you" (**5:1**). Though this Epistle was written back yonder, it is to be read today. Do not feel bad if your nose is on the grindstone. Let it grind and keep grinding; you will still have a good nose. Thank God that you are wealthy enough to afford a grindstone. I never was sorry that I was poor. I used to be sorry that I did not have a big library like other preachers, sorry I was poor in that respect. But God opened my eyes to the real need of knowing His Word and being filled with the Spirit. Having a big library now would be to me just like one of these five-year-old children having a book on astronomy. I would not have time to wade through it. If I did, it would not do me any good. When we come face to face with the Lord and we get acquainted with this little Book, this mighty Book, that has been hundreds of years in making, then all these big and great and wonderful and magnificent things of the world, pale into insignificance. They look to us just about like the fellow that sat on a throne and declared his independence, and when it was examined, it was found to be made of soapboxes. That is about how big the world looks to us after a sight of Jesus Christ.

Therefore, James says, "Go to now" (**4:13**). The world says, "Go to it." Here is where they get it. Wicked men are all the time borrowing from the Scripture. They are uttering bright statements which they get from the Bible. The rest of the world does not know where they get them. "Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away" (**4:13**). This natural life is just like a vapor which is here today and tomorrow it is gone. The Old Testament tells us that our life is as a hand breadth; it is like the weaver's shuttle, which operates today, and tomorrow is silent (**4:14**). "For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live and do this, or that." If the Lord will, we shall live for Him; if it is not His will, we will not live (**4:15**). We are dependent upon God absolutely. Put the Lord's will into your purposes. O, it is a beautiful life to say every day and every hour in your heart at least, If the Lord will. If we leave our will out of it except as it is yielded to His will, how much worry we are saved from and how much trouble.

"But now ye rejoice in your boastings; all such rejoicing is evil. Therefore, to him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (**4:16,17**). We are indebted to Paul for teaching us how to get the victory that James tells us we ought to have. This is an old story to some of you; but it is such a precious story, a true story. James shows us that we have sin in

the flesh, and Paul adds, "It is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me" - ***Rom. 7:17**. James says that lust is in our members; hence it is not the new creation that does wrong.

***Romans 7:17**

Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

"When I would do good evil is present with me," wrote Paul, "When I would be sweet, I am ugly. When I would be calm, I am all nervous. When I would hold my tongue, I just spit fire. When I would pray, I scold the children. "The good that I would, I do not; and the evil I would not, that I do." That is the way with the double minded man. He has not learned the way of victory from Rom. 6. But Paul gives the cause and remedy. He explains, by saying, "It is no longer I," that is, the new I, the new man that doeth wrong; "but sin that dwelleth in me;" not in my heart, but in the flesh; "for I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." Then he ends that chapter by saying, "O wretched man that I am. Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Finally, he sees the victory in Christ, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." I was delivered through Christ's death - ***Rom. 7:18-25**. Paul carries us back to the cross where our old man, sin's residence, was crucified with Christ. Our unruly members with their lusts and ambitions were all nailed to the cross. We are to agree with God and declare that to be true. That is the way to reckon. We are not to try to put the old man to death but reckon him to be dead. Indirectly, James means the same thing when he says, "Yield yourselves unto God." Paul also says, "Yield yourselves unto God and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." Make it practical thus - Lord, I yield my hands to you. If you do not take charge of them, I will steal sure enough. I yield my feet, Lord, to you. If you do not control them, they will walk in forbidden paths. If we yield our will to the Lord; if we let Him have control; if we count the old man dead and count Christ to be our life; if we thus reckon with, God, we find ourselves getting the victory and holding the victory and walking on in victory. The Victor dwells within us. The victorious Christ grows up in us. He becomes our life more and more. We find that we are sustained in the victory. We walk every day and every hour in the victory in the will of God.

***Romans 7:18-25**

¹⁸ For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.

¹⁹ For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. ²⁰ Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that

Chapter 5

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

5:2 Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten.

5:3 Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days.

dwelleth in me. ²¹ I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. ²² For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: ²³ But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. ²⁴ O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? ²⁵ I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

As we learn the way of victory over the sin in the flesh; we also get victory over sickness and grow strong. We take Christ for strength and health in our physical frame. The resurrection life of Christ operates in us. Thus, only by following Paul's instruction can we heed the exhortation in James four.

THE POWER OF FAITH CHAPTER FIVE

"Go TO now, ye rich men; weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you" – **(5:1)**. With this address, we complete our series of lessons on the Epistle of James. When we began these lessons, we stated that James wrote, not only to the twelve tribes of Israel, to whom his letter was directly addressed; but that he wrote also to the Israel at the end of this age. This last chapter is a positive proof of that fact. There are three divisions to this last chapter. The first six verses speak to the rich. The next six verses speak of the coming of the Lord. The last eight verses give some instructions concerning divine healing. Is that outline not a miniature picture of the time in which we are living? This is indeed the time in the history of the world, when rich men are abounding and increasing. This is the time when thousands of saints are speaking and writing about the coming of Jesus. And this is emphatically the hour when divine healing is made prominent; for God is preparing those of the "upward calling" for the rapture, and those who will "dwell on earth," for the millennial reign. The chapter begins by addressing the wealthy. There are many rich men, even millionaires, identified with Christendom today. They are Christians professedly at least and claim to be the Israel of God. Therefore, the Lord speaks to them according to their profession, as well as according to His purpose and plan. Hence, this letter was written to sinners in the professed church, rather than to those outside.

"Ye have heaped treasure together IN the last days" **(5:3)**. This is an invincible proof that these words are spoken to the present generation. The preposition "for" is "IN" according to the Greek. It does not mean that the rich in the past amassed wealth for these days; but now, "IN the last days," men are piling up riches. The number of wealthy men in Christendom is a fabulous number. The census of millionaires is staggering.

5:4 Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth.

A poor man is almost out of the question. He has hardly any chance. Hear what God, through the Apostle, says to this wealthy horde. "Weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon you" **(5:1)**. Awful times are coming upon the earth. They who are having the best time now are going to have the worst time when God's judgments fall upon the world. If the rich would use their substance unselfishly, how much suffering and squalor they could alleviate; how much good they could do. I read a statement which illustrates the wealth and the hard-heartedness of some people. Mr. Carnegie made a donation to some benevolent institution. The man who saw him sign the check for \$10,000, said to him, "Mr. Carnegie, you must feel a deep joy and a great thrill in having the privilege of giving this money for such a noble purpose." The millionaire replied, "I feel no thrill whatever. I have simply subscribed my name to a piece of paper and feel just like I did before signing it. It does not affect my feelings a particle." That man was so extremely wealthy that such a sum did not affect his heap. And he was a religious man. God is going to deal with all such religious grafters. He says: "Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten" **(5:2)**. Their wealth is ill-gotten gain. It is at the expense of the laboring men and the poor people. "Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you and shall eat your flesh as it were fire" **(5:3)**. Oh, what a judgment men will have, because they reject Jesus Christ and have not used the opportunity that was in their hands for the betterment of the people and the glory of God. We learn elsewhere in the Scriptures that we are rewarded, not according to what we have not, but according to what we have. God will bring men on the carpet and punish them, not according to the evil they do simply, but because they fail to do the good which they might have done. They might have a reward by surrendering to God and using their substance for His glory. That is, Christians will be rewarded.

"Behold, the hire of the laborers, 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" **(5:4)**. Kept back by fraud. Why, we are witnessing this all the time. That is why the laboring men rise up in arms and organize. You cannot blame the poor laboring men for organizing unions, if they cannot trust God. The rich men are organized into gigantic combines which nobody can break up but God Himself. No marvel if the poor laboring men, whose life is crushed out of them, rise up and try to better their condition. I do not say that saints should join these

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

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

5:7 Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.

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

unions. They ought to trust God. We have to learn all these things. I say that we have no right to blame the poor hard-working fellow that might be helped if the man who has means would do his duty. James declares that the cries of them, which have reaped, are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth. Do you believe that friends? God hears the cry of the poor man. He hears the cry of the widow whose husband was driven to straits and died a premature death because he was over-worked and under-paid. The Lord hears the cries of the children of those homes and He is going to have revenge in their behalf; for many of those poor toilers are God's dear children, or their wives and little ones are saved and depending upon the Lord. Many unsaved husbands work for wealthy concerns, because their wives believe God and look to Him alone. He answers their cry.

"Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts as in a day of slaughter" (5:5). Yes, men live in the middle of a block and glory in their ill-gotten wealth, which they obtained by oppressing the poor toilers who did the hard, dirty work for them. They ride around in \$5,000 automobiles, living in mansions that cost enough to keep an ordinary family for a whole lifetime, while two blocks away there may be a family famishing with hunger and cold. And such rich kings claim to be religious. They occupy front pews in their churches and forbid anyone else sitting there; because they pay for it. Ah, it is nothing to belong to a church. It is nothing to be religious and own a fine pew in a fine meeting house. Friend, is your name written in the Lamb's book of life? Have you a pew, purchased by the blood of Christ, by the side of the righteous Judge? Have you been born of the Spirit into the Church of the firstborn? "Ye have condemned and killed the just, and he doth not resist you" (5:6). The just man does not resist the wicked oppressor; because God has said, "Vengeance is mine. I will repay." God does not resist him; because there is coming a day of reckoning, when the secrets of men's hearts will be disclosed, and He will reward the righteous and punish the wicked.

Christ's Coming Foretold

"Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord" (5:7). Here is further evidence that the foregoing words refer to people in the end of this age. Wickedness and wealth are signs of the near advent of Jesus. The saints suffer persecution and privation at the hands of the wealthy and wicked; but they are encouraged to be patient in the midst of their hardships,

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

seeing that the end is nigh (**5:8**). The Apostle makes use of a well-known fact among farmers to illustrate the truth. He says, "Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth and hath long patience for it" (**5:7**). He plants early in the spring, cultivates during the summer, then harvests in the fall. His planting must receive "the early and the latter rain" (**5:7**). Likewise, the early spiritual rain came at the beginning of this age; for the Holy Spirit was poured out upon Israel on the day of Pentecost and a few years later upon the Gentiles. The latter spiritual rain began to fall about 1906. The promised revival preceding the Lord's advent is now on. God is preparing the world for judgment, by offering them abundantly of His marvelous grace. Salvation and healing and the fullness of the Spirit are being proclaimed everywhere; so that men will be without excuse when the judgment thunders peal and roll. God is granting great signs and miracles as precursors of the end. God is preparing His people also for the rapture. The anointing with the Holy Spirit is not only for service, but for translation as well. "They that were ready (with oil in their vessels and lamps) went in with him to the marriage; and the door was shut." - ***Matt. 25:10**. And the divine purpose of the world-wide healing wave is that the saints may be prepared for translation; for some believers are growing up into Christ in all things, taking Him as the life and health and strength of their bodies and thus become victors over death. They are laying hold of Paul's prayer, that their "whole spirit, soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ" - ****I Thess. 5:23**. Many believers, which Jesus likened to the five "foolish virgins," will miss the translation and not be present at the marriage of the Lamb; because they reject the latter rain outpouring of the Holy Spirit. They are being prepared to be the nucleus of Christ's kingdom on earth during the millennium.

Oh, praise God for the latter rain. What a time this has been and is still. Oh, I praise the Lord that I was not born 50 years sooner. I would have missed this glorious fruit-ripening hour, this hope of translation. Thank God, I was born on schedule time. I was saved on schedule time and endued with power from on high on schedule time. By God's wondrous grace, I expect to be translated on schedule time also. "Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned; behold the Judge standeth before the door" (**5:9**). Doubtless this has reference primarily to ministers. They become envious of one another's gifts and successes.

***Matthew 25:10**

And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were

5:10 Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience.

5:11 Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.

ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.

****I Thessalonians 5:23**

And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

If ever this admonition was needed, it is needed now. We are living in the most critical moment of the history of Christendom. Very few preachers, or people, understand the doctrine of the two natures in a believer. Therefore, they fail to understand the truth as it is in Jesus. Some honest hearts are having a trying time, a struggling time, in the Lord's work. They are tempted with envy at the success of some "big fellows," who seem to have "wonderful meetings, wonderful success," and who are called "wonderful men," etc. James comforts these true-hearted soldiers by saying, "Do not yield to envy, brother. God is the Judge. He stands at the door." Thank God! He knows who is who. He knows what each one is doing, and what motive prompts the doer. He weighs our works, not in the balance of man's reason, but in the scales of divine truth. "The righteous Judge" will reward the worker in that day according to his deserts.

"Take for example the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction and of patience" (**5:10**). Yes, they had discouraging times. Their messages were not wanted. They suffered privations, ostracism, imprisonment and death. What big meetings did any of them ever conduct? We read of "the school of the prophets," who were supposed to have God's message and declare His will; but pray tell of one thing that is recorded to their credit. However, Elijah, who traveled on foot, lived a lonely life, and was hunted by the religious king, is the one whom the Holy Spirit honors with a record as "the man of God," who wrought great and mighty things. Elisha also, whom the school of the prophets ridiculed, and who lived in one room with the simplest furniture, never was much in evidence in public; yet the divine record gives him the highest honors. Oh, thank God! He knows who is who.

James cites Job as an example of patience under severest trials and the end of the Lord in his behalf. There is nothing great and wonderful recorded of Job, except that he was a "righteous" man (Ezek. 14:20), and "patient." What did he ever do but suffer affliction from Satan and persecution from his would-be friends, whom he called "physicians of no profit," and "miserable comforters?" Yet God pronounced him "the greatest of all the men of the East." Eliphaz, the religious philosopher, Bildad, the traditionalist and Zophar, the legalist, with one consent withstood Job and sat in judgment over him,

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

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

5:14 Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:

when they should have soothed and comforted him and prayed for him. James says, "Ye have heard of the patience of Job and of the end of the Lord" (**5:11**). God made those three critics come and bow before Job and acknowledge him, and He accepted his intercessory prayer in their behalf. God gave him children for those whom he lost and doubled all his wealth and added 40 years to his life. That was "the end of the Lord" for Job; for "the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy." Such is the unexpected comfort that the Holy Spirit makes James write to the true-hearted saints of this end-time.

These words of solace will be needed still more after the first-rank over-comers will have gone to glory at the first sounding of the trumpet. There are many self-denying believers today, who do not understand fully God's plan and movements. They are honestly ignorant (**5:12**). They will suffer more and more as the days go by and the spirit of anti-Christ increasingly takes hold of things; for his spirit is creeping into religious circles, and ever into the supposedly spiritual circles. The patience of Job, yea the book of Job and the comforts of James will be sorely needed. Job, indeed, in his affliction, is a type of Israel in their affliction during these many years of Gentile times. Job's deliverance and multiplied wealth are types also of Israel's deliverance and millennial prosperity. Hence, the reason that James alludes to him in particular.

Family Prescriptions

"Is any among you afflicted, let him pray. Is any merry; let him sing psalms" (**5:13**). (**5:13-16**) are our family prescriptions. They are our Physician's pillbox. If you are struck in the side with a pain, pray. If you have the toothache, pray. Individual believers should learn to take their petty weaknesses to the Lord in prayer, and not run to the elders with every ache and pain. But the typical life, the growing and useful life is not limited to prayer and burden bearing. There is a triumph side also. The assembly needs some "merry" saints also. "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine," says the Proverb. Thank God for the "Sons of Asaph," who can sing. How often we have observed the power and blessing of a sweet, happy, melodious hymn, especially when someone else had given a long, doleful tale of woe, or a dry, heady dissertation. How the hearty singing of a psalm drives away the gloom from the home in an hour of heaviness. Indeed, often it requires the song of the merry heart as well as the prayer of the afflicted to bring deliverance from the affliction. Is there help for the shut-in and the bed-ridden? Most

certainly. Happy for me the day, when I saw that I, as an elder, could go and pray for the sick and suffering, and God would heal them (**5:14**). And to this day, it is such a privilege to call upon the Lord in the behalf of others. To me it continues to be a great wonder and an honor and a glorious opportunity thus to glorify God and magnify the death of Christ by lifting saints from a bed of suffering and pain through the simple prayer of faith. My amazement is sometimes painful that ministers still insist on opposing the now common practice of divine healing. How can they be saved and believe the Bible and reject such a necessary and scriptural custom and privilege? An "elder" is not necessarily a pulpit performer. He may be one who preaches the word, or he may not. He is one who is older in the Lord and has some official prestige. God honors the faith of sisters also in this capacity. In fact, when Jesus announced the going forth of the Gospel, He said, "These signs shall follow them that believe," (***Mark 16:17**) and placed no restrictions on anyone. "Them that believe," certainly includes believing women. God's answers to their cries today in behalf of the afflicted, is evidence enough of this view.

"Is any sick among you" (**5:14**). This refers primarily to the members of the assembly and not to sinners. Therefore, the further instruction - "let him call." The sick one, the helpless one, the saint who is unable to go to the meeting, should call for the elders. That call indicates faith. It is easy to go and pray for such a one; for faith makes the call. Then let the elders "Pray over him, anointing with oil in the name of the Lord." It has always been God's way that saints pray one for another. How much better than to rush the sick off to a hospital. How precious for the believer. How it glorifies Jesus. How it fulfills the Word. How it magnifies the power of the Holy Spirit, of which the anointing oil is only a symbol. Note several facts about "anointing with oil." Today there is a wholesale use of the oil among those who practice divine healing, which is not scriptural. According to James' words here, the oil is to be used in the sick room only. Hence, in our public ministry of healing, we never use the oil unless saints call for it and insist on it. As far as we know, Paul did not use the oil. Some saints fear to use the oil, lest the faith of the sick one stand in the oil rather than in the Lord. But the anointing is to be "in the name of the Lord." The oil simply reminds us of the Holy Spirit, even as water baptism reminds us of our death with Christ. The oil speaks of power, of healing, of life, which the Spirit alone can give. Our faith is in the Lord, the Healer. The Spirit answers to that faith. Anointing with oil is an outward expression of faith in the Healer, Christ.

5:15 And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

5:16 Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

5:17 Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.

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

***Mark 16:17**

And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;

"The prayer of faith shall save the sick" (**5:15**). Preachers do not have faith; hence, they do not pray for their sick ones. They are worldly and popular. Jesus said, "How can you believe, when you receive honor one of another and receive not the honor that cometh from God only" - ***John 5:44?** They have fine doctors in their meetings, to whom they accord healing honors. Of course, they cannot believe God for healing. Nevertheless, some pastors believe and pray, and the Lord answers and raises up the sick. "The prayer of faith" is not some strange, wonderfully worded, mysterious petition of the elders, as some have supposed. It is simply a petition indited by the Holy Spirit in accord with the desire and faith of the sufferer (**5:16**). Therefore, it is a settled fact - "The Lord shall raise him up." The Lord gets the glory. That is why some physicians hate us. They are robbed of healing glory. Their material medicine is not wanted, nor needed.

A Further Word about Job and Elijah (**5:17,18**). They were alike men of great faith, but of two different kinds. Job had faith to be patient under sore trials. The word faith, or faithful, is not once named in his book. Believe is mentioned five times. His faith in God was hidden. Nevertheless, it was there. We learn in ****Rom. 5:1-4** that peace is the result of justification by faith; but tribulation connects that faith with patience. Faith is the great grandfather of patience. Faith was the deep root of Job's patience. Therefore, let us not only admire his patience, but let us bear in mind his faith, for which God proclaimed him "perfect and upright, and one that feared God and eschewed evil" - *****Job 1:1**.

Elijah had faith to work miracles. He shut up the heavens; he precipitated a flood upon the land; he raised the dead; he slew 400 false prophets, and he went to heaven without dying (**5:18**).

Job did none of those marvelous things; yet his faith in God was as great as that of Elijah. Jesus promised to reward

***John 5:44**

How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?

****Romans 5:1-4**

¹Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:²By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. ³And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;⁴ And patience, experience; and experience, hope:

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

*****Job 1:1**

There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil.

"faithfulness" - ***Matt. 25:21** and ****Rev. 2:10**.

"If he have committed sins they shall be forgiven him" (**5:15**). This implies that sickness may come upon a believer without him having anything to do with it at all. The cause is altogether outside of the will or the conduct of the sick one. It implies also that in some cases, the believer has done something which became an inlet for the enemy to inject his poison. In either case, the advocacy of our Elder Brother on high (*****2 John 1:1**) and the intercession of the elders here below, prevail and deliverance comes. The following verse shows that prayer is not heard because a man is an elder, but because he is "a righteous man," one who is proven to be righteous (**5:16**). It shows also that the ministry of healing is not confined to the elders but granted to others as well. And confession of faults is sometimes necessary to have faith for healing. Read it. "Confess your faults one to another and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (**5:16**). God's estimate of divine healing in the assembly of the saints and the importance of the simple prayer of faith are illustrated by pointing back to Elijah's cry, the cry of a righteous man, for a three year's drought and then for the rain to be poured out on the land. Healing of the sick in answer to prayer is no small item. But here again we have a wonderful and final type of Israel. The sick man is the Jew during the tribulation days. He is greatly at fault. He is the one in (**5:19**) who has erred from the truth. Elijah's anti-type, the two witnesses (Rev. 11), will prophesy to the Jews and pray for them. The "Spirit of grace and supplication" (******Zech. 12:10**) in the latter spiritual rain, falling on Israel, will be poured out - Ezek. 39:29.

***Matthew 25:21**

His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

****Revelation 2:10**

Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

*****2 John 1:1**

The elder unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth; and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth;

******Zechariah 12:10**

And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of

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

Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.

The heavens will pour down copious showers of rain upon the land of Palestine and make it productive after several years of drought - ***Joel 2:23** and ****Zech. 10:1**. The sinner of verse 20 (the Jew) will be converted from the error of his way and God will thus hide a multitude of sins (**5:20**). Then will be fulfilled *****Heb. 8:12** - "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." The Epistle of James has no formal ending. It stops without a benediction. This too is typical of what is written of the Jew after his conversion - "Judah shall dwell forever and Jerusalem from generation to generation" - ******Joel 3:20**. That will end the history of the wandering Jew. It is evident that James wrote this Epistle before 63 A.D., when he was killed.

The Little Foxes

Mary M. Bodie

Solomon had a vineyard great below a hill,
On which the wind moved like unto amber flame.
And light of love divine there kindled to distill
A nectar sweet and precious with secret name.
Solomon had a thousand men to tend his tender vines
And gleaming grapes that drank the rays of sun.
Their perfume fragrant on the air as Babylon's enticing wines,
When they were crushed in press and nectar run.
The Shulamite, the Undefined, the Only One,
Was privileged oft to walk and gaze upon those vines.
(The grapes were ripening for Solomon, David's son.)
Alas, one night, when full and shining was the moon
And tilted high; foxes, little mischievous apes,
While we thought the harvest would be soon,
Came upon that vineyard great, and spoiled the grapesbey
James in obeying Paul.

***Joel 2:23**

Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month.

****Zechariah 10:1**

Ask ye of the LORD rain in the time of the latter rain; so the LORD shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain, to every one grass in the field.

*****Hebrew 8:12**

For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.

******Joel 3:20**

But Judah shall dwell for ever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation.

