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JAMES

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HISTORY:

¹James was a common name and there are several men called James in the New Testament. The first of these was James the son of Zebedee. He was the brother of the Apostle John. He was one of the first to believe in the Lord Jesus and he was one of the apostles. Herod the king killed him in about AD 42 (Acts 12:2). As the letter was later than AD 42, this James could not be the writer of it. The other was James the oldest brother of the Lord Jesus. After Jesus was seen by his brother James (1 Corinthians 15:7) after coming back from the dead, James believed in Jesus from that time on. He became a leader in the church in Jerusalem until he died in about AD 62. He is the most likely author of the letter. The purpose of the letter was to expose unbiblical practices and to teach right Christian behavior. He wrote to Jewish Christians residing outside Palestine for they had been scattered and it expresses his concern for these persecuted Christians who were once part of the Jerusalem church.

SYNOPSIS:

1:1-9 James opens up by expounding who he is; he is a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ with a greeting to the scattered Christians calling them brothers. This was a time when the twelve tribes had been scattered all over the world and had lost their identity and James is referring to all tribes. This short discussion centers on trials/ temptations, trusting, transition, treasure, and true religion. James doesn't say how rough life is, but tells them to count it all joy when falling into those many temptations, Why?- Because the trying of their faith works out patience; their patience will have her mature and finished work causing them to lack nothing. He writes, if they need wisdom; understanding; insight, then ask God, for He's able to give it to all men freely, not reprimanding any, but ready to give the wisdom needed. All that's needed is that you ask in faith, not wavering, tossed to and fro like the waves of the sea by the wind that moves it, but really expecting what you ask for. A "waverer" may expect nothing and receive nothing of the Lord because he's doubled-minded and unstable in all his ways. But the lowly brother should rejoice in the Lord. It doesn't mean he is to rejoice because he is poor or unhealthy or cripple, but rejoice despite the circumstances because no matter how terrible they may be, Christ loves the lowly and has promised to exalt him as a king throughout all eternity. But while on earth, his spirit is to be strong as the spirit of a king. Get ready!

1:10-12 However, the rich is made low, while the lowly is exalted. Why? - Because the flower of the grass shall pass away. This means that the rich and high have to approach God bare—as nothing and having nothing—approach Him like a little child, poor and without anything. This is the only way God accepts any person. The flower flourished for awhile but it soon passes away. Sometimes trials bring us low; sometimes doing unlawful things bring us low. The status that the rich once had will soon pass away. That is the danger of false security. Let the rich and high person rejoice in the fact that God will accept him when he comes lowly. The sun rises with burning heat and withers the grass and flower that was once flourishing and causes them to perish. This is the same with the rich and high—the body of the rich ages **and dies**. You can't take it with you, therefore, all men, no matter the status stands before God as equals. But blessed is the man that endureth temptation. Why? - He will receive the "crown of life" for it is promised to him who love

¹ <http://www.easyenglish.info/bible-commentary/james-lbw.htm>
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God. This is the reward for enduring. You didn't run the race running too fast or running too slow, but you kept up with God and endured the challenges. The word "*blessed*" means inward and spiritual joy and satisfaction; an inner assurance and confidence that carries one through all the trials and temptations of life no matter the pain, sorrow, loss, or grief. His confidence and joy should be in knowing that God is in full control taking care of him.

1:13-18 Our temptations do not come from God. Temptation is the desire and craving for wrong things that God forbids and that are harmful to our human bodies and spirits. We are always blaming someone else for leading us into sin, trying to escape the guilt:

- Man blames woman; woman blames man.
- Spouse blames spouse.
- Child blames parent; parent blames child.
- Student blames teacher; teacher blames the school.
- Employer blames employee; employee blames employer.

God is not the tempter; it says **He cannot**; it's not within Him to do so because of the great love He has for us. And no man can tempt Him with evil! So here God calls it what it is, "*evil!*" Therefore, where does temptation come from? Well as we can see in verse 14—"*But every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.*" Three steps:

1. There is lust and enticement – the lure and bait tactic; pays attention to and thinks about it.
2. There is the conception of the lust and the birth of sin – begins to picture it in the mind with pleasure and therefore, it is done. Sin is conceived and birthed in the mind, therefore, the heart is set.
3. There is the result of lust and enticement – death.

However, the way to overcome temptation is twofold;

1. If the temptation attacks our thoughts, then we must push the wrong thought out of our mind and then begin to immediately focus our thoughts upon Christ and some passage of Scripture by meditating on it.
2. If the temptation comes from some attraction to our senses, then we must turn our head or body away and flee the temptation. Immediately, we must focus upon Jesus Christ in steadfast prayer and Scripture passage; feeding yourself the Word of God and rebuking the enemy's thoughts.

A Sunday School child explained the matter in simple terms. "*Two men live in my heart: the old man Adam and Jesus. When temptation knocks at the door, somebody has to answer. If I let Adam answer, I will sin, so I send Jesus to answer, He always wins!*"

James says do not err; don't be deceived; do not make the mistake of blaming God. God does his part and we are to do our part! God gives only good gifts. "*Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above...*" He is the Father of lights and He is unchangeable. This is just the opposite because temptations lead people into darkness of guilt and shame of personal disappointment and accusation, of hurting and damaging others, of destruction and death, of secrecy and hidden affairs, of night and closed doors, of hidden and secret acts. God the Creator of the sun moon and stars which by their very nature each gives off and reflects its light because of the Creator. They move in rotation; change from day to night; and vary in intensity and shadow, but God does not follow that pattern. God is **the perfect** light that stands alone needing not to change His character. With His own Will, He brought us forth by the Word of Truth. This is an active expression of God's Will! God wills only to see us born again. He wills for us to know the Word of truth. If we ever hear the word of error, it is not of God. Run from it! It is of some other source, some error that comes to tempt man away from God and His truth. God brings sinners to Christ through His Word. Christians are the evidence of God's new creation; that is, a kind of His firstfruits of His creatures. The OT Jews brought the first fruits too the Lord as the expression of their devotion and obedience. Of all the creatures in the universe, Christians are the highest and finest. A higher birth must mean a higher life! As we feed upon His Word we become part of his firstfruits giving devotion to Him only.

1:19 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:— Well then, being of God's firstfruits, let every man, not some, but every man have these certain traits. How can a

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person make sure that he hears the Word of God and will not fall into temptation? One has to do six things:

1. **He must be quick to hear the Word of God.** We have two ears, so don't talk so much, just listen. The lack of listening combined with lack of restraint in speech leads to ill-tempered action.
2. **He must be slow to speak.** If we listen carefully before we speak, then we won't get so easily angered. This shows restraint and exposes our conduct and speech in a good way.
3. **He must be slow to wrath or anger.** This means two things:
 - a. A person must not react in anger against God's Word of salvation and righteousness.
 - b. A person must not become angry and act against others in wrath. An angry person cannot do what God says.

This is preparation; this is necessary. We can't walk through life doing as we please. The result will be death. You will then avoid hasty speech and unrighteous anger.

1:20 For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. This wrath reveals a deep, internal resentment and rejection and does not produce the righteousness of God. He fails to recognize that the mere human approach cannot change another person's heart and such does not help the purpose of God and causes us not to live up to the standard of God. When we are slow to wrath we are in a better position for God's purpose to work within us; His righteousness is to work in us.

1:21 Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness,— Then for us to have the righteousness of God working in us, we would have to:

4. **Put aside all filthiness.** This is a picture of taking off a dirty garment and putting it aside. A person must lay off every dirty thing and lay it off to the side away from himself. If he enjoys the dirt and the filth, then his mind is going to be on it. His mind will not be clear, not enough to hear the Word of God. The Greek word for "*filthiness*" (*ruparia*) is taken from the Greek word "*rupos*." The word is sometimes used to refer to "*wax in the ear*." So get rid of moral uncleanness and impurity; filth and evil so you can hear and receive the Word of God.
5. **Put aside all that remains of superfluity of naughtiness** (overflow or excess of wickedness; malice, ill will, malignity... The attitude of mind that desires to injure others). The idea is that even putting aside all filthiness, there will still be some naughtiness or wickedness that will show up within us. Therefore, we must be alert to these uprisings and put them off and lay them aside as well. James is telling them and us that in order to hear and receive God's Word, lay aside and put off those things that would cause us not to hear and that would cause us to be tempted to go the other way.

1:21b ...and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. Now, James gives the solution; receive with meekness the engrafted word. The "*engrafted word*" means implanted Word. What is it supposed to do?—save your soul. This is a picture of planting seed in fertile soil. Be as a child before their father, meekly and humbly. The idea is that we must be humble, gentle, quiet, and attentive in listening to the Word of God, with an open heart ready to hear what the Father has to say. As God implants His Word within us, we hear exactly what the Father says and we are to obey His instructions and our soul is saved led by the power of the Holy Spirit. The implanted Word must take root in God's people. In order for it to take root we are to humbly accept the Word; welcome it with a teachable spirit. The Word can continually deliver us from the power of sin.

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

6. He must be a doer of the Word. It's not enough to only hear the Word of God, we must take action and do the Word; live by the Word as it so instructs us. We may be able to quote the Word, but that does not leave us out from following the Word. There are many who sit under the Word of God week after week, and they learn and know as much of the Word as anyone. They think that their listening and learning makes them acceptable to God, that it makes them safe and secure. When they slip into

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sin, they feel that they can ask God for forgiveness and that He will forgive them. They just feel that God would never reject them. But note something, the most critical fact; God does not accept us because we hear and know the Word nor because we confess our sins. Each of these are necessary and very important, but they are not enough. God accepts us because we confess and repent. "*Repentance*" means that we turn away from our sin and turn to God. God accepts us because we turn to Him and live for Him. When we believe God—really believe Him—then we trust and follow Him, and do exactly what He says. There is a need for obedience.

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:— If a person does not practice doing the Word of God, it is like seeing the same reflection in the mirror, nothing changed. This comes from failing to apply the Word of God to your life.

1:24 For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. If a person does not practice operating the Word of God, what he did hear or learn will soon fade away from memory; it's just forgotten, never becomes a part of the person's life! How many times has this happen where, we might hear the Word of God and are convicted of some defect, some shortcoming, some failure that we need to clean up? But as soon as we walk out from under the Word, we are distracted by the world and its affairs and we soon forget to do what the Word tells us to do?

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. On the other hand, the person who hears and does the Word of God is blessed. The Word of God is called the "*perfect law of liberty*." This means that the Word of God will set a person free from the bondages of sin and death. The Word of God will free a person from all the temptations of this life and give him the full and victorious life for which his soul longs for. The law of liberty sets a man free to know to fellowship with God forever and ever. The only thing is that we must continue in the Word of God which is the perfect law of liberty to be free. It is there for us, we just have to continue doing what it says, not forgetting what we've heard, but doing the work we've heard. We can't help but be blessed!

1:26 If any man among you seem to be religious, and brideth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain. The word "*religious*" describes a person who gives great attention to religion. Like the Jews who were the first and thought they were acceptable to God because they are religious, their religion was vain. And those that seem to be religious and not restrain their tongue are deceived in their own hearts, and they are vain. No matter what he thinks or professes to be, this tells us right here that their religion is empty. He does not please God. You can be very faithful in your religious worship and service, but be loose with the tongue. Our conversation has to be right and line up with the Word of God, and not loose.

•interrupting and dominating the conversation •being easily provoked and lashing out at others
•gossiping and telling tales •criticizing and murmuring •judging and condemning others
•using slang and cursing •engaging in suggestive and off-colored talk •talking about
and running down others.

No matter what a person thinks; no matter how religious he is, if he does not bridle his tongue, he deceives himself. His religion is empty. For a person to withstand and conquer temptations, he must bridle his tongue.

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. James says to practice pure religion: visit the needy: the fatherless and widows in their affliction. Whatever their need is God expects us to reach out to them. The task is not really difficult, we just have to take the time to do it. Some churches have teams that go out and visit with certain families that are on their lists to pray for and help. They are making the

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impossible possible. Charity is apart of our helping others.

- Pure religion is undefiled religion. It does not become corrupted with false beliefs or with false religion. It holds to the purity of the gospel, the Word of God.
- Pure religion does not focus upon form and ritual and ceremony. It focuses upon the power of God to change lives eternally and it reaches out to change people's lives by visiting them.
- Pure religion does not become morally corrupt. It does not become entangled with the affairs and pleasures of this world.

...and keep yourself unspotted from the world. True religion stirs people to separate themselves from the things of this world that arouse their fleshly desires and cravings. True believers keep themselves unspotted from the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life.

SUMMARY:

The Christian life through testing is to be swift to hear, slow to speak, and slow to wrath will put us in right order to overcome temptations, thereby hearing God speak first. Doing the word supersedes just hearers only. There is a religion that seems to be right in our own eyes, however, if we fail to bridle our tongue, it is in vain and we deceive ourselves. There concludes a difference between religion that is useless and that which is pure and undefiled before God (**1:19-27**).

APPLICATION:

It's like being OO7—committed to action by hearing and doing the Word of God. We have to make the commitment.

[TOP](#)

INTRODUCTION:

This passage begins a new section in James; a discussion of various temptations and trials that are common to all believers. One of the strongest is that of showing partiality or favoritism; discriminating against people in the church. Evidently, some of the congregations were developing into social cliques in which the poor were given to understand that they were not wanted or at best tolerated.

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

James once again calls them brethren as God treats us all equal. None is more than the other. In the KJV this verse seems to be asking a question without the question mark or the "you" is understood. They don't have the faith they claim to have in the Lord Jesus Christ in respecting other people. This is important for them to know because God is the originator of faith and everyone who has faith in the Lord Jesus Christ considers Him as Lord. **"He is the Lord of glory"**, who came down from heaven, laying aside His glory for the sake of the sinner in which He has placed that faith within us. Because **"we all sinned and came short of the glory of God"** Rom.3:23, He would then show us how to get that glory back that was lost in the garden with Adam. He respects and looks after us, and we in turn ought to respect everyone as the same; not putting one above another. This is what James is telling the brethren and us, you cannot be a Christian simply by affirming the rights. Your good works are the evidence of true faith.

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;

James didn't want them treating anyone more than the other or less than the other. Therefore, he gives the scenario of a man coming into the assembly wearing a gold ring, gorgeous apparel and then a poor man coming into the same assembly with vile clothing. Most of the time you perceive he's poor by the clothing he's wearing. These men may be unbelievers or they may be believers, but they are differently contrasted. You can't tell who lives in their hearts. You knew there was a difference in the rich man than in Lazarus. We only perceive the outer appearance. The point is: What happens when these two men come to your church? Who will come to them and what will their actions be?

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:

He further says you will respect the man wearing the gorgeous apparel and allow him to sit up front in a good place; the best seat; while you tell the poor man to stand or sit under your footstool (low stool in which you rest your feet). He is treated no better than a servant who sits at the footstool of a slave master's feet. We're looking for the rich man to give financially and help support the church, for they already can see that the poor man has nothing to give.

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

The question presented to them is, are you partial, showing favoritism and becoming judges, having wrong motives? This is a clear illustration that dismisses all excuses that they may come up with. By being a believer and having faith meant that they were not to show partiality or favoritism. Just as there is not to be partiality between men and women! There are five things wrong with showing partiality and favoritism:

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1. **Showing partiality sets one up as the Judge of men.** It makes one as God; it says who can worship God and who cannot, who is acceptable to God, and who is not. Only God can determine who He will accept and not accept.
2. **Showing partiality reveals evil thoughts.** The person focuses on mundane and changeable things; temporary things. Such thoughts are corrupt because they neglect the person entirely. It means that the things a person has are more important than the person himself. We need to look at can we bring him to Christ?

2:5 Harken, 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?— The question is asked, Listen, haven't God chosen the poor; didn't He come all the way from heaven for the poor of this world who possess secret riches both in their present faith and in God's eternal kingdom? Hallelujah, don't you know that we are rich in faith and are heirs of His kingdom which He has promised to those that love Him. So therefore,...

3. **Showing partiality discriminates** against the poor and lowly; the person who are loved by God. God also cares for the rich and high, but He also cares for the poor and lowly— which is showing no discrimination.

2:6 But ye have despised the poor.— James makes it well known that they have despised the very people God loves.

4. **Showing partiality shows a disgraceful attitude.** It dishonors, humiliates, shames, disgraces, and insults the poor and lowly person. No believer is to ever make a person feel unwelcomed or of little value and worth.

2:6b ...Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats?— Two things are said about the rich:

1. The rich and high usually oppress the poor and they readily grab what they can, using the very laws of the land to do it. The idea is that they use the law unjustly in order to protect and increase their wealth and power, thereby, oppressing the poor.

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

5. **Showing partiality shows foolish behavior.** They foolishly think they don't need anything; they think little about needing anything and their behavior shows it.
2. The rich and high usually blaspheme the name of Christ. They blaspheme His name by denying, mocking, ridiculing, persecuting, neglecting, ignoring, and rejecting Him as the Savior of the world.

The point is: For the rich man the list goes on and on of their deception and foolish behavior, but, why would the church and its believers show partiality to such people over the poor of the earth? Why was partiality to the rich man in the assembly who are the very ones who oppressed the needy of the world shown favoritism over the poor man? So there is no reason for them to respect the rich more than the poor. Rather they should welcome and look after both.

2:8 If ye fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well:— Well, what is the royal law according to the scripture?— "**Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.**" It is the Lord's command; the law of love. It was given by God Himself and reinforced by His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, when He came to earth. If a person loves God and loves his neighbor as himself, he will automatically obey. It is the very commandment that leads to eternal life. They would do well just to fulfill it. Matthew 22:40

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

There are three warnings of showing partiality:

1. **Showing partiality is sin.** It violates the royal law of love.
 - a. James is saying, if you adopt this method: play-up to these rich important people or fawn all over them for what they can do, you are committing sin; you violate the law.
 - b. Also, ²not to respect the poor insults those whom God has chosen. Those who do this to the poor people insult the God who made them.

This makes the guilty Christian no better than those who insult the name of God. We must treat all people as we would want to be treated. Believers are to love people, not show partiality, discriminating against some for what they can do for us or offer us while ignoring the poor who can offer little or nothing. It is sin and makes us a transgressor of the law.

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

2. **Showing partiality makes a person guilty of the whole law of God.** Every law has been given by God. They form a whole pattern; a whole package. Take it or leave, huh? No, if you follow God you can't take out some laws that don't appeal to you and follow what you want. You would be a transgressor of the law by breaking only one. So thereby offending in one area; breaking one law, we are guilty of breaking the whole law; all the laws. We must be forgiven by God just as much as any other transgressor.

The law of God has many commands but it is one law.

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. Don't sleep with someone else's spouse and don't kill. So, the person who fails to obey just one part of the law, even if you don't commit adultery, but you kill someone, is guilty of failing to keep the whole law. I say again, you would be a transgressor of the law by breaking only one.

3. **Showing partiality is just as serious a sin as adultery and killing.** "Partiality" is a sin that selects and favors one person over another or selects one law over another. It is the same root, the same cause, the same selfishness, the same lust, the same sin as killing.

2:12 So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty. "So" completes all the verses before this one. So speak and do what is right; practice what you preach as if judgment might come at any moment by the rule that sets you free. Our words and our deeds will be judged because God examines the heart. We cannot sin lightly and serve faithfully. But we have that liberty to repent and confess our sins and God forgives us. We are forgiven. ³We are righteous in the sight of the Father, because we have been washed in the precious blood of Jesus Christ and made righteous. We have taken on His righteousness in exchange for our sin. That's a freedom we don't take lightly. Being under the law of freedom; "**the law of liberty**", gives us the freedom to choose freely to love and obey willingly. ⁴Do not treat being forgiven as a license to sin. Satan often uses God's grace in order to tempt us, by saying: "*Don't worry. Go ahead and sin. God will forgive you anyway.*" It has a serious warning to all those who do not obey it. God will judge all by this rule. The nature of that of our liberty should cause us to be kind to all people. Christians are under the law of liberty which is our freedom in Jesus Christ.

² <http://www.easyenglish.info/bible-commentary/james-lbw.htm>

³ <http://www.lovetheLord.com/books/james/03.html>

⁴ http://www.scripturestudies.com/Vol1/A4/a4_nt.html

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2:13 For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment. No mercy shall be shown to them that had not shown mercy. God will treat us exactly as we have treated others. There is only one thing that will rejoice victoriously over judgment and that is mercy. Our only hope against the burning fire of God's judgment is mercy.

NOTE:

The greatest tragedy of the church today is, that people who profess Christ, yet do not live for Christ. Millions profess Christ and they are baptized and confirmed and made members of the church, but they do not follow nor live for Christ. They do not live pure and righteous lives, nor do they give all they are and have to reach the lost and needy of the world. Are they saved? Do they have a genuine faith? This is the discussion of this passage. This is the second temptation that is common to all Christian believers: the temptation to profess faith without works.

2:14 What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?— Two pertinent questions are asked.

1. **What does it profit,** a believer, who says they have faith and do not display works? The man says he has faith, but it is only what he says. His faith is only a faith of speech, not behavior and life. His faith is only a faith of profession, not of possession. And that is false profession.
2. **Can faith save him?** This is saying, can that type of faith save him. James does not contradict Paul. Both affirm that true saving faith results in a changed life as evidenced by works (Eph.2:8-10). The works of a believer speak to the world of the faith he has. God will not recognize this type of faith because it would seem that the believer does not truly believe the truths he claims to believe.

This kind of Faith that has no works does not bring salvation to that person. There is no benefit at all in that faith, so, the answer to these two questions is "**No!**" A believer who says they have something does something; he acts out what he believes because it's in his heart to do. The subject here is the nature of real faith. Is the church living for the world and self or are they living for Christ?

2:15 If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of dally food,— This speaks of a brother or sister being believers in the faith in need of the proper clothing, and impoverished of their daily food. They are unable to properly dress themselves to stay warm, and to secure enough 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?— The Message Bible puts it plainly: ...you come upon an old friend dressed in rags and half-starved and say "Good morning, friend! Be clothed in Christ! Be filled with the holy Spirit!" and walk off without providing so much as a coat or a cup of soup—where does that get you? All we can say is go in peace, stay warm, and be filled. We just share words of comfort with them; we just seem to visit, comfort, and wish them well. Is that what we do? James is saying, what does that profit if we don't give them the things they need— something to keep them warm or food to eat. If we are only talking about what we should do and not reaching out to help the destitute of the world just as Jesus did, our faith is dead; utterly meaningless, and does not profit us or the other person.

2:17 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. James calls this dead faith—faith having not works:

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- *a dead faith* (Jam.2:17, 20, 26).
- *an unprofitable faith* (Jam.2:14).
- *a vain, empty faith* (1Cor.15:2).

Isn't it obvious that God-talk without God-acts is outrageous nonsense? It is not enough to claim that we have faith and not live for Christ. We must really believe that He is the Savior and Lord of our lives and do what He says. We are to live a Christ-centered life and not a Christ-titled life. Faith by itself is dead. True faith is an operative faith, showing forth works.

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. James is painting the picture with only two sentences: First. *"You have faith and I have works."*

- A man claims he has faith. **His Belief:** He believes he is saved by faith; God accepts him because he believes in Jesus Christ even if he fails to live for Christ and believe God has accepted him and will take him to heaven when he dies. **The Word says:** *"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven"* Matt.7:21.
- A man claims to have works. **His Belief:** God accepts him because he does good works and lives as good a life as he can. He believes that the important thing to God is to be religious and do all the good that a person can. If a person does sin, God will never reject him; God will accept him no matter who he is and no matter what religion he follows. **The Word says:** *"Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?"* Matt.4:22.

James pulls no punches: To profess faith alone will not save a person and to follow works to become acceptable to God will not save a person. James handles this with one clear statement: *"Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works."* You ever heard the statement—*"the proof is in the pudding?"* It may look like pudding, but until I take action to taste it, I won't know. *"The truth of something can only be judged by putting it into action or to its intended use."* You profess to have faith, now where is the proof; back it up. No man can come to Christ and remain the same. The proof is only in our actions we profess.

2:19 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. ⁵There are some who say that belief in one God is good and sufficient. It is true that there is one God. He is the only God and there is no other. They do well to believe in the one true God. It is good but, by itself, it is not enough. The demons know that God lives and that he is all-powerful. Their belief is not merely words or thought. It has a real effect on them. They believe and tremble with fear. They are in terror of God. It makes them certain of their own terrible end. They know that one day God will destroy them. He will destroy them because they are not willing to obey him. To say that we believe is of little value if it does not produce good works. Real faith unites people to God. It does not cause them to tremble, but leads them to love God and do good works. Faith is in the heart and the mind. And it shows itself in a changed life, which wants to obey God.

2:20 But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?— James is saying, oh, foolish, senseless man, you need to know that faith without works is dead? Faith without works is not producing anything. Lives become void to achieve what's needed because your life is not producing any works. This is the same as no prayer—no power! When there is no action upon your faith, it brings no fruit; it's dead. Faith must lead to good works or else it is of no use. It is dead faith!

⁵ <http://www.easyenglish.info/bible-commentary/james-lbw.htm>
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>

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2:21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?— We know that a person is justified by faith. "**Justification**" is the act of God whereby He declares the believing sinner righteous on the basis of Jesus' finished work on the cross. It is not a process; it is an act. It's not something the sinner does; it is something God does for the sinner when he trusts in Jesus. Here, Abraham is justified by works. How was Abraham justified by works, when he had already been justified by faith? From the very beginning **by faith**, he was justified before God and his righteousness declared—he believed God and left the city of Ur of the Chaldees. Now, **by works**, he was justified before men and his righteousness demonstrated— when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar. It was a faith that needed to express itself by works. This proof of faith did not lead to salvation, for he was already saved, but he was justified; proved righteous by the works that he did because of his faith. His works showed his faith

2:22 Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?— We have just seen in the above verse that Abraham was justified by faith and works. James shows that he who professes that he has faith, must prove the reality of his faith by his works. Abraham's faith produced his works and his works was made perfect (complete). His faith and his works worked together. ⁶The action of offering Isaac matured Abraham's faith. His faith moved from a conviction that God would overcome his old age to produce a child, to the conviction that He could raise his son from the dead. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God, but then you have to apply that faith; exercise it for it to mature.

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. *"And the scripture was fulfilled."* What scripture? The scripture in the OT, Genesis 15:6—*"And he believed in the Lord: and he counted it to him for righteousness."* These words were declared 30 years before Abraham ever offered up Isaac. The action of Abraham's belief was fulfilled (became evident), thereby, proving the truth of these words. "**Imputed**", means counted. "**Counted**" is a legal or financial term, meaning to put to one's account; credited. Abraham trusted and believed God and God credited righteousness onto Abraham's account. He did not work for this righteousness; he received it as a gift from God. He is called *"the Friend of God"* meaning God having a high honor and a great regard for him. John 15:13-15 tells us *"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. 14Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. 15Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you."*

2:24 Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. You see faith brings us salvation, and active obedience (works) demonstrates our belief is genuine which brings us back to the first topic: Faith without works is dead, and the 17th verse, *"Even so forth, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone."* True faith is what God accepts and has to be lived and acted upon. Ephesians 2:8 says *For we are saved by grace through faith...*, but the works are a by-product of our faith. Works do not procure our salvation but they do declare it to others. Ephesians 2:9-10 says *"Not of works, lest any man should boast. 10For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."* Faith in Jesus Christ is necessary to save a person but it is not faith on its own. The works of a man is justified because it's done with true faith.

⁶ <http://versebyversecommentary.com/james/james-221b/>
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>

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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?—This is another example of faith in action—the converted harlot, Rahab, who proved her faith by works. Even the lowest person who claims to believe in God cleans up their lives when following God and will manifest good works. She protected the Israelite spies as they were hunted down by the Jericho soldiers. Why? – Because she believed in God and His promises. She exercised dynamic faith: her mind knew the truth, her heart was stirred by the truth, and her will acted on the truth. Therefore, she proved her faith by her works; putting her faith to work.

2:26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also. The scenario of a body without the spirit or breath is dead and does not move, act, live, or work; it's empty, useless, and worthless, so it is with faith without works. Faith without works is dead because it does not move, act, live, or work; it is also empty, useless, and worthless. It does not live for Christ because the lack of works reveals an unchanged life and a spiritually dead heart. Faith without works is dead because it does not follow nor manifest works in reaching people and meeting the needs of a destitute world.

SUMMARY:

James' teaching here is that he can't understand why the believers are showing favoritism in the church; treating rich visitors with great respect and treating poor visitors with no respect. Then wrong judgment and evil thought are displayed. They were not to show partiality because of the clothes or ring others wore. It was the rich who persecuted the poor, and ridiculed their Savior. He exhorts them to obey the "royal law" in the Scriptures. There are warnings of showing favoritism. If they can keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, they are guilty of all; break this law they break all the laws. Even if you don't commit adultery, but you kill someone, then you're guilty of failing to keep the whole law. I say again, you would be a transgressor of the law by breaking only one. There are three warnings of showing partiality. Believers are to love people, not show partiality, and not discriminate against some for what they can do for you or what is offered, while ignoring the poor who can offer little or nothing. It is sin and makes us a transgressor of the law. Every law has been given by God. They form a whole pattern; a whole package. The law of God has many commands but it is one law. So speak and do what is right; practice what you preach as if judgment might come at any moment by the rule that sets you free. No mercy shall be shown to them that had not shown mercy. Therefore, true freedom is to obey God and do what pleases Him (1:1-13).

⁷Faith without works cannot save one. That's why the questions are asked, what does it profit...? And can faith save one? Is there any profit to tell a naked and destitute man to depart in peace be warm and filled, and not give them what they need? A man may say he has faith but not have works. Thus faith by itself, without works, is dead. Faith is shown by one's works. It is not enough to claim to have faith. The devils believe in God, and tremble. Abraham, the friend of God was justified by works when he offered his son Isaac on the altar. His faith was working with his works, and by them perfected his faith. By his works the Scripture was fulfilled that declared him faithful and righteous. Rahab, the harlot was justified by works when she hid the spies. Thus faith without works is dead, just as the body without the spirit is dead (2:14-26).

APPLICATION:

Start by asking God what's in your heart. A life lived in love and mercy has no fear of God's judgment. [TOP](#)

⁷ http://executableoutlines.com/ja2/ja2_02.htm
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>

3:1 My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation. Apparently the churches to which James was writing had too many men who were self-appointed teachers or "**Masters.**" James cautions those who would be leaders to examine their motives; possibly speaking to the Jews who wanted to teach the newcomers in the faith. Teaching was a highly valued and respected profession in the Jewish culture. Many Jews who embraced Christianity wanted to become teachers. James warned them that although it is good to aspire to teach, the teachers' responsibility is great because their words affect other spiritual lives. There is a warning to all teachers and James includes himself when he says "we." They must show by their lives the truth that they teach.

A Quaker proverb says "*Let your life speak verses Let your lives preach.*"

Another one says: "*Of your unspoken words you are the master; of your spoken words the servant, and of your written words the slave.*"

Therefore, our speech will be severely judged, whether we're a preacher, teacher, or a believer, it will be judged! It would be easy to speak great words, but, wrong when we fail to do what they have taught. There should not be a large number of teachers who are not ready to follow, for they shall receive the greater condemnation. God holds them to a higher standard for what they teach than others do.

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. Here, we are referring to our speech; offending others with our tongue. The tongue stumbles and sins often; stumbles in word after word. How does scripture say this? Let's take a look. Is your tongue always showing that we are...?

- bragging
- not provoked
- speaking any evil thoughts
- gossiping
- Or are we always speaking kindly
- always rejoicing in truth
- always saying wholesome words etc.?

Only one thing that can be said: how short we are of the glory of God! The tongue shows us that we are always stumbling and coming short. Therefore, we must learn to control the tongue. God wants us to know that if we don't offend in word. We are mature men, able to bridle the whole body. That's why James admonishes us to be quick to hear, **slow to speak**, and slow to wrath. Shocking isn't it? In other words, **James is saying "a loose tongue, betrays a loose life"** and "**actions speak louder than words.**" The tongue has to submit to the fruit of the Spirit, which is self-control.

- **A person's maturity can be measured by the control of his tongue.**
- **A person can learn to control any passion or appetite of the body by learning to control the tongue.**

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

James gives two analogies that compare to the tongue:

1. **A horse's bridle.** The bit or bridle in the horse's mouth may seem small compared to the size of the horse, and appear trivial, however, the animal obeys as it is directed as the bit turns the whole body of the horse.

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. The second analogy that compares to the tongue:

2. **A ship's rudder.** The rudder or helm guides, steers, and controls the ship through fierce winds and storms, turning it by the smallest of objects compared to the ship itself, wherever the captain wants it to go.

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The bit and the rudder needed a master to take control of them; so does the tongue need a master to take charge. To work properly and accomplish good things, both bit and rudder must be under the control of a strong hand that knows how to use them properly. In the same way, the tongue must overcome the contrary force of the flesh, and be under God's wise control if it is to accomplish anything good.

3:5 Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Comparing these two analogies, we see the tongue is also a **small member** of the body, but what an enormous damage it can do. It has enormous power to boast great things. Boasting can come in two forms: (1.) he can boast in a quiet, unassuming way or (2.) he can boast by talking big. A person can boast about anything, but no matter how the boasting is done, it is destructive: it either lowers the image of a person in the eyes of others because of his boasting or makes the listener feel inferior or less of a person than the boaster. Boasting is nothing more than vain or empty talk, but its destructive force must never be underestimated.

3:5b ...Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!—The word "matter" (hulen) means wood or a forest, hence the matter or raw material of a thing (Marvin Vincent, *Word Studies In The New Testament*, Vol.I, Grand Rapids, Mich: eerdmans, 1969, p.7471). Therefore, the meaning is that a great forest is set on fire by only a little spark. So it is with the tongue.

3:6 And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members,—The reason the tongue need a master is because it is a fire; not that it can become; it says it is a fire! And it can set a whole forest of lives and relationships on fire, consuming and destroying all that lies in its path. It is a world of iniquity; it can cause what seems to be a world of sin and destruction when it is set ablaze.

- a marriage destroyed
- children disturbed
- friendships damaged
- reputations ruined.
- wars fought
- fights aroused
- injuries caused
- bodies maimed
- promotions denied.

3:6b ...that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature;—The tongue defiles the whole body and sets on fire the whole course of a man's nature of life. The phrase "**the course of nature**" (*ton trochon geneseos*) is a descriptive phrase meaning in the Greek, "**the wheel of nature, the wheel of life, the unending span of life stretching from birth to death**" (A.T. Robertson, *Word Pictures In The New Testament*, Vol.6, p.43). Therefore, the tongue can do just what this verse says: pollute and dirty a man's whole body and life, the whole wheel of his life. How? –

Through the expression of our words or someone else's words. Name the sin and words are involved.

3:6c ...and it is set on fire of hell. Note the source of a fiery tongue: Hell. Satan himself is the igniter of a fiery tongue. Therefore, any person who sets his tongue ablaze is following the tongue of Satan, of the fire of hell itself. A believer's tongue is never to speak forth the fiery flames of hell's destructive words—words that are ugly, cursing, unclean, angry, divisive, unkind, suggestive, or tale-bearing. You see the need for control? You see the need of mastering the tongue? You see the need of putting a bridle over your mouth? The tongue has the power of life and death. It is like a fire, to ignite those works of the flesh in our own sinful nature. It is better to bridle the tongue than to go around setting fires with your temper, which is of the flesh.

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:—It is certainly a mystery and astounding that man can tame the beasts, birds, serpents, and mammals or creatures in the sea. James reminds us that animals can be tamed, therefore, the fire of the tongue can be tamed only by God. At Pentecost, that was the first part of our bodies that God took control of—the tongue. They were all on one accord in their speech.

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3:8 But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. James says that no man can tame the tongue for it is "**unruly**" (akatastaton)—[that is restless, uneasy, unstable, always roaming about], evil, and full of deadly poison. Some animals are poisonous, but some of our tongues spread poison. Getting the poison out is God's job. Therefore, if God does not take control of your heart, it will be that way—full of evil and poison, but when God does fill our hearts with His love, then out of our hearts will flow the abundance of life filling the tongue with good and wholesome things. An evil tongue is the tool for the devil, but a wholesome tamed tongue is a tool for God! Praise God! If He can save a soul, He can tame a tongue, if we give our Will over to Him.

3:9 Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. James includes himself again as he refers to believers. The tongue can bless God in one breath and curse men in the next. The tongue gives us a picture of the basic human nature. We are good—made in God's image; but we are also bad—fallen and sinful. Are we a Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde? Heaven forbid! We must stay in fellowship with God. He works to change us from the inside out. While He is doing that, we must not attack man but speak against sin!

3:10 Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. As I said earlier, we only have one mouth and two eyes and out of that one mouth comes blessing and cursing. This is not supposed to come out of the believer's mouth. God wants consistent behavior; con-sistent speech that edifies. And James calls them "**My brethren**", meaning we are of the family of God!

3:11 Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?— The question is asked in an illustration that they might understand about a double-tongue; a forked tongue, but one mouth. James gives two analogies that will not work together in nature.

1. Even in nature a fountain or spring does not give forth sweet water, and then bitter water? It would be contradicting itself; it would be inconsistent. God created it to be consistent.

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

2. Even in nature a fig tree does not bear olive berries, nor can a vine bear figs? We know the tree by the type of fruit that it bears. No tree can bear two kinds of fruit, so also a true believer would not produce both blessings of God and cursing toward others.

SUMMARY:

⁸James begins this chapter with a caution against many becoming teachers. In view of the stricter judgment that awaits teachers, one should be sure they possess the maturity and self-control necessary to control the tongue. James gives an illustration of a bit and rudder emphasizing its size and importance that controls a powerful horse and a huge ship. But, the tongue also being a small member can start a fire and can defile the whole body (**3:1-6**).

Man can control creatures of land and sea, but not the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless God, and then curse man made in His image. Thus, blessing and cursing proceed from the same mouth; something which should not be so, for no fountain sends forth both fresh and salt water. Neither does a fig tree bear olives, nor a grapevine bear figs (**3:7-12**).

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⁸ http://executableoutlines.com/ja2/ja2_03.htm
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>

SYNOPSIS:

5:1-3 introduces us to the rich person facing a fierce temptation so ferocious that it will consume him unless he lives ever so close to the Lord. It is the temptation to bank and hoard money instead of using it to meet the needs of the desperate and dying in the world. James, a servant of the Lord and Jesus' brother became the leader of the church in Jerusalem. This is James' fourth and strongest blast at the rich (*others 1:9-11; 2:1-13; 4:1-10*). There must have been a good many rich in the Judean church who were thoroughly unchristian in their deeds, who were bent on worldly pleasure instead of caring about the things of God. He warns all the rich who keep more than what they need; who keep and hoard their money as selfish gain. He tells them to "*weep and howl*", meaning to burst into weeping and to howl (groan) with grief because their riches are corrupt; their garments are moth-eaten; their gold and silver are cankered and rusted and will bring miseries upon them. The point is this: if farm produce and building products sit unused, they rot. If textile garments sit unused, they are moth-eaten. If gold and silver sit unused, they become coated with filth and eventually corrode and waste away. If wealth—money or anything else is hoarded, it is useless. It does nothing but sit there and eventually it will be gone. What a terrible tragedy! It will become a witness against them causing it to eat their flesh as if it were fire; destroying their life like it was a cancer eating their gut. Treasures of wealth that are heaped up become treasures of wrath. What they piled up was for judgment (in the last days)!

5:4-6 James says to rich who cheat, steal, and defraud the field workers (poor laborers), hear their cries for judgment for their cries have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth (the Lord of Hosts—His Omnipotence)! The poor laborers were the ones who could not pay their debts and were thrown into prison or forced to sell all their possessions, and at times even sell their family members into slavery. The person who oppresses the worker shall face the judgment! They sought to live a life of pleasure and gratification of being recognized and known as being successful and powerful, as a person who can have and enjoy what this earth has to offer, and forgets God and the cries of the desperate and needy of the world. Therefore the rich have condemned and killed the righteous as they reject the message of self-denial and sacrificial giving that the righteous practice and teach. And the righteous do not resist them; they don't retaliate. They just keep on proclaiming the message of the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ. They continue to reach out to the desperate needs of the starving, poor and needy of the world.

5:7-9 This begins the last section of the Book of James in which it discusses the temptations and trials that confront and attack us day by day. Temptations and trials must be combated step by step in order to conquer them. That's why James tells us and the brethren to be patient for the Lord is coming again. The word "*patient*" means longsuffering, bearing and suffering a long time; persevering, being constant, steadfast, and enduring. Be patient as the farmer waits for his crops to grow, for no crop appears overnight, except a crop of weeds. The husbandman or farmer is a good example of the kind of patient waiting believers must possess as they wait for the Lord's return. Don't live as if Christ will never come. Work faithfully to build His Kingdom for the King will come when the time is ripe! The coming of the Lord will bring an end to labors, and the believers a day of reaping to be enjoyed. They are to establish their hearts meaning to set their hearts upon; to fix upon; to make fast—looking for it everyday the Lord's coming, just as a farmer looks for his great day of harvest. It stirs us to patiently endure no matter the

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situation, and by patiently enduring we shall gain the victory over all. Don't complain, murmur, or judge other believers for your troubles or the situation you're in. The warning is that if we complain, murmur, and grumble, we shall be condemned. Behold the judge stands at the door is an illustration of Christ as judge, about to open the doors to the courtroom and convene His court with a readiness to avenge all wrong.

5:10-12 James gives them and us an example of the prophets' patience in suffering affliction, for they believed and spoke in the name of the Lord. Look at the prophets, for they faced all kinds of temptations and trials. They patiently endured; stood fast; held onto their faith in God; refused to give in to grumbling or complaining, but continued to proclaim the salvation and hope of God for the world. And they are counted as blessed because they stayed true. Acts 5:41 says *"And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worth to suffer shame for his name."* Then there's the patience of Job. He never gave in to the trials or temptations. He never forsook his faith in God. He didn't understand all that was happening to him, but he refused to turn against God. The *"end of the Lord"* may be rendered the "Lord's goal." Whatever the Lord allows is meant for our good. God brought it all together at the end for Job. Job was tremendously blessed by God for his persevering faith. God is full of tenderness and mercy! When heavily tried or tempted, do not swear or curse, neither by heaven, or by earth, or by any other oath. Just let your yes be yes and your no be no. Swearing and cursing is taking God's name in vain, for a man's word is a reflection of himself and there should be no need for oaths. Man should stand in awe of God, not curse Him.

5:13 **Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.** God honors unity in prayer, that's among the brethren; the believers in the body of Christ. When our experiences range from affliction and suffering to cheerfulness and joyousness, let us pray and sing praises. When we face troubles, we pray; when we are free of trouble, we praise. This means we pray and praise God all the time—through times of affliction and through times of joy. We seek Him in prayer for His power, deliverance, and for courage to be a great witness when facing trouble, while He walks us through it all. And then there is joy in the Lord and we show this to the world with assurance and confidence of the life Christ provides and the eternal future offered by God. This is the praise that should be flowing from our lips! Sing a song of praise, even in prayer!

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:**— James continues to ask the question; Is any among you that are going through something, and he gives the answer with certainty! If sick, call for the elders of the church. They are to pray and anoint the sick with oil in the name of the Lord! The oil was both a medicine (in the parable of the Good Samaritan) and a symbol of the Holy Spirit's presence and power (as used in anointing kings). Thus oil can represent both the medical and the spiritual in the prayer of healing and deliverance. Both are to set the person's mind and heart upon the Lord's work. If they had to call for the elders (leaders of the church), that meant that they were shut-in; bedridden, and incapacitated and were not able to go to them. That's why leaders or elders and those that move in the spirit should be able to be called on for prayer. Know the members that are sick. Jesus Christ is Lord over both the body and the spirit, for all is done in His Name!

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.** By following the above procedure, this would mean that the elders' prayer for the sick is offered in faith to the One who can heal. *"Therefore, I say to you, whatever*

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*things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them" Mark 11:24. That is the prayer of faith!; not hoping or trying to understand it, but just believing! Take away the limits. "Without faith it is impossible to please Him for they that come to Him must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him" Heb.11:6. When you operate in the Prayer of Faith, no sight is involved, meaning no physical senses are involved; no malice or unforgiveness in the heart. ...shall save the sick meaning restore (to spiritual wholeness). All sickness is not due to a person's sin; we found that out in Job. However, sin can cause physical illness. The prayer of faith saves the sick, and **the Lord shall raise him up** (physical restoration) if sins have been committed (past sin committed by the believer that he has not repented of. This is persistent rebellion against God's Word. He is a person who refuses to confess and repent of his sin. He is in a state of rebellion against God). Sin is the cause of the spirit being defeated and the body wearied and wasting away.*

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. The Spirit of God will reveal your sin to you. We confess our faults one to another so we can **pray** for one another. Does this mean that believers are to go around confessing all their sins in all their intimacies and ugliness? No! This is not what this passage is talking about. It is referring to certain types of sins or to certain times when we are to confess our sins.

- When the sin has been a wrong or injustice done against someone else.
- When we have misled or lied to someone.
- When we have offended someone or caused someone to stumble and sin.
- When restitution should be made.
- When we have publicly committed some crime and public forgiveness is required.

Prayer is of critical importance for one reason. Why? Because, *"The effectual fervent prayer; the earnest working power of prayer avails much."* Temptations and trials afflict everyone upon this earth, such as temptations of worldliness, lust, and pride; trials that cause accidents, disappointments, unfaithfulness, bad times, and bad feelings strike us, and we are to combat them with prayer, asking for the courage to keep a clear conscious so guidance can come through. Our consistency in prayer avails. A righteous man (one that's in one accord; in right standing with God) avails. In verse 15, the Prayer of Faith saves a sick believer and the Lord raises him up, and now in this verse, the effectual fervent prayer; prayer that is really earnest works and heals a sin-sick soul when sin confession is made.

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. James cited Elijah as an example of a righteous man; a man living right, whose prayers released power. Elias was an excellent example of a man availing in the effectual fervent power of prayer. He was a man who had compassions and feelings just like us; who faced the same temptations and trials as we do, yet, Elijah earnestly prayed for it not to rain, and it did not rain; not a drop for three years and six months.

5:18 And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit. Then he prayed again for it to rain, and it rained and the earth bore its fruit. The point is: the earnest fervent prayer is effective; it works! God hears and answers!

SUMMARY:

<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>

PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

The suffering are to pray, the cheerful are to sing praises (5:13). ⁹“Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him” (James 5:14). The process begins when the sick person calls for the elders to come to him. The word “sick” is very broad. It includes any serious physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, or relational problem that has become too heavy to bear. There are many kinds of sickness, and when a believer is overwhelmed, he should feel free to call the elders to come to him. But why are the elders to come to him? First, because the sick person is too sick to come to the church, so the church comes to him. Second, because he is too sick to pray for himself, so the church comes to pray for him. The word “elders” is plural and they go together to the sick because there is strength in numbers. They pray in the name of the Lord and anoint with oil (a symbol of God’s Spirit; that God’s presence is there and is able to heal). And the prayer offered in faith, the Lord shall raise the sick person up. When the elders pray, they are to come to God with an attitude of complete trust that He can and will do what is needed in every situation. They are to ask the sick if they are conscious of any sin that is standing between them and God, blocking His healing power; for if committed sin is lying dormant, it has to be dealt with to be forgiven. Confession is good for the soul. Then the fervent effectual prayer of the righteous avails much. The real power is in the Name of the Lord (5:14-16). (5:13-16).

“Healing in the Bible is not becoming what we were, but becoming all that God intends us to be.” Selah.

We are reminded of the value of fervent prayer by the righteous, using Elijah as an example of how God answers prayer providentially (conveniently; beneficially) (5:17-18). God is our very present help in times of trouble, but He uses man in the process. He doesn’t have to, but He does!

[TOP](#)

⁹ <http://www.keepbelieving.com/sermon/praying-for-the-sick/>
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-versebyverse.html>