

JAMES
BIBLE SENSE TO LIVE BY

Grace Mercy Ministry

James: Bible Sense to Live By

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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to the Lord Jesus Christ who inspired James to write a letter giving believers instructions on how to live a holy life.

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INVITATION

This letter from Jesus Christ through James is loaded with divine wisdom on how to live a life that will cause those around you to ask why you are different and how they can get what you have.

Study the book of James diligently reading through it as much as possible. Get to know the book memorizing key verses and meditating on them as often as possible. When you complete this workbook go through it with a brother or sister in the Lord. Work through it with your spouse, children and believing friends. Share it with your pastor(s) and ask them to consider teaching a class using it.

FOREWORD

God exhorts His spiritual children to get spiritually fit and to stay fit until the day He takes them home:

All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3.16-17)

Like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation (1 Peter 2.2)

David thirsted and hungered after the Word of God:

As the deer pants for the water brooks, So my soul pants for You, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God; When shall I come and appear before God? (Psalm 42.1-2)

O God, You are my God; I shall seek You earnestly; My soul thirsts for You, my flesh yearns for You, In a dry and weary land where there is no water. (Psalm 63.1)

God gave the Hebrew people manna to teach them that man does not live by bread (food) alone, but by His Word:

"He humbled you and let you be hungry, and fed you with manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you understand that

man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by everything that proceeds out of the mouth of the LORD. (Deuteronomy 8.3)

Jesus repeated this truth during His ministry:

But He answered and said, "It is written, 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD.' " (Matthew 4.4)

Do you thirst for the Scriptures as a deer does for water? Do you spend time every day hearing the Word, reading the Word, studying the Word, memorizing the Word, meditating on the Word and praying for wisdom as you do?

Do you spend at least an equal amount of time each day feeding your soul as you do feeding your stomach? Which is more important to you ó your immortal soul or your mortal body? Do you spend every spare moment of each day absorbed in the Word and prayer?

These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. " You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. (Deuteronomy 6.6-7)

If you truly love God and you sincerely desire to please Him by living an obedient, holy life then you will study His Word every day. This book and the other study books from Grace Mercy Ministry are designed to help you study the Sacred Scriptures.

PREFACE

How to prepare to study the Bible

This study series is designed to motivate believers to study the Bible book-by-book. It should be the goal of every believer to study every book in the Bible before going home to be with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

We suggest you answer the discussion questions before reading the commentary. Answer the questions using Scripture and check your answers with the answers at the end of the book. If you answer the discussion questions correctly you do not need to read the commentary, but we encourage you to do so to get more insights.

Before you answer the discussion questions we urge you to read through the book of the Bible that you are studying numerous times to get acquainted with it. A sound practice is to read the entire book once a day for one month before you begin to study it. Books that are more than eight chapters you can split in half and read one half the first day and the second half the next day. Daily Scripture reading is extremely important to spiritual growth. Before, during and after reading the Bible pray that God gives you understanding and wisdom (James 1.5).

Reading four or more chapters a day in the Bible is very important. Every Christian should read the Bible through in one year every year of his life. To do this all you need to do is read three chapters in the Old Testament and one in the New Testament. As you study a specific book of the Bible your reading of that book for a month or more would be extra reading.

Below are basic reading programs. Choose the one that is right for you and then seek to expand the number of chapters you read every day.

Through the Bible in one year ó Read three chapters in the Old Testament and one in the New Testament.

One year and Proverbs - Read three chapters in the Old Testament, one in the New Testament and one in Proverbs each day.

One year, Proverbs and Psalms - Read three chapters in the Old Testament, one in the New Testament, one in Proverbs and one in Psalms.

Advanced reading program ó Read one chapter a day in each section of the Bible ó Torah, historical books, poetical books, major prophets, minor prophets, gospels, Pauline letters, general letters/Revelation, and Proverbs.

Super-advanced reading program ó Read one chapter a day in each section of the Bible ó Torah, historical books, poetical books, major prophets, minor prophets, gospels, Pauline letters, general letters/Revelation, Proverbs, and five chapters in the Psalms.

You can set up your own Bible reading program. The ones above are just a few reading programs to consider. As you read and grow in the Lord you will find a reading program or several that are best for you. Feel free to change your reading program each year.

Old Testament

Torah ó Genesis-Deuteronomy

Historical books ó Joshua-Esther

Poetical books ó Job-Song of Solomon

Major prophets ó Isaiah-Ezekiel

Minor prophets ó Daniel-Malachi

New Testament

Gospels/Acts ó Matthew-Acts

Pauline letters ó Romans-Hebrews

General letters/Revelation ó James-Revelation

Study the Appendixes before you start this workbook. Make certain you are born from above (Appendix A), then take the Faith Check (Appendix B) and set up your Spiritual Fitness Program (Appendix C). Also do not forget to study Appendix D on humility and Appendix E on how to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

INTRODUCTION

The book of James was written by the sibling of Jesus around 45 A.D. Some argue it could have been written just prior to his execution by the Jews in 62 or 69 A.D.

He was called James the Just, James the Righteous or James of Jerusalem. He took command of the Church from the start. The Roman Catholic Church claims that Peter was the head Apostle and the first Pope, but all historical records state emphatically that James was the first head of the Church.

At the first Church Council in Jerusalem around 50 A.D. James was the Apostle who was in command. Peter made his argument that the Gentiles do not have to be circumcised to be saved to James and the other Jewish believers (Acts 15.7-11). James issued his decision that the Gentiles did not have to be circumcised to be saved. Yet he added that they should abstain from ó worshipping idols, fornicating, eating meat of animals that did not have their blood drained out and drinking blood (Acts 15.19-20).

James wrote this letter to Jewish believers in Jesus Christ who were scattered throughout the Roman Empire (1.1) from the great diaspora when Nebuchadnezzar conquered Israel and took most of the people into bondage to Babylon (Iraq). The diaspora of Jews was mentioned by the Pharisees (John 7.35). We also know that thousands of Jews from all over the empire travelled to Israel to participate in the feasts each year (Acts 2.9-11).

This book is not a book of doctrine as many of the books that Paul wrote are. Instead it is a book of instruction on how to live a holy life that can bring glory to God. It is a basic training manual that every believer should study throughout his life.

Companion training manuals in the New Testament are the letters of Peter and John. Every book in the Bible has instructions on holy living, but these six books are heavy with instructions and light on doctrine. They should be studied diligently along with Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, the two foremost Old Testament books of instruction on sanctification. Reading just two chapters a day ó one chapter a day in Proverbs and also one chapter a day in the books of Ecclesiastes, James, Peter and John is an excellent reading program ó you will read through those books once a month.

Mastering the various doctrines of Scripture can be hard for most believers, yet all believers can master the basic principles of holiness. They are contained in the letters of James, Peter and John, and in the books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes. Master those books and then you will be prepared to master the doctrines of the Bible.

CHAPTER ONE

Discussion/Study Questions

1. What is a bond-servant? (v. 1)

2. Who did James write his letter to? (v. 1)

3. What are we to do when we encounter trials? (v. 2)

4. What should the testing of our faith produce? (v. 3)

5. What should we be after we have gone through several testings of our faith? (v. 4)

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

6. What should we NOT lack? (vs. 5-7) _____

A. If we lack this what should we do?

B. What else can we do to get this? (Proverbs 1.1-7; 2.1-10; 4.7; 5.1-2; 7.1-4; 8.13)

C. Does God give this to all men and in what manner?

D. When we ask for this what must we NOT do and why?

E. What kind of a person are we if we do not ask in faith?

7. What should the brother of humble circumstances do? (v. 9)

8. What should the rich brother do and why? (vs. 10-11)

9. Which brother is given the greater blessing by God and which brother will have more rewards in Heaven? (vs. 9-10)

10. What should we do when we encounter trials and or temptations? (v. 12)

A. What will we receive if we are approved?

B. Is there something else we must do to receive the reward?

C. If we are not approved will we still receive the reward?

11. Does God tempt people or do They test people? (vs. 13-15)
(2 Samuel. 24.1; 1 Chron. 21.1)

A. What is the difference between temptation and testing?

1. Temptation is: _____

2. Testing is: _____

B. Can God be tempted by evil?

C. Was Jesus tempted by evil during His incarnation and could He have given in to it? (Luke 4.1-13)

D. What causes a person to be tempted? (v. 14)

E. What are the results of giving in to temptation? (v. 15)

1. _____

2. _____

F. Can the natural results of succumbing to temptation be stopped and if so how?

12. What must we guard against (v. 16)

A. Who is the father of the thing we must guard against?
(Genesis 3.1-7; John 8.44; Revelation 12.9; 20.3, 8, 10)

B. How do we guard ourselves against this? (Ephesians
6.10-18)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

13. Where does every good thing and every perfect gift come from? (v. 17)

A. Who receives these good things and gifts?

B. What does no *ōvariationō* and no *ōshifting shadowō* mean?

1. No variation: _____

2. No shifting shadow: _____

14. Who brought whom forth? (v. 18)

A. By what was this done?

B. What is a first fruit? (Exodus 23.16)

1. Who is the First Fruit? (1 Corinthians 15.20, 23)

2. Who was among the first fruits? (Matthew 27.51-53)

15. What must every believer be? (v. 19)

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

16. What can the anger of man never achieve? (v. 20)

A. What must we never let go down on our anger?
(Ephesians 4.26)

B. Can we exhibit righteous anger? (Ephesians 4.26)

17. What must all believers do? (v. 21)

A. _____

B. _____

18. What can save our souls? (v. 21)

A. How is a person saved? (Ephesians 2.8)

B. By what does faith come? (Romans 10.17)

19. What must all believers do? (v. 22)

A. Give a few examples of what we must do?

B. How do some believers delude themselves?

C. Should we periodically examine our faith? (2 Corinthians 13.5)

1. How do we examine our faith?

20. What one word best describes a hearer of the Word who does not obey it? (vs. 23-24)

21. What is the Perfect Law ó the Law of Liberty? (v. 25)
(James 2.12; John 8.32; Galatians 2.4; 6.2; 1 Peter 2.16)

22. What must all believers do with the Law of Liberty and what must we not do with it? (v. 25)

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

23. What will be the result if we do what we should do and not do something? (v. 25) (Psalms 1.1-3)

24. What must we all do if we claim to be religious? (v. 26)

A. If we do not do this what will be the result?

1. _____

2. _____

25. What is pure and undefiled religion? (v. 27)

A. _____

B. _____

CHAPTER ONE OUTLINE

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CHAPTER ONE COMMENTARY

Salutation

1.1 James, a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad: Greetings.

(1.1) James greeted all Hebrew believers in Jesus of Nazareth. Even though the letter was written to Hebrew believers it is for all believers of the New Testament dispensation just as all of the books of the New and Old Testaments are.

Testing of faith

1.2-4 Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. 4 And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

(1.2-4) He greeted believers in an unusual way by telling them to consider it all joy when they encounter trials. No one naturally considers it joy when they face trials. Even Spirit filled believers find it hard to do this, but we must. Until we are filled with joy when we suffer trials we will not be used fully by God for His glory. It does not happen overnight, but takes years of hard mental, emotional and spiritual work. That hard spiritual work is daily reading (Deuteronomy 17.19; Psalm 42.1-2; 63.1; 143.6; Revelation 1.3), studying (Deuteronomy 8.3; Matthew

4.4; Proverbs 2.1-5; 8.34; 22.17; John 5.39; Acts 17.11; Romans 15.4; 2 Timothy 2.15; 3.15), memorizing (Deuteronomy 6.6; Psalm 37.31; 40.8; 119.11; Proverbs 2.1; 3.1, 3; 4.1, 21; 6.21; 22.18; Isaiah 51.7; Ezekiel 3.10) and meditating on Scripture (Joshua 1.8; Job 22.22; 23.12; Psalm 1.2; 4.4; 19.14; 63.6; 77.12; 104.34; 119.15, 23, 27, 48, 78, 97, 99, 148; 143.5; 1 Timothy 4.15) bolstered by continuous prayer 24-7 (Matthew 7.7-11; Luke 18.1-8; John 14.13-14; 16.24; Ephesians 6.18; James 1.5; 1 Thessalonians 5.17). It also consists of regular fellowship with the brethren (Psalm 119.63; Proverbs 13.20; Acts 2.42, 46-47; 5.42; Hebrews 3.13; 10.24-25; 1 John 1.7), sharing the gospel (Psalm 96.2; Acts 2.47; 1 Peter 3.15) and making disciples (Deuteronomy 4.9-10; 6.5-7; 11.18-19; 32.46; Psalm 78.3-7; Matthew 28.19-20; 2 Timothy 2.2).

Trials test our faith, and show us how faithful we are to God. He knows how faithful we are, but we do not. Most times that we suffer tribulation we discover we are not as faithful as we think we are.

Testing of our faith should produce endurance which in turn perfects us in our faith (Romans 5.3-5) so we are lacking nothing. If trials have the opposite effect you are backslidden or not truly born from above. You may wish to examine your faith (2 Corinthians 13.5).

Wisdom

1.5-8 *But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. 6 But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. 7 For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, 8 being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.*

(1.5) Believers who lack wisdom should ask God for wisdom and it will be given to them. If you have never asked for wisdom start today and do it every day. Ask God to give you wisdom in the study of His Word, in your dealings with your spouse and children, the brethren and the lost, and in all aspects of your life.

Remember the statement God made to us through James concerning prayer: *“You do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures”* (4.2-3).

If we ask for those things which are of the will of God such as wisdom, He will give it to us because He gives to all believers generously and without finding fault. Do not delay ó ask today!

(1.6-8) When you ask God for wisdom do not doubt. Believe He will give it to you and ask as long as you live. No one can ever have too much wisdom. Those who doubt their prayers may not have them answered. Their faith is not strong enough and because of it they usually believe anything they are taught even when it contradicts the Scriptures. A great number of believers are led astray into cults because they are weak in faith ó double-minded and unstable. The way to strengthen your faith is to ask for more (Luke 17.5) and to study the Bible every day. Read the Word, memorize It and meditate on It. Spend more time in fellowship with the brethren and share your faith with the lost.

Rich versus poor

1.9-11 *But the brother of humble circumstances is to glory in his high position; 10 and the rich man is to glory in his humiliation, because like flowering grass he will pass away. 11 For the sun rises with a scorching wind and withers the grass; and its flower falls off and the beauty of its appearance is destroyed; so too the rich man in the midst of his pursuits will fade away.*

(1.9) Believers who are poor should be rich in spiritual things and they can take comfort in their lofty, spiritual position. Even

though most poor believers do not consider themselves to have a high position, they do. Unfortunately, most churches honor the rich members and ignore the poor. This is dead wrong and we are warned against respecting people because of their wealth (James 2.1-9). Pastors, deacons and members who respect the rich members and ignore the poor members are backslidden.

(1.10-11) Rich believers should glory in their lowly position for they are like the flower which soon passes away. Rich believers are the lowest ranking believers there are. This may seem odd, but with God most things in the spiritual realm are just the reverse of the physical realm.

Among the wicked the rich are considered the best and the brightest, and are highly respected. Among believers the poor should be highly respected while the rich are considered below average. Unfortunately, this is not so because the members of virtually every church in the Western world are apostate or backslidden. This is to be expected as it was prophesied that in the last days there would be a great falling away from the faith (2 Thessalonians 2.3; 2 Timothy 4.3-4).

Just as the grass and flowers die when the scorching wind blows, rich men also pass away sooner than they expect to. All men are *ōa vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away* (James 4.14). Because of this we should use every minute we have to serve God rather than fulfill our lusts, including seeking after riches (Matthew 6.33).

The statements about the poor being spiritually rich and the rich being spiritually poor are general statements. Not every poor believer is spiritually rich but many are, and not every rich believer is spiritually poor, but most are. The rich are consumed by their riches. They think about how to hold on to them and to make more money. They seldom spend time in the Word and prayer. If you are rich prove you are not spiritually poor by spending more time in the Word and prayer, and by being a servant of all. If you are poor prove you are spiritually rich by being in the Word and prayer daily and by serving the brethren.

Perseverance under trial

1.12 Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

(1.12) Believers who persevere under trials are happy (James 5.11; Luke 6.22; 1 Peter 3.14). This is the reverse of what the world believes. When we come through trials without falling apart we realize we are more obedient to God than we thought we were ó we are filled with the Spirit (1 Peter 4.14), and that gives us great joy and happiness. If you are not happy when you are obedient to God something is wrong.

If you are unhappy when you pray, listen to the Word, read It, study It, memorize It and meditate on It you are backslidden or not saved. If you are unhappy when you fellowship with the brethren and rarely share the gospel you are not right with the Lord. These are the basic acts of obedience which should bring joy and happiness to us. If you are not doing these things on a regular basis you something is wrong.

When we come through trials and tribulations without complaint we prove to men to be obedient children of God who love Him, and we will receive the crown of life. This is a special reward that is only given to those who are proved to be obedient. It is not given to believers who suffer loss at the judgment seat of Jesus (1 Corinthians 3.15).

Lust, a cause of sin

1.13-16 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone. 14 But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. 15 then when lust has conceived, it gives birth

to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death. 16 Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.

(1.13-14) No one can ever say truthfully that when he is tempted the temptation comes from God. He does not tempt people and He cannot be tempted by sin. Whenever anyone succumbs to temptation they do it of their own volition because they want to. Each man is responsible for his own sins and cannot blame them on someone else. Believers have the power to overcome temptation ó the Holy Spirit.

No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it. (1 Corinthians 10.13)

(1.15) When a believer dwells on a lust of the flesh (1 John 2.16) he will eventually indulge in it. That is why we must not entertain lustful thoughts. Once a person commits a sin if he does not confess it, repent and ask forgiveness (1 John 1.9) he breaks fellowship with God and starts down the road to backsliding. A believer can either continue down that road until he comes to his senses, gets his fill of sin (Proverbs 14.14) or is taken home by God (John 15.2, 6). When sin is accomplished it brings about death to the sinner, saved or lost.

(1.16) We must not be deceived about the nature of sin. It is sly and sneaks up on us dressed as something that is harmless. There are many things believers do which are sinful that they think are permissible. They argue that they have liberty in the Lord yet they have been deceived. A classic example is watching television and movies. Most TV shows and movies glorify sin and the father of sin, the devil. Yet believers watch these movies and programs which are filled with foul and vulgar language, that show sex, rape, homosexuality, violence, murder, drunkenness, drug abuse and all kinds of perverse acts. We are not to *óparticipate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but even*

expose themö (Ephesians 5.11). Watching these TV shows and movies of the wicked is a sin. There are some TV shows and movies that have none of the obscene things listed above in them, but are there other things we can do?

There dozens of other things which are sins that most believers think are alright. Instead all believers should avoid anything which is not honorable, right, pure, lovely, and of good repute (Philippians 4.8).

Gifts and the purpose of God

1.17-18 *Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow. 18 In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures.*

(1.17) Everything given to man that is good comes directly from God. This includes the wicked. God gives good things to the wicked as well as the righteous (Matthew 5.45).

Every gift that God gives to His children is perfect and lacking in nothing. When He gives us gifts (Ephesians 4.8) *õfor the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christö* (Ephesians 4.12) they are sufficient and we do not need anything else, but His power to use them.

God is the Father of lights (1 John 1.5) who lives in unapproachable light (1 Timothy 6.16). God does not change like a shadow that shifts from moment to moment in His dealings with man. He deals the same with all men from Adam to eternity. He does not change (Hebrews 13.8), and never will for if He did He would not be totally perfect without flaw and sin.

(1.18) God brought the elect forth from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light, the kingdom of His Son, Jesus of

Nazareth (Colossians 1.13; 1 Peter 2.9) by the Word of Truth ó Jesus Christ (John 1.1, 14). He did this by His own free will without being coerced, compelled, prompted, or obligated. He could have let all mankind die in their sins and burn forever in the Lake of Fire and still be perfectly just, righteous and holy, without sin or fault of any kind. It is solely because He gave His only begotten Son (John 3.16), when He did not have to that we can be saved by His grace (Ephesians 2.8-9).

If God had been obligated to give His only begotten Son then salvation would not be a work of grace, but a work of obligation, a payment of a debt God owed mankind. This is what the lost believe, yet many Christians believe this also.

Holiness and good works

1.19-27 This you know, my beloved brethren. But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger; 20 for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God. 21 Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls. 22 But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. 23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; 24 for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. 25 But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does. 26 If anyone thinks himself to be religious, and yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this man's religion is worthless. 27 Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

(1.19) All believers should be quick to listen to others and slow to speak. But above all we must be slow to anger. One of the traits of a fool is that he does not listen to others. A fool will not listen to counsel because he thinks he knows everything (Proverbs 12.15; 18.2). It is impossible to learn anything without listening to others either in word or in print.

A second trait of a fool is that he always shoots his mouth off, especially when he has no idea what he is talking about (Proverbs 29.20). He also tells people everything he knows (Proverbs 29.11) which is very little.

A wise man is just the opposite. He listens to others before he speaks (Proverbs 1.5) and carefully considers what he says. He also says very little for he knows that the more he speaks the better the chances are he will say something to offend others (Proverbs 10.19).

A Spirit controlled believer will have control over his anger. He will not blow up on people and say rash things. Patience (control over one's tongue) is a powerful quality which is more valuable than being physically strong or commanding large armies (Proverbs 16.32).

(1.20) We should control our anger because it never bears righteous fruit. Anger is a sin and it always causes problems in a family, especially the family of God. We are commanded to get rid of anger (verbal and physical) along with bitterness, clamor, slander and abusive speech (Ephesians 4.31; Colossians 3.8). When we get angry with someone we should resolve it before the end of the day (Ephesians 4.26) or it will fester and grow into hatred. Hatred is something that can interfere in our fellowship with God.

There are times when we should have righteous anger toward evil deeds and sinful acts (Ephesians 4.26), but we should never act in the flesh. We should pray and wait until our anger has subsided before we do something.

(1.21-22) All believers are to put away the old sinful self ó stop committing the sins we did before we trusted in Jesus. Instead of continuing to live like the wicked we are to humbly receive the

Word that was implanted in our hearts ó the Scriptures which brought us to a saving knowledge of Jesus. After receiving the Word we are to act upon it not hide it under a bushel (Matthew 5.15). We are the light of the world through our actions. If we do not let our light shine by obeying God the lost world will remain in darkness and never come to a saving knowledge of Jesus.

Believers who do not walk in the Spirit (Galatians 5.16, 25) are living in sin and deluding themselves. All believers must prove that they are born anew and a new creation (2 Corinthians 5.17) by living the Christian life, not just professing to be saved. We must become doers of the Word and not just hearers deluding ourselves (James 1.22). People who claimed to be born from above and are not doing the good works which God prepared for them to perform (Ephesians 2.10) may not be born of God(1 John 5.1-2).

(1.23-24) Believers who listen to the preaching of the Word and read it, but do not act upon it are simple-minded people. They are so simple-minded that they cannot remember what they look like after looking at themselves in the mirror. Believers who refuse to obey God are simple-minded because they are ignorant of Scripture or they choose to be. For the latter it is an act of the will.

Believers who say they cannot read, study, memorize and meditate on the Scriptures because it is too hard for them are lying. Only severely handicapped people can make that excuse. Every believer is smart enough to understand the Bible because the Holy Spirit teaches them (John 14.26; 16.13; 1 John 2.20, 27) and they can memorize Scripture. Virtually everyone has memorized the lyrics of secular songs and most can recite lines from their favorite movies. No believer has an excuse.

We all have teachers who help us (Ephesians 4.11-13) and we have no excuse to not use them. If you have difficulty understanding the Bible go to your pastor and ask him to personally train you or find someone to train you how to study the Bible and to help you set up a study program.

All believers are to study the Scriptures every day (Acts 17.11) as well as read Them (Matthew 21.42), memorize Them

(Psalm 119.11; Proverbs 2.1) and meditate on Them day and night (Joshua 1.8; Psalm 1.2). All believers should be trained well enough in the Scriptures to be able to teach others (Matthew 28.19-20; 2 Timothy 2.2), especially fathers (Deuteronomy 6.7). Last, but not least, we are to share the Gospel of eternal life with the lost (Deuteronomy 6.8-9; Psalm 57.9; 119.46; Matthew 28.19-20; 1 Peter 3.15).

(1.25) Believers who study the Bible diligently and obey it are happy serving the Lord. Believers who walk in the Spirit (Galatians 5.16, 25) are happy while believers who walk in the flesh are only happy when they are fulfilling their fleshly desires. The rest of the time they are fighting the Spirit and in spiritual turmoil (Galatians 5.17). Eventually backslidden believers will get a fill of their sins (Proverbs 14.14), and return to God or be taken home (John 15.2, 6; 1 Corinthians 5.5).

It is far better to diligently serve God and be happy in this life and experience the peace (John 14.27; 16.33) and the joy of Jesus (John 15.11; 17.13). Besides having a full and rewarding life in this world we will have great reward in Heaven (Matthew 5.12; 1 Corinthians 3.12-14).

(1.26-27) You can tell if you are religious if you have control over your mouth. If you do not speak in anger, slander people and gossip (1 Timothy 3.11; Titus 2.3), tell silly stories and crude jokes (Ephesians 5.4) you are religious. If you cannot control your mouth your faith is worthless.

Besides controlling your mouth you need to help orphans and widows. If your church does not have a program of caring for widows and orphans go to your pastors and ask them to start one.

It is the duty of churches to care for them not the government. The government cannot provide them with spiritual help and the little help the government gives them does more harm than good. The fact that believers in America failed to do their duty has encouraged the government to take over our responsibility creating the disastrous welfare system that we are

saddled with. Believers only have themselves to blame. If we do not go about our business things will get worse.

The last thing you must do to be religious is to keep from living a life of sin ó keeping yourself unpolluted by the world. If you are playing around in the world, you are not religious; you are not walking in the Spirit (Galatians 5.16, 25).

CLOSED BOOK TEST **(Timed - 60 seconds)**

1. What are we to do when we encounter trials?

2. What should we ask for just as Solomon did?

3. Who is considered by God to be greater in the spiritual realm ó the rich or the poor?

4. Are all your abilities, intelligence and wealth gifts from God or did you obtain them by your own power?

5. What three things should we do concerning our speech and temper?

6. What does the anger of man never produce?

7. Should all believers be hearers of the Word and doers of the Word?

8. If we cannot control our speech is our faith worthless?

9. What is pure and undefiled religion?

10. Is it the duty of government or the Church to care for widows and orphans?

VERSES TO MEMORIZE AND MEDITATE ON

The following are the key verses of chapter one:

2-5, 9-10, 12, 19-20, 22, 26-27

Try to memorize as many verses as you can. If you find other verses you desire to memorize do so. You can never memorize too much Scripture. Even if you memorize and meditate on these verses while you study this book and then forget them later it will be a blessing to you. The Holy Spirit can give you total recall years later if the need arises (John 14.26).

CHAPTER TWO

Discussion/Study Questions

1. What must we not do with our faith? (vs. 1-4)

- A. List some of the motives of this sin.

2. Who does God mostly choose to save? (v. 5)

3. What does God promise to those He chose to save and what should their response to being chosen be? (v. 5)

4. What type of person is it shameful to show favoritism to? (vs. 6-7)

A. What do these people do to others?

B. What do they do to Jesus?

5. What is the Royal Law? (v. 8)

A. What is the Holy Law that all the commandments hang on? (Mark 12.29-33)

6. Is showing partiality (favoritism) a sin? (vs. 9-11)

A. If a person were to keep the whole law except for one commandment would he be guilty of breaking all the commandments?

B. Why would a person be held guilty of breaking all the commandments if he broke only one?

C. Why do you think favoritism is a sin?

7. Should we live according to the Ten Commandments or according to another law? (v. 12) (Galatians 5.13-26)

A. Is there any Old Testament commandment that we are bound to keep to remain in fellowship with God?

B. Should we focus on obeying commandments or focus on living by the Holy Spirit? (Galatians 5.18)

1. How do we walk by the Spirit? (1 Thessalonians 5.17; James 1.22; Deuteronomy 17.19; 2 Timothy 2.15; Psalm 119.11; Psalm 1.2; Hebrews 10.24-25; 1 Peter 3.15; Matt. 28.19-20)

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____

e. _____

f. _____

g. _____

h. _____

i. _____

8. Whose judgment will be merciless? (v. 13)

A. Which is better ó mercy or judgment?

9. If a person is born from above will he do good works? (v. 14)

A. Can a person be saved and never do any good works?

B. Are we saved just to escape judgment or are we saved for that and other things? (Ephesians 2.10)

C. If a person who claims to be saved shows no evidence of being a new creation is it possible he believed in vain? (1Corinthians 15.2)

D. Should all believers examine their faith to see if it is real? (2 Corinthians 13.5)

1. How does one examine his faith?

10. What is one way of doing good works? (vs. 15-16) (1 John 3.17-19)

11. Can a person's faith be worthless? (v. 17)

A. What does it mean if one's faith is worthless?

C. If one's faith is worthless does it mean they lost their salvation or they were never truly saved?

12. Should it be obvious to all whether or not a person is saved?
(v. 18)

13. What is the difference between the belief of demons in God and the belief of people in God? (v. 19)

A. Can demons be saved by belief in God?

B. Is their belief different than our belief and how so?

14. If a believer has no good works is he a fool? (v. 20)

15. If a believer's faith is useless is he in danger of being taken home? (John 15.1-6)

16. Was Abraham justified by God by his works or by his faith? (vs. 21-23) (Romans 4.1-5)

A. Was the willingness of Abraham to offer his son Isaac a work or an act of faith?

B. What does James mean that faith is perfected by works?

C. Is there a contradiction by the statement that Abraham was justified by works (v. 21) and the statement that he believed God and his belief was reckoned to him as righteousness? (v. 23) (Genesis 15.6; Romans 4.3)

17. Is a person justified in the eyes of men by faith plus works?
(v. 24)

A. Was what Rahab did a work or an act of faith? (v. 25)

18. How can we tell whether or not a person's faith is useless?
(v. 26)

19. When is a person physically dead? (v. 26)

20. If scientists succeed in cloning a person will the clone have a
spirit?

CHAPTER TWO OUTLINE

- | | |
|--------------------------------|-------|
| I. Showing favoritism is a sin | 1-13 |
| II. Faith and good works | 14-26 |

CHAPTER TWO

COMMENTARY

Showing favoritism is a sin

2.1-13 My brethren, do not hold your faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ with an attitude of personal favoritism. 2 For if a man comes into your assembly with a gold ring and dressed in fine clothes, and there also comes in a poor man in dirty clothes, 3 and you pay special attention to the one who is wearing the fine clothes, and say, "You sit here in a good place," and you say to the poor man, "You stand over there, or sit down by my footstool," 4 have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil motives? 5 Listen, my beloved brethren: did not God choose the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him? 6 But you have dishonored the poor man. Is it not the rich who oppress you and personally drag you into court? 7 Do they not blaspheme the fair name by which you have been called?

8 If, however, you are fulfilling the royal law according to the Scripture, "YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF," you are doing well. 9 But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. 10 For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all. 11 For He who said, "DO NOT COMMIT ADULTERY," also said, "DO NOT COMMIT

MURDER.” Now if you do not commit adultery, but do commit murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. 12 So speak and so act as those who are to be judged by the law of liberty. 13 For judgment will be merciless to one who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment.

(2.1) Believers should never favor one person over another for any reason, especially for their status or wealth. God does not respect one person over another (Acts 10.34; Romans 2.11) based on anything a person does for we are all dead in our sins (Ephesians 2.1) until we receive Jesus (John 1.12). When we favor certain people we only cause strife and division and make it difficult to attain unity of faith within a local body (Ephesians 4.12).

(2.2-4) A common way believers show favoritism is to treat wealthy people who attend a service better than the poor man who looks like he is a homeless vagabond. Believers know the poor man will not be able to give much money if any, and may need money. Most churches try to make the poor who wander in not welcomed while they do their best to land rich people who visit them. This is dead wrong and a sign that the church leadership and members are backslidden. Pastors who show favoritism or who allow the flock to do it need to get right with the Lord or step down. They have no business being in a position of leadership. Unfortunately most pastors show favoritism to the rich and treat the poor like dirt.

One poor man who is filled with the Spirit is more valuable than 100 rich, backslidden believers. A church that has 100 rich, backslidden believers will inevitably be in poor spiritual condition. The rich will constantly be fighting among themselves on how to use ötheirö money. When a believer gives preference to one believer over another he does it out of evil intentions and it is a sin.

A righteous believer öshows no partiality to princes, nor regards the rich above the poorö (Job 34.19). Instead of showing favoritism to the rich he gives hilariously to the poor

(Proverbs 19.17) knowing God will repay him with interest in due time. He also knows that if he shows partiality to the rich or gives to the rich he will come to poverty (Proverbs 22.16).

(2.5) God chose the poor of this world (1 Corinthians 1.27) to be rich in faith and to be heirs of the kingdom He promised to His children (Romans 8.17; Galatians 3.29; Tit. 3.7; Hebrews 6.17; 1 Peter 3.7).

God uses what the world considers to be weak to show His might. He has done this since the beginning of the world. He chose the nation of Israel to be His ambassador to the world not because they were the strongest or largest nation. On the contrary they were one of the smallest and weakest. Yet He used them to show His might again and again. He brought them out of bondage in Egypt with a strong hand (Exodus 13.9) and had them take Jericho at their weakest time (Joshua 5.2-8). He also turned the world upside down with 12 Hebrew men (Acts 17.6).

(2.6-7) When we discriminate against the poor we show complete contempt for them. Instead of favoring the rich we should treat the poor as well as we treat the rich.

It is self defeating to treat the rich better than others for they are the ones who persecute the middle class and poor. If you cross them they take revenge by dragging you into court. They also do more than their fair share of blaspheming the name of our Lord and Savior.

Believers favor the rich for only one reason ó greed. They think they may get some money out of them for their church or for themselves. This is a sin which all believers are commanded to flee from (1 Timothy 6.11).

(2.8-9) When we fulfill the royal law of loving our neighbors as ourselves we will not show partiality. This is the highest law in regard to horizontal relationships.

The highest law of all is our vertical relationship with God. *“You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength”* (Deuteronomy 6.5).

Whenever we do not love our neighbor as ourselves by showing partiality we sin and become a transgressor of the royal law. We also transgress against the highest law for no one can love God and despise his neighbor or brother (1 John 4.20).

(2.10-11) When a person violates just one of the ten commandments he is guilty of breaking all of them. The law is a complete unit which must be obeyed to the letter. To break just one makes a person the breaker of the whole law. This seems unjust to man, but God requires perfection. Total perfection is mandatory to meet His requirements, and only Jesus has met that requirement.

Even if a person could keep the whole law, and no one can for *õall have sinned and fall short of the glory of Godö* (Romans 3.23), they would still go to hell because all are born in sin (Psalm 51.5). No matter how hard a person tries he cannot work his way into Heaven *õfor by grace you have been saved through faith, and not of yourselves, it is a gift of God; not of works, that no one should boastö* (Ephesians 2.8-9).

Yet even though no one can work their way into Heaven all believers are to strive to be perfect as our heavenly Father is (Matthew 5.48).

(2.12-13) All believers should speak and act as though they are being judged by the law of liberty. We should not condemn others who do things we do not think are right (1 Corinthians 4.5). If you think something that is not described in the Bible as a sin is a sin do not do it (James 4.17), but do not condemn others for doing it. If you think you can do just about anything think again. We *õwere called to freedomö* but *õdo not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one anotherö* (Galatians 5.13).

All believers will give account to Jesus of what they did for Him (1 Corinthians 3.13-15; 2 Corinthians 5.10). We will receive rewards for the good works we did with the right motives. We will not receive rewards for the good works we do for the Lord with wrong motives. We must always serve God and others from a pure motive of love.

Faith and works

2.14-26 *What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but he has no works? Can that faith save him? 15 If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and be filled," and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that? 17 Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself.*

But someone may well say, "You have faith and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works." 19 You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder. 20 But are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow, that faith without works is useless? 21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar? 22 You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, faith was perfected; 23 and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "AND ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS," and he was called the friend of God. 24 You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone. 25 In the same way, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way? 26 For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.

(2.18-19) James answered those who claimed they had faith by showing them his faith by his works. He lived what he preached, unlike most believers today. Anyone who claims to believe in Jesus Christ and does not live for Him, is either not saved or backslidden. You cannot be saved and living in the power of the Holy Spirit without doing the work of the Lord. If you are not

actively serving Him you are backslidden. There is no neutral gear for believers.

James reminded his readers and all who claim to believe *õthat God is oneö* that they do well, but the "*demons also believe, and shudder.*" Just believing in God does not save anyone. It is a faith in Jesus Christ and His work on the cross that saves (Acts 16.31; Romans 10.9-10).

(2.20) Believers who do not understand that faith with no works is useless are foolish. You cannot claim to have faith in Jesus and be without works. If you are without works you most likely are not saved and you are deceiving yourself.

(2.21) The prime example of an Old Testament dispensation patriarch who had faith and proved it by his works is Abraham. The ultimate act of his faith was his willingness to kill his son, Isaac, when God asked him to (Genesis 22.1-14).

(2.22) Abraham acted on faith and because he exercised his faith while he obeyed God his faith was perfected. His faith was so strong he believed that if he killed Isaac that God would raise him from the dead (Hebrews 11.17-19).

(2.23) God said that Abraham believed in Him and *õit was reckoned to him as righteousnessö* (Genesis 15.6) before he sought to sacrifice Isaac (Genesis 22). Abraham was saved before he obeyed God by offering up his son. His faith was proved, not to God, but to the world when he offered Isaac. The Scripture was fulfilled when Abraham offered up his son.

(2.24) This verse has confounded believers for millennium. Many believe that James is teaching that salvation is by faith plus works. We know this is not true for in other passages the doctrine of soteriology is plainly stated as being by faith alone without the works of man:

For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works that no one should boast (Ephesians 2.8-9).

For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from the works of the law (Romans 3.28).

But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit. (Titus 3.4-5).

Just as David also declared the blessing of the man to whom God reckons righteousness apart from works: "Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will in no wise take into account" (Romans 4.6-8).

The Holy Word of God does not contradict Itself. Therefore James, under inspiration of the Holy Spirit, wrote that man is justified in the eyes of man by faith and works. When the entire passage is read in context it is clear that James is writing about justification in the sight of man, not God.

We know this is true because God declared Abraham to be justified by faith (Genesis 15.6) about 20 years before he offered up Isaac and demonstrated his faith before man (Genesis 22.1-14).

(2.25) Rahab was also justified in the sight of man by helping the two spies escape. Yet she was justified by God because of her faith (Hebrews 11.31).

(2.26) When the spirit leaves a body that body is dead. This is the only definition of death that any government should accept. As long as there is life in a body that means the spirit of that person still resides there and they are alive. It does not matter if they are a total vegetable.

The practice of keeping people alive with high-tech medical equipment is wrong. It only makes the manufacturers extremely wealthy as well as the hospitals and doctors. Yet everyone who is in a vegetable state who can live without medical equipment must be kept alive. To let them die by not feeding them is

murder. Sometimes God allows a person to slip into a coma to force the person's family to slow down and refocus their priorities. When you have to care for someone in a coma your priorities and lifestyle change.

Just as the body is dead when the spirit leaves it, so is a person's faith without works. Your faith is dead (useless). Believers who are not actively serving God are backslidden and their faith is of no value. They are spiritual vegetables. Backslidden believers may wish to examine themselves to see if they are in the faith (2 Corinthians 13.5).

This passage also wipes out the lie that people can astral project their spirit. Occultists believe their spirit can leave their body and travel around the world and the universe. This is pure nonsense. If they had this supernatural power they could not leave for more than a few minutes or their brain would be dead when they returned. The moment their spirit leaves their body it ceases functioning and the brain is deprived of oxygen. After five or six minutes without oxygen the brain dies.

Anyone who claims to leave their body for more than five minutes would never wake up when they returned. They may claim their body continues to function when their spirit leaves, but the Holy Word of God says it cannot.

Daily prayer and study of the Bible are the most important things a believer can do. There is nothing else in this life that is more important, including marriage, having a family, a career, a home, money, status, fame or worldly possessions.

When the devil tempted Jesus to turn stones into bread He rebuked him quoting Scripture:

But He answered and said, "It is written, 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD.'" (Matthew 4.4)

Praying throughout each day and reading, studying, memorizing and meditating on Scripture is not a hobby that believers should do once a week or whenever they feel like it. It is something they should do every day, and it should be the first

thing they do when they roll out of bed. Fathers have an extra responsibility. They are to teach the Scriptures to their children every day:

ōThese words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.ö (Deuteronomy 6.6-7)

You could be the richest person to ever live worth hundreds of trillions of dollars; have a beautiful spouse and children; have perfect health; have no troubles and have every desire of your heart fulfilled, yet if you never or rarely read and studied the Bible, only prayed for 30 seconds before each meal, attended church once or maybe twice a week you would be one of the spiritually poorest persons to ever live.

An unemployed, homeless person with no worldly possessions except the clothing on his back, a pair of shoes and a Bible, who studies the Word of God and prays several hours a day, fellowships with the brethren as often as possible, worships God daily, shares the Gospel frequently and makes disciples would be one of the spiritually richest persons to ever live.

Worldly status means nothing to God. He looks at the inner being (1 Samuel 16.7; Jeremiah 12.3) and blesses those who love Him with all of their heart, soul, mind and body (Deuteronomy 6.5; Mark 12.30) and seek after His kingdom and His righteousness before all else (Matthew 6.33).

God considers wealthy believers to be spiritually poor and those who are poor in worldly goods to be spiritually rich:

But the brother of humble circumstances is to glory in his high position; and the rich man is to glory in his humiliation, because like flowering grass he will pass away. (James 1.9-10)

This truth is something that virtually no pastor and congregation in America understand. God honors the poor for

NOT seeking after the riches of the world and He humbles the rich for seeking after riches. There is nothing wrong in making a lot of money as long as you give all of your excess earnings to the poor and the work of the Lord. Believers who make millions and spend most of it on themselves and give just a tithe to the Lord are not using the money God has given them for His glory. Instead they are using it for their selfish, worldly pleasures. It is a blessing from God to make millions if those riches are given to the poor and the Lord. Yet if you spend more on yourself than you need to live on ó wealth can be a curse. Wealth easily derails believers from serving God as Paul explained:

For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. (1 Timothy 6.10)

You may think you are immune to the seduction of the riches of the world, but NO one is. The more wealth you hoard the more time you will spend caring for your worldly goods. The only safe way to keep from being corrupted and having your faith ship-wrecked is to limit your worldly possessions and wealth. Keep what you need to live a normal life and give the rest away.

We are commanded by Jesus Himself to store up riches in Heaven rather than on Earth:

Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (Matthew 6.19-21)

Any believer who stores up excessive treasure on Earth and stores up no or little treasure in Heaven is committing a sin. There is no excuse for any believer on Earth to live at a higher standard of living than the average standard of living is in the

community he lives in. The national average income for a family of four in America is about \$57,000 a year. If you do not live in a state where the cost of living is more than the national average and you make more than \$57,000 a year you should give the excess to the poor and the Lord. Learn how to live at a modest standard of living and spend more time in spiritual matters.

All believers are commanded to give to the poor and needy brethren:

If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and be filled," and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that? Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself. (James 2.15-17)

But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth. We will know by this that we are of the truth, and will assure our heart before Him. (1 John 3.17-19)

Our people must also learn to engage in good deeds to meet pressing needs, so that they will not be unfruitful. (Titus 3.14)

Contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality. (Romans 12.13)

Your intelligence, physical abilities, financial savvy, career, spouse, children, home, possessions were all given to you by God.

Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow. (James 1.17)

You did not get them on your own no matter what you may think. He did not give you all of your abilities and possessions so you could live it up. He gave you everything you have so you can use it to bring glory to Him. Everything you own is to be used to bring glory to God just as everything you do is to bring glory to Him:

Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. (1 Corinthians 10.31)

Take inventory of what you have in the way of abilities and possessions and see how you can use them to bring glory to God. If you have work skills volunteer to do work at the church or for members in the church. If you have excess wealth find members in the church, relatives, neighbors and strangers who need help and give to them. If they need work give them work to do.

If you believe that God will bless you with more worldly wealth than you give to Him and the poor it makes sense to give away all of your excess wealth for He will give you even more. Do not think you have to have a tax receipt for every penny you give to the church or the poor and needy. God does not need IRS tax right offs to stay in business.

If you do not believe God gave you all of your talents, wealth, possessions and everything you have do not give anything to Him and the poor. Hoard it all for yourself. You may also decide to stop going to church and tithing. Why bother? God will not bless you and you will be just throwing your hard-earned money away.

If you think poor believers are lazy, useless eaters do not give them a penny. Let them live in their poverty and spurn them. Most believers feel this way. James warned of this:

My brethren, do not hold your faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ with an attitude of personal favoritism. 5 Listen, my beloved brethren: did not God choose the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?

But you have dishonored the poor man. Is it not the rich who oppress you and personally drag you into court? Do they not blaspheme the fair name by which you have been called? If, however, you are fulfilling the royal law according to the Scripture, "YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF," you are doing well. But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all. (James 2.1, 5-10)

Yet if you are saved walk the talk. Open up your storehouse of riches and share them with the poor and needy. See if God will pour out blessings on you.

Give, and it will be given to you. They will pour into your lap a good measure--pressed down, shaken together, and running over. For by your standard of measure it will be measured to you in return. (Luke 6.38)

Serve God, not mammon (Matthew 6.24). Make your life count for something. Bring glory to God.

CLOSED BOOK TEST

(Timed - 60 seconds)

1. Who should we give more honor to ó the rich or the poor?

2. Is it a sin to show favoritism? _____

3. Has God chosen more poor or rich people for salvation?

4. If a person breaks just one commandment is he guilty of all?

5. Can a believer have faith, but never do good works?

6. Are wealthy believers commanded to give to poor believers?

7. Can a true believer's faith be useless? _____

8. Was Abraham and Rahab justified before YAHWEH or before men by their works?

9. Do others know we are saved by what we say or by what we do?

10. When is the physical body dead?

VERSES TO MEMORIZE AND MEDITATE ON

The following are the key verses of chapter two:

1, 5, 8-10, 14, 17, 23, 26

Try to memorize as many as you can. If you find other verses you desire to memorize do so. You can never memorize too many Scriptures.

CHAPTER THREE

Discussion/Study Questions

1. Why should there not be many Bible teachers? (v. 1)

2 What kind of judgment is this talking about? (v. 1)

A. Is it a judgment of rewards or punishment?

B. Can a teacher lose rewards by teaching false doctrines?

3. What does it mean to stumble? (v. 2)

A. Can a person never stumble in word but stumble in deed?

B. Can a person be perfect in word and deed?

C. Are we commanded to be perfect?

1. Should every believer have total control over his speech?
(vs. 3-4)

2. Is it a sin to boast? (v. 5)

6. Why is the tongue (speech) compared to fire? (vs. 5-6)

7. Why is the speech of virtually everyone sinful? (v. 6)

8. How does our speech defile our body? (v. 6)

9. What does it mean that our speech sets on fire the course of our life? (v. 6)

10. What is meant by the statement that our speech is set on fire by Hell? (v. 6)

11. Why is it so hard for people to control their speech? (vs. 7-8)

A. How can a person get control over his speech?

B. What causes our speech to be a restless evil that is full of deadly poison? (v. 8)

12. Why is it wrong to curse someone? (v. 9)

13. Why do you think it is easy for believers to praise God and a few minutes later curse someone? (v. 9)

14. If a person praises God and also curses people is his heart (true self) holy or evil or both? (vs. 11-12) (Galatians 5.17)

15. If a person is truly wise and has understanding what will he do? (v. 13)

16. What two things should we NOT have and what should we NOT do? (v. 14)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

17. When we are arrogant why does it mean we are lying against the truth? (v. 14)

18. Is there a false wisdom? (v. 15)

A. What are the sources of this wisdom?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

19. What are the results of being jealous and having selfish ambition? (v. 16)

1. _____

2. _____

20. Is it good to have ambition that is not selfish? (v. 16)

21. Where does real wisdom come from? (v. 17)

22. What are the attributes of true wisdom? (v. 17)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

23. What seed bears the fruit of righteousness? (v. 18)

24. Explain what it means to sow this seed and why it is important that it is sown in peace? (v. 18)

CHAPTER THREE OUTLINE

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------|
| I. Dangers of the tongue | 1-6 |
| II. The need to control the tongue | 7-12 |
| III. Wisdom of the world and Heaven | 13-18 |

CHAPTER THREE

COMMENTARY

Dangers of the tongue

3.1-6 *Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment. 2 For we all stumble in many ways. If anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body as well. 3 Now if we put the bits into the horses' mouths so that they will obey us, we direct their entire body as well. 4 Look at the ships also, though they are so great and are driven by strong winds, are still directed by a very small rudder wherever the inclination of the pilot desires. 5 So also the tongue is a small part of the body, and yet it boasts of great things. See how great a forest is set aflame by such a small fire! 6 And the tongue is a fire, the very world of iniquity; the tongue is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body, and sets on fire the course of our life, and is set on fire by hell.*

(3.1) Only a few believers are to become teachers in a church because not every believer is given that gift (Romans 12:7; 1 Corinthians 12:28-29). Yet all parents should teach the Scriptures to their children (Deuteronomy 6.6-7; Proverbs 4.1; 6.20).

To know if you have this gift you must teach a few times and have the pastors decide if you do or do not. If the pastors do not believe you have the gift of teaching then you do not. God will

not reveal to you that you have the gift and keep this fact secret from the pastors of the church.

Those who teach will be judged more severely here on Earth, and at the judgment seat of Jesus (1 Corinthians 3:11-15). If one teaches false doctrine due to negligence in studying the Word or deliberately, God will discipline him. Some preachers teach false doctrine thinking they have to keep their flock in line. An example is the doctrine of Eternal Security. They falsely believe that if they teach that doctrine the flock will live like the wicked and their (the preacher's) ministry will fall apart. Preachers must never teach a doctrine out of fear.

If a preacher teaches a doctrine inaccurately because he has not learned the truth on a specific subject the Holy Spirit will guide him into the truth (John 16:13) as he seeks the truth and diligently studies the Word (2 Timothy 2:15). If a teacher does not teach Scripture accurately after learning the truth he will have great loss of rewards.

At the judgment seat of Jesus all teachers will give account as to why they taught what they taught. They will be judged on their motive for teaching. If they taught to receive praise from men, to feel important or to lord their position over others they will receive no rewards. If they taught by the power and wisdom of the Holy Spirit to feed the flock they will receive rewards. Rewards for works are based on one's motivation not results. A teacher, elder, evangelist, etc., may have a prosperous ministry, but if he is serving God for the wrong motives he will receive no rewards.

(3.2) Every believer stumbles and we have all *sinned and fall short of the glory of God* (Romans 3:23). But the biggest stumbling block is the tongue. If we can control what we say we can control our behavior.

(3.3-4) James uses the example of putting bits into a horse's mouth and the rudder steering a ship to show that a small part of something can be used to control the entire thing no matter how large or powerful it may be.

(3.5) The tongue is a small part of the body yet it is the most influential part. A person's words influence others more than their deeds. This is why we must watch what we say and let our behavior do the talking for us. Lead by example rather than barking out commands. Rational people respect what a person does more than what one says.

When we lose control of what we say we stir up all kinds of trouble. One of the more troublesome works of the tongue is boasting. Everyone likes to brag about how great they are, and when they do they only cause others to be jealous or to think lowly of them. No one likes a braggart. A believer who is filled with the Holy Spirit, and therefore the love of God, does not brag and he is not arrogant (1 Corinthians 13:4). A believer who is boastful and arrogant cannot be filled with the Holy Spirit. If you are arrogant God will judge you (Psalm 101:5; James 4:6).

Just as a fire can destroy millions of acres of forest along with homes and people the tongue can destroy the lives of millions of people and does every year. Throughout the world reputations and lives of millions of people are ruined by gossip and slander. That is why it is important for believers to carefully guard what we say (Ps. 39:1). We should also pray to God that He guard our mouths (Psalm 141:3).

öThe one who guards his mouth preserves his life; the one who opens wide his lips comes to ruin.ö (Proverbs 13:3).

öHe who guards his mouth and his tongue, guards his soul from troubles.ö (Proverbs 21:23).

We must never slander anyone especially a brother (1 Timothy 3:11; 2 Timothy 3:3; Titus 2:3). If we do God will discipline us, and if we continue He may take us home (Psalm 101:5).

If we are ever insulted we must not insult the offender, but bless him (1 Peter 3:9). We must obey the command God gave us:

For, "THE ONE WHO DESIRES LIFE, TO LOVE AND SEE GOOD DAYS, MUST KEEP HIS TONGUE FROM EVIL AND HIS LIPS FROM SPEAKING DECEIT. HE MUST TURN AWAY FROM EVIL AND DO GOOD; HE MUST SEEK PEACE AND PURSUE IT. FOR THE EYES OF THE LORD ARE TOWARD THE RIGHTEOUS, AND HIS EARS ATTEND TO THEIR PRAYER, BUT THE FACE OF THE LORD IS AGAINST THOSE WHO DO EVIL." (1 Peter 3:10-12).

(3.6) The tongue is like a fire because slander quickly destroys one's life. It is a world of iniquity for men speak from what is in their hearts (Matthew 12:34-35), and the hearts of all men *is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; who can understand it?* (Jeremiah 17:9).

The heart is wicked and our speech defiles our body. The words we speak determine the course of our life. Believers can control their speech through the power of the Holy Spirit. That is why we must walk by the Spirit (Galatians 5:16, 25) and not live according to the desires of the flesh. Our hearts have been changed and are not wicked. Everyone who trusts in Jesus becomes a new person (2 Corinthians 5:17) and has no excuse when he speaks evil of others. Believers cannot do or say something improper, and then say they were only jesting (Proverbs 26:19).

The fallen angels take an active part in causing people to speak evil of one another. That is what is meant by the phrase *is set on fire by hell.* Believers are not controlled or oppressed by demons, but they can influence us if we are not walking in the Spirit.

The need to control the tongue

3.7-12 *For every species of beasts and birds, of reptiles and creatures of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by the human race. 8 But no one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison. 9 With it we*

bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God; 10 from the same mouth come both blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be this way. 11 Does a fountain send out from the same opening both fresh and bitter water? 12 Can a fig tree, my brethren, produce olives, or a vine produce figs? Nor can salt water produce fresh.

(3.7) James uses the example of man's dominion over the all the creatures on Earth (Genesis 1:28) to show how difficult it is to tame the tongue. Even though man has been able to tame every creature on Earth from the docile to the ferocious he cannot tame the tongue. The hardest creature to tame is oneself. That is why God commands us to discipline ourselves in studying His Word (2 Timothy 2:15), memorizing His Word (Proverbs 3:3; 7:3; Psalm 37:31; 40:8; 119:11; Luke 2:19, 51), and meditating on His Holy Word (Joshua 1:8; Psalm 1:2; 63:6). When we discipline ourselves in the Word we will be filled with the Holy Spirit and will have the power to control what we say.

Along with daily study of the Word we must also pray unceasingly (Ephesians 6:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; Colossians 1:3; 4:2). The only way to control what you say is to walk in the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:16, 25), and the only way to do that is to daily study, memorize and meditate on the Holy Word of God, and pray without ceasing.

(3.8) No one can control what they say! This includes believers. The only way we can keep a tight reign on our speech is through the power of the Holy Spirit. No believer in his own power can control what he says! This is why we must walk in the Spirit 24 hours a day, every day of our lives. When we walk in the flesh we will offend others and God with our words.

The tongue in and of itself is not evil. The tongue is used to refer to a person's soul and mind. It is the soul and mind (will) of men that are a restless evil full of deadly poison!

“You brood of vipers, how can you, being evil, speak what is good? For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart.” (Matthew 12:34).

(3.9-10) Believers frequently praise God and curse men who are created in the image of God. This shows how hard it is to control our language. When we get angry most of us let loose with a barrage of curses at whatever or whoever angered us. We must not speak in anger. The old saying, “Count to ten before speaking” when you are upset is good advice. Think before you speak, especially in the heat of anger.

(3.11-12) James uses the example of a fountain giving only one kind of water to emphasize the importance of controlling what we say. If we are truly born from above, and are new people (2 Corinthians 5:17), we should only speak good about others and have total control over what we say. He also uses the fact that a fig tree cannot bear olives and vice versa to drive the point home even further.

By using these examples James is explaining that we are new people, and evil should not come from our hearts (Jeremiah 17:9). Everyone speaks what is in their hearts (Matthew 12:34), so when you speak evil of others you know you have an evil heart. If you are born anew and do this you are backslidden, and need to immerse yourself in the Holy Word of God. It is through the Word that one is washed/purified (John 15.3; Ephesians 5:26). This is a continual process in the experiential realm. It is not a positional truth for we have been washed, sanctified and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of God (1 Corinthians 6:11).

Wisdom of the world and Heaven

3.13-18 *Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom. 14 But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth. 15 This wisdom is not that*

which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic. 16 For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing. 17 But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy. 18 And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

(3.13) A person who thinks he is wise and has understanding should show this through his good behavior. His actions will be performed in the gentleness of wisdom. Here James makes it clear that we are to lead by example not with our mouths.

We must not only behave properly among ourselves, but when we are in the world (1 Peter 2:12). We are ambassadors of Jesus (2 Corinthians 5:20) and cannot afford to act like the wicked when we are with them. We are to make disciples of all nations (Matthews 28:19-20) not play with the wicked and indulge in our petty lusts (1 John 2:15-16).

(3.14) If any believer has bitter jealousy and selfish ambition he is not filled with the Holy Spirit. No believer is to do things his way. We are to do all things in the Spirit for it is by the power of Jesus that we can do all things (Philippians 4:13).

Jealousy is not a fruit of the Holy Spirit, but a deed of the flesh (Galatians 5:20) which hinders the work of the Lord. Selfish ambition is not of the Holy Spirit. Those *öwho are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousnessö* will receive *öwrath and indignationö* from God (Romans 2:8). Unbelievers will receive the full wrath of God and be condemned to the Lake of Fire (Revelation 20:11-15) while believers who live according to their selfish ambitions will be disciplined by Him (Hebrews 12:5-6).

When believers continue to live according to their jealous desires and selfish ambitions they display arrogance and are living a lie. By their behavior they claim to know what is best for them and that God is in the dark about them and their needs. This is a lie for no man can even begin to know what is best for

him. The creator of the universe knows what is best for every one He has created and when we understand this and accept it we will become vessels of honor *ōuseful to the Master, prepared for every good work* (2 Timothy 2:21).

(3.15) The alleged wisdom that teaches it is right to seek after one's selfish desires is not of God, but of man, of the sin nature and of Satan. We are to seek after that which will advance the work of the Lord ó making disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:19-20) and building up of the body of Jesus (Ephesians 4:12-13). We are never to do something to satisfy our personal lusts for when we do it leads us into a life of sin (1 John 2:15-16).

(3.16) Jealousy and rivalry produce chaos and their fruit is always evil deeds. Fulfillment of these desires can never bring one true happiness and joy. When the lusts of the flesh are fulfilled they cause one to lust even more and they never satisfy. Many believers think that if they had a better job, a loving spouse, obedient children, faithful friends, more money, etc. they would be happy and be able to serve the Lord more effectively. This is the wisdom that is earthly, natural and demonic. The only way you can serve God more effectively is by being content with their circumstances (Hebrews 13.5) and obeying Him (Deuteronomy 11.13; Joshua 1.7; 23.6; Psalm 119.60, 100-101, 167; John 14.23).

Believers rarely understand that we do not serve God through our power. We serve Him through the power of the Holy Spirit. That is why we are told to be filled with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18) and to walk by the Spirit (Galatians 5:16, 25). Because of this we must not fulfill our lusts. When our lusts are not fulfilled we will be a vessel fit for the Lord's service (2 Timothy 2:19-22). If Jesus emptied Himself to serve the Father how much more should we?

(3.17) When we act on the wisdom that is from the Lord we will be pure, peaceable, patient, compliant, full of mercy and good fruits and there will be no hypocrisy within us. These are the marks of a believer who is filled with the Holy Spirit

(Galatians 5:22-23). Every believer who is filled with the Spirit will bear fruit for that is why Jesus chose us (John 15:16). Those who do not bear fruit are taken home (John 15:2) and those who do are pruned (disciplined) so they will bear more fruit (John 15:2).

If you are not pure/holy it is a good sign you are not filled with the Holy Spirit. And if you are not peaceable around others, patient, compliant (a team worker) and merciful to others you are not filled with the Spirit. If you are not bearing fruit you are either not controlled by the Spirit or you are in an off season while being pruned by the Lord.

(3.18) The fruit of righteousness which we sow is done in peace by peacemakers. That fruit is our behavior and or words. If you are sowing fruit through contention and antagonism toward the wicked it will not bear more fruit. The Lord only blesses those who sow fruit in peace for *ōblessed are the peacemakersō* (Matthew 5:9). We must never beat the lost over the head with the gospel, but to share it in love.

This does not mean we are to water down the gospel and not talk about Hell and judgment. We are to speak on those subjects, but in love and with compassion. We are ambassadors of Jesus (2 Corinthians 5:20). Ambassadors negotiate treaties and agreements in a peaceable way. We are to do the same by sharing the gospel in a manner which will not turn the lost against us and Jesus. When Paul spoke to the Athenians on Mars Hill (Acts 17:18-34) he did not condemn them for worshipping false gods (Acts 22-23). No! He respected their desire to find truth and then told them who the UNKNOWN GOD is (Acts 17.23) that they worshipped in ignorance ó Jesus Christ who rose from the dead (Acts 17.31).

Everything we do must be done in love for as God and Jesus loved us (Romans 5:8; John 10:11; 15:13) we must also love one another (John 13:34-35) and all men (Matthew 5:43-48).

CLOSED BOOK TEST

(Timed - 60 seconds)

1. Should there be many Bible teachers?
2. Will Bible teachers be judged more strictly?
3. What can no man tame?
4. Does a wise man behave in a holy or worldly manner?
5. Is worldly wisdom good or evil?
6. Should believers ever exhibit worldly jealousy?
7. Should a believer ever have selfish ambition?
8. Could jealousy and selfish ambition be a cause of many problems in churches?
9. Is Heavenly wisdom void of hypocrisy?
10. Should Christians be peacemakers?

VERSES TO MEMORIZE AND MEDITATE ON

The following are the key verses of chapter three:

1-2, 6-8, 13, 17-18

Try to memorize as many verses as you can. If you find other verses you desire to memorize do so. You can never memorize too many Scriptures. This is one of the most powerful chapters in the Bible. If you have a problem with your speech, consider memorizing the entire chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

Discussion/Study Questions

1. What is the source of conflict among spiritual brothers? (v. 1)

A. Is this source what also causes conflicts in families, companies, governments, nations and between nations?

B. How can this source of conflict be defeated?

2. What two sins does James say is the cause of problems? (v. 2)

A. _____

B. _____

3. What three things does James say people do as a result of sin?
(v. 2)

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

4. Is James saying believers commit these sins?

5. What two reasons are the causes for us not getting the things we want? (vs. 2-3)

A. _____

B. _____

6. Why does James call believers adulteresses? (v. 4)

7. Can a believer be a friend of the world and God at the same time? (v. 4)

8. If a believer is a friend of the world what is he to God? (v. 4)

9. What does God the Father jealously desire? (v. 5)

10. Who is God opposed to? (v. 6)

11. Who does God give grace to? (v. 6)

12. What are we to do concerning God? (v. 7)

13. What are we to do concerning the devil? (v. 7)

14. What three things are we to do concerning God and ourselves? (v. 8)

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

15. What two problems did the believers James wrote to have? (v. 8)

A. _____

B. _____

16. Why did James tell his readers to be miserable and not happy? (v. 9)

17. What does God do for those who humble themselves before Him? (v. 10)

A. Does He do this in this life or the life to come or both?

18. What one thing do most people want for themselves? (v. 10)

A. What is the best way to get this?

B. How do most believers and people go about getting it?

19. Why should we not speak against or judge our spiritual brothers and sisters? (v. 11)

20. Who is the one and only true Lawgiver and Judge? (v. 12)

21. Is there a time when we can or should judge a spiritual brother? (v. 12) (Matthew 7.15-23; Galatians 2.14; 1 Timothy 5.20; 2 Timothy 4.2; 2 Peter 2.1)

22. When we undertake any project what should we ask God? (vs. 13-15)

23. In the grand scheme of things is the lifespan of a man short or long? (v. 14)

24. What sin should we avoid at all costs and why? (v. 16)

25. Is it wrong to not do something that is right to do? (v. 17)
(List a few examples.)

CHAPTER FOUR OUTLINE

I. Conflict among believers caused by their lust for worldly desires	1-3
II. Friendship with the world	4-5
III. Drawing near to YAHWEH	6-10
IV. Do not judge the brethren	11-12
V. Do not boast about the future	13-16
VI. Not doing good is a sin	17

CHAPTER FOUR

COMMENTARY

Conflict among believers and worldliness

4.1-3 *What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members? 2 You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask. 3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures.*

(4.1) The source of virtually all problems believers have is their lust for things of world. When they see something or someone they want they forget about their Savior and go for it. This leads to sin and conflict with unbelievers and believers. We are commanded to not love the world and the things in it (1 John 2.15). When we love the world instead of God as we are commanded to (Deuteronomy 6.5) and the brethren (John 13.34) the love of God is not in us (1 John 2.15).

The lust of the flesh, eyes, and the boastful pride of life must be fought against. We must take steps to not indulge in them. Whatever your sin is you must eliminate it. If it is food you need to cut back and lose the excess weight. Obesity is a highly visible sign that a person has a major problem with one area of the flesh. Some people may have a physical propensity towards obesity, but even they can be normal if they conquer their lust

for food. It is a battle we fight our entire lives, but through the power of our Savior we can have victory (Romans 7.24-25).

(4.2-3) Amazing as it sounds, during the First Century people who were members of the home churches committed murder. According to the Scriptures those who committed murder more than once were most likely not born anew. They claimed to be saved, but really were not for *ōno murderer has eternal life abiding in himō* (1 John 3.15).

There was a considerable amount of fighting among the brethren in the churches that James wrote to. They behaved like the wicked; that is one reason this letter was written. It was also written for the edification of millions of believers throughout the Church Age. This does not mean we do not have to take responsibility for our lives. We still have to work for a living (2 Thessalonians 3.10) and care for ourselves and our families. We are to do our part, and trust in God to do what we cannot do.

If you need a job go out and look for one, and God will open the door. If you want a spouse get involved in a church and He will bring to you the one He has chosen for you. God will not give someone a spouse who is not active in a church. You can get married, but it does not mean God chose your spouse. It is also unlikely He will bless that marriage. When we do anything in life we should ask God for guidance and consult with our pastors or a member that they designate to handle counseling.

Another problem far too many believers have is asking for things to fulfill the lusts of the flesh. When we ask God for anything we must first be living according to His will (Romans 12.1-2) and we must ask according to His will (1 John 5.14). If we delight ourselves in God, commit our way to Him and trust in Him, He will give us the desires of our heart (Psalm 37.4-6) and make our ways successful (Psalm 1.1-3).

Friendship with the world

4.4-5 *You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore*

whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. 5 Or do you think that the Scripture speaks to no purpose: "He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in usö?

(4.4) James hits his readers over the head with a club by calling them adulteresses. They were not walking in the Spirit, but were instead walking after the lusts of the flesh. They were trying to fit into the wicked world system and at the same time serve God. They either had never heard what Jesus said about serving God and mammon (Matthew 6.24) or they did not believe it. [The Gospel written by Matthew had not been written at this time, but the teachings of Jesus had been passed on by word of mouth.] No one can love the world and the things in it, and love God at the same time. Those believers who love the world do not have the love of God in them (1 John 2.15).

These backslidden believers had become intimate friends with the world and in so doing had become enemies of God (Romans 8.7). It is impossible to be a friend of the wicked and a friend of God at the same time. Believers who think they can be are deluded, and are in a backslidden condition.

We are to be friendly to all people, but we are not to make friends with the wicked and fellowship with them:

öDo not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness? Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, "I WILL DWELL IN THEM AND WALK AMONG THEM; AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE. "Therefore, COME OUT FROM THEIR MIDST AND BE SEPARATE," says the Lord. "AND DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN; And I will welcome you. "And I will be a father to you, And you shall be sons and daughters to Me," Says the Lord Almighty.ö (2 Corinthians 6.14-18)

This command does not apply only to marriage and business deals with unbelievers. It applies to everything. You cannot go anywhere or do anything with an unbeliever without fellowshiping with him. You have nothing in common and should never do anything with an unbeliever except share the truth with him or help him in time of need.

Believers who think they can go with the lost to ball games, movies, social events, vacations, etc. are fooling themselves. They are either ignorant of the Word or they reject it to satisfy their lusts. If you want to do these things do them with believers.

The only thing we can do with unbelievers is bring them to services or church events and eat dinner with them as Jesus did. He ate with the wicked for the sole purpose of sharing the gospel with them (Luke 19.5, 9-10; Luke 7.34-50).

(4.5) God has made it perfectly clear that He has a powerful jealousy for our obedience to Him. The Scripture that James quoted from is not known. It was taken from one of the numerous lost books of the Bible. Which book it comes from is unknown, but it will be made known when Jesus returns. During the Millennial Kingdom He will have archaeologists dig up the lost tablets and parchments and complete His Word. He will also have archaeologists dig up thousands of other artifacts and sites. Archaeology will be one of the biggest endeavors of the Millennial Kingdom.

The Holy Spirit jealously longs for the body that He made to dwell in. He literally lives inside our physical bodies (John 14.16, 23; Romans 8.9-11; 1 Corinthians 3.16; 6.19-20; 2 Kor.5.5; 6.16; Ephesians 2.22; James 4.5). He desires that we keep His temple in the best condition that we can. This means we must eat a healthy diet (preferably a vegetarian diet), drink distilled or reverse osmosis water, get daily exercise, sufficient sleep and relaxation. We must also not destroy it by ingesting toxic substances ó alcohol, drugs, sugar, processed foods and any food loaded with BGH, preservatives, salt, sugar, antibiotics and pesticides. Lastly, we must not deface His temple with tattoos.

God is extremely jealous of our allegiance, loyalty and obedience to Him. He demands total perfection (Matthew 5.48), and He does not settle for anything less. We settle for less and that is the problem. We must not become complacent in our walk. When we do we backslide down the slippery slope of fulfilling the lusts of the flesh and sometimes wake up in the pit of apostasy.

The life we live in the Spirit is not easy ó it is a cosmic struggle that never slows down. We are fighting our lusts (1 John 2.15-17) and the rulers, powers, world forces of darkness, and spiritual forces of wickedness in heavenly places (Ephesians 6.12). The enemy never lets up, takes off on holidays or goes on vacation, and neither can we. We must be in constant prayer (1 Thessalonians 5.17), be hearing the Word every day (Deuteronomy 6.3-4; Proverbs 1.5, 8; 2.2; 4.1, 10, 20; 5.1; Romans 10.17), reading It daily (Matthew 21.42; 24.15; Revelation 1.3), studying It daily (Acts 17.11), memorizing It (Ps. 119.11; Proverbs 2.1; 3.1,3; 4.1), meditating on It day and night (Joshua 1.8; Psalm 1.2), teaching It (Deuteronomy 6.7; Matthew 28.19-20; 2 Timothy 2.2), fellowshipping with the brethren (Hebrews 10.24-25) and sharing the Gospel with the lost (Deuteronomy 6.8-9; Psalm 57.9; 119.46; 145.11-12; Matthew 28.19-20; 1 Peter 3.15).

If you are not praying without ceasing; hearing, reading and studying the Word daily; memorizing and meditating on the Word day and night; fellowshipping with the brethren regularly, teaching the Word; and sharing the Gospel regularly you are complacent and giving less than all you can. This is just the foundation of your walk in faith. Upon this you build your house of good works (1 Corinthians 3.12-15).

Drawing near to God in humility

4.6-10 *But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, "GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE." 7 Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. 8 Draw*

near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. 9 Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy to gloom. 10 Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.

(4.6) The believers that James wrote to committed numerous sins and believers throughout the Church Age have committed every sin imaginable. Yet God still extends His grace to us. This grace is not the grace that saves, but the grace that keeps us in fellowship with Him. We can only have fellowship with Him if we submit to Him (v. 7) and humble ourselves before Him (v. 10). Until we do that we cannot have fellowship with Him.

This is not a one-time act, but an on-going process. Every time we sin we break fellowship with God. To re-establish fellowship we must confess the sin (1 John 1.9), submit to Him, humble ourselves before Him, spend a few minutes or more in the Word to refocus our minds which should be set on the things above (Colossians 3.2) and then go our way serving Him.

We must remember that even though we all commit numerous sins every day we cannot fall into the trap that we can go our merry, sinful way and think we have fellowship with God. We must continually be in fellowship with God ó asking forgiveness, asking for spiritual strength, wisdom, understanding and guidance.

(4.7) All believers are to be subject to God twenty-four hours a day, not just on Sundays. To be subject to Him means to obey Him. We lay the foundation of obedience by establishing a spiritual fitness program. A good way of doing this is to create a journal listing the amount of time you spend each day in prayer, hearing the Word, reading It, studying It, memorizing It and meditating on It. It is also helpful to keep track of the times you share the Gospel, and teach the Word as well as fellowship with the brethren.

Start small and build from there. A good starting point would be to pray 10 minutes a day, read the Bible 10 minutes and listen

to at least one half-hour message each day. A one hour study each week would be a good place to start. Memorizing just one verse a week, and meditating on the Word 10 minutes a day would be a good starting place. You cannot set a specific number of people to share the Gospel with each day or week, but you can set a goal and record the results. You may only share the Gospel with one person a week or a month. Keep a record of it, and watch how the Lord will give you more opportunities. He who is faithful in a little will be given more (Luke 16.10).

If you are a parent you should be teaching your children the Word and praying with them every day:

These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. (Deuteronomy 6.6-7)

Just 30 minutes a day would be good starting point. And husbands should spend at least 30 minutes a day studying the Word and praying with their wives. If you are too busy for that you need to cut something out of your schedule and rearrange your priorities.

All believers should attend as many church services as possible. God commands all believers to *stimulate each other to love and good deeds*, on a daily basis and not to forsake our *assembly together* (Hebrews 10.24-25). How can you stimulate the brethren if you seldom attend church? You cannot and believers who think they can are deceiving themselves.

This is just the beginning ó it is the first step. This is the first act of humbling yourself before God (v. 10). From here believers are to expand their obedience by giving joyfully to the work of the Lord (2 Corinthians 9.7), volunteering to do the work of the Lord, to evangelize the lost, and to show hospitality to the brethren and the poor in the community.

You cannot oppose the devil until you submit to God. The only way we can defeat him is to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Once we are filled with the Spirit we can actively oppose the devil.

Most versions translate the Greek word *anthistemi* as *ōresist.ō*. This gives the impression that we are on the defensive, and resist him when he attacks. We must never be on the defensive. Rather we are to be on the offensive, and be constantly attacking the devil and his gang of fallen angels. The word *anthistemi* should be translated *ōset againstō* or *ōto cause to standō* (Vineø). All believers are in a war against the devil and his gang (Ephesians 6.12) and we are to attack at all times. We are never to retreat or take a spiritual vacation. When we do, we backslide and sometimes some of us never come out of it.

The spiritual armor we use in this war is offensive (Ephesians 6.13-17). The defensive pieces of our armor are the helmet of salvation and our shield of faith. We are to actively oppose every program the devil launches to deceive mankind from believing the truth of the gospel (2 Corinthians 4.4), such as false religions, atheism, humanism, feminism, evolutionism, communism, socialism, hedonism, phenomenology (situation ethics), murder on demand (abortion/euthanasia), pornography, etc. We are commanded to destroy speculations and every lofty thing that is raised up against the knowledge of God (2 Corinthians 10.5). The speculations and lofty things are the isms noted above.

Every church should be actively opposing these evils of Satan in whatever manner they can. They can write letters to Congress to vote against certain bills, start their own political action group and boycott companies that sell pornography or hospitals that murder babies. But the political action of a church should never be greater than its preaching, teaching, discipleship, evangelism and community outreach programs.

(4.8) We are to draw near to God by obeying Him. As noted in the previous verse we should put together a spiritual fitness program and stick to it. As we obey God in this He will enable us to increase our time of fellowship with Him and the brethren, and give us greater responsibilities in His service. You cannot draw near to God any other way.

Going to church or revival meetings and other activities is not drawing near to God. Going to every meeting you can, can be a way of running away from God. You cannot fellowship with God in most church activities. You can in true worship services, but most services are not true worship services. They are social gatherings where people spend their time showing off, gossiping, looking down on others and flattering some. They are also a time where the pastor shows off by preaching some meaningless sermon which is nothing more than a pep talk.

Believers do not need a pep talk every week. They need to be fed the Word of God through college style teaching sessions where they are required to do homework and are tested and graded! Believers who refuse to do the homework are not to be ostracized. Instead they are to be encouraged all the more to draw near to God.

The tradition of preaching a sermon every Sunday morning is not Biblical and is the least productive use of time. A worship service consists of worshipping God through singing and giving praise and thanks. Tacking on a 20 minute sermon at the end is meaningless. A congregation should have a worship service and also have a teaching service where the pastor teaches the congregation the Word of God book-by-book.

We are also commanded to cleanse our hands which means to stop sinning. The only way we can stop sinning is through the power of the Holy Spirit ó we must be filled with the Spirit continuously (Ephesians 5.18). The only way to do that is by following the steps explained previously.

We must also learn to hate sin (Proverbs 8.13) for until we hate sin we will be tempted by it and succumb to it. The way to develop a strong hatred of sin is to spend more and more time in the Word and in prayer, along with fellowship with the brethren, sharing the Gospel with the lost, and avoiding situations where you can be tempted. Cleansing our hands is hard work and it must be done every day.

We must also purify our hearts to keep from being double-minded. It is a condition in which believers live in two worlds ó the spiritual realm and the world of the flesh ó at the same time. You cannot be filled with the Spirit and live a double life ó serve

God and mammon (Matthew 5.24). The only way to purify our hearts is to follow the steps found in Appendix C.

(4.9) Amazing as it sounds all believers are to be miserable, mourn and cry rather than laugh and be happy. We are to consider spiritual things, especially the importance of sharing the Gospel with the lost rather than worry about the things of the world (Colossians 3.2). Too many believers rarely stop to think about the fate that awaits the lost as they go through the day. All they think about is their petty lusts and how they can fulfill them.

There is nothing wrong in being happy and laughing as long as it is not a result of fulfilling one's lusts. Unfortunately, many believers spend too much time fulfilling their sinful lusts, laughing and making merry just as the lost do. The time is past for us to chase after the lusts of the world (1 Peter 4.2-3). Instead, we are to suffer in the flesh to stop sinning (1 Peter 4.1).

Believers need to spend more time in solemn contemplation of the fate of the wicked. If we did we would get fired up for the Lord and do what He commanded us to do:

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. (Matthew 28.19-20)

(4.10) All believers are to actively humble themselves before God. This is not a suggestion it is a command. Until a believer does this he will not be used to full capacity by the Lord. The first step in being filled with the Holy Spirit is to humble oneself.

You humble yourself by putting God and His work first. You also set up a spiritual fitness program as shown in Appendix C. You then must put His righteousness and Kingdom first (Matthew 6.33) and be willing to go wherever or do whatever He asks you to do. Until you willingly give of yourself 100% to God you will not be able to serve Him fully.

Do not judge the brethren

4.11-12 *Do not speak against one another, brethren. He who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks against the law and judges the law; but if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge of it. 12 There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the One who is able to save and to destroy; but who are you who judge your neighbor?*

(4.11) We are not to speak against one another, but let the elders handle that for they are the ones who watch over our souls (Hebrews 13.17). It is their duty to keep watch over the brethren, and if need be rebuke and correct anyone who sins (2 Timothy 4.2). When the flock tries to do the job of the elders it creates dissention which is a deed of the flesh (Galatians 5.20)

Instead of judging one another we are to speak as though God is speaking (James 4.11) to build up one another rather than tear down (Ephesians 4.29). If you have something against a brother, go to him in private. If he will not listen to you then go to the elders, and let them deal with it (Matthew 18.15-17).

When we speak against a brother we are speaking against the law for all believers are made holy in Jesus just as the law is holy. We cannot know for certain if what we think is true about someone is true until it is made known to the entire congregation. If we accuse a brother wrongly it is the same as accusing the law saying it is wrong. Instead of accusing the brethren we are to edify them (Romans 14.19; 15.2; 1 Thessalonians 5.11).

(4.12) There is only One God who gives law and who judges and who also saves those who trust in His Son, Jesus the Messiah, and who damns those who do not believe in Him. We are not to usurp His authority and right to make the laws and to judge by judging the brethren or making our own laws (traditions).

We must leave judgment up to God and the pastors who have been given the authority to judge the brethren for they keep

watch over their souls (Hebrews 13.17). We are also not to make laws or create traditions which we force others to observe. Not even the pastors have the authority to do this and those who do will answer to the Lord.

The Pharisees were guilty of this and were condemned for doing it by Jesus (Matthew 15.1-9). The Pharisees had created myriad traditions which were not based on the Scriptures. They forced everyone to observe them and in the process they trampled the law making it of no effect. They placed the doctrines of men above the commandments of God (Matthew 15.9).

We must be on guard against doing this for when we walk according to the traditions of men we cannot be filled with the Holy Spirit and we become useless vessels in the Lord's service.

Do not boast about the future

4.13-16 *Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit." 14 Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. 15 Instead, you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that." 16 But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil.*

(4.13) There is nothing wrong in making plans and setting out to do something. It is only wrong when you do something without trusting in God to guide you. We are to trust in Him for everything we do (Proverbs 3.5-6) and accept as His will, whatever happens, whether it is good or bad. Sometimes He does not let us carry out our plans because they do not fit in with His plan for us. When that happens we should not become bitter and frustrated, but be joyful and press on with something else.

One thing we should be careful not to do is brag about our plans (Proverbs 27.1). Instead of making a big show we should

keep a low profile and let the Lord work. When we boast of what we plan to do we can hinder His work. Many times He will not bless a work because those involved take all the credit rather than give God the glory.

(4.14) No one knows if they will be alive tomorrow and because of that we should not become overconfident in ourselves. Our confidence should be in God. Our lives are so short that in relation to eternity they are no more than a vapor. Most people deceive themselves into thinking they will live forever in mortal bodies, including believers. Few consider death and understand that we should make use of every second God has given us to serve Him. Unfortunately, most believers waste their time fulfilling their petty lusts and chasing after business deals which have nothing to do with serving God.

Far too many believers waste most of their time; shopping for useless toys, trinkets, etc., watching TV and videos, going to movies, going out to dinner, going to ball games, taking trips, relaxing, working on hobbies, etc. Believers need to cut down the amount of time they spend fulfilling their pitiful lusts by 90%, and spend that in the Word, prayer, fellowship, and soul winning. People need a lot less òmeö time than they think. About one hour a day in òmeö time is plenty. At the least believers should spend the same amount of time serving God as they do in òmeö time.

WAKE UP BELIEVERS! You are wasting your lives on useless endeavors!

(4.15) Whenever we decide to do anything we should trust it is the will of God and ask Him to guide us in our endeavor. If it is His will it can succeed or fail. Sometimes He causes us to fail in a project to teach us something. Just because a work succeeds does not mean it is the will of God. Many endeavors succeed even though the participants are acting in their own strength. God allows it for His reasons which we may never understand until we get to Heaven.

(4.16) Anytime a believer boasts in plans he has, whether they are to serve the Lord or himself it is a sin. We should never boast in anything but the works of God. We should brag about His works before the entire world. David did this (Psalm 9.1, 11; 71.13-14; 96.2-3; 119.26-27, 46) as well as numerous other patriarchs and New Testament saints (Acts 2.14-36; 7.2-50; 26.2-23).

Not doing good is a sin

4.17 Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin.

(4.17) James concluded his admonishment to the brethren by telling them any time they know the right thing to do and they do not do it, it is a sin. That is a heavy burden for there are myriad things we know are right to do and we do not always do them. Some of these things are praying without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5.17); being in the Word every day ó hearing It (Deuteronomy 6.3-5), reading It (Matthew 24.15), studying It (Acts 17.11), memorizing It (Psalm 119.11), meditating on It (Joshua 1.8); teaching the Scriptures regularly (Deuteronomy 6.7; Matthew 28.19-20; 2 Timothy 2.2); and sharing the Gospel with the lost on a regular basis (Mark 16.15).

These are things we should be doing daily along with other things. It is hard to always do what is right, but we are expected to be perfect as our Heavenly Father is perfect (Matthew 5.48).

CLOSED BOOK TEST

(Timed - 60 seconds)

1. Do some believers fight and quarrel with each other?

2. Do some Christians ask God for things with wrong motives?

3. You can be a friend of the world and of God at the same time.

4. Does the Holy Spirit literally live inside of our bodies?

5. Who is God opposed to?

6. What does God give to the humble?

7. What three things should all believers do concerning God?

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

8. What should we do concerning the devil? _____

9. Should we judge each other? _____

10. Is our stay on Earth long or short? _____

VERSES TO MEMORIZE AND MEDITATE ON

The following are the key verses of chapter four:

3-10, 17

Try to memorize as many verses as you can. If you find other verses you desire to memorize do so. You can never memorize too many Scriptures.

CHAPTER FIVE

Discussion/Study Questions

1. Is it better to be rich or poor? (vs. 1-3) _____

2. What is one result of being rich? (v. 1)

3. What is the message of verse two? (v. 2)

4. What does it mean that the rust of gold and silver will be a witness against the rich? (v. 3)

5. Will the rust of the money of the rich consume their flesh like fire? (v. 3)

6. What does the statement mean concerning the rich storing up their treasure in the last days? (v. 3)

7. What is a common practice of rich employers? (v. 4)

8. Will the rich get away with their sinful ways? (v. 4)

9. What are two other common traits of the rich? (v. 5)

10. What does the phrase *ōfatted your hearts in a day of slaughterö* mean, and what is the day of slaughter? (v. 5)

11. What have the rich done to the righteous throughout history?
(v. 6)

12. What are the righteous to do when persecuted by the rich?
(vs. 7-8)

13. What are we to do while we wait for the return of the Lord
and how do we do the second thing? (v. 8)

A. _____

B. _____

14. What does the phrase *ōat handō* mean? (v. 8)

15. Was the return of Jesus *ōat handō* when James wrote this
letter? (v. 8)

16. What are we not to do about each other and why not? (v. 9)

17. What does the phrase *ōstanding at the doorō* mean? (v. 9)

18. Who does James give as an example for us to learn from about suffering and patience? (v. 10)

19. How can we learn from these men? (v.10)

20. Whose name did these men speak in? (v. 10)

21. Is it important to know and use the name of God? (v. 10)

22. What is His name? (v. 10)

23. Why did the Lord allow the devil to persecute Job? (v. 11)
(Job chapters 1-2)

24. What is the Lord filled with? (v. 11)

25. What are we commanded not to do and what should we do
and why? (v. 12)

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

26. What should those who suffer and those who are cheerful
do? (v. 13)

A. _____

B. _____

27. What should the sick do? (v. 14)

28. Is it important to know and use the name of the Lord? (v. 14)

29. What will restore the sick? (v. 15)

30. Can sickness be due to sin? (v. 15) _____

31. What two things are we to do to one another? (v. 16)

A. _____

B. _____

32. What did Elijah do and why? (vs. 17-18; 1Kings 17.1; 18.1)

33. Can a true believer stray from the truth? (v. 19)

34. What is the result of turning a believer back to the Lord who had gone astray? (v. 20)

CHAPTER FIVE OUTLINE

I. Warning to the rich	1-6
II. Perseverance of the saints	7-12
III. Prayer for healing	13-18
IV. Restoring the backslidden	19-20

CHAPTER FIVE COMMENTARY

Warning to the rich

(5.1-6) Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries which are coming upon you. 2 Your riches have rotted and your garments have become moth-eaten. 3 Your gold and your silver have rusted; and their rust will be a witness against you and will consume your flesh like fire. It is in the last days that you have stored up your treasure! 4 Behold, the pay of the laborers who mowed your fields, and which has been withheld by you, cries out against you; and the outcry of those who did the harvesting has reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. 5 You have lived luxuriously on the earth and led a life of wanton pleasure; you have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter. 6 You have condemned and put to death the righteous man; he does not resist you.

(5.1) The rich people that James is railing against were members of the Church. These öbelieversö were committing murder and fighting with each other over worldly possessions! These sinful members most likely were not saved. The Church has always had members who were not saved. Today most churches have more unsaved members than saved ones.

At the beginning of the Church Age rich members of the Church had a hard time understanding that their wealth was a gift from God and not something they earned through hard work. Rich believers today still do not understand this simple fact of life.

God gives some believers more wealth than others to further the spread of the Gospel and to help the poorer brethren along with widows, orphans and the poor in general. He does not give them riches so they can buy a big home, drive expensive cars, buy boats, planes, or other toys, and spend it on their petty lusts.

A believer who makes one million dollars or more a year should live at the same standard of living as a man who makes the national average wage. Any believer who lives at a standard of living higher than the national average is in a backslidden condition, and will suffer loss at the judgment seat of Jesus (1 Corinthians 3.15; 2 Corinthians 5.10). The only exception would be for those who live in areas where the cost of living is higher than the national average such as Alaska, Hawaii and some of the big cities. Spending 20 percent more than the national average should be sufficient. Every penny we have is given to us by God. We are to be good stewards, and use our wealth for His glory rather than spend it to satisfy our petty desires (Luke 10-14). Believers who use their wealth for themselves run the risk of being judged in this life and taken home early. They will have great loss of rewards.

(5.2-3) The riches of the wealthy eventually are destroyed. Everything wears out over time, especially fancy clothes. The only exceptions are precious metals like gold and silver, and gems. Yet gold and silver rust, and they along with gems can be lost and stolen (Matthew 6.19). The deterioration of valuables is a testimony to the rich that nothing in this world is eternal.

The desire for riches consumes everyone who puts their trust in them. It burns their body like fire causing ill health. It is the worry of keeping one's riches that can cause poor health. Medical experts understand that one's emotional state can have a positive or negative effect on their health and anxiety about anything can cause poor health.

James mentioned the fact that the rich in the First Century were living in the last days (Acts 2.17) to encourage them to stop putting their trust in their riches and put it in God (Proverbs 3.5-6).

If you are rich and you have a love for your riches turn loose of them. They are causing you to be a useless vessel for the Lord's service. You would be better off giving your excess wealth to the poor and the church you attend, and live on just what you need. If you have large bank accounts, loads of stocks and bonds, gems, precious metals, etc. give it away and live from pay check to pay check like most people do. If you are good at investing money continue to do it. Save what you need to retire on, give the rest away and trust the Lord. There is nothing wrong in setting up a retirement fund, but do not create one that has more money than you will need unless you plan on supporting others.

Remember that it is God who makes you prosperous and not yourself. Everything you make is His and it is to be used for His glory not to satisfy your petty desires.

If you are wealthy and do not want to live like the average person give most of your money away. According to the televangelists God will bless you with much more (Malachi 3.10; Luke 6.38).

(5.4) Rich believers were taking advantage of the poor by not paying them for their work and they cried out to God who took notice of it. He decided to correct the situation by having James write to them. Rich believers should never take advantage of anyone who is poor, especially not their spiritual brothers. Wealthy believers who do this will lose rewards and make it into Heaven *ōso as through fire* (1 Corinthians 3.15).

(5.5) The rich believers James rebuked were extremely self indulgent. They lived high on the hog and indulged in every desire they could think of. They reveled in their carnal way of life and had no desire to serve God. They also did not realize that they would face a day of judgment if they did not repent.

Today there are far too many believers who are living just as these backslidden believers were living. They spend virtually all their money to fulfill their desires and put a couple dollars in the offering plate. Some even tithe, but when you make \$100,000 or more a year and all you give is 10% you are backslidden! As

noted previously anyone who lives on more than the national average wage is backslidden. The only exceptions are those who live in areas where the cost of living is higher than the average like Alaska, Hawaii and some of the big cities.

(5.6) The rich members of the Church in the First Century were actually condemning poor people, and having them put to death. This sounds incredible, but that is what went on in that time.

Perseverance of the saints

(5.7-12) Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains. 8 You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. 9 Do not complain, brethren, against one another, so that you yourselves may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door. 10 As an example, brethren, of suffering and patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. 11 We count those blessed who endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord's dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful. 12 But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath; but your yes is to be yes, and your no, no, so that you may not fall under judgment.

(5.7) Believers are to be patient when they encounter various trials and tribulations as the poor suffered under the rich. We are to wait patiently until Jesus returns and gathers us to Himself (1 Thessalonians 4.16-17) or until we leave our earthly temple.

Farmers who do not irrigate their crops wait patiently for rain. There is nothing else they can do. We must wait patiently

for our Lord's return or our death. We should all be holy in conduct *looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God* (2 Peter 3.12) by sharing the Gospel with as many people as we can.

The phrase *ōat handō* that is found in some translations means *ōnearer.ō* The Greek word *eggus* is a verb, and it can be translated *ōnearerō* rather than *ōnear.ō* The translation *ōat handō* is improper and gives the impression it will take place within a short space of time. The word *ōnearerō* is correct because Peter used another variation of this verb (*eggizo ó Strong's 1448*) in his first letter (4.7).

(5.8) We are to be patient as farmers are, and strengthen our faith for the Rapture is nearer. The way to strengthen our hearts (faith) is to diligently study the Word (2 Timothy 2.15) every day (Acts 17.11), and fellowship with the brethren as often as possible, and all the more as the day of the Rapture draws near (Hebrews 10.24-25). We must also pray without ceasing (1 Thessalonians 5.17) and share the Gospel with the lost just as Jesus commanded us to do (Matthew 28.19-20).

(5.9) We are to be patient and not judge the brethren for the supreme Judge will judge us if we do. We are not to complain or speak against a brother (4.11-12; 1 Corinthians 4.5). If we think a brother has offended us we are to go to him and settle the matter (Matthew 5.23-24; 18.15). If he refuses to resolve the matter we are to take one or two brothers and confront him. If he still will not listen to reason rebuke him before the entire assembly, and ostracize him if he does not repent (Matthew 18.16-17).

(5.10) We should never complain about our minor suffering for the prophets of the Old Testament dispensation suffered far worse than we could ever dream of. Every believer should read the stories of the prophets and see what they went through starting with Job. Then read the life of Moses in the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. Continue on with the stories of Joshua, the judges, Samuel, King David,

Elijah, Elisha, Nehemiah, Ezra, and the rest. Our sufferings are trivial compared to the terrible hardships they endured. Many of them were put to death (Hebrews 11.32-40). The Apostles also suffered far greater persecution for Jesus than anyone living in America in our time, and they counted it joy to *ōsuffer shame for His name* (Acts 5.41). Also read what Paul went through (2 Corinthians 11.23-27).

(5.11) We need to consider those in the Old and New Testament dispensations happy who endured persecution (Matthew 5.10; 1 Peter 3.14). When we suffer persecution we should be happy just as the Apostles were who considered themselves worthy to suffer for the name of Jesus of Nazareth (Acts 5.41). We are to prepare ourselves for persecution just as Jesus did (1 Peter 4.1). The major benefit of suffering for Him is that we will stop sinning and live *ōfor the will of God* (1 Peter 4.1). As we suffer in the flesh we are to rejoice (1 Peter 4.13), glorify God (1 Peter 4.16), and entrust our *ōsouls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right* (1 Peter 4.19). As we trust in God with all our heart and do not trust in our understanding we will acknowledge Him in all that we do, and He will make our paths straight (Proverbs 3.5-6).

Consider the sufferings of Job who lost everything he had, including his children, but then had it all restored two-fold by God who is *ōfull of compassion and merciful*. When you suffer persecution or trials read the book of Job for it will uplift and strengthen you.

(5.12) No believer is to ever make an oath of any kind (Matthew 5.33-37). In the Old Testament dispensation oath making was commonplace and most oaths were broken. The Hebrews people were commanded not to make false oaths (Leviticus 19.12) and to keep every oath they made (Numbers 30.2). When they broke an oath God made them pay (Deuteronomy 23.21). God made it clear that He did not expect people to make vows, but when they did they were to be careful to perform it (Deuteronomy 23.22-23). Men made them as a way of showing off and of trying to

make themselves look important. The custom had become abused so much that oaths were meaningless.

The command to not make an oath was given to eliminate this custom, but also to show that oaths are not as important as man made them out to be. Instead it is best to just say yes or no on a matter and do as you say.

If we make vows (oaths) today and do not keep them we will be judged. Everyone makes vows in anger or frustration, but we should not. We must be careful not to continue this practice or we will be judged. Fortunately, we will not be obligated to keep our vows for we live under grace not law.

Prayer for healing

(5.13-18) *Is anyone among you suffering? Then he must pray. Is anyone cheerful? He is to sing praises. 14 Is anyone among you sick? Then he must call for the elders of the church and they are to pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; 15 and the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him. 16 Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much. 17 Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months. 18 Then he prayed again, and the sky poured rain and the earth produced its fruit.*

(5.13) Believers who are suffering in any way should pray for the Lord to comfort them. Those who are happy should sing songs of praise. We are to sing songs to one another (Ephesians 5.19) to edify each other, but mostly to glorify Jesus (Ephesians 5.20). Those who are suffering either physically, mentally, emotionally or spiritually will be encouraged.

(5.14-15) Believers who are sick are to call for the pastors of the church to pray for them. Oil was used to anoint kings (1 Samuel 16.13) and priests (Leviticus 8.12) in the Old Testament dispensation, and it was used at the beginning of the Church Age. It should be used because it represents the work of the Holy Spirit who heals believers not the oil.

(5.16-18) Believers are to confess their sins to one another for healing not in any other context. We are not commanded to confess our sins to a priest, bishop, or anyone designated as such. We are to confess our sins to Jesus when we commit them for *“He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness”* (1 John 1.9).

The only time we are to confess our sins to other believers is when we sin against them, and for healing. Some sins should not be confessed to others such as sexual sins because many believers cannot handle it.

Prayer works and the effective prayer of a righteous man can do a great deal. The prime example is Elijah who prayed that it would not rain and for 3½ years it did not. He prayed again that it would rain and it did. Elijah was just like us. He had no special power, just great faith and he exercised it. The way to make your faith grow is to ask God to increase it (Luke 17.5).

Restoring the backslidden

(5.19-20) *My brethren, if any among you strays from the truth and one turns him back, 20 let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins..*

(5.19-20) When a brother backslides, it is the duty of others to bring him back (Galatians 6.1). If he repents you will save him from being judged by the church (Matthew 18.15-17), and possibly by God, who sometimes takes backsliders home (John 15.2, 6; 1 Corinthians 5.5).

When anyone brings a prodigal brother home he must keep secret the sins the backslider committed. It does no one any good to broadcast to the entire church and the world every sin the backslider committed. Only the one who brings him back and possibly the pastors should know what sins he has committed. The backslider should be the one to tell the pastors what sins he committed.

CLOSED BOOK TEST

(Timed - 60 seconds)

1. For the most part are rich people kind or ruthless?

2. Do the rich mostly live a life of wonton pleasure?

3. Do the rich usually kill?

4. Was the Rapture near at hand in the first century?

5. Should believers swear (make oaths)?

6. What should we do when we are suffering and what should we do when we are cheerful?

7. What should we do when we are sick?

8. What did Elijah do to keep it from raining for 42 months?

9. What should we do when we see a brother go astray?

10. What does love cover?

VERSES TO MEMORIZE AND MEDITATE ON

The following are the key verses of chapter five:

9-11, 19-20

Try to memorize as many verses as you can. If you find other verses you desire to memorize do so. You can never memorize too many Scriptures. If you are wealthy and find it difficult to give more than a tithe to the Lord and the poor consider memorizing verses 1-6.

ANSWERS

CHAPTER ONE

1. What is a bond-servant? (v. 1)
A servant who decides to remain a servant for life.
2. Who did James write his letter to? (v. 1)
The twelve Hebrew tribes.
3. What are we to do when we encounter trials? (v. 2)
Consider it all joy.
4. What should the testing of our faith produce? (v. 3)
Endurance.
5. What should we be after going through testing of our faith?
(v. 4)

A. Perfect. B. Complete C. Lacking nothing.
6. What should we NOT lack? (vs. 5-7) Wisdom.

A. If we lack this what should we do?
Ask God for wisdom.

B. What else can we do to get this? (Prov. 1.1-7; 2.1-10; 4.7;
5.1-2; 7.1-4; 8.13)
Increase in learning, acquire wise counsel, respect God,
receive and treasure Scripture, search for it, acquire
wisdom and pay attention to it, keep the commandments
and hate evil.

- C. Does God give this to all men and in what manner?
Yes and He gives it generously and without reproach.
- D. When we ask for this what must we NOT do and why?
Not doubt.
- E. What kind of a person are we if we do not ask in faith?
A double-minded person who is unstable in all our ways.
7. What should the brother of humble circumstances do? (v. 9)
Glory in his high position.
8. What should the rich brother do and why? (vs. 10-11)
Glory in his humiliation because his riches will last for a brief time.
9. Which brother is given the greater blessing and which brother will have more rewards in Heaven? (vs. 9-10)
The poor brother.
10. What should we do when we encounter trials and temptations? (v. 12)
Persevere.
- A. What will we receive if we are approved?
The crown of life.
- B. Is there something else we must do to receive the reward?
Love Jesus.
- C. If we are not approved will we still receive the reward?
Probably not.
11. Does God tempt people or do They test people? (vs. 13-15)
(2 Sam. 24.1; 1 Chron. 21.1)
God never tempts people, but He frequently tests them.
- A. What is the difference between temptation and testing?

1. Temptation is ó Inticing someone to sin.
2. Testing is ó Showing others how strong a person's faith, love, loyalty, obedience, etc. is.

B. Can God be tempted by evil?

NO! It is impossible for God to be tempted by evil!

C. Was Jesus tempted by evil during His incarnation and could He have given in to it? (Luke 4.1-13)

NO! The testing by the devil was not a temptation to Jesus. It was permitted to prove to the devil, the fallen angels, the holy angels and all mankind that Jesus is fully divine and fully God in human flesh.

D. What causes a person to be tempted? (v. 14) Lust.

E. What are the results of giving in to temptation? (v. 15)

1. Sin.
2. Death

F. Can the natural results of succumbing to temptation be stopped and if so how? (15)

Yes, if one stops sinning, receives medical attention, takes care of his body or the Lord heals him.

12. What must we guard against (v. 16) Deception

A. Who is the father of the thing we must guard against?

(Genesis 3.1-7; John 8.44; Revelation 12.9; 20.3, 8, 10)
The devil.

B. How do we guard ourselves against this? (Ephesians 6.10-18)

By putting on the full armor of God which is:

- | | | |
|--------------|------------------|-----------|
| 1. Truth | 2. Righteousness | |
| 3. Faith | 4. Gospel | |
| 5. Salvation | 6. Word of God | 7. Prayer |

13. Where does every good thing and every perfect gift come from? (v. 17)

From above (Heaven) from the Father of lights.

A. Who receives these good things and gifts? People.

B. What does no ðvariationö and no öshifting shadowö mean?

1. No variation ö The blessings are the same for everyone.

2. No shifting shadow ö The blessings do not go from good to bad.

14. Who brought whom forth? (v. 18)

The Father brought forth the saints (believers).

A. By what was this done?

By the Word of God.

B. What is a first fruit? (Exodus 23.16) The first crop.

1. Who is the First Fruit? (1 Corinthians 15.20, 23)
Jesus.

2. Who was among the first fruits? (Matthew 27.51-53)

An unspecified number of Old Testament believers.

15. What must every believer be? (v. 19)

A. Quick to hear.

B. Slow to speak.

C. Slow to anger.

16. What can the anger of man never achieve? (v. 20)

The righteousness of God.

A. What must we never let go down on our anger?

(Ephesians 4.26)

The sun.

- B. Can we exhibit righteous anger? (Ephesians 4.26)
Yes, but we must be careful not to sin.

17. What must all believers do? (v. 21)

- A. Put away all filthiness and wickedness (sin).
B. Receive the Word (Scripture).

18. What can save our souls? (v. 21) Scripture.

- A. How is a person saved? (Ephesians 2.8)
By the grace of God through faith alone in Jesus.
- B. By what does faith come? (Romans 10.17)
Hearing Scripture.

19. What must all believers do? (v. 22)

Be doers of the Word and not just hearers.

A. Give a few examples of what we must do?

1. Love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength (Deuteronomy 6.5; Mark 12.30).
2. Love your neighbor as yourself (Leviticus 19.18; Mark 12.31)
3. Draw near to God (James 4.8).
4. Keep the commandments in Scripture (1 John 5.2-3).
5. Cleanse your hands and purify your hearts (James 4.8).
6. Pray for all kinds of people (1 Timothy 2.1).
7. Share material goods with those in need (1 John 3.17-18).
8. Be hospitable (1 Peter 4.9)
9. Serve each other (1 Peter 4.10)
10. Visit orphans & widows, do not be carried away by the world (James 1.27)
11. Humble yourselves (1 Peter 5.6)
12. Resist the devil (James 4.7; 1 Peter 5.9)
13. Love your enemies (Matthew 5.44)

14. Give to the Lord in secret (Matthew 6.1-4)
15. Do not love the world or worldly things (1 John 2.15)
16. Do not oppress employees, widows, orphans or aliens (Malachi 3.5)
17. Seek good and not evil, hate evil and love good, and establish justice (Amos 5.14-15; Proverbs 8.13)
18. Do not charge high rent to the poor (Amos 5.11)
19. Do not reject knowledge (Hosea 4.6)
20. Do not have idols in your life (1 John 5.21)

B. How do some believers delude themselves?

1. By going to church and doing little else.
2. By saying a quick prayer before dinner and a quick prayer before sleeping and little else.
3. By giving some money or even tithing and little else.
4. By watching your favorite religious TV show and little else.
5. By helping the brethren once in a great while and little else.

C. Should we periodically examine our faith? (2 Corinthians 13.5)

Yes, all Christians should examine their faith from time to time.

1. How do we examine our faith?

By studying the Scriptures to see what it says we should do. If we are not doing them we have failed the test.

20. What one word best describes a hearer of the Word who does not obey it? (vs. 23-24) Hypocrite.
21. What is the Perfect Law ó the Law of Liberty? (v. 25)
(James 2.12; John 8.32; Galatians 2.4; 6.2; 1 Peter 2.16)
Love God with all your heart, soul, mind and body,
and your neighbor as yourself (Mark 12.30-31).
22. What must all believers do with the Law of Liberty and what must we not do with it? (v. 25)

- A. Look at it.
 - B. Obey it.
 - C. Not be forgetful hearers.
23. What will be the result if we do what we should do and not do something? (v. 25) (Psalms 1.1-3)
We will be blessed in what we do.
24. What must we all do if we claim to be religious? (v. 26)
Control our speech.
- A. If we do not do this what will be the result?
 - 1. We will deceive ourselves.
 - 2. Our religion (faith) will be worthless.
25. What is pure and undefiled religion? (v. 27)
- A. Visiting and caring for orphans and widows.
 - B. Keeping oneself pure from the world.

CHAPTER TWO

1. What must we not do with our faith? (vs. 1-4)
Show favoritism.
- A. List some of the motives of this sin. Greed, power, influence, favors in return.
2. Who does God mostly choose to save? (v. 5) The poor.
3. What does God promise to those He chose to save and what should their response to being chosen be? (v. 5)
Heirs of the kingdom of Heaven and rich in faith.
4. What type of person is it shameful to show favoritism to? (vs. 6-7)
A rich person.

- A. What do these people do to others? Sue them.
- B. What do they do to Jesus? Blaspheme His name!

5. What is the Royal Law? (v. 8)

Love your neighbor as yourself.

A. What is the Holy Law that all the commandments hang on? (Mark 12.29-33)

Love God with all your heart, soul, mind and body and love your neighbor as yourself.

6. Is showing partiality (favortism) a sin? (vs. 9-11) ó Yes!

A. If a person were to keep the whole law except for one commandment would he be guilty of breaking all the commandments? ó Yes!

B. Why would a person be held guilty of breaking all the commandments if he broke only one? It is a contract. Violation of one part breaks the entire contract.

C. Why do you think favoritism is a sin? It causes those who do not receive favoritism to be jealous. It feeds the pride of those favored. It can cause some to behave in an unethical manner to curry favor. It can cause some to lose respect for the one showing the favoritism and dislike the ones favored.

7. Should we live according to the Ten Commandments or according to another law? (v. 12) (Galatians 5.13-26)

We should not live according to the Ten Commandments. Instead we should live according to the Law of Liberty.

A. Is there any Old Testament commandment that we are bound to keep to remain in fellowship with God? No!

B. Should we focus on obeying commandments or focus on living by the Holy Spirit? (Galatians 5.18).

We should focus on living by the power of the Holy Spirit.

1. How do we walk by the Spirit? (Galatians 5.16, 25).
 - a. By praying always (Ephesians 6.18; 1 Thes. 5.17).
 - b. By hearing Scripture daily (Deut. 6.4; Rom. 10.17).
 - c. By reading Scripture daily (Matt. 24.15; Rev. 1:3).
 - d. By study Scripture daily (Acts 17.11).
 - e. By memorizing Scripture daily. (Psalm 119.11; Proverbs 2.1; 3.1, 3)

8. Whose judgment will be merciless? (v. 13) Godø.
 - A. Which is better ó mercy or judgment? Mercy!

9. If a person is born from above will he do good works? (v. 14) Yes, he will.
 - A. Can a person be saved and never do any good works? No. He will do some good works.

 - B. Are we saved just to escape judgment or are we saved for that and other things? (Ephesians 2.10) We are saved to escape Hell and to perform the good works which God has prepared for us to do.

 - C. If a person who claims to be saved shows no evidence of being a new creation is it possible he believed in vain? (1 Corinthians 15.2) Yes.

 - D. Should all believers examine their faith to see if it is real? (2 Corinthians 13.5) Yes, on a regular basis!
 1. How does one examine his faith? By studying Scripture to see what we should and should not do, and then decide if we are living a holy life. (See Appendices B and C.)

10. What is one way of doing good works? (v. 15-16) (1 John 3.17-19)
Helping those in need.
11. Can a person's faith be worthless? (v. 17) Yes!
- A. What does it mean if one's faith is worthless? It is not being used to do the good works that God has prepared for us to do.
- B. If one's faith is worthless does it mean they lost their salvation or they were never truly saved? They might never have been born from above. If they were saved they are backslidden.
12. Should it be obvious to all whether or not a person is saved? (v. 18)
Yes!
13. What is the difference between the belief of demons and the belief of people in God? (v. 19) Saving belief (faith).
- A. Can demons be saved by belief in God? No.
- B. Is their belief different than our belief and how so?
They believe that God is the only true God, but they do not trust God to save them as we do. And even if they wanted to trust Him they could not because there is no salvation plan for fallen angels.
14. If a believer has no good works is he a fool? (v. 20) Yes.
15. If a believer's faith is useless is he in danger of being taken home? (John 15.1-6) Yes.
16. Was Abraham justified by God by his works or by his faith? (vs. 21-23) (Romans 4.1-5)
He was justified in the eyes of God only by faith.

- A. Was the willingness of Abraham to offer his son Isaac a work or an act of faith?
It was an act of faith.
- B. What does James mean that faith is perfected by works?
A person's faith grows stronger as he does good works by the power of the Holy Spirit.
- C. Is there a contradiction by the statement that Abraham was justified by works (v. 21) and the statement he believed God and his belief was reckoned to him as righteousness? (v. 23) (Genesis 15.6; Romans 4.3)
No! Abraham was justified in the eyes of his servants by his work of faith and he was justified in the eyes of God by his faith.
17. Is a person justified in the eyes of men by works plus faith? (v. 24) Yes.
- A. Was what Rahab did a work or an act of faith? (v. 25)
An act of faith.
18. How can we tell whether or not a person's faith is useless? (v. 26)
If they do not do good works it is worthless.
19. When is a person physically dead? (v. 26)
When their spirit departs their body.
20. If scientists succeed in cloning a person will the clone have a spirit?
No. It is highly likely clones will be demon possessed.

CHAPTER THREE

1. Why should there not be many Bible teachers? (v. 1)
Teachers will be judged more strictly.

2. What kind of judgment is this talking about? (v. 1)

A. Is it a judgment of rewards or condemnation?

The judgment of teachers is of rewards.

B. Can a Bible teacher lose rewards by teaching false doctrines?

It is possible that Bible teachers will lose rewards if they teach false doctrines.

3. What does it mean to stumble? (v. 2)

Do or say something improper or sinful.

A. Can a person never stumble in word but stumble in deed?

One cannot be perfect in what he says and imperfect in what he does.

B. Can a person be perfect in word and deed?

A person can be perfect in word and deed but only for a limited time ó a few hours.

C. Are we commanded to be perfect?

We are commanded to be perfect as our Father in Heaven is perfect. (Matthew 5.48)

4. Should every believer have total control over his speech? (vs. 3-4)

Every believer must get control of his speech.

5. Is it a sin to boast? (v. 5)

It is a sin to boast, unless you boast about the work of the Lord.

6. Why is the tongue (speech) compared to fire? (vs. 5-6)

Uncontrolled speech destroys friendships, marriages, families and lives.

7. Why is the speech of virtually everyone sinful? (v. 6)
Everyone says things virtually every day that are sinful or improper because of our sin nature. The easiest way to sin is with the mind and the second easiest is with our speech. Every believer struggles to control his sinful thoughts and words his entire life. Eventually our sinful thoughts and words produce sinful acts.
8. How does our speech defile our body? (v. 6)
It defiles our entire body (being) because the more we express our sinful thoughts in words the more we feed our sinful thoughts.
9. Explain how our speech sets on fire the course of our life? (v. 6)
Our sinful speech stimulates our desire to think about sinful things which in turn leads us to do sinful acts.
10. What is meant by the statement that our speech is set on fire by Hell? (v. 6)
Our sinful speech is not controlled by the forces of darkness, but they can entice us to think sinful thoughts, to say sinful things and to do sinful things. That is why we are commanded to resist the devil (James 4.7).
11. Why is it so hard for people to control their speech? (vs. 7-8)
No one can control his thoughts and speech by his own power.
- A. How can a person get control over his speech?
The only way to control our sinful thoughts and speech is by the power of the Holy Spirit.
- B. What causes our speech to be a restless evil that is full of deadly poison? (v. 8)
Our sin nature causes our speech to be a restless evil that is full of deadly poison.

12. Why is it wrong to curse someone? (v. 9)
It is wrong to curse people because everyone is created in the image of God. We are in a way cursing God.
13. Why do you think it is easy for believers to praise God and a few minutes later curse someone? (v. 9)
Believers can one moment praise God and curse someone the next because we do not have control of our sin nature.
14. If a person praises God and also curses people is his heart (true self) holy or evil or both? (vs. 11-12) (Galatians 5.17)
When we praise God and also curse people it can mean we are holy, yet struggling to get our sin nature under control. It is also possible we have no desire to get our sin nature under control and we are phonies who pretend to love God.
15. If one is wise and has understanding what will he do? (v. 13)
A truly wise believer will have holy behavior.
16. What two things should we NOT have and what should we NOT do? (v. 14)
1. Bitter jealousy.
 2. Selfish ambition.
 3. Be arrogant.
17. When we are arrogant why does it mean we are lying against the truth? (v. 14)
When we are prideful we are in open rebellion to God and His Word. We are saying that we know what is right rather than God.
18. Is there a false wisdom? (v. 15)
Yes there is false wisdom.
- A. What are the sources of this wisdom?
1. Earthly.
 2. Natural.
 3. Demonic.

19. What are the results of being jealous and having selfish ambition? (v. 16)
- A. Disorder.
 - B. Every evil thing.
20. Is it good to have ambition that is not selfish? (v. 16)
It is good to have ambition if it is for the service of the Lord and you do not seek glory, fame, recognition, etc.
21. Where does real wisdom come from? (v. 17)
Real wisdom comes from above (Heaven).
22. What are the attributes of true wisdom? (v. 17)
- 1. Pure. 2. Peaceable. 3. Gentle. 4. Reasonable.
 - 5. Full of mercy. 6. Full of good fruits. 7. Unwavering.
 - 8. No hypocrisy.
23. What seed bears the fruit of righteousness? (v. 18)
The seed whose fruit is righteousness.
24. Explain what it means to sow this seed and why it's important that it is sown in peace? (v. 18)
Sowing the seed of righteousness is living a holy life. When we live a holy life in peace with all men we show the unsaved we are different. Then we can share the Gospel with them.

CHAPTER FOUR

1. What is the source of conflict among spiritual brothers? (v. 1)
Our pleasures.
- A. Is this source what also causes conflicts in families, companies, governments, nations and between nations?
Yes.

B. How can this source of conflict be defeated? Prayer and studying Scripture.

2. What two sins does James say is the cause of problems? (v. 2)

A. Lust.

B. Envy

3. What three things does James say people do as a result of sin? (v. 2)

A. Murder.

B. Fight.

C. Quarrel.

4. Is James saying believers commit these sins? Yes.

5. What two reasons are the causes for us not getting the things we want? (vs. 2-3)

A. Do not ask.

B. We ask with wrong motives.

6. Why does James call believers adulteresses? (v. 4)

They are spiritually unfaithful to God by being friends of the world.

7. Can a believer be a friend of the world and God at the same time? (v. 4)

No. If a believer is a friend of the world (unsaved) he is an enemy of God.

8. If a believer is a friend of the world what is he to God? (v. 4)

Enemy.

9. What does God the Father jealously desire? (v. 5)

The Holy Spirit jealously longs for our physical bodies that He dwells in.

10. Who is God opposed to? (v. 6)
The proud.
11. Who does God give grace to? (v. 6)
The humble.
12. What are we to do concerning God? (v. 7)
Submit.
13. What are we to do concerning the devil? (v. 7)
Resist him.
14. What three things are we to do concerning God and ourselves? (v. 8)
 - A. Draw near to God.
 - B. Clean up our behavior.
 - C. Purify our inner man.
15. What two problems did the believers James wrote to have? (v. 8)
 - A. They were not close to God.
 - B. They were not holy.
16. Why did James tell his readers to be miserable and not happy? (v. 9)
They were partying most of the time and God says it is better to go to the house of mourning than the house of feasting.
17. What does God the Father do for those who humble themselves before Him? (v. 10)
He exalts them.
 - A. Does He do this in this life or the life to come or both?
Sometimes in this life, but always in the life to come.

18. What do most people want for themselves? (v. 10)
To be looked up to, loved, wanted, etc.
- A. What is the best way to get this?
Be humble.
- B. How do most believers and people go about getting it?
They act in a proud manner around others.
19. Why should we not speak against or judge our spiritual brothers and sisters? (v. 11)
We become judges of the Law instead of doers of the Law.
20. Who is the one and only true Lawgiver and Judge? (v. 12)
God.
21. Is there a time when we can or should judge a spiritual brother? (v. 12) (Matthew 7.15-23; Galatians 2.14; 1 Timothy 5.20; 2 Timothy 4.2; 2 Peter 2.1)
We can judge when they teach false doctrine or commit a public sin or live a sinful lifestyle.
22. When we undertake any project what should we ask God? (vs. 13-15)
Ask if it is His will.
23. In the grand scheme of things is the lifespan of a man short or long? (v. 14)
Extremely short.
24. What sin should we avoid at all costs and why? (v. 16)
Pride. It is the original sin (Isaiah 14.13-14) and the sin that God greatly hates (Proverbs 6.17).
25. Is it wrong to not do something that is right to do? (v. 17)
(List a few examples.)
Yes!
- A. Not care for widows and orphans.
B. Not pray and study Scripture on a daily basis.

- C. Not defend someone who is being attacked, persecuted or harassed.
- D. Not speak up for the helpless such as unborn babies who are murdered.
- E. Not expose a false prophet or false teacher.
- F. Do nothing when we see a brother or sister living a sinful lifestyle.
- G. Not rebuke someone who behaves in an unruly, rude, obscene, obnoxious or unethical manner.

CHAPTER FIVE

1. Is it better to be rich or poor? (vs. 1-3)
It is better to be poor.
2. What is one result of being rich? (v. 1)
The rich will have miseries.
3. What is the message of verse two? (v. 2)
All riches eventually become worthless or useless.
4. What does it mean that the rust of gold and silver will be a witness against the rich? (v. 3)
When a person hoards gold and silver coins they rust or tarnish somewhat. It means that person is not using his wealth to provide jobs. He is saving it for a time of need.
5. Will the rust of the money of the rich consume their flesh like fire? (v. 3)
The rust will not literally consume the flesh of the hoarder, but the stinginess of that person will spiritually destroy them.
6. What does the statement mean concerning the rich storing up their treasure in the last days? (v. 3)

The rich have a bad habit of hoarding more wealth than they would ever need in a time of hardship. They should use more of their wealth to provide jobs and produce goods.

7. What is a common practice of rich employers? (v. 4)
Withhold pay or not pay.
8. Will the rich get away with their sinful ways? (v. 4)
No! They will be judged for their sins and punished accordingly. True believers who mistreat their employees will suffer great loss of rewards.
9. What are two other common traits of the rich? (v. 5)
They live a life of luxury and wanton pleasure.
10. What does the phrase *“fatted your hearts in a day of slaughter”* mean, and what is the day of slaughter? (v. 5)
The rich live a life of pleasure, and therefore they fatten their sinful self as a farmer fattens his livestock for the slaughter. The Day of Slaughter is the Second Advent of Jesus.
11. What have the rich done to the righteous throughout history? (v. 6)
The rich have unjustly condemned and murdered believers and the poor.
12. What are the righteous to do when persecuted by the rich? (vs. 7-8)
Be patient and wait for God to take vengeance.
13. What are we to do while we wait for the return of the Lord? How do we do the second thing? (v. 8)
 - A. We are to be patient and strengthen our hearts while we wait for Jesus.
 - B. We strengthen our hearts by prayer, study of the Word, fellowship and evangelism.

14. What does the phrase *ōat handö* mean? (v. 8)
It means ñearerö or õcertain.ö
15. Was the return of the Lord *ōat handö* when James wrote? (v. 8)
James wrote his letter around 45 A.D. If, as the preterists claim, Jesus returned in 70 A.D. His return was not near or *ōat handö* in 45 A.D. Twenty-five years is not at hand no matter how much you want it to be.
16. What are we not to do about each other and why not? (v. 9)
Do not complain about the brethren.
17. What does the phrase *ōstanding at the doorö* mean? (v. 9)
It means Jesus is always ready to judge and He judges the saved and unsaved continually.
18. Who does James give as an example for us to learn from about suffering and patience? (v. 10)
The prophets of the Old Testament dispensation.
19. How can we learn from these men? (v.10)
We can learn from the prophets by studying what was written about them.
20. Whose name did these men speak in? (v. 10)
The prophets spoke in the name of YAHWEH.
21. Is it important to know and use the name of the one these men spoke in? (v. 10)
It is extremely important to know the name of YAHWEH. The name is used hundreds of time in the original Hebrew manuscripts. We are commanded to love the name (Psalm 69.36; 119.32), call upon the name (Psalm 80.18; 105.1; 116.13, 17); seek the name (Psalm 83.16), know the name (Psalm 91.14), bless the name (Psalm 96.2; 100.4; 103.1), praise the name (Psalm 61.8; 66.4; 68.4; 69.30; 74.21; 92.1; 99.3; 113.1), shout for joy at the name (Psalm

89.12), tell of the name (Psalm 22.22; 102.21), give glory to the name (Psalm 29.2), glory in the name (Psalm 105.3), give thanks to His holy name (Psalm 30.4; 44.8; 54.6; 106.47), rejoice in the name (Psalm 89. 16), trust in His holy name (Psalm 33.21), exalt His name (Psalm 34.3), respect the name (Psalm 61.5), sing about the glory of the name (Psalm 66.1), give glory to the name (Psalm 96.8; 115.1), remember the name (Psalm 119.55) and cause the name to be remembered (Psalm 45.17). The patriarchs used the name YAHWEH daily. The use of the name YAHWEH was discontinued by the rabbis after coming out of Babylonian captivity. It was wrong.

22. What is His name? (v. 10)
The name of God is YAHWEH.
23. Why did the Lord allow the devil to persecute Job? (v. 11)
(Job chapters 1-2)
To prove to the devil, the fallen angels, the holy angels
And Adamkind that Job was faithful. All believers can
show their faithfulness when we encounter trials and
persecution.
24. What is the Lord full of? (v. 11)
God is full of compassion and mercy.
25. What are we commanded not to do and what should we do?
(v. 12)
- A. We must not swear or take oaths.
 - B. We must say what we mean without using oaths.
 - C. We must not make oaths to avoid being judged by God.
26. What should those who suffer and those who are cheerful
do? (v. 13)
- A. Those who suffer should pray.
 - B. Those who are cheerful should sing praises.

27. What should the sick do? (v. 14)
The sick should call for the elders to pray for them.
28. Is it important to know and use the name of the Lord? (v. 14)
It is very important to know and use the name YAHWEH.
29. What will restore the sick? (v. 15)
Prayer given in faith will restore the sick.
30. Can sickness be due to sin? (v. 15)
Sin can bring judgment from God in the form of sickness.
31. What two things are we to do to one another? (v. 16)
- A. Confess our sins to one another.
 - B. Pray for each other (Eph. 6.18).
32. What did Elijah do and why? (vs. 17-18)
Elijah prayed that it would not rain and then that it would.
He did this under orders from God (1Kings 17.1; 18.1).
33. Can a true believer stray from the truth? (v. 19)
True believers not only can stray from the truth or their faith ó most do at some time in their lives.
34. What is the result of turning a believer back to the Lord who had gone astray? (v. 20)
When we turn a brother or sister back to the Lord we save him from judgment and cover (forgive and forget) a multitude of his sins.

ANSWERS TO CLOSED BOOK TESTS

CHAPTER ONE

1. What are we to do when we encounter trials?
Count it all joy (v. 2)
2. What should we ask for just as Solomon did?
Wisdom (v. 5)
3. Who is considered by God to be greater in the spiritual realm ó the rich or the poor?
Poor (vs. 9-10)
4. Are all your abilities, intelligence and wealth gifts from God?
Yes! (v. 17)
5. What three things should we do concerning our speech and temper?
Be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger. (v. 19)
6. What does the anger of man never produce?
The righteousness of God (v. 20)
7. Should all believers be hearers of the Word and doers of the Word?
Yes! (v. 22)

8. If we cannot control our speech is our faith worthless?
Yes! (v. 26)
9. What is pure and undefiled religion?
Caring for widows and orphans and keeping oneself unstained by the world. (v. 27)
10. Is it the duty of government or the Church to care for widows and orphans?
The Church!

CHAPTER TWO

1. Who should we give more honor to ó the rich or the poor?
The poor. (vs. 1-7)
2. Is it a sin to show favoritism?
Yes! (v. 1)
3. Has God chosen more poor or rich people for salvation?
More poor people. (v. 5)
4. If a person breaks just one commandment is he guilty of all?
Yes! (v. 10)
5. Can a believer have faith, but never do good works?
No! (vs. 14-17)
6. Are wealthy believers commanded to give to poor believers?
Yes! (vs. 14-17)
7. Can a true believer's faith be useless?
Yes! (v. 17)

8. Was Abraham and Rahab justified before God or before men by their works?
Men. (vs. 21-25)
9. Do others know we are saved by what we say or by what we do?
By what we do. (v. 21-25)
10. When is the physical body dead?
When the spirit departs. (v. 26)

CHAPTER THREE

1. Should there be many Bible teachers?
No! (v. 1)
2. Will Bible teachers be judged more strictly?
Yes! (v. 1)
3. What can no man tame?
The tongue – speech. (v. 8)
4. Does a wise man behave in a holy or worldly manner?
A holy manner. (v. 13)
5. Is worldly wisdom good or evil?
It is evil. (v. 15)
6. Should believers ever exhibit worldly jealousy?
No! (v. 14)
7. Should a believer ever have selfish ambition?
No! (v. 14)
8. Could jealousy and selfish ambition be a cause of many problems in churches?
Yes! (v. 16)

9. Is Heavenly wisdom void of hypocrisy?

Yes! (v. 17)

10. Should Christians be peacemakers?

Yes! (v. 18)

CHAPTER FOUR

1. Do some believers fight and quarrel with each other?

Yes! (v. 1)

2. Do some Christians ask God for things with the wrong motive?

Yes! (v. 3)

3. You can be a friend of the world and of God at the same time.

No! (v. 4)

4. Does the Holy Spirit literally live inside of our bodies?

Yes. (v. 5)

5. Who is God opposed to?

The proud. (v. 6)

6. What does God give to the humble?

Grace! (v. 6)

7. What three things should all believers do concerning God?

Submit, draw near to Him and humble ourselves! (vs. 7-10)

8. What should we do concerning the devil?

Resist him. (v. 7)

9. Should we judge each other?

No! (v. 11)

10. Is our stay on Earth long or short?

Very short! (v. 14)

CHAPTER FIVE

1. For the most part are the rich kind or ruthless?

Ruthless! (vs. 1-6)

2. Do the rich mostly live a life of wonton pleasure?

Yes! (v. 5)

3. Do the rich usually kill more than the poor?

Yes! (v. 6)

4. Was the Rapture near at hand in the first century?

No! (7)

5. Should believers swear (make oaths)?

No! (v. 12)

6. What should we do when we are suffering and what should we do when we are cheerful?

Pray and sing praises. (v. 13)

7. What should we do when we are sick?

Call for the pastors of the church. (v. 14)

8. What are the pastors to do?

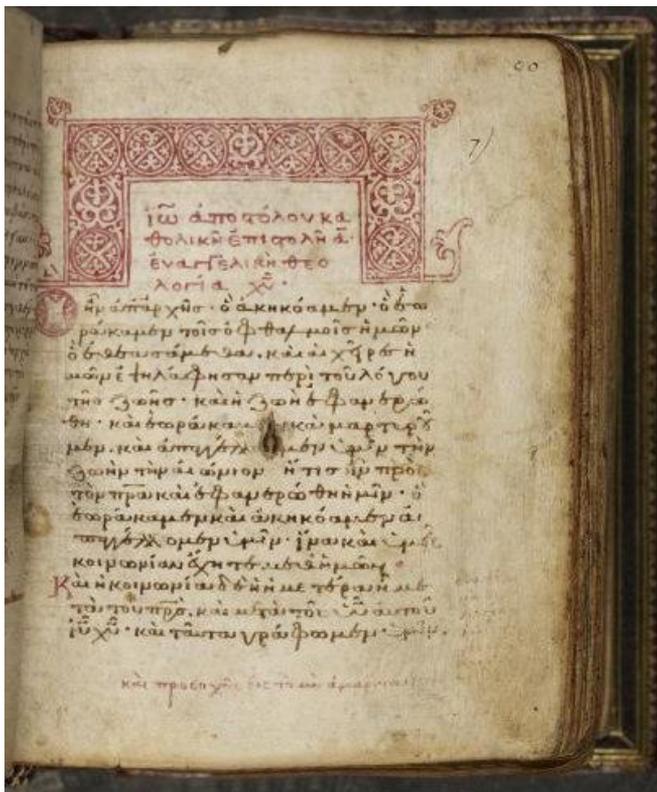
Anoint him with oil and pray. (vs. 14-15)

9. What did Elijah do to keep it from raining for 42 months?

Pray. (v. 17)

10. What should we do when we see a brother go astray?

Turn him back from his error. (v. 20)



JOHN'S LETTERS

This book gives the reader the secrets for living a holy life and how to have an intimate relationship with God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. It also contains assurance that no true believer can lose his salvation, forfeit it or walk away from it.

Read it online at GraceMercyMinistry.com or order your copy from [ó dovbooks@yahoo.com](mailto:odovbooks@yahoo.com)

AFTERWORD

The book of James is a book full of common sense and truths that every believer should learn and then apply to their lives. Study this book and the book of James until you burn the eternal truths into your soul and you walk the talk.

The study of Scripture is hard for most believers. Commentaries and study books are written to help them. Take advantage of these tools until you are able to write commentaries and study books to help others. If you never reach the point where you can write books, keep studying the Bible and books, and share what you have learned with those around you.

Every believing father should study Scripture so he can disciple his wife and his children as God commands them to:

*And these words which I command you today shall be on your heart **and you shall repeat them to your sons and shall speak of them when you sit in your house and when you walk in the way and when you lie down and when you rise up.** (Deuteronomy 6.6-7)*

This is not the only command for parents to disciple their children:

Deuteronomy 4.9-10; 11.18-19

Psalms 78.3-7

Proverbs 4.1; 6.20

Even though you may not be a parent all believers in Jesus Christ are commanded to make disciples (Matthew 28.19-20).

You must be disciplined before you can make disciples. If you cannot disciple yourself ask your pastor to disciple you or find someone who can. If your pastor cannot do it and no one else in your church can get a good book on discipleship and study it until you are capable of discipling others and then make disciples. An excellent series of books on discipleship is *Discipleship 101-501* by Grace Mercy Ministry.



DISCIPLESHIP 101-501

This set of five books is designed to take a newborn babe in Jesus Messiah to full spiritual maturity. They are so comprehensive that every man called to be a pastor can use them to be fully trained to be a pastor. They are not study books designed to indoctrinate the reader into the dogmas of a specific denomination or church. They only help the student of the Bible study the Bible inside and out and to burn the Scriptures into his soul. These workbooks can be used by any and all denominations and churches.

Read it online at **GraceMercyMinistry.com** or order a copy from ó **dovbooks@yahoo.com**

APPENDIX A

WHAT YOU MUST DO TO BE SAVED

For those who want to spend eternity with Jesus Christ rather than in the Lake of Fire there is Hope! Everyone is a sinner in need of salvation:

For all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God;
(Romans 3.23)

Those who die in their sins will be judged:

And for as much as it is apportioned to men once to die and after this judgment. (Hebrews 9.27)

He that believes on the Son has eternal life, and he that is not subject to the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him. (John 3.36)

And if anyone was not found written in the Book of Life, he was cast into the Lake of Fire. (Revelation 20.15)

Yet even though all have sinned, one can escape eternal punishment in the Lake of Fire, and have eternal life through Jesus Christ:

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord. (Romans 6.23)

And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into life eternal. (Matthew 25.46)

“For what shall it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” (Mark 8:36-37)

Salvation is available to all because:

God commends His own love to us that while we were still sinners, Messiah died for us. (Romans 5:8)

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that everyone who believes in Him may not perish, but may have eternal life. (John 3:16)

Belief in Jesus Christ is the only way to be saved:

Jesus said to him, “I am the way and the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me.” (John 14:6)

And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under Heaven which has been given among men by which we must be saved. (Acts 4:12)

Salvation is by grace through faith in Jesus alone:

For by grace you are saved through faith; and this not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, that no one might boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9)

What must one do to be saved?

That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart is belief to righteousness, and with the mouth is confession to salvation. (Romans 10:9-10)

If you believe that God the Father raised Jesus from the dead, call upon Jesus to save you right now:

For everyone, whoever calls on the name of God will be saved. (Romans 10.13)

Today is your day of salvation:

Behold now is the day of salvation! (2 Corinthians 6.2b)

Receive Jesus today for you do not know what tomorrow may bring:

But as many as received Him, He gave to them authority to be children of God, to those believe on His name. (John 1.12)



TREASURE HUNT

Everyone dreams of finding hidden treasure and millions have search for it throughout the last 6,000 years with thousands finding it. Yet every true believer in Jesus Christ has the incredible privilege of spending their entire life searching for hidden treasure that is much more valuable than all the hidden treasure on the Earth! In fact the unimaginable hidden treasure that we are commanded to search for is far more valuable than all the minerals, oil, gas, water, gold, silver, precious gems, art, stocks, bonds, corporations, buildings and land on Earth! It is more valuable than the entire planet and even the entire universe!

If you have not begun your search for the greatest treasure in the Universe read it online at **GraceMercyMinistry.com** or order a copy from **ó dovbooks@yahoo.com**

APPENDIX B

FAITH CHECK

Are you being conformed to the image of Jesus Christ?

Because whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. (Romans 8:29)

Are you being conformed to the image of Jesus Christ? Has there been a noticeable change in your likes and dislikes since you trusted Jesus to save you?

I exhort you therefore, brethren, by the compassion of God to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, well-pleasing to God, which is your intelligent service, and do not fashion yourselves to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is the good and well-pleasing and perfect will of God. (Romans 12:1-2)

Everyone who is truly born from above will change. You will stop doing certain things and start doing things you did not do previously. Your thought life will also change.

To determine whether something is good (honoring to God) pray, read the Bible and ask yourself if Jesus would join you.

There are a few things we know are not of God, and must be avoided at all costs ó illegal drugs and getting drunk.

And be not drunk with wine in which is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit. (Ephesians 5.18)

The next time you listen to secular music, watch television and movies ask yourself if you think Jesus would enjoy spending the day listening to that music and watching those shows and movies. Not all movies and television shows are bad. Exercise great discernment in watching them. Stick to news and documentaries. The next time you watch a Hollywood production imagine Jesus is sitting next to you. Do you think He would sit through a Hollywood trash movie or television show? By the way, Jesus is with you at all times.

The Spiritual Man versus the Natural Man

Take a few minutes to examine your daily walk with Jesus:

Take a few minutes out of your busy schedule and examine your daily walk with Jesus.

Spiritual Activities	Average time spent weekly
Prayer	_____
Reading and studying the Bible	_____
Memorization and meditation	_____
Family worship and devotions	_____
Worship/fellowship with believers	_____
Giving to and helping others	_____
Sharing the Gospel	_____
Being disciplined/making disciples	_____
Total time serving Jesus	_____

Worldly activities	Average time spent weekly
Watching TV and movies	_____
Internet	_____
Reading (secular books/magazines)	_____
Hobbies and recreation	_____
Attending sporting events	_____
Socializing (in person, phone, Web)	_____
Shopping	_____
Other non-spiritual activities	_____
Total time serving yourself	_____

Sleeping, eating, moderate exercise and working are not on this list because they are pursuits of the flesh that are necessary for survival. It is your free time that you are to examine. All believers should spend more of their free time each day feeding their soul than feeding their flesh. Sadly, few do that. Worse yet, few believers spend more time feeding their souls than they do eating.

If you are not spending more time in spiritual activities (feeding your soul) than you do in eating (feeding your flesh) you are backslidden. Since most people take time to feed their flesh should you take an equal amount of time in feeding your soul?

If you spend more time each day exercising the flesh than you do exercising your soul which is more important to you ó your sinful body or your eternal soul?

Take this faith check once a month for the first year and then take it every few months or so. This will help you see your progress of maturing in the Lord.



FAITH TEST

Faith Test is a book every believer needs to read. Paul exhorted believers in Corinth to examine themselves to see if they were in the faith:

Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you – unless indeed you fail the test? (2 Corinthians 13.5)

To see if you pass the faith test read it online at GraceMercyMinistry.com or order a copy from dovbooks@yahoo.com

APPENDIX C

SPIRITUAL FITNESS PROGRAM

God commands every child of His to be spiritually fit. This includes denying oneself of the pleasures of the world, living a holy and disciplined life, daily studying Scripture, living by every Word that proceeds from His mouth and then teaching others:

Therefore, since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same purpose, because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, so as to live the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. For the time already past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles, having pursued a course of sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousing, drinking parties and abominable idolatries. (1 Peter 4.1-3)

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth. (2 Timothy 2.15)

Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so. (Acts 17.11)

But He answered and said, "It is written, 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD.' (Matthew 4.4)

"These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. (Deuteronomy 6.6-7)

There are a few basic things that a believer in Jesus Christ must do to become a faithful *disciple*:

1. **Pray** (Deuteronomy 9.25-26; 1 Samuel 15.11; 1 Chronicles 16.11; Psalm 88.9; Proverbs 15.29; Isaiah 56.7; Matthew 5.44; 6.5-6; 7.7-11; 26.41; Luke 11.5-10; 18.1-8; John 14.13-14; 15.16; 16.24; Acts 1.14; 2.42; 4.31; 6.4; 1 Corinthians 7.5; Ephesians 6.18; Philippians 4.6; Colossians 4.2; 1 Thessalonians 5.17; 1 Timothy 2.1-2; 5.5; 2 Timothy 2.8; James 1.5; 1 Peter 3.7).
2. **Listen** to Scripture (Deuteronomy 4.10; Proverbs 8.34; 22.17; 23.12; Luke 8.15, 21; 11.28; James 1.22; Revelation 1.3).
3. **Read** Scripture (Deuteronomy 17.19; Isaiah 34.16; Revelation 1.3).
4. **Study** Scripture (Proverbs 2.1-5; 8.34; John 5.39; Acts 17.11; Romans 15.4; 2 Timothy 2.15).
5. **Memorize** Scripture (Deuteronomy 6.6; 11.18; 30.14; Psalm 37.31; 40.8; 119.11; Proverbs 2.1; 3.1, 3; 4.1, 21; 6.21; 22.18; Isaiah 51.7; 59.21; Ezekiel 3.10; Romans 10.8; Colossians 3.16).

6. **Meditate** on Scripture (Joshua 1.8; Job 22.22; 23.12; Psalm 1.2; 4.4; 19.14; 63.6; 77.12; 104.34; 119.15, 23, 27, 48, 78, 97, 99, 148; 143.5; Colossians 3.16).
7. **Fellowship** with the brethren (Psalm 22.22; 119.63; Proverbs 13.20; Acts 2.42, 46-47; 5.42; Hebrews 3.13; 10.24-25; 1 John 1.7).
8. **Worship** with the brethren and privately (Deuteronomy 6.13; 26.10; 1 Chronicles 16.29; Psalm 2.11; 29.2; 96.9; 99.5, 9; 132.7; Jeremiah 7.2; Matthew 4.10; John 4.23-24; Romans 12.1; Philippians 3.3; Revelation 4.10; 14.17; 19.10; 22.9)
9. **Do good works** (Matthew 5.16; Galatians 6.9-10; Ephesians 2.10; 1 Timothy 6.18; Titus 3.14; Hebrews 10.24)
10. **Love others** (Exodus 23.4; Leviticus 19.18; Matthew 5.48; Mark 12.31; John 13.34-35; 15.12-13; Romans 12.9-14, 21; 1 Thessalonians 3.12; Hebrews 10.24; 1 Peter 1.22; 4.8; 1 John 3.16-18)
11. **Live a holy life** (Leviticus 11.44-45; 19.2; 20.7; Romans 6.5-7, 11-14; 2 Corinthians 7.1; 1 Peter 1.15-16; 2 Peter 3.11; 1 John 3.6-10).
12. **Share the Gospel** (Psalm 9.1; 26.7; 35.28; 96.2; Proverbs 11.30; Mark 16.15; Acts 2.47; 1 Peter 3.15).
13. **Be discipled** (Proverbs 1.8; 4.1; 6.20; Eph. 4.11-13).
14. **Make disciples** (Deuteronomy 4.9-10; 6.5-7; 11.18-19; 32.46; Psalm 78.3-7; Proverbs 1.8; 4.1; 6.20; 22.6; Joel 1.3; Matthew 28.19-20; Ephesians 4.11-13; 2 Timothy 2.2).

1. **PRAY:** Pray often for your family, friends, fellow employees, employer, church members, pastors, and city, state and federal politicians. Pray with your family daily and with church members on a regular basis. Begin and end each day in prayer, and pray throughout the day. Pray that God teach you each day as you study His word.

2. **LISTEN TO SCRIPTURE:** Play recordings of the Bible and listen to sermons and Bible studies.

3. **READ SCRIPTURE:** Make a reading program and stay with it. If you read three chapters a day in the Old Testament and one in the New Testament you will read the Bible through in one year. It is also important to read one chapter of Proverbs each day. It does not take more than a half-hour a day to read five chapters. If you watch TV have your Bible handy and read a chapter during commercial breaks. Anyone could read ten chapters a day by just taking a Bible break during commercials.

4. **STUDY SCRIPTURE:** Choose a book of the Bible or a topic to study, and stay with it until you finish it.

5. **MEMORIZE SCRIPTURE:** Memorize key verses from both the Old and New Testaments.

6. **MEDITATE ON SCRIPTURE:** Once you have a few verses memorized you can meditate on them any time of the day, and wherever you are. Until then keep a pocket Bible or pocket New Testament handy. Keep a Bible and a few New Testaments in your car at all times for yourself and others. Get into the habit of giving out Bibles and pocket New Testaments.

7. **FELLOWSHIP WITH THE BRETHREN:** Become an active member of a church. Support the church with your time, talents, treasure and spiritual gifts. If you cannot find a real church meet with believers in a home.

8. **WORSHIP:** It is so important that there are more commands to worship God than to pray, study the Bible, memorize Scripture or meditate on the Word. Every believer should spend time each day worshipping God. We worship God by being silent and meditating on the blessings He has given you; by thanking and praising Him by rejoicing and singing.

9. **DO GOOD WORKS:** Believers are commanded and encouraged to do good works to fellow believers, but everyone they come in contact with. Those good works can be giving them a cup of cold water to giving them enough money to solve a problem they face.

10. **LOVE OTHERS:** All believers in Jesus Christ are commanded to love fellow believers, but also the lost. We do that by helping others when they need help. Giving them money, doing work for them, taking them places, listening to them, encouraging them, praying and studying the Bible with them, worshipping God together and forgiving them are just a few things we can do to love others.

11. **LIVE A HOLY LIFE:** We are commanded in the Old and New Testaments to live a holy life. Everything we do is done to bring glory to God (1 Corinthians 10.31) rather than to ourselves. We practice righteousness and keep the commandments of God (1 John 3.7). We also do not practice sin (1 John 3.8-9) ó that is commit one or more sins willingly on a regular basis rather than unintentionally. We all sin every day, but those who live a holy life take steps to limit their sins of commission.

12. **SHARE THE GOSPEL:** Once you learn how to share the Gospel be ready to do so 24/7. Be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit to share the Gospel. Carry tracts with you and hand them out as you are prompted by the Holy Spirit. If the person(s) wants to talk ó speak with them, but if they do not want to talk ask them to read the tract, and pray as you walk

away. Keep a diary of your witnessing. When you lead someone to the Lord invite them to church and make sure they become an active member. If you are not mature enough to disciple them ask your pastor(s) to find someone to disciple them.

13. BE DISCIPLED: Find someone to disciple you or find a good book(s) on discipleship such as *Discipleship 101-501*.

14. MAKE DISCIPLES: Once you have been discipled, start to disciple others. If you are a husband disciple your wife. If you are a father disciple your children. If you are a mother disciple your children with your husband. If you are single lead a person to the Lord and disciple him/her. Never disciple a person of the opposite sex unless you are engaged.

If one develops a discipline in these basics of holy living he will become a *disciple* of Jesus Christ. It does not happen overnight. It takes many years to become a mature *disciple*, but it starts with the daily discipline of being in prayer, in the Word and in regular fellowship with other believers.

Pray in the morning, throughout the day and before you go to sleep. Set up a daily Bible reading program. If you read 4 chapters a day you will read through the Bible in a year. Read 3 chapters in the Old Testament each day and 1 chapter in the New Testament. Buy an audio copy of the Bible, and listen to it at home and in the car. Buy DVDs of movies about the Bible and watch them often (*The Gospel of John, Peter and Paul, The Greatest Story Ever Told, King of Kings, etc.*). Memorize Scripture. If you memorize one verse a week you will have 52 verses memorized in one year. Meditate on Scripture and let the Holy Spirit teach you. Learn how to share the gospel. Ask your pastor to train you, and then share your personal testimony and the gospel as the Lord leads.

As you grow in the Lord you will pray more, and listen to, read, study, memorize and meditate on Scripture more and more. You will share your gospel more often, and spend more time in fellowship with other believers.

Verses that every believer should have memorized are those dealing with the Gospel and evangelism:

All have sinned ó Romans 3.23

The wages of sin is death ó Romans 6.23

Judgment ó Mark 8.36-37; Hebrews 9.27

Jesus is the only way ó John 14.6; Acts 4.12; Romans 5.12

The gift of eternal life ó John 1.12; John 3.16; Rom. 6.23

Faith in Jesus ó Romans 10.9-10, 13; Ephesians 2.8-9

Evangelism - Matthew 28.19-20; Acts 1.8

Choose verses on specific topics that help you in your daily walk. Here are some examples:

Eternal security ó John 5.24; 6.37; 10.27-29; 20.31; 1 John 5.10-13.

Holiness/Sanctification ó Psalm 119.11; Proverbs 8.13; Romans 12.1-2; 1 Cor. 10.31; 2 Corinthians 5.17; 6.14-18; Galatians 5.13-26; Colossians 3.16; James 4.1-10; 1 Peter 1.15-17; 1 John 2.15-17.

Love ó Matthew 5.43-48; 1 Corinthians 13.1-13.

Blessed hope ó 1 Thess. 4.16-18; Titus 2.13; 1 John 3.2-3.

Brotherly love ó John 13.34-35; 1 John 3.16-18

Peace ó Philippians 4.7.

Prayer ó Matthew 7.7; John 14.13-14; 1 John 3.22; 5.14.

Prosperity ó Psalm 1.

Protection ó Psalm 23.

Spiritual warfare ó Ephesians 6.10-18.

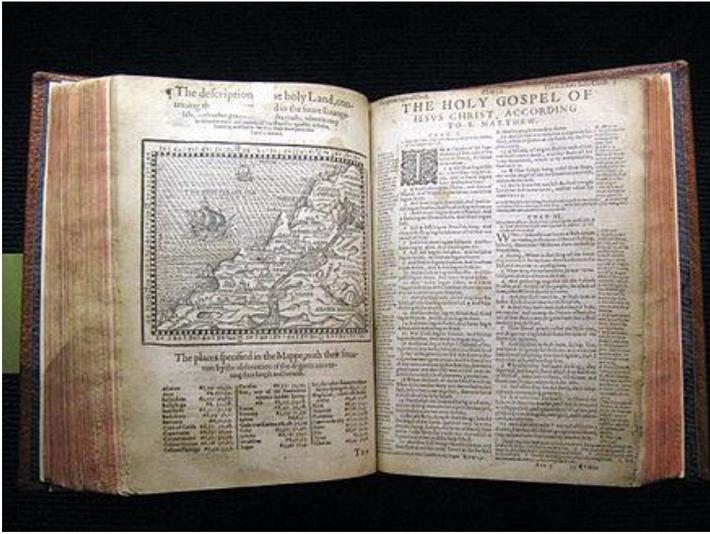
Strength ó Isaiah 40.29-31; Ephesians 3.16; Phil. 4.13.

Sufficiency ó Philippians 4.19.

Temptation ó 1 Corinthians 10.13.

Tongue ó James 3.1-18.

As you grow in the Lord you will pray more, and listen to, read, study, memorize and meditate on Scripture more and more. You will share your gospel more often, and spend more time in fellowship with other believers.



SPIRITUAL FITNESS PROGRAM

God commands all of His children to be spiritually fit (Ephesians 4.11-15) and He expects all of them to become teachers (Deuteronomy 6.6-7; Proverbs 6.20; Hebrews 5.12). The only way to get spiritually fit and eventually become a teacher of the Bible is to set up a Spiritual Fitness Program.

All combat soldiers go through basic training which includes a physical fitness program. Without it they could never hope to fight and win. The same is true for believers of Jesus. We are all soldiers in the Army of Christ and we need to be trained how to fight the spiritual war we are in which includes a Spiritual Fitness Program.

Read it online at GraceMercyMinistry.com or order a copy from ó dovbooks@yahoo.com

APPENDIX D

BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit. (Ephesians 5.18)

Believers are not to be intoxicated (drunk) with wine and in like manner to not get ðhighö with drugs (legal or illegal). Instead we are to ðbe filled with the Spirit.ö What does it mean to ðbe filled with the Spiritö? Does it mean we must have a ðsecond blessingö in which the Holy Spirit empowers us to do the work of the Lord?

Scripture does not say that before we can be ðfilledö or empowered with by the Holy Spirit we must have a special ðsecond blessing.ö Instead it is a daily activity. It is something we must do when we first awake and then throughout the day.

The first thing we should do when we wake up is ask the Holy Spirit to fill us and lead us that day. Prayer at the beginning of a day makes it go by much more smoothly. Prayer gets us in the proper attitude so we can let our light shine throughout the entire day. The second thing one should consider is spending time in the Word. A quiet time in the Word when one first gets up fills us with the Word. Being filled with the Word and the Holy Spirit is the same thing because the words that Jesus spoke are ðspiritö and ðlifeö (John 6.63). Not only are the words that He spoke ðspiritö and ðlifeö but all Scripture:

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3.16)

Prayer throughout the day (1 Thessalonians 5.17) is a spiritual energy habit. Continual prayer keeps our mind set on the things above and not the things of this sin-filled world (Colossians 3.2). Being filled with the Word several times throughout the day is another spiritual habit that will conform one to the image of Jesus. Taking Bible breaks is vital to be continually *ōfilledō* with the Holy Spirit. If you can take a Bible or New Testament with you try to read a chapter a few times during the day. If you cannot take a Bible with you to work or when you are out you can meditate on Scripture that you have memorized. When you hide the Word of God in your heart you always have it with you to meditate on.

By praying several times throughout the day and taking Bible breaks one can be continually *ōfilledō* with the Holy Spirit. The more often one feeds on Scripture and prays the more he will grow. Babies would die within a few days if they were not given food. The same is true of newborn believers. If they are not given spiritual food they quickly die spiritually. The more spiritual food they receive the faster and stronger they grow. One or two twenty minute sermons each week may keep a believer alive spiritually, but that is life-support nourishment. To grow into a strong, mature and vital disciple one must feed on Scripture several times every day. All believers need to listen to, read, study, memorize and meditate on Scripture daily and wash the Word down with prayer. If you do that faithfully every day God will bless you with myriad spiritual blessings, not physical blessings.

If you want to be a disciplined and dedicated disciple of Jesus you must be a spiritual glutton, feeding on the holy Word of God throughout each day and praying always. Instead of being a glutton of physical food and pleasures of the world be a glutton of spiritual food.

APPENDIX E

HUMILITY

Humility is a spiritual trait that few believers have because it is impossible to obtain it through the flesh. Humility only comes when a believer surrenders his life to the Lord every day. Surrender is daily obedience to God and dying to yourself, the flesh and the world.

One obeys God by praying throughout the day from morning to night (1 Thessalonians 5.17); by daily reading, studying, memorizing and meditating on Scripture (Appendix B); by regular fellowship with the brethren (Acts 2.42, 46-47; Hebrews 3.13; 10.24-25); by continual sharing of the Gospel (Psalm 96.2; Acts 2.47; 1 Peter 3.15) and by making disciples (Matthew 28.19-20; 1 Timothy 2.15).

One dies daily to self by not doing things that feed the ego. Instead of spending time seeking to have your ego built up by the approval, attention, love, respect and honor from others, and seeking fame, glory and riches we need to seek how we can build others up by giving approval to their good deeds, and by giving them attention, love, respect and honor (Philippians 2.1-9). The road to humility is travelled by building others up in the faith, not demanding others build us up in the faith or build up our egos.

One dies to the flesh daily by not engaging in things that the sinful flesh desires and which are sins. Two of the most prevalent sins of the flesh are gluttony and intoxication (by alcohol or drugs). Excessive indulgence in some other activities of the flesh that most believers need to curb are: sex, partying, sports, hobbies, vacationing and sunbathing. The

goal of a believer who seeks to die to himself is to spend more time in spiritual activities than activities of the flesh which are not necessary for survival. Everyone must eat to live, but gluttony is a sin. Everyone needs to engage in bodily exercise, but too many believers spend more time exercising than they do praying and reading the Bible. The same is true of partying, sports, hobbies and sunbathing for many believers. These things are not sins, but excessive indulgence in them is. Only wealthy believers vacation too much, and that is something they need to cut back on. If they cannot bring themselves to cut back they can invite and pay the expenses of a brother, sister or couple in the Lord that cannot afford to go on vacation to go with them. That way they can spend time on vacation in the Word, prayer and soul-winning.

A believer dies to the world by reducing his involvement in certain worldly activities or by cutting them out altogether. Some worldly activities that most believers spend far too much time engaged in are: television, movies, music, Internet, politics, non-spiritual books and magazines and seeking after wealth and possessions. Every believer who desires to die to himself and live a holy life for the glory of God will spend more time each day in prayer, Scripture, fellowship and soul-winning than in activities of the world.

We know we are growing in the Lord and dying to ourselves, the flesh and the world when our self love, our love of the flesh and our love of the world diminishes as it should:

Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever. (1 John 2.15-17)

The more these sinful desires diminish the humbler one will be. Pride is the opposite of humility. Pride is the root of every sin. There is no sin a person can commit that does not

spring from pride. That is why the key to holy living is to be humble. Humility replaces pride and when pride is vanquished so is sin. No one can ever eliminate all traces of pride and sin, but it should be the goal of every true believer.

Humility is a spiritual trait that every believer should not only desire, but actively seek after. God does not use His children to bring Him glory until they are humble. A believer who humbles himself before God will be looked upon by God with grace (Isaiah 66.2; Proverbs 3.34; James 4.6) and He will have regard for him (Psalm 138.6). And when we humble ourselves before God and those around us He will exalt us (James 4.10). We must never forget that all believers are commanded to *ōhumbleö* themselves before God (1 Peter 5.6), *ōwalk humbly withö* God (Micah 6.8), be *ōhumble in spiritö* (1 Peter 3.8), clothe themselves *ōwith humilityö* (1 Peter 5.5) and to not be proud (Romans 12.16).

Humility is always better than pride (Proverbs 16.19) and it is the only way to obtain true riches, honor and life (Proverbs 22.4). Pride will bring a person down while humility will bring him honor (Proverbs 11.2; 16.18; 29.23). We must also remember that there are numerous warnings against pride (Psalm 10.2; 40.4; 73.6; 119.78; Proverbs 3.7; 26.12; 28.25; Isaiah 5.21; 13.11; John 9.41; Revelation 3.17). And being proud is a sin (Proverbs 21.4), one of the seven things that God hates and that is an abomination to Him (Proverbs 6.17; 8.13).

Humility is one of the most difficult traits for anyone to obtain. No one can be humble in his own power. We must rely on the power of the Holy Spirit to impart humility to us. Yet there are specific things we must do on a daily and regular basis before He will give us humility. The daily things we should do as noted previously are pray, read, study, memorize and meditate on Scripture. The things one should do on a regular basis are fellowship with the brethren and share the Gospel with the lost as the Holy Spirit leads. These are the basics, but there are many other things a dedicated believer should do on a daily basis:

Seek first the kingdom of God (Matthew 6.33)
Put on the armor of God (Ephesians 6.10-18)
Fight the good fight of faith (1 Timothy 6.12)
Transform your mind (Romans 12.2)
Take up your cross (Matthew 10.38-39; 16.24-26)
Deny yourself (Romans 12.1)
Be content in your circumstances (Philippians 4.3;
1 Timothy 6.6-8; Hebrews 13.5)
Give thanks in all circumstances (1 Thessalonians 5.18)
Continually offer praise to God (Hebrews 13.15)
Forsake the world and all that is in it (Romans 12.2;
Galatians 6.14; 1 Peter 1.14; 1 John 2.15-17)
Do not seek wealth (Proverbs 23.4; 1 Timothy 6.9-11)
Submit to others (Ephesians 5.21)
Obey your spiritual leaders (Hebrews 13.17)
Love the brethren (John 13.34-35; James 2.15-16; 1 John
3.16-18)
Love the lost and one's enemies (Proverbs 25.21;
Matthew 5.43-48)
Be rich in good works (1 Timothy 6.18; Galatians 6.10;
Ephesians 2.10; 2 Timothy 3.17; Hebrews 13.16)
Do not grow weary in doing good works (2 Thess. 3. 13)
Give to those in need (Leviticus 25.35; Deuteronomy 15.7;
Proverbs 11.24-25; 19.17; 21.13; 22.9; 28.27; Ecclesiastes
11.1; Isaiah 58.7; Matt. 5.42; Luke 6.38; 12.33; Acts 11.29;
Romans 12.13; Hebrews 13.1-2; James 1.27; 1 Peter 4.9)
**Lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and
dignity** (1 Timothy 2.1).

As we do these things day-by-day we will grow more humble and be used by God for His glory (1 Corinthians 10.31) more each day. Others will see the Lord working through us and may be encouraged to follow our example. Pastors must set an example for the flock (1 Peter 5.3) by engaging in the spiritual activities above and they should also encourage others to do the same. They and all believers should be the servant of all (Matthew 20.26-27; Mark 9.35; Luke 22.26).

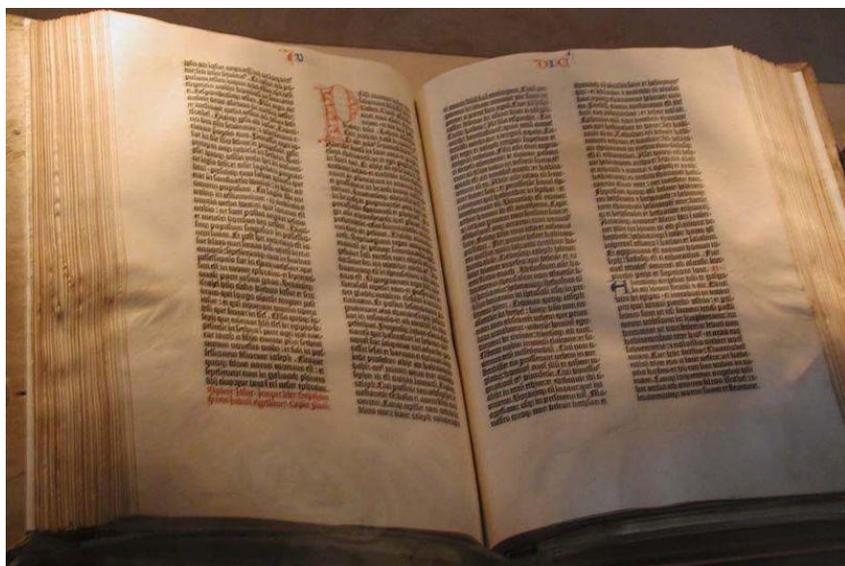
Negativity Factor

Very few believers understand the Negativity Factor. Understanding of this is the key to gaining humility and ridding oneself of pride.

Everyone is conceived and born in sin and goes astray from birth (Psalm 51.5; 58.3). We struggle with sin our entire lives even after we are born from above (Galatians 5.17). It is our sin nature and our submission to it that hinders the work that God seeks to do through us. This is the Negativity Factor. We do not add to the work of God in any way, we only hinder it. God performs great works through us in spite of us. We hinder His work we do not help it. The only thing we can do is lessen our Negativity Factor by obeying God every second of every day of our lives.

Christians who think they help God perform good deeds or great works are delusional. We can never help God. All we can do is empty ourselves of all of our desires and make ourselves available to Him every day. We must daily do what John the Baptist said about Jesus Christ, *“He must increase, but I must decrease”* (John 3.30). The more we rid ourselves of us the more God can work through us for His glory.

The way to diminish ourselves is to spend every spare moment we have in prayer, worshipping God, Bible reading, study, memorization and meditation, fellowship with the brethren, sharing the Gospel and making disciples. Every minute we spend enjoying the pleasures of the world ó watching TV, movies and sports, shopping, partying, reading meaningless fiction books, eating pleasure foods, hobbies, worrying over investments ó is a minute wasted forever. Everyone needs down time, recreation and relaxation, but there are good ways of getting R&R and bad ways. Make sure your methods of R&R are honoring to the Lord and do not over do it. Three of the best forms of relaxation are praying, reading the Bible and listening to hymns. When you need to chill out pray, read the Bible and or listen to hymns. If these activities do not relax and energize you something is wrong.



PROVERBS TO LIVE BY

Proverbs is filled with practical advice on how to live a holy life that is pleasing to God and will bring glory to Him. We encourage every believer in Jesus Christ to study Proverbs daily. This book is an aid to assist you in that great privilege.

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