

## EXEGESIS OF JAMES (sermon 2)

James 1:9-18 (NIV)

[9] Believers in humble circumstances ought to take pride in their high position. [10] But the rich should take pride in their humiliation—since they will pass away like a wild flower. [11] For the sun rises with scorching heat and withers the plant; its blossom falls and its beauty is destroyed. In the same way, the rich will fade away even while they go about their business.

[12] Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him. [13] When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; [14] but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. [15] Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death. [16] Don't be deceived, my dear brothers and sisters. [17] Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. [18] He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.

### Book of James Information

- James was written by the brother of Jesus who was the co-leader of the Jerusalem church
  - o James the disciple was the first martyr (Herod killed by the sword in 44 A.D.)
- The book was written early – in ~ AD 45 (about 12 years after Jesus Crucifixion)
- It was written to from the Jewish leadership in Jerusalem (Home office) to Jewish believers all over the world

### James History – who was James?

1. Unbelief – James did not believe in Jesus during Jesus early ministry

- Jhn 7:3-5 (NIV) Jesus' brothers said to him, "Leave Galilee and go to Judea, so that your disciples there may see the works you do. [4] No one who wants to become a public figure acts in secret. Since you are doing these things, show yourself to the world." [5] For **even his own brothers did not believe in him.**
  - o This was early in Jesus ministry – James did not believe in Jesus

2. Pentecost – James was present at Pentecost

- Act 1:12-14 (NIV) Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day's walk from the city. [13] When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. [14] They all joined together constantly in prayer, **along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.**
  - o James was present at Pentecost
    - Something happened during between the early ministry of Jesus and Pentecost

3. Resurrected Jesus appeared to James

- 1Co 15:3-8 (NIV) For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, [4] that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, [5] and that **he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve.** [6] After that, **he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time,** most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. [7] **Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles,** [8] and **last of all he appeared to me also,** as to one abnormally born.
  - o Jesus appeared to James after He was raised from the dead

- Was it a personal appearance or with the other Apostles.

#### 4. James was Co-leader with Peter in Jerusalem Church

- Gal 2:8-9 (NIV) For God, who was at work in Peter as an apostle to the circumcised, was also at work in me as an apostle to the Gentiles. [9] **James, Cephas and John, those esteemed as pillars**, gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship when they recognized the grace given to me. They agreed that we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcised.
  - James (son of Zebedee, brother of John) was first martyr in AD 44 Killed by sword - Herod
  - Every reference to James in the New Testament is James the Brother of Jesus
  - James was called “the Just” because of his reputation for Holiness and Fairness

#### James Opened the door for Gentiles

- Act 15:13-21 (NIV) When they finished, **James spoke up. "Brothers," he said, "listen to me.** [14] Simon has described to us how God first intervened to choose a people for his name from the Gentiles. [15] The words of the prophets are in agreement with this, as it is written: [16] "'After this I will return and rebuild David's fallen tent. Its ruins I will rebuild, and I will restore it, [17] that the rest of mankind may seek the Lord, even all the Gentiles who bear my name, says the Lord, who does these things'— [18] things known from long ago. [19] **"It is my judgment, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God.**

Review-----

#### The Purpose of Trials (vs 2-4)

- TRIALS = resistance – must persevere
  - THE FRUIT OF PERSEVERENCE – maturity and completeness (lacking nothing)

#### The Source of Wisdom (vs. 5)

- WISDOM “spiritual intelligence”
  - is gained by “asking God who gives generously”
  - Spiritual intelligence is the fruit SEEKING GOD not from GAINING INFORMATION by STUDY

#### The Enemy of Faith = Doublemindedness (vs. 6-8)

- Doublemindedness Means “having two opinions” (double spirited)
  - “feeling your way” (living by what seems to feel right)
    - Doublemindedness is the ENEMY of Faith
- FAITH IS A CHOICE – is not driven by feelings
  - FAITH IS A DECISION TO BELIEVE GOD = IS PERSISTANT THROUGH ALL FEELINGS
  - DOUBLEMINDEDNESS – Stepping away from What GOD SAID to you..
    - Laying aside what you heard God say... Believing another opinion..
      - Trying to do both what God says and what you want...
- Results of Doublemindedness
  - DOUBLEMINDED ARE UNSTABLE IN EVERYTHING THAT THEY DO
    - God created it this way...
      - Are Emotionally unstable
      - Are Spiritually unstable
  - THEY SHOULD EXPECT NOTHING FROM THE LORD
    - God cannot reward them because faith is a prerequisite with GOD
    - FAITH allows God to MOVE – NO FAITH, God cannot move
      - Doublemindedness – keeps God from doing what He wants to do

NEW CONTENT -----

## Humility and Riches

[9] Believers in humble circumstances ought to take pride in their high position. [10] But the rich should take pride in their humiliation—since they will pass away like a wild flower. [11] For the sun rises with scorching heat and withers the plant; its blossom falls and its beauty is destroyed. In the same way, **the rich will fade away even while they go about their business.**

- THOSE WITH A SIMPLE LIFESTYLE WILL BLOSSOM AND GROW
- THOSE WITH A MATERIALISTIC LIFESTYLE WILL FADE AWAY...

### ACCORDING TO JESUS AND JAMES... There is a continuum of people – two sides...

THE RICH – Those who give their attention to becoming physically/financially wealthy & comfortable

- People who are rich = have a lot of money and means (Usually are these...)
  - o Easily forget that they are in need of God & others
  - o Give their attention to growing and maintaining physical wealth & comfort
  - o Forget that everything belongs to God and that we must STEWARD His possessions
    - They believe that THEY own their stuff – can do with it as they like
- Wealthy “wanna-be’s” (Some are these...)
  - o Do not value God’s call to simple living (feel that more money will make them happy)
  - o Give their attention to making money & acquiring possessions
  - o Forget that everything belongs to God and that we must STEWARD His possessions
    - They believe that THEY own their stuff – can do with it as they like

THE HUMBLE – Those who give their attention to becoming spiritually wealthy

- Usually are people who are poor = have very little money and means
  - o Constantly are aware of their need for God and others
  - o Give their attention to loving God and caring for others
  - o Realize that everything belongs to God - & Steward it well (tithe, give to needs, care for others)
- Can be people who have moderate income but have “simple lifestyle”
  - o Have accepted Jesus lordship over their money and material possessions
  - o Realize that everything belongs to God - & Steward it well
    - Give to the Lord what is due to Him = tithe
    - Give to the needs of others = offerings

### TWO “POSITIONS”

- Simple lifestyle = HIGH SPIRITUAL POSITION
  - o “High” – because materialism is not a snare
  - o “Have little” - their primary focus in life is giving attention to loving God and loving people
- Rich lifestyle = LOW SPIRITUAL POSITION
  - o “Low” – because materialism is a constant temptation
  - o “Have much” – there is a constant temptation to believe that “stuff” will make you happy
    - Give primary time to the management of worldly goods, land, leisure, recreation, possessions

### THE DIFFICULTY OF RICHES...

- **Jesus** teaching on RICHES = RICH YOUNG RULER
  - o Mrk 10:17-27 (NIV) As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. "Good teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" [18] "Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good—except God alone. [19] You know the commandments: 'You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, you shall not defraud, honor your father and mother.'" [20]

"Teacher," he declared, "all these I have kept since I was a boy." [21] Jesus looked at him and loved him. **"One thing you lack," he said. "Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."** [22] At this the man's face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth. [23] Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, **"How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!"** [24] The disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said again, "Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! [25] **It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.**" [26] The disciples were even more amazed, and said to each other, "Who then can be saved?" [27] Jesus looked at them and said, **"With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God."**

- Jesus Teaching

- **A SIMPLE LIFESTYLE** (having enough resources to live)

- Is advantageous to the Kingdom of God
- Living with a focus on relationships
  - With God
  - With others
- It gives us a real view of our lives
  - Because we must Trust God for everything

SIMPLE NEEDS... (Simplistic lifestyle people know that they are needy)

- We cry out for God because we need him for everything
- We lean on others because we need them for support

- **A RICH LIFESTYLE** (having more than enough)

- Is challenging to the Kingdom of God
- Living with a focus on making and managing money/materials
- Living with a focus on material management
  - Being comfortable financially

- DISTRACTS from desperation for God (kills spiritual hunger)

- DISABLES our connection with others (kills community)

"NO NEEDS"... (Wealthy people feel independent of God and others)

- Do not need to cry out for God – have enough to keep us "well fed.."
- Laodicean Church = Rev 3:15-17 (NIV) I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! [16] So, because **you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth.** [17] You say, **'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.'** But you do not realize **that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked.**

- Do not lean on others – because we feel that we don't need others

- Jesus teaches that "having a lot of resources is a handicap to the kingdom of God"

- It's hard to be a part of God's Kingdom if you can "build your own"
  - ALL OF US QUALIFY AS "RICH" IN THIS DEFINITION

## Why are riches a handicap?

PAUL'S teaching on Riches/ Materialism

- 1Ti 6:6-10 (NIV) But godliness with contentment is great gain. [7] For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. [8] But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. [9] **Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires** that **plunge people into ruin and destruction.** [10] **For the love of money is a**

**root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.**

- People who love (desire) riches
  - FALL INTO THE TEMPTATION
  - GIVE INTO MANY FOOLISH/HARMFUL DESIRES
  - EXPERIENCE RUIN and DESTRUCTION
    - Example: Sports Heroes/Rock Stars
      - Don't grow up with money
      - Give into temptation – commit many sins – Get destroyed
    - (READ WHAT HAPPENS TO LOTTERY WINNERS...)

NEXT TIME...

### **The purpose of Trials and Consequences of Sin**

[12] **Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial** because, **having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life** that the Lord has promised to those who love him. [13] When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For **God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone**; [14] but **each person is tempted** when they are **dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed**. [15] Then, **after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death**.

- THE REASON FOR TRIALS
  - TESTING OF OUR FAITH
- The goal of Testing
  - A crown of life
- Source of Testing
  - EVERYONE IS TESTED BY THE ENEMY
- The Process of Sin
  - DESIRES CONCEIVED = THE FLESH is given priority (Desire for fleshly satisfaction)
    - "dragged away by personal desires"
    - Comfort, leisure, sexual pleasure, materials,
  - SINS COMMITTED = Riches + fleshly desires = Sin
    - Faith is putting hope in God
    - Carnality – putting hope in flesh
      - Enter in to sin
  - DEATH
    - Separation from the life of God
    -

### **The Gift of New Birth**

[16] Don't be deceived, my dear brothers and sisters. [17] Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. [18] He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.