

— WEEKLY —
**BIBLE
STUDY**
NOTES

**Insights and Life Lessons
From Jacob:
Study on the Book of James
Pt. 4 (James 1:17-28)**

Scripture Memorization: Proverbs 9:10-11 “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. For through wisdom your days will be many, and years will be added to your life.”

Introduction: James has encouraged us to understand that whether we are poor or rich, in Christ we are equal. The same way the poor rejoice when they are lifted by God, the rich should also rejoice when trials bring humility in their lives. As believers, we should never be guilty of the love of money, and our identity and life pursuits should only be grounded in what is eternal. He then turns to the topic of the blessings we receive from enduring temptations, which sounded like a continuation from Jesus’ the Sermon on the Mount found in Matthew 5. Jesus taught in this sermon how his believers, embody the Kingdom of Heaven here on earth when we walk in the characteristics of being poor in spirit, mourning, gentleness, hunger and thirst, mercy, purity, peace and persecution. James teaches that we are wealthy and satisfied when temptation is present in our lives. These temptations will approve us in God’s eyes, reveal our faith and cause us to receive the crown of life. When we encounter temptations, we must not ascribe blame to God as it is not in His nature to tempt. He may allow them, but never creates them. Satan will use fleshly desires to plant evil seeds in our hearts and if we allow these desires to gain a foothold, they can give birth to sin in our lives. Being aware of Satan’s tactics and knowing that his plans are always to kill, steal

— WEEKLY —
**BIBLE
STUDY**
NOTES

and destroy gives us the knowledge we need to resist the deceptions of his temptations and keep us on the path of producing life and goodness.

1. James 1:17 Focus on God's goodness.

- a. James turns our attention away from the temptations we may face and focuses on the goodness of God which stands in complete contrast.
- b. The ultimate goodness of any gift must be measured on an eternal scale. Therefore, all good and perfect gift must come from the hand of God.
- c. Your knowledge of God's character comes into question. James reminds us that He is the Father of lights, no variation or opposing sides. He is good, all the time.
 - i. "The ancient Greek is actually 'the Father of *the* lights.' The specific **lights** are the celestial bodies that light up the sky, both day and night. The sun and stars never stop giving light, even when we can't see them. Even so, there is never a **shadow** with God. When night comes, the darkness isn't the fault of the sun; it shines as brightly as before. Instead, the earth has turned from the sun and darkness comes." -Hiebert.
 - ii. When we know who He truly is, then we will understand where all of the blessings we have received is coming from.
- d. James also wanted us to understand that this gift of salvation was the work of God, not the work of man.

— WEEKLY —
**BIBLE
STUDY**
NOTES

- i. God did to us all that has been done, without any incentive, except for His love for us and His mercy extended toward us.
 - 1. “Now mostly, men who are generous need to have their generosity excited. They will need to be waited upon; appeals must be laid before them; they must sometimes be pressed; an example must lead them on. But ‘of his own will’ God did to us all that has been done, without any incentive or prompting, moved only by himself, because he delighteth in mercy; because his name and his nature are love because evermore, like the sun, it is natural to him to distribute the beams of his eternal grace.” (Spurgeon)
- ii. His light has brought us forth; meaning it is a natural behavior to bring light, goodness, mercy and love into those He created.

e. We might be a kind of first fruits.

- i. James is mainly writing to this generation of believers who were from a Jewish background, showing that he believed there would be a greater harvest coming from the Gentiles.
- ii. We also should see ourselves, not as better or more important, but as first fruits of those who have come to know Christ and that showing off His glory would bring in so much harvest.

2. James 1:19-20 Unrighteous anger.

- a. James gives us a remedy on how to live a life that is others-centered.
 - 1. “But hath not Nature taught us the same that the apostle here doth, by giving us two ears, and those

— WEEKLY —
**BIBLE
STUDY**
NOTES

open; and but one tongue, and that hedged in with teeth and lips?” (Trapp)

2. In light of the nature of temptation and the goodness of God, we must take special care to be slow to wrath, knowing it doesn't work the righteousness of God.

3. Psalm 141:3.

3. **James 1:21** Standing firm against the lusts of the flesh vs. fighting for the word.

a. In light of the nature of temptation and the goodness of God, we are to lay aside impurity, putting them far away from us.

i. Filthiness- uncleanness or moral impurity. Mark 7:21-22.

ii. Overflow of wickedness- superabundance of naughtiness, mischief, rudeness, delinquency, willful disobedience.

b. In contrast, we should receive the implanted word of God with meekness, a teachable heart.

i. “The first thing, then, is *receive*. That word ‘receive’ is a very instructive gospel word; it is the door through which God’s grace enters to us. We are not saved by working, but by receiving; not by what we give to God, but by what God gives to us, and we receive from him.” (Spurgeon)

ii. When God’s word is implanted in the human heart, it will save our souls, both in our current situation and eternally.

— WEEKLY —
**BIBLE
STUDY**
NOTES

4. James 1:22-25 How to receive the word of God.

- a. When we are receiving this implanted word, it can only be received as a doer, not as a mere hearer.
 - i. Very common in the ancient world for people to hear a teacher. If you followed the teacher and tried to live what he said, you're called a disciple of that teacher. Jesus is looking for disciples.
 - ii. Matthew 7:24-27.
 - iii. "A teacher or preacher may give an eloquent address on the gospel, or explain ably some O.T. prophecy about Christ, but when the sermon is done, it is not done; something remains to be done by the hearers in life, and if they content themselves with sentimental admiration or with enjoying the emotional or mental treat, they need not imagine that this is religion."
(Moffatt)
 - iv. "I fear we have many such in all congregations; admiring hearers, affectionate hearers, attached hearers, but all the while unblest hearers, because they are not doers of the word." (Spurgeon)
 - v. "You know the old story; I am half ashamed to repeat it again, but it is so pat to the point. When Donald came out of church sooner than usual, Sandy said to him, 'What, Donald, is the sermon all done?' 'No,' said Donald, 'it is all said, but it is not begun to be done yet.'" (Spurgeon)
- b. James then describes this type of person.
 - i. Has the same sense and stability as a man who looks into a mirror and immediately forgets what he just saw.
 1. Observe: Greek word for careful scrutiny.

— WEEKLY —
**BIBLE
STUDY**
NOTES

2. Even if you may be thought of as a Bible expert, if it doesn't result in doing then you are merely religious.
 3. Natural face: Greek word for "in the face of his birth", meaning his nature; actions in addition to motives, desires, inward condition.
 4. "Certain preachers dream that it is their business to paint pretty pictures: but it is not so. We are not to design and sketch, but simply to give the reflection of truth. We are to hold up the mirror to nature in a moral and spiritual sense, and let men see themselves therein. We have not even to make the mirror, but only to hold it up. The thoughts of God, and not our own thoughts, are to be set before our hearers' minds; and these discover a man to himself. The Word of the Lord is a revealer of secrets: it shows a man his life, his thoughts, his heart, his inmost self." (Spurgeon)
- ii. A healthy person looks in the mirror to DO something, not to just admire the image.
1. A healthy Christian looks into God's word to DO something about it, not just store up facts that he will not put to use by being a doer of the word.
 - a. Look: in Ancient Greek language spoke of a penetration examination, so that the person would even bend over to get a better look.
 - b. Continue: this ancient Greek word, *parameinas*, is translated "Takes time to see and examine the state of his soul, the grace of his God, the extent of his duty, and the height of the promised glory. The metaphor here is taken from those females

— WEEKLY —
**BIBLE
STUDY**
NOTES

who spend much time at their glass in order that they may decorate themselves to the greatest advantage, and not leave one hair, or the smallest ornament, out of its place.”

- c. The perfect law of liberty: the law in the New Covenant is one of liberty, written on our transformed hearts by the Spirit of God.

5. James 1:26-27 What it means to be a doer.

- a. If your religion doesn't affect your actions, then it is worthless.
 - i. If you claim to be right with God, but you cannot control your tongue, you're deceived.
 - ii. if you claim to be right with God, but you do not visit orphans and widows in their trouble, you're deceived.
 - iii. “James seems to reflect upon a group of hypocritical Jews, whose religion consisted so much in external observances, and keeping themselves from ceremonial defilements, when yet they were sullied with so many moral ones, Matthew 23:23; John 18:28; devoured widows' houses.” (Poole)
 - iv. If you are operating a pure and undefiled religion before God, you will be unspotted from the world.

— WEEKLY —
**BIBLE
STUDY**
NOTES