

"True Faith and the Word of God"

Part 4

James 1:19-27

Introduction: Today we are returning to our study in the book of James and as we do we are stepping into the middle of a study focused upon the Word of God.

Before we get back into this study let me give you some thoughts to consider.

1. **We are saved to represent Jesus Christ to the rest of the world.**

2 Corinthians 5:19-20

¹⁹ *To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.*

²⁰ *Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.*

Now this is done as we walk in obedience to the Word of God. God has ordained the church as a place where you can come in and learn the Word so that you can then put the Word into practice.

Ephesians 4:11-15

¹¹ *And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;*

¹² *For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:*

¹³ *Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:*

¹⁴ *That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;*

¹⁵ *But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:*

2. True joy comes by walking in obedience to God's Word.

Psalm 1:1-3

***Blessed** is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.*

² *But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.*

³ *And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.*

In Psalm 1:1 the psalmist makes 3 negative statements about the man who is blessed and happy in life and then he makes 1 positive statement.

- a. He does not get his counsel from the ungodly.
- b. He does not follow in the steps of those who are unsaved.
- c. He will not sit in fellowship with those who are ungodly.
- d. But his delight is in the law of the Lord. In other words he walks in obedience to God's Word.

This is the path to joy and contentment in life.

Now let me get to our study in James. James knew the importance of the Word of God and in James 1:19-27 we find the words the Holy Spirit gave to James to write concerning the Word of God.

I. The Reception of the Word of God

James 1:19-21

Now let me remind you that this entire section on the Word is based on what James had said in 1:18.

Notice James 1:18

The point here is that we have been saved to be like Christ which is what we already considered.

Notice James 1:19-20

We have already looked at this so I will just skim over the high points. Here James is saying that we are to be quick to hear the Word of God and we are not to suppress the

Word when through the study or the preaching of the Word we see something which needs to be adjusted within our lives. To get angry toward the Word does 2 things:

1. It hinders the Spirit of God in our lives. He will then not produce the righteousness of God.
2. It will grieve the Spirit and so we will be miserable.

The last time we looked at this we saw a picture of this in the book of Esther.

Notice James 1:21

The point which James is making here is that we are to deal with any sin that is in our lives because it is sin that hinders the spiritual growth of the believer. Now to be more detailed here James is addressing the subject of malice. These people were being persecuted for their faith and there seemed to be a lack of forgiveness toward those who had persecuted them. For this reason their growth was hindered.

Application:

Let me just stop here and remind you that if you have any malice toward someone who has in some way offended you it will hinder your spiritual growth. Let me show you how serious this is.

1. **It will hinder your prayer life.**

Psalm 66:18

¹⁸ If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me:

2. **It will hinder your worship.**

Matthew 5:23-24

²³ Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee;

²⁴ Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

If there is something between you and a brother then God will not accept your worship. We must reconcile before God will accept our offerings to Him.

3. **It will hinder your fellowship.**

Matthew 6:14-15

¹⁴ For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:

¹⁵ But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Jesus is not saying that we lose our salvation. He is saying that unforgiveness hinders our fellowship with the Father.

Notice James 1:21 again.

James tells us that we are to receive with meekness the engrafted word which is able to save our souls.

The idea here in this verse is that when we allow the Word of God to have its proper place in our lives, then it actually will change us from the inside out. To take that father he is saying that when we receive the Word of God and we do not suppress it then it actually becomes part of us. The Word of God becomes part of our nature.

Listen to this:

The picture here is that of a seed planted in the ground. The Word of God is like a seed that when it is planted in fertile soil it produces growth that is just like the seed itself.

Example:

When you plant a seed of corn it grows corn. When the Word of God is planted in us it produces righteousness.

Let me show you another passage where we can get a picture that will help.

Romans 11:16-17

¹⁶ For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root be holy, so are the branches.

¹⁷ And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree;

We have been GRAFTED onto the root and all the blessings which flow from the Abrahamic Covenant flow through us. That is spiritual blessings not physical.

It is the same way when we receive the Word of God. It gets rooted in and it produces great blessings in our lives.

Let me show you a picture from God's Word.

Notice John 2:1-10

Many people read over this first miracle and miss something very important here. This the first miracle which Jesus performed and within this miracle there is a beautiful picture. I have heard this miracle used in an attempt to justify alcohol as well as other desires of the flesh. But I want you to see the spiritual picture.

Notice John 2:1-3

Here was a wedding celebration where the wine ran out. Now in the Bible wine is symbolic of joy.

Ecclesiastes 10:19a

¹⁹ *A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry:*

Psalm 104:15

¹⁵ *And wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart.*

From these two verses we can see that wine is associated with joy in the Bible. Therefore, the spiritual picture at the wedding is that all the joy was gone.

Notice John 2:4-6

Jesus then commanded those who were there to take the water pots and fill them with water.

Now it is interesting that there were 6 water pots.

Genesis 1:26-27

²⁶ *And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.*

27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

Genesis 1:31

31 And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

Man was created on the 6th day and therefore the number of man is 6.

Now back to the wedding; there were 6 water pots and they were made out of stone or clay.

This is a picture of man before salvation. We are nothing but cold, empty, clay pots. There is no deep down lasting joy. Sure there are periods of temporary joy but they are fleeting. So the picture here is of man in his state of emptiness.

Notice John 2:7

Jesus commanded that they fill the empty pots with water. Now let me show you another verse.

Ephesians 5:25-26

25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.

Here we can see that water is symbolic of the Word of God.

Back to John again.

The picture is that Jesus commanded that the 6 empty pots were to be filled with water. This is a picture of the unsaved man who is empty and cold sitting under the Truth of God's Word. When the unsaved hear the Truth of the Word and they do not suppress it watch what happens.

Notice John 2:8-11

The water was turned into wine. The spiritual picture is the believer is filled with joy. It is important to note that this wine was better than the wine they had earlier. That is to say that before salvation we have fleeting times of joy but it is not to be compared with the joy that comes when we hear the Word of God and get saved.

Back to James now; James knew that God's Word had the power to transform our lives and keep transforming them.

Conclusion:

Listen to the Words of A. W. Tozer:

"What I am anxious to see in Christian believers is a beautiful paradox. I want to see in them the joy of finding God while at the same time they are blessedly pursuing Him. I want to see in them the great joy of having God yet always wanting Him." ~ A. W. Tozer