

# Marks of True and False Religion

by Aaron Hurst

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*The sermon explores the distinguishing marks of true and false religion as outlined in the Book of James, focusing on faith, trials, and practical application of belief.*

**Duration:** 1:15:37

**Scripture:** James 1:2-5, James 1:12, James 1:17, James 1:19-20, James 1:22, James 1:27

**Topics:** "False Religion"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on the book of James, specifically the first chapter. He begins by discussing the three different mentions of James in the Scriptures. The speaker then highlights the importance of true religion, which is founded upon the promises of God and obedience towards Him. He contrasts this with false religion, which is vain and lacks a solid foundation. The speaker expresses gratitude for how the Lord has led in the service and feels that it aligns with the message he wants to share from the book of James.

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## Transcript

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Through the blood of Christ, our ransom. That's the only way we're going to be more than conquerors. Through the blood.

Open your Bibles to James. James chapter 1. I would like to share a message from the book of James. This morning, I've been blessed how the Lord has ordered the service up till now.

Just trust Him to continue to speak to our hearts. Can we stand together in prayer? Father, we quiet our hearts before You, Lord. We thank You for Your Word.

We thank You for the opening message. We thank You for the children's lesson, God. We thank You for the worship time together, Lord.

Father, now we just do ask in Jesus' name that You would continue to bless Your Word. And Father, we pray for the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ upon every heart, upon every hearer. To receive with meekness the Word of God.

Father, we stand in need of You, Lord. God, I just pray that You would have mercy upon Your servant, Lord. Wash me in the blood.

Touch my lips, O God. That I may speak the oracles of God, Lord, as I ought, Father. And Father, we trust You by Your Spirit to quicken Your Word to our hearts, Lord.

Bless all those that have come, Father. Those that may listen by way of tape. Maybe those that are at home with sick children.

O Lord, bless Your Word to our hearts. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

You may be seated. I want to go through the book of James' first chapter this morning, Lord willing. Just give a little introductory notes to the book of James.

There are three different mentions of James in the Scriptures. I believe three different Jameses are referred to. The authorship of this James is probably the brother of our Lord Jesus.

Most often agreed upon by those who have searched it out. It being likely the brother of our Lord who wrote this epistle. James, as he addressed this letter and he wrote it, it was quite clear that it is addressed to the Jewish Christians.

He says to those who are scattered abroad, he brings greeting to the twelve tribes which were scattered abroad. So it seems to be that it has an emphasis or a word of God to the Jewish Christians. But I believe also that includes us this morning.

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and we are to receive it as such. But it is good to just look at some introductory notes here to this letter that was written. We see that in the book of Acts chapter 2 there were Jews in Jerusalem from other nations, those that were scattered abroad.

In Acts 11 we see that many of the Jewish Christians were scattered abroad because of persecution in Jerusalem. The study of the book here as to when it was written, it seems to have been written in about A.D. 50. And the basic theme that is in the book of James, some of the different studies that I've done is woven throughout the letter, seem to be two themes pretty clearly.

And I'll look at them from a couple of different angles this morning as well. One of the writers would say the two themes are persecution from outside the fellowship and also problems within the fellowship. The believers were experiencing trials and James was encouraging them and they were also experiencing divisions and sins within the assembly and James sought to bring words that would be helpful in their seeing those needs and turning in repentance.

Now sometimes we've heard people say that James stands in contrast to Paul in his writings and that there is a conflict in the gospel of James in the matter of justification by faith. But I don't believe that that is so. As you look in the book of James and you follow it through, James very clearly believed in justification

by faith as Paul taught in the book of Romans and so forth.

But he also took it into a practical everyday reality and said that if your faith doesn't have a practical outworking and there is no works to it and there is no substance or meat to it, then it is dead, being alone. So I don't see them as contradictory or opposing opinions, but rather that it is God, as our brother Jeff said, just revealing another light, another greater dimension of who He is and what He requires from His people. James, we can read, he was an apostle of the circumcision, so it seems very clear that he was writing and his focus or his emphasis in ministry and calling was more to the circumcision to the Jewish people, which we can read in Galatians 2.9. It tells us there that James and Caiaphas and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived that grace was given unto me.

They gave unto me and Barnabas, the right hand of fellowship, that we should go unto the heathen, but they, unto the circumcision, they meaning James and Caiaphas and John. As I've looked at the analysis of the book from a number of different authors who have done that, there seems to be the one in my own Bible here. If you have a Thompson Chain reference Bible, you can go back and look at the analysis of the book and you can see what they have given here as the analysis and they say that most of the materials in the book of James can be arranged under two headings and that is true and false religions.

And I believe too that that is also true. That James speaks very specifically and very clearly of the marks of true religion and of also the marks of false religion. A religion that is a vain religion and it's not founded upon the true promises of God and obedience toward God.

I so appreciate the way the Lord has led in the service. I feel it just fits beautifully to what the Lord has laid on my heart. I do desire to, by the grace of God, go through the book of James here, first chapter, today.

Lord willing. And I just want to look at this a bit here, as we look at this first chapter here and take the word of God as it comes to us this morning. James chapter 1 and verse 1. James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting.

Now, I want to first of all notice that James introduces himself as a servant of God. Paul referred to him as an apostle, but James, when he introduces himself, he says, I am a servant of God and I'm a servant of Jesus Christ. And so we see the humility of James as he opens up his letter and he addresses his letter to the circumcision or to the Christians that he wrote there to, I believe, which was to the Jewish Christians to a greater extent.

But he doesn't introduce himself as an apostle. He comes with humility. He comes with grace upon his heart and says, I am but a servant.

I am a slave. I am a bondservant. And that word servant, if you look it up in the Strong's definition or the Thayer's, it says, those whose service is used by Christ in extending and advancing his cause among men.

Used of the apostles, that's that definition there. So as we look at this book of James here and the first chapter this morning, if I were to title this message, I would title it, Marks of True and False Religion, an exposition of the book of James chapter one. So for the title this morning, Marks of True and False Religion, an exposition of the book of James chapter one.

As we go on through this chapter, we see in verse two he says, My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into diverse temptations. So he speaks to the brethren. In James you will find that word quite often used.

He speaks to the brethren. He says, my brethren. He's speaking to the brothers who are in Christ.

He's speaking to the community of faith. Those who are in the faith in Christ Jesus. My brethren.

And now he gets into the message. And the first one that we want to look at here, I'll give some titles or points as we go through this message. Point number one of the Marks of True Religion is joy and patience in the midst of trials.

He says, my brethren, count it all joy when you fall into diverse temptations. Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

Now, as we look at trials and we look at temptations and testings, he says our response or the mark of a true Christian's response is a response of joy. And I have to admit this morning, when I face trials and testings, it's not my natural response to rejoice in the midst of trial. And I believe we could say that this morning.

But I believe we can see from the light of the eternal perspective of our God who loves us and that the trying of our faith is more precious than gold. God is after something in our lives. He wants to refine us and He wants to purify us and He wants to bring us forth like gold.

He wants to burn out the dross. He wants to take away those things that hinder and mar the testimony of Jesus in us. So He says, my brethren, count it joy.

And as I look that word up, it says the cause of highest joy. Nothing but joy. When you fall into, and that word falling into has the meaning of unexpected trials.

Everything is going well in your life and then here comes a trial and it just hits you unexpected. So as to be encompassed about by a trial. When you fall into temptations, and I want to define this word temptations here.

This word temptations I don't believe is meaning at all an allurement to sin, but rather it's a trial which tests our character. It tests our commitment. It tests our genuineness.

It tests who we really are in Christ. Whether we're real or not. Or whether we're phony.

The Lord God allows these trials because He wants to purify us. He wants to bring forth gold out of our lives. Therefore He says, count it joy when these testings come.

They purify our character. As we look at the book of James, and we look at more of a panoramic view of all the chapters in James, we can see that He was writing to those who were sick and those who were afflicted. In James 5.13, those that are sick, those that are afflicted, and He acknowledges that not all is a bed of roses.

Not all is just glory hallelujah and health and wealth, but Christians do suffer. And they suffer under trials. And they sometimes get sick.

And they sometimes are afflicted. And they are in severe testings and tryings. And all sorts of afflictions.

But if we can see the hand of God, that every trial that comes our way to the child of God is a masterpiece of strategy of the captain of our salvation for our good. He has a plan. He has a purpose in these trials.

I think of a testimony of a man who said that I will not glory in myself. I will not glory in who I am for God. I will not boast about how many souls I have saved.

I will not boast about how many people and how many nations and tribes have heard the gospel through me. But there is one thing I will glory in and one thing I will boast in, and that is in mine infirmities. And that was Paul the Apostle in 2 Corinthians 12.

He said, I will glory in mine infirmities. And he says how that there was a messenger of Satan given unto him, a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me lest I should be exalted above measure. And he says, I prayed and I besought the Lord thrice that this thing should depart from me.

But God said, my grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Now look at his response. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in mine infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

Isn't that what we want, brothers and sisters? Do we not want the power of Christ to rest upon us? And therefore, for the power of Christ to rest upon us, we must be broken. We must be purified. We must be refined like gold in the fire.

And the Lord says that He will sit there as a purifier of the sons of Levi. And God has a purpose. He wants to refine us and purify us.

I believe Paul understood this. That's why he could say, though I've been beaten, though I've been shipwrecked, though I've been in hunger, though I've been in cold, though I've been in fasting, though I've been in peril of robbers and all these sorts of things, and yea, even in peril of my own countrymen, yet I know this one thing, and in this one thing will I glory. And all of these things are working together for the good, because I love my Lord Jesus, and my God is sovereignly in control, and every temptation and every trial that comes into my life, God has a purpose for refining my life.

He says, therefore I take pleasure in infirmities and in reproaches and in necessities and in persecutions and in distresses for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong. Most gladly, therefore, will I glory in my infirmities that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

Count it all joy when you fall into diverse temptations knowing this, knowing this, let us not be ignorant of this fact, but knowing this, that the trials that come our way, God, sovereign Lord of the universe, says to the devil, when he's testing Job, you can go that far, but no farther. That's it. God will not allow you to be tried above what you're able, but will with every trial make a way of escape, or every temptation.

Now that can be a temptation to evil, but I believe also we can say that same word temptation can be also referred to as a trial. God will not allow you to be tried above what you're able, but He'll make a way of escape that ye may be able to bear it. You know that way of escape, sometimes we think of that, that oh well we'll just fly away like a bird and we'll escape out of it.

But God says that ye may be able to bear it. Sometimes the trial is not removed, just like in Paul's situation. God did not choose to take away that thorn in the flesh, that infirmity, but He said, my grace is sufficient for thee.

And Paul understood that in my weakness of my flesh, then can Christ Jesus be glorified and magnified in my life, because then He is strong and I am weak. Knowing this, that the trying of your faith works as patience. And patience means endurance.

It works endurance in your life. You know, that trying, that proving, it's an exercise. And when you are exercised in the trying of your faith, it brings forth a beautiful fruit afterward.

At the time it doesn't seem very pleasant. The Bible does say that very clearly. At the time of chastening, at the time of trials, it's not pleasant.

But afterward to those who are exercised, it yields a beautiful fruit of righteousness. And as I think of this trying of our faith, it worketh patience. It worketh endurance.

The testing, the proving of your faith, it worketh endurance. In Romans 5, verse 1 through 5, and you'll need to turn there, we see another picture of this. Paul says, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we also have access by faith into this grace wherein ye stand and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.

And that's beautiful. Oh, we love that. And that is right, that is true, everything I said.

But now in verse 3 of Romans 5, he says, and not only so, but we glory in tribulation also. See, a lot of the gospel that is being preached today, it's a gospel of easy-believism, and it will make you happy, it'll make you healthy, it'll make you wealthy, and they do not preach about that you must do much tribulation entering the kingdom of heaven. They don't say that there's sufferings and persecutions awaiting you when you give your life to Christ.

They don't tell you that. They just tell you, oh, come to Jesus and you'll be happy. And God will bless your life.

Yes, God will bless your life. And blessed is he that has the Lord Jesus Christ as his Savior. Blessed are he whose sins are forgiven.

You know, praise God. And happy is that person. But there's also a side to this, that not only do we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and we stand by faith, but we, not only so, he says, but we glory in tribulation also.

Because we understand that knowing this, that tribulation worketh patience. And patience experience and experience hope. And I like this.

And hope maketh not ashamed. Glory. Because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost.

So, let patience have her perfect work. Because as we are exercised, as God puts us through the testings, there is a perfect work that will come forth out of the lives of those who are tested and tried. He says, let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

And that let patience, I would like to clarify that as meaning endurance. Let endurance have her perfect work. Those who endure.

Those who steadfastly continue in patience and endurance. Let it have its full effect, this perfect work. Let it have its full effect, showing perfect endurance.

You know, when you think of a perfect work, you know, I say, well, I know I'm not perfect and I haven't arrived, but I want us to look at this in a little bit of a different light. That perfect work is an endurance that God is working in you. And that endurance and that seeing it from God's perspective, that when we are in these trials, we can glory in them because we know that God is working a work in us so that we may be perfect and entire and not be lacking, not be found in the want, you know, be found incomplete because He wants to complete us in Him.

That we can rejoice and let patience have her perfect work, which is namely a joy in the cross that God allows to come into our life. Let endurance have her perfect work. Jesus said, He that endures to the end shall be saved.

Let there be an enduring. And that ye may be perfect, He says. Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect.

And that word perfect, again, I believe it means that you may be fully developed in the attributes of a Christian, that you may grow in the attributes of Christ's likeness, that you may be perfect and that you may be developed and that you may be entire with all its parts complete, wanting nothing. Oh, that's beautiful. So, true and false religion.

True religion, true religion is patient in the midst of trials. And I want to encourage you this morning, you know, we don't maybe always respond right at the beginning of a trial, but God is long-suffering with us. He doesn't just immediately cut us off, but He works with us.

He tempers the heat just right. He will not allow you to be tempted above what you're able. No matter what you're facing, no matter what difficulties in life, no matter what persecutions, God's grace is sufficient for us.

Marks of true religion is an unwavering faith and singleness of mind. Let us go on in verse 5. If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God that giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering, for he that wavereth is like the wave of the sea, driven with the wind and tossed.

Let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord. A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways. True religion is marked with an unwavering faith.

If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, and it shall be given him. It's beautiful. It's a beautiful promise.

God will give. But this intireness, this completeness in Christ, this going through these trials is not an easy attainment. We must not shrink from the cross.

We must not shrink from the suffering and the trial. But when we're in the trial, cry out to God for wisdom with an unwavering faith that believes God when He says, let him ask of God that giveth to all men liberally. I like that.

God isn't stingy. He doesn't hold back. He doesn't give you just a little bit.

He'll give you sufficient for the trial that you're facing. You know, it reminds me of the testimonies of people in the past when they were in great trial of affliction. And we could turn over there to Hebrews and read how they were sown asunder.

And they were chased and hunted down like sheep for the slaughter. But by faith, they overcame. By faith, they endured.

And they saw Him who is invisible. They had their hearts and minds fixed upon God. And by faith, they were able to do those things.

They also saw mighty wonders of God in the dead being raised to life and things like that. You know, they saw God working in many beautiful ways. But some, they were cast into prison and they were killed.

And it tells us in Revelation, some of ye shall be cast into prison and ye shall be killed for my name's sake. But he that keepeth his faith and endures unto the end, oh, he shall receive a beautiful crown of life that fadeth not away. So don't be afraid what man can do unto you.

Jesus says in Matthew 10, don't be afraid what man shall do unto you, but rather fear God. An unwavering faith. Ask with simplicity.

I was so blessed this morning in the prayer room. A brother shared how his little child asked him for an egg. And at first, he wasn't going to give him an egg.

Then the words of Jesus came to him. If your son asks an egg, will you give him an egg? So he gave him an egg. And his son asked for some bread.

And he gave him some bread. Are you hungry this morning? Jesus is that bread that came down from Heaven. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness and they're dead.

But the bread that comes down from Heaven, the Lord Jesus, oh, whosoever eateth and drinketh of Him shall have eternal life and shall live by Him. Ask of God. Believe in Him.

He upbraideth not. You know, and that's... God is so good. He gives to those who come asking without upbraiding them.

And He could upbraid us if He would. Maybe about our past ingritudes for what He did for us. Maybe He blessed us in such ways and we just took it for granted.

We didn't even stop to thank Him. Like those nine levers. One came back and gave glory to God and the others went off their way.

God doesn't upbraid. He doesn't throw things in our face and say, well, if you would be more faithful yourself or whatever. But God honors the simplicity of faith that comes believing.

Lord, I'm in need. I have nothing. God, I need wisdom.

And it shall be given Him. Found a little interesting quote here from the Jewish religion. Let me not have need of gifts of men whose gifts are few, but their upbraidings manifold.

But give me out of Thy large hand, O Lord. You know, when you look at Solomon. Solomon's prayer for wisdom.

God gave him the wisdom he asked and so much more. God hears every true prayer and grants you the thing asked or something better. Hallelujah.

Just as a good physician, a good doctor. He'll give what is best for the patient's health and well-being. It might hurt at the moment, but the doctor knows better.

And he says, we must go through this. If we don't get rid of this cancer, you're gonna die. If we don't take that gangrene out of your leg, it's gonna spread to the rest of your body.

God hears every true prayer and He answers. Giving the thing asked or something better. If He sees it's not for our good, He won't give it just for temporary gratification or for immediate satisfaction.

But He says, No, my son. I have something better for you. Let Him ask in faith, not wavering.

Because He that wavereth. That wavering, that's like wavering between belief and unbelief. And may I say it so this morning that, you know, I think we need our eyes opened.

I feel I do in a greater way. Unbelief is sin. The children of Israel entered not in because of unbelief.

And somehow I think we as Christians we sort of think we can go along and we can choose to believe God here and when we can see it also and walk by our sight. But God says, you know, we walk by faith. We walk by faith and not by sight.

Now that doesn't mean that we just go haphazardly about our lives and we tempt God. You know, and just throw things out there and say, well, Lord, I'm going to jump off the edge of the cliff and I have faith you're going to save me. That's how the devil came to Jesus.

He said, well, just jump off. Just jump off the pinnacle. And, you know, the Bible says these angels will catch you.

Jesus said, oh no. You shall not tempt the Lord your God. So, let us have an understanding.

You know, faith is a faith that is persuaded of the things of God and what God has spoken and said that He wants to do. It's not something where I step out and do something stupid and then expect God to intervene for me. And yet, the Lord is gracious toward us.

If He had dealt with me according to all my stupid things, I wouldn't be here. But I just want to encourage us, you know, a reality of faith that is real and it has its hope rooted and grounded in the Scriptures. Asking in faith, believing God, He that wavereth, you know, He that wavereth.

It's like the wave of the sea driven with the wind. You know, when I think of being driven with the wind, to me that speaks of something that is without external circumstances pushing us around, trying to get us off from the foundation of a steadfast, rooted, grounded conviction in Christ. Driven with the wind.

All the voices from without coming at us from every direction. No, don't you do that. Don't you believe that.

Why don't you just give up your silly notion? You know, Jesus Himself, it says, could do no mighty work or a mighty miracle in His own hometown because there was such unbelief. I mean, it's staggering to think, you know, the power of bondage in people's lives through unbelief. The blindness of heart through unbelief.

And there's many voices shouting from without. You know, there was two spies who believed God. But there was twelve, or ten? No, there was ten who did not, right? There was twelve sent to believe, ten did not.

And the ten were very vehement in trying to get their point across. Even to the stirring up of all the people, stone these believers. We don't want to live by faith.

Moses, feed us some manna, give us some bread. Why do we have to go in there and fight those giants? We'll never do it. And they stirred up the people.

Unbelief. The sin of unbelief. And we can read it right here in the New Testament.

These things were written for our admonition. And He tells us, beware, lest ye have an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God. And He points right back to them.

He tells us very clearly that the winds that blow, it tosses the waves. And there is that which is without. And then I think of tossed, you know, driven and tossed from that which is within, could we say.

You know, you've heard the expression, you know, I was tossing and turning all night. The warfare is raging within. The cost of being a disciple of Jesus Christ.

Going through this trial. Or taking the easier road, brother Jeff. Taking the easier road.

We'll just get off the highway of holiness a little bit tossed in its own instability. One time on the shore of faith and hope and the next time told back into unbelief and just, you know, there often men hang in the balance. A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways.

And that double-minded has the meaning of double-souled. I looked it up in the Bible dictionary. It's like I want to live my life in my soulish desires and flesh.

But I also want to be a child of God. And today with the Another Christ gospel that is being preached, they say you can have it. You can have it your way.

You can have Jesus as your Savior and you can enjoy all the pleasures of this world and live in the flesh and just live it up. But God doesn't say that. He says the double-minded man, he's unstable.

And that has the meaning of a double-souled. He's divided in his loyalties. He's directed toward God and yet directed toward something else.

He's unstable. He's unwavering. I looked that word up in Webster's 1828 dictionary, double-minded.

It says having different minds at the same time. Unsettled, wavering, unstable and refers to James right here. The 1828 Webster's dictionary will take those Bible words and give a definition which I really appreciate that.

That's a challenge to our hearts this morning. Are we single-minded, single-eyed on the Lord? Or is there an unsettledness and an instability and a wavering? Let not that man think he shall receive anything of the Lord. He makes it so practical.

He makes it so clear. He doesn't beat around the bush. He says you ask and believe God and you're going to receive.

But if you are going to waver and you're going to be double-minded, don't think you're going to receive anything from God. Marks of true religion, true Christianity is acceptance of providential, providential talents God has given, providential giftings God has given. And we see that in James 1 verses 9 through 10.

He says, Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted, but the rich in that he is made low, because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away. You know, it's an acceptance with what God has given me. It's an acceptance with the way God made me.

He says, Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted. He can rejoice that he is exalted. He's been accepted in the family of God through the Lord Jesus Christ and his faith in Jesus Christ.

He's an heir and a child of God, just like that other brother. And you know, you look around you and we could take a whole message out of this and go over to Corinthians where he talks about the differing gifts in the body and the comely parts and the seemly parts that are not so seen and they're not quite so honorable, but God has placed them all in the body as it pleased Him. And so, let the brother of low degree rejoice that he is exalted.

And let the one that is rich in that he is made low because as the flower of grass he shall pass away. You know, the rich who says, I don't need God. When they come to see that they need God, it brings much rejoicing because their riches stood in opposition to God and to see the need of their heart.

And so, the rich can rejoice in that he is made low. Do you know of any people like that? They forsook their riches, they forsook their corporate world, they forsook their businesses because they met Jesus at the cross and they were made low. They were humbled and they were shown their need of a Savior.

And they're brought low. They're not haughty anymore. They are not cocky and proud.

And corporate CEO of this big corporation. Now, they're made low. But oh, they should rejoice because true greatness is to be a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ to know Him.

You know, the design is to reduce all things to an equal footing. I like that. The ground is level at the cross.

You know, rich and poor, bond and free, Greek, Gentile, Jew, all made one in the blood of His cross. Hallelujah! Marks of a true religious person who is... I hardly hate to use the word religion. Marks of a true Christian who is identified as a true Christian is he endures temptation.

James 11, verse 11. James 1, verse 11. No sooner is the sun risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perishes, so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways.

Blessed is the man that endures temptation, for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. You know, it doesn't matter how much property we own. It doesn't matter how much money we have in the bank.

It doesn't matter how rich we are. He says, as the grass withereth, the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perishes, so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways. You know how sad if all we have is riches in this world.

You know, that man with his barns, I'm going to build bigger, but he was not rich toward God. You know, all the fashion of it, all the glory of it, all the pride and pomp of it, it's all going to pass away. Even if it's cloaked over with a false cloak of humility, so also shall the rich man fade away.

It shall fade away. It shall fade away. Verse 12.

Got ahead of myself there a little bit. Verse 12. Marks of a true Christian, one that is real, he endures temptation.

Blessed is the man that endures temptation. For when he has tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. Hallelujah.

He endures temptation. Not falling into, but enduring of temptation is a cause for joy. Enduring trials and testings.

For when he has tried, and when he has come through it, having passed through the trying, oh, he comes through with a victorious faith in God. It says, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. The crown of life.

I think of the victor's crown. He shall receive the victor's crown. It's to them that love him.

Love produces persevering endurance amidst suffering. And by that persevering in the midst of suffering, we show our love. The world looks at the Christians and they can't figure them out.

They're going through trials with joy. Because they love the Lord Jesus and they see beyond the present here and now. We have a better continuing city and a better substance reserved for us.

Now, it shifts a little bit here from the trial and in verse 13 it speaks of temptation which I believe now is a temptation or a solicitation to evil. Verse 13 Let no man say when he is tempted I am tempted of God for God cannot be tempted with evil neither tempteth he any man but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed. Then when lust has conceived it bringeth forth sin and sin when it is finished bringeth forth death.

I believe now he's speaking of a temptation to evil because he says God cannot be tempted with evil neither tempteth he any man. So now we are looking at temptation to evil to commit sin to depart from God. He says let no man say when he is tempted I am tempted of God.

God is bringing it upon us. Let no man fancy that God lays upon him a temptation to sin because God doesn't send trials to make us worse or to cause us to fall away but to draw us to himself and to purify us and to make us more like him. So it's a contradiction to say that God would be the one who would send temptations to draw us away from himself for he is far from tempting us.

When he says that God tempted Abraham that was a testing and a trying of his faith. We know that very clearly because then the Lord said well now I see Abraham that you love me. You love me above your son.

It was a testing of his faith. It was not a seducement or an enticement to sin. And then here in James it tells us how this temptation comes about.

It says let no man say when he is tempted I am tempted of God but in verse 14 every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed. The cause of sin often is in ourselves. It's in our own lust.

In our own carnal man. And I think it's very important for us to understand this. Because there is also a lot of talk these days of the devil made me do it.

The devil led me into sin. And we can go back I don't have time to do it all this morning and look in the book of Genesis. When Satan tempted Eve what caused her to sin I believe was when she began to doubt God.

See that? She began to doubt God's provision God's goodness and saying you know what? I really need fruit off of that other tree that God said I shouldn't have. And God had provided everything for her and for Adam. They didn't need any fruit off of that tree.

So they began to doubt God and she began to agree with the enemy with the devil. Satan's suggestions do not endanger us before they are made our own. Satan's suggestions and his seductions do not endanger us unless we embrace him and we make him our own.

And something in our carnal lust and that old Adam rises up and says I want this. Each of us faces our own unique temptations. However, let us remember though that there has no temptation taken you but such as is common to man.

But we do have different temptations between male and female between a young person and an old person and Paul says Timothy flee youthful lust. And he tells to some of the older men some different things you know there are unique temptations however your temptation is not so weird and strange and different that nobody else has ever faced it. And see that's where the devil sometimes and in our own mind not sure where to put all this we think well our situation is uniquely different and so therefore no one else has ever faced this temptation.

But the Bible says that Jesus Christ is able to come to our aid. He is able to come and succor us because he was tempted in how many points? All points like as we and yet without sin. Oh praise the Lord.

So he can come to our aid and come to our help. And he can deliver us out of that temptation. Lust flows from the old Adam in that original sin by birth that we were conceived and born in sin and inherited from Adam.

And so every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed. The drawing away is the beginning steps to be drawn away from truth and virtue and holiness and purity with God drawing you away off of the highway of holiness through lust. And say well we can just step off a little bit I'll keep one foot over here I want to serve God I want to be a holy person but the way is a little too narrow and all these voices are shouting out there another Christ is being preached and saying oh you don't have to be so strict and so narrow the way is not that narrow come on let's mix a little bit of the world in here and let's make it more appealing and let's just have friendship evangelism and let's just appeal to the people and I can tell you today that is what is happening with a mass in our churches today and it is sad to see even the secular media is writing about the churches saying they have lost their identity and they're bringing in clowns they're bringing in actors they're bringing in Superbowl Sunday to gather the crowds in and we're going to show the game in the church and the preacher better have a short message because we want to

watch the game fun and play oh but we're doing it in church so it's okay, is it?

Jesus said not everyone that says Lord, Lord is going to enter into the kingdom of heaven but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven the drawing away, you know that lust but that lust must be crucified it must be mortified and put to death through the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ through the denying of self through the fleeing to Jesus for refuge that word being drawn away and enticed enticed has the meaning of like being taken with bait the world hangs out all their fish lines and their fish hooks with all kinds of bait they even call it Christian my brothers, my sisters we must we must love the Lord Jesus we must love the word of God we must love him above all else supremely what lust what easily besetting sin what enticement is hanging out in front of you I don't know

but God does and I know that God is able to deliver you, my friend no temptation no enticement but such as is common to man and God is able to make a way of escape that ye may be able to bear it this enticement this lust to sin if we were to take time to look in Proverbs it is personified there as the harlot that allures a man and you can take that harlot and you can say that is the lust of sin and it can be any other sin it doesn't just have to be moral but that harlot depicts Satan and his lustful enticements to humanity to draw them away it hangs out the bait there to catch and to entice those and to draw them away from the steadfastness in Christ into sin so every man when he is tempted and drawn away by his lust so the cause of sin often is in this old carnal flesh in this old

satanic carnal flesh he gives us further steps he says that lust when it has conceived it bringeth forth sin and sin when it is finished it bringeth forth death so you see the process he says you know let this be clearly understood it's not God who is enticing you to sin God doesn't tempt you with evil but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed then when lust has conceived it bringeth forth sin and sin when it is finished it bringeth forth death so first it is agreed with it is embraced it is embraced and there is a conception of that sin in the heart and of that lust and then it bringeth forth sin that which was hidden in the heart brother Jeff as you shared this morning you know that which was in the secret of the hearts of men and they said God doesn't

see us if that secret sin that secret lust is not repented of and cleansed and washed in the blood of Jesus out of the heart and life it conceives and it brings forth sin and sin when it is finished it bringeth forth death nip sin in the bud nip that lust in the bud flee that thing give no room for it we must hasten on marks of a true Christian true religion false religion false profession do not err my beloved brethren every good gift and every perfect gift is from above and cometh down from the father of lights with whom is no varableness neither shadow of turning another point is the recognition of the divine source of all blessings is from God hallelujah you know it's not like that group of men who were together and said well we had a good crop this year who shall we give credit to

for the good crops we've had and say well thank and I don't even want to say what they said but they didn't give thanks to God so they hold up their glasses to one another and toast with their alcoholic beverages and revel in the goodness and God is the one who has given it but they don't even acknowledge God they don't even see it but a recognition that all good things come from above from God it comes down from the father of lights with whom is no varableness or shadow of turning it's a perfect gift oh beautiful the father of lights he's the God of light no varableness, no shadow of turning you know I can see my shadow here this morning I can see my shadow of my hands right here on my bible and if you look around you there's a lot of light in this building but you can probably still see

shadows but with God who's the God of light there's no shadows and there's no shadow of turning with God everything is bright in the light there's no shadow no varableness no shadow of turning I'm not quite sure what to do here I think we'll read through a few more verses without a lot of comments and let the word of God speak to our hearts of his own will, begat he us, verse 18 the word of truth that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures wherefore my beloved brethren let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, and slow to wrath, for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness and receive with meekness the engrafted word which is able to save your souls you know the marks of a true Christian is

that his ears are open to hear he has a heart and an ear open to hear the word of God he's quick to hear he's slow to speak, he's slow to wrath, his self control he forsakes evil verse 21, lay apart all superfluity of naughtiness, all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness and receive with meekness the engrafted word, the forsaking of evil and laying apart of that superfluity of naughtiness which is malice as I looked that up, that definition an evil disposition toward one another, he lays that aside no malice toward one another no evil disposition toward one another and he's receptive to the word of God receiving with meekness the engrafted word a love for the word of God, a love for truth it's the mark of a true believer in verse 22, but be ye doers of the word and not hearers only,

deceiving your own selves for if any be a hearer of the word and not a doer, he's like a man beholding his natural face in the glass and I thought of the children's lesson, the mirror he beholdeth himself and goeth his way and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was he's one who practices the word true religion is not just hearing but doing if we hear and do not do he says we deceive our own hearts and we forget we look into the mirror but we forget what manner of man we are, but oh, verse 25 whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty and continues therein, not being a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed hallelujah verse 26, if any man among you seem to be religious and bridle if not his tongues but deceive with his own heart this

man's religion is vain it's empty you know a false religion can go to church on Sunday and tell jokes on Monday sitting around at the sales barn laughing and telling jokes vain empty life but pure religion it bridleth the tongue pure religion sets a watch upon our lips as to what we say you know James brings it just so clear he just makes it black and white if any man among you seems to be religious and bridle if not his tongue he deceive with his own heart you know that bridling of the tongue you can look up a little earlier in the verses where he said the wrath of man speaking angry words all those sorts of things we could go many places with that temperance, temperance in what I say a bridled tongue that doesn't speak evil of others pure religion verse 27 and undefiled before God and

the Father is this to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction and to keep himself unspotted from the world pure religion there is a purity pure religion is that love which has in it no foreign mixture of self-deceit and hypocrisy it is a pure religion and it is undefiled before God and the Father and it's a religion that works itself out in practical everyday holiness visiting the fatherless and the widows in their affliction it's full of compassion and love it's full of sympathy it's full of serving just like James just a servant James, a servant of God also it says to keep himself unspotted from the world there is a jealous watchfulness upon the heart to keep himself unspotted from the world it's a strange gospel today in United States of America but it's not a strange

gospel in many other parts of the world because to be a Christian sets you apart from the main flow of society but in America to be a Christian, you can still be a movie star you can be a sports figure you can

be many things and just tack on the name Christian but in many parts of the world this indeed does not sound strange at all to their ears because they know it is so it is true if you're going to be a real Christian you cannot be a friend of the world it separates you the world won't have you if you'll be a real Christian it crucifies the world to you and I to the world may the Lord bless His word in Jesus name, Amen thank you for preaching the word this morning certainly a need in our day today to be practical allow God's word to be practical in our lives separate from the world can

we go to church in the morning and go to the games in the afternoon come to God's house in the morning before the game God what the sign on the church billboard said, I wonder who's God I wonder who God that God is, no my God my God didn't say that maybe we have time just a few thoughts here if there's any thoughts this morning anyone, something hard to share going to be brief there's someone, one hand up here anyone else want to share, get your hand up I would just have a few words to say, concerning the area of temptation, I know that it is an area where every one of us faces on a day to day basis and brother Aaron touched on it this morning here in the book of James I would like to encourage us this morning to be an overcomer encourage us to be an overcomer and Jesus' words as He spoke

into the churches there in Revelation and the promises to an overcomer are very beautiful and I time and again read those I have them underlined in my Bible and would just like to read them here this morning maybe a few of them to him that over cometh and I take this, that over cometh temptation and goes on to him that over cometh will I give to eat of the tree of life and then the second one to him that over cometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna and then another one and he that over cometh and keepeth my works unto the end to him will I give power over the nations he that over cometh the same shall be clothed in white raiment and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life but I will confess his name before my father and before his angels praise the Lord him that over

cometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God and the last one here to him that over cometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne even as I also overcame and am set down with my father in his throne and I just want to encourage us this morning it is possible to be an overcomer you know even in this world that we live in it is possible to walk through this life and to be an overcomer and I believe for myself as I think of this a big area of this is our relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ and how much do we love the Lord how much are we sold out for him and it takes us to the other side of it where I cannot do this because I love my God I cannot go that way because I love Jesus for what he did for me and no longer is my mind plagued with wavering back and forth but the decision

is made I cannot the love of Christ so constrains me that I cannot and will not God bless everyone I appreciated the message this morning Amen My heart was ministered to this morning thank you brothers for preaching the word laboring in that I have two thoughts first thought is about two and a half years ago my family and I decided to memorize James chapter 1 and what a blessing that was memory does put the word of God into our heart and it goes with you so young people in all we need to make that a priority I believe but verse I'd like to speak on verse 26 and how that practically affects our everyday life I just want to confess that many times at work I may get carried away a little bit and it's something will happen and I hear that little I hear that check in my heart and that's from

the Lord that don't speak here don't say anything and many times I don't and it's a blessing but other times I go ahead I don't know what happens but I notice one thing that when I do speak and I sense that the Lord is not wanting me to I tend to lose some disrespect from my fellow co-workers I've noticed that but when I'm holding back and I'm bridling that tongue I see God's blessing upon my life and many times my

relationships with my co-workers there at work tend to improve and it's amazing how God's word is true that we do need to bridle our tongue second thing I'd like to share is I praise God that my heart has not been on Super Bowl Sunday which is today in my past I was a big football fan and got carried away in that and it took my heart away from my family and I praise the Lord

we're not letting out church early to go to the game or to go watch it I was part of it in my past I was going that way and I wanted the preacher to get done early and I just say thank you Lord that we're not part of the games the games and the coliseums and the early church they were wanting blood they were wanting violence and to kill and there's really no difference now football there's blood and people have gotten killed over it and people are it's just a vile sport I just want to speak that I don't believe God is pleased at all with that I think it's a great sin in our nation alright well thank you for that we have one over here yet when our brother shared earlier about being overcomers and the things in Revelation I guess the Lord just prompted me to share because I was reading in

Revelation not so long ago and just making a note of those very things that God would give to those who overcame and I wrote those things down in my journal and then the next thing I found I needed to write though was how God wanted to just deal in my own heart in overcoming things in my own life that still need to be refined and I just praise him that he is faithful to do that even as instances where my dear husband was very graciously and gently rebuking me for something that needed to be rebuked for and just wanting the Lord to get his acts to the root you know to not let patterns that maybe have gone on to continue but to find victory in just those little things and I was just especially in reading Revelation seeing that five of those seven churches there was a rebuke for them and

they started out well and I'm sure they probably thought they were still going well but there were things that they were just spiritually deaf to in their hearts that they weren't hearing and it took someone from the outside to come in and show them that and as I also just noted in Ecclesiastes where it talked about the old and foolish king who would no longer be admonished I thought Lord don't let me be like that you know maybe I'm an older sister in the church but I need to continually be just open to God's rebuke in my heart that I'm able to accept what he is trying to show me and if I ever reach that point where I'm you know no longer needing rebuke then I'm like that old and foolish king so may the Lord help each of us as we yes we certainly want to be overcomers but to be willing to

let the Lord continue to show us things in our lives that we need to put the acts to the roots Thank you  
Thank you sister

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