

James 1:5-18

REVIEW ...

- COUNT it all joy...
 - When we FALL into various TRIALS - TEMPTATIONS...
 - KNOWING - that the testing of our faith produces patience!
 - Testing us so that we know what is inside of us – pull out impurities...
 - We talked quite a bit about the word patience -- to abide in Jesus!
 - Trials teach us NOT to depend on ourselves – but instead depend on Jesus!
- BUT – we must let patience have its PERFECT work...
 - We have a choice when it comes to the TRIALS of life...
 - We can get upset - blame others for our problems - try to fix the issues...
 - Or we can stop and realize that God has allowed it SO THAT we learn to ABIDE!
 - Becoming perfect [spiritually] - complete [practically] - and we will lack NOTHING in life!

GODLY WISDOM... [3 POINTS]

- 1ST – WISDOM IN TRIALS... vs. 5-8
 - 1st – We lack WISDOM... vs. 5
 - If any of you lacks [indicative] wisdom – let [imperative] him ask of God...
 - There are TWO very different kinds of WISDOM – from ABOVE and from BELOW...
 - James 3:15-17 – “This WISDOM does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. For where envy and self-seeking exist - confusion and every evil thing are there. But the WISDOM that is from above is first pure - then peaceable – gentle - willing to yield - full of mercy and good fruits - without partiality and without hypocrisy.”
 - There is WISDOM - that comes from this WORLD – from BELOW...
 - And there is WISDOM [σοφία] – that comes from God – from ABOVE!
 - The WISDOM of God is not the same thing as KNOWLEDGE we learn in the world...
 - Because having Godly WISDOM - knowing the best choices to make in life...
 - This WISDOM is a gift of the Spirit – **I Corinthians 12:8**
 - Ask God for Wisdom...
 - This is NOT a question – it is a statement of FACT [indicative] we DO lack WISDOM!
 - Therefore we MUST [imperative] ask God who is the ONLY source of true WISDOM!
 - When we do the Lord WILL [indicative] – give it liberally / abundantly to us!
 - When we are in the midst of a TRIAL – we often have NO idea what to do...
 - Because we do NOT know what the outcome will be – we CANNOT see tomorrow!
 - We have all felt the helplessness that comes from not being able to see the future...
 - Feeling like a lost little child – not knowing what decision to make...
 - Looking for someone to guide us – needing WISDOM so we do not make a mistake!
 - All we have to do is simply ask – and God is MORE THAN willing to give it to us!
 - 2nd - What keeps us from ASKING... vs. 5
 - Who gives [indicative] to all liberally and without reproach - and it will be given to him...
 - REPROACH – we would simply say to be ASHAMED...
 - We think God is going to look down on us when we ask for WISDOM...
 - He will be disappointed that we do not KNOW the answer – so we do not ask...
 - But how foolish – that we LACK wisdom is a FACT [indicative] God already knows!
 - He is not surprised when we come to Him for help – in contrast He is WAITING for us to ask!

- One of the greatest inventions of the past TWENTY years has been Google search...
- Interesting note – Google is named after the numerical notation googol...
- 10^{100} – that is TEN with a HUNDRED zeroes after it – more than the atoms in the universe!
- The idea being if we have ANY question - we can ask Google and get an answer!
- We have been given a SUPER powered Google...
- The difference is our search engine is powered by the creator of Heaven and Earth...
- And the answers / WISDOM that He give to us are ABSOLUTE truth!
- The only catch is we have to be willing to ASK – **Matthew 7:7**

o 3rd – How to ask for WISDOM... vs. 6

- But let [imperative] him ask in faith...
 - James does give one condition to obtaining the WISDOM...
 - We MUST [imperative] ask in for WISDOM from God in FAITH...
 - FAITH – [πίστις] – 244x in NT – to have TRUST or CONFIDENCE...
 - Because if we do not TRUST – we are not going to believe the WISDOM Jesus provides!
- With no doubting...
 - For he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind!
 - No DOUBTING– [διακρίνω] – literally no JUDGING...
 - The idea is if we try to inspect / judge the WISDOM of God in the light of this world...
 - Then we will DOUBT God – and not TRUST what He has tells us...
 - Instead of knowing EXACTLY what we should do – we will be CONFUSED!
 - We will be like a WAVE of the sea – driven and tossed by the wind...
 - Like a WAVE that gets battered back and forth by winds coming from all sides...
 - We will waffle back and forth between the IDEAS of men and the TRUTH of God!
 - The WORLD is almost always the exact opposite of what the WORD says...
 - The WORLD says to seek riches – the WORD says to be content – **Hebrews 13:5**
 - The WORLD says to focus on yourself – the WORD says to die to ourselves – **Luke 9:23**
 - The WORLD says to be strong – the WORLD says we need to be weak – **II Corinthians 12:9**
 - If we are listening to the WORLD – we will have a hard time believing the WORD!

o 4th – Not receiving WISDOM... vs. 7-8

- Let not [imperative] that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord...
- He is a double-minded man - unstable in all his ways!
- If we are listening to the WISDOM of the world...
- We MUST not [imperative] assume God will give us ANYTHING!
- Because we are DOUBLE minded – TWO minds – one for God and one for the world...
- The result of having TWO minds – we are unstable in ALL of our ways!
- UNSTABLE– only here NT – meaning we cannot even STAND UP!
- I have met so many believers who are miserable – they are tossed about like waves...
- The problem is they think the WISDOM of the world has something to offer them...
- Therefore they are miserable in the Lord – because they are confused by the world...
- But they are also not happy with the world – because they know too much about the Lord...
- They are miserable wherever they go – they CANNOT stand - because they are divided!
- **Luke 16:13** – “No one can serve two masters. You will hate one and love the other...”

● 2ND – RESOURCES FOR TRIALS... vs. 9-11

o 1st – Poor and helpless... vs. 9

- Let the lowly brother [rejoice] in his [position]...
- LOWLY [ταπεινός] – to not rise far off the ground – we would say POOR...
- Let [imperative] the POOR brother REJOICE [imperative] – DOUBLE command...
- Because a POOR man has NOTHING else but the Lord to put his TRUST in!

- WHY would we want to REJOICE because we are POOR...
- Because we are left with NO other option than to look to Jesus...
- Forcing us to learn the most important lesson – ABIDE – as a result of our TRIALS!
- o 2nd – Rich and helpless... vs. 10-11
 - But the rich in his humiliation...
 - The rich must REJOICE in their HUMILIATION...
 - HUMILIATION [ταπείνωσις] – same word used for the POOR...
 - Because where the POOR have to DEPEND on the Lord...
 - But the RICH also SHOULD depend on the Lord!
 - JAMES gives an illustration to show us why...
 - As a flower of the field he will pass away...
 - No sooner has the sun risen with a burning heat than it withers the grass - its flower falls...
 - And its beautiful appearance perishes - so the rich man also will fade away in his pursuits!
 - If a RICH man is trusting in his WEALTH to save him from his TRIALS...
 - He is in a dangerous position – because his wealth can fade like a flower in the noon sun!
 - Therefore he SHOULD be putting his TRUST in Jesus – not in his MONEY!
 - Therefore we do not REJOICE in riches – because they are NOT certain...
 - Instead REJOICE that Jesus is the one who NEVER changes!
 - That way we do NOT chase after the empty wealth of this world...
 - Instead we will come in HUMBLE daily dependance on Jesus!
 - Rich or are we poor...
 - POVERTY is an interesting concept – most of us think we are POOR...
 - We think that way because we look at those who are RICHER than we are...
 - HALF of the world lives on less P150 a day / if we have cash in our pocket – we are RICH!
 - But it does NOT matter which label we give ourselves – both are HUMBLD...
 - Either now in POVERTY – or at the end of life when all RICHES of this world are lost...
 - And the HUMBLE man has every reason to REJOICE – because he also NEEDS GRACE!
 - James 4:6 – “God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble [same word].”
- 3rd – REWARD FROM TRIALS... vs. 12-18
 - o 1st – Endure TEMPTATION... vs. 12
 - Blessed is the man who endures temptation - for when he has been approved...
 - He will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him!
 - BLESSED – OH HOW HAPPY – is the man who endures TEMPTATION...
 - TEMPTATIONS / TRIALS – as we noted last week these are the SAME word...
 - ENDURE [ὑπομένω] to abide in Jesus Christ – **John 15:4**
 - This is the exact same point that JAMES made in - **James 1:2-4**
 - But he adds - we will be BLESSED – because once we are APPROVED...
 - APPROVED [δόκιμος] – same root word as TESTED – **James 1:3**
 - We receive THE CROWN - God promised [indicative] to those that LOVE [ἀγαπάω] Him!
 - What is the CROWN – TWO possibilities...
 - **I Corinthians 3:12-14** – “Each ones work will become clear for the Day will declare it - because it will be revealed by fire... If anyones work... endures he will receive a reward.”
 - Anything done with a selfish motive - is wood / hay / and stubble – burns up in the fire...
 - But anything we do out of a RIGHT heart – will be Gold / silver / and jewels...
 - Then at BEMA seat of Christ - **II Corinthians 5:10**
 - We will receive rewards - CROWNS - for the good things done for the Lord...
 - We can then throw the Crowns at the feet of Jesus - **Revelation 4:10**
 - The problem with CROWNS as rewards...

- CROWN [στέφανος] is only described FIVE times in the Bible...
- **I Corinthians 9:25 / II Timothy 4:8 / James 1:12 / I Peter 5:4 / Revelation 2:10**
- CROWN is always singular – not crowns – meaning there is ONLY one!
- Also the description of the CROWN – suggests the one CROWN we receive is ETERNAL LIFE...
- Eternal Crown / Crown of Righteousness / Crown of Life / and Crown of Glory!
- Finally the idea of CROWNS as REWARDS - focuses on the wrong thing...
- We are looking to receive a REWARD from the Lord – as if He owes us!
- Thinking that we earn extra rewards / CROWNS for our works – brings pride...
- We think we are better because of what we have done for the Lord...
- There is a sense of spiritual self-righteousness – spiritual superiority...
- Or a sense of condemnation - because we think we have not done enough!
- Our CROWN is Eternal life...
 - Whether we are saved young or old – our reward is Heaven - **Matthew 20:1-16**
 - Whether we were the greatest Apostle – or only saved a day – our CROWN is Heaven...
 - In other words it is not about how much work we do for the Lord...
 - It is about what HE did for us – the CROWN of life that HE gives to those who LOVE Him...
 - Therefore we are wise to endure TRIALS – because they come with an eternal reward!
- o 2nd – Origin of TEMPTATIONS... vs. 13-15
 - Let no one say [imperative] when he is tempted - I am tempted by God... vs. 13
 - For God cannot be tempted by evil - nor does He Himself tempt anyone!
 - TEMPTATION [πειράζω] - the word TEMPTATION / TRIAL are the same word...
 - A TRIAL – is a TEST from God / a TEMPTATION – is not from God...
 - We do go through TEMPTATIONS - but God is NEVER the source!
 - Not that we do not still try and BLAME God – just like Adam and Eve – **Genesis 3:12**
 - When God asked Adam what he had done he blamed God - the women YOU gave me...
 - When God asked Eve she blamed God – it was the serpent God made!
 - But it was NOT God who made Adam and Eve sin – they CHOSE to rebel against God...
 - They were deceived by their own LUSTS – their PRIDE – desire to be LIKE God!
 - **I John 2:16** – “All that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.”
 - Where do TEMPTATIONS come from... vs. 14
 - Each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed!
 - We are TEMPTED [passive] when we are DRAW AWAY by our own LUSTS...
 - DRAWN AWAY – only here NT – to be LURED out by BAIT!
 - A number of times we have gone fishing at MCC after church for lunch...
 - You have to feel sorry for those fish – the worm drops in the water...
 - And they are LURED out of their safety – because they are ENTICED [deceived] ...
 - Their DESIRE [lust] for the worm – ends up making them LUNCH!
 - No one wakes up one day and says – I think I want to ruin my life today...
 - We are TEMPTED by something because we genuinely think it will make us happy...
 - If I can only get that perfect figure - then I will be beautiful...
 - If I can only get that next promotion – then I will have enough money...
 - If only I look at that picture on the internet – then I will be satisfied!
 - But we are DECEIVED – these desires are not from the Lord!
 - Desire brings death... vs. 15
 - Next - when desire has conceived...
 - o Desire CONCEIVES – speaking of the conception – the beginning of a pregnancy...
 - o Sin begins as a thought – some idea that comes into our head...

- o Often it is provoked by something we see / something we hear – planting a seed!
- o **TEMPTATION** does not become **SIN** until we **DWELL** on – keep thinking about...
- o Because the battle for our actions begins in our mind...
- o If we are **THINKING** about **SINNING** – then we can expect we fall into **SIN**...
- o We cannot keep a bird from landing on your head - but do not let him build a nest!
- It gives birth to sin...
 - o When **CONCEIVING** – the fun part – is over we move on to the birthing part...
 - o And perhaps intentionally so – it speaks of a process that is **EXTREMELY** painful!
 - o Because once we chose to give in to our **DESIRES** – we give **BIRTH** to sin!
 - o The word **CONCEIVE** can also be used to describe taken a permanent **PRISONER**...
 - o Which is also what our desires to – they lead to sin that makes us a prisoner!
 - o **Romans 6:16** - “[We] become the slave of whatever [we] choose to obey? [We] can be a slave to sin - which leads to death - or [we] can choose to obey God..”
 - o Sin is like a drug - the most addictive kind of drug - and it will take over our life...
 - o Sin can seem to be enjoyable - but it sucks us in - and we become **PRISONERS**...
 - o In the end we find we are in bondage to sin - morally and spiritually bankrupt!
- And sin - when it is full grown - brings forth death!
 - o When God told Adam and Eve not to eat of the tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil...
 - o He warned them if they did they would **SURELY DIE** – **Genesis 2:17**
 - o Yet they did **NOT** die the moment they ate the **FRUIT**!
 - o **SURELY DIE** [מֵוֶת תָּמוּת] - DIE is repeated twice here – DIE [imperfect] / DIE [infinitive] ...
 - o We could translate it – you will start dying [imperfect] physically...
 - o But you will immediately be a dead man [infinitive] spiritually!
 - o We likewise – if we give into **TEMPTATION** – and it brings forth sin...
 - o The result is we **DIE** – not immediately – but spiritually we are separated from God...
 - o And one day if we do **NOT** repent – we will face the **SECOND** death – **Romans 6:23**
- o 3rd – Do not be deceived... vs. 16-18
 - Do not [imperative] be deceived - my beloved brethren... vs. 16
 - **DECEIVED** – [πλανάω] – where we get the word **PLANET** – the **WORLD**...
 - We have to be so careful what **TEMPTATIONS** we allow into our lives...
 - If we are constantly pumping social media / Hollywood / advertising into our heads...
 - Is it no wonder that we are being **DECEIVED** by this world!
 - Instead of being filled with the wisdom of the **WORLD**– we need to be filled with the **WORD**!
 - **Matthew 18:13** – “Jesus answered and said to them - you are **DECEIVED** [πλανάω] - not knowing the Scriptures or the power of God.”
 - Every good and perfect gift... vs. 17
 - Every good gift and perfect gift is from above - and comes down from the Father of lights...
 - o There are **TWO** kinds of gifts that come down from our Father!
 - o Good **GIFT** – [δόσις] - speaks of a financial **GIFT** – **Philippians 4:15**
 - o Perfect **GIFT** – [δώρημα] – speaks of spiritual **GIFT** – our salvation – **Romans 5:16**
 - o Both come down from the **FATHER OF LIGHTS** – a unique title given only here!
 - o Where sin seeks to **DECEIVE** us and make us **CAPTIVES**...
 - o Our Heavenly Father will light our way to the **TRUTH** – and set us **FREE**!
 - With whom there is no variation or shadow of turning!
 - o This is a powerful illustration – contrasting **GOD** to the **SUN**...
 - o The sun is always changing positions causing our shadow to move all over...
 - o But the light of our Father is **ABSOLUTE** – it **NEVER** moves or changes!

- The will of God... vs. 18
 - Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth...
 - That we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures!
 - JAMES concludes with a contrast – desire that conceives sin – sin that brings forth death...
 - God brought us forth by the Word of Truth – that we might bear FRUIT!
 - The question we are left to ask is which life are we living...
 - Are we tossed around by the winds of this world – or are we asking for WISDOM!
 - Are we putting out trust in RICHES – or humbled knowing we have GRACE!
 - Are we falling into temptation – or are we enduring knowing we have a CROWN!
 - TRUSTING in our Father of Lights who wants us to bear good FRUIT!