

Truth

Magazine

TM

JUNE 2018 | NO. 6 | VOLUME 62

THE EPISTLE OF JAMES

“James, a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad: Greetings” (Jas. 1:1, NASB).

The Letter of JAMES

Restoring Your Faith

James, a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad: Greetings. ^aAc

dom, let him ask for mercy, and he will give to all generously. ^a1Ki 3:9 ^bPs 112:9
6 But he must be without any doubt, who doubts is driven

Truth Magazine

(ISSN 1538-0793) is published once a month by Truth Publications, Inc., 220 S. Marion, Athens, AL 35611. Postage paid at Bowling Green, KY and additional mailing offices.

Manuscripts should be sent to the editor:
Mark Mayberry (mark@truthpublications.com)

Subscriptions, renewals & other correspondence should be sent to:
Truth Magazine
220 S. Marion
Athens, AL 35611

Book orders should be sent to:
CEI Bookstore
220 S. Marion
Athens, AL 35611
Phone: (855) 492-6657
truthbooks.com

Online Website:
truthmagazine.com

Send change of address to Postmaster at:
220 S. Marion
Athens, AL 35611

Graphic Designer:
Kelly McCombs
KMCimage@gmail.com

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The Letter of JAMES

Testing Your Faith

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Lord Jesus Christ,
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The Epistle of James

The theme section of the June issue of Truth Magazine focuses upon “The Epistle of James.” Grateful appreciation is extended to Kyle Pope for arranging, assigning and editing these articles. Since the production cycle for this issue occurred while I was preaching in the Philippines, his assistance was very beneficial. Thanks, brother!

■ THE EPISTLE OF JAMES: ITS VALUE FOR TODAY

by Daniel H. King, Sr.

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In light of its simple and practical content, brother King offers an overview of James and provides eight reasons why this book remains valuable in the present era.

■ “BLESSED IS A MAN”

by Jim Deason

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The wisdom literature of the Old Testament repeatedly affirms the blessed nature of one whose God is the Lord. In like manner, James announces blessings upon those who endure trials, seek after wisdom, and prove themselves doers of the word.

■ “LISTEN, MY BELOVED BRETHREN”

by Donnie V. Rader

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In the second chapter of James, the reader is admonished to avoid partiality, double-standards, and selective obedience; dedicated disciples adopt a radically different mindset, embracing a full, active, and obedient faith.

■ “THE TONGUE IS A FIRE”

by Gary Kerr

pg 28

History records tragic examples of fires that started with a spark or a small flame but quickly spread into devastating infernos. No wonder the Holy Spirit guided James to employ this imagery to illustrate the power the tongue has for both good and evil.

■ “THEREFORE SUBMIT TO GOD”

by Allen Dvorak

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Warning against divided allegiance, aggressiveness toward brethren, and arrogance toward God, the fourth chapter of James provides the solution: humble repentance, hopeful reliance, and full submission to the heavenly Father.

■ “ESTABLISH YOUR HEARTS”

by L. A. Stauffer

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Being ready for the Lord’s return is a fundamental principle of putting on Jesus Christ. Brother Stauffer encourages us in this effort in his examination of James’ charge to “establish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord is at hand.”

Shepherds and the Flock of God

by Mark Mayberry

David, the sweet psalmist of Israel, protected the physical flock of his father, Jesse, and guiding the nation of Israel. What lessons might elders/overseers/pastors learn today?

God the Father and Jesus Christ are depicted in the Scriptures as Shepherds (Ps. 23:1-3; John 10:11-18; Heb. 13:20-21; 1 Pet. 2:25). David famously declared, “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters. He restores my soul; He guides me in the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake” (Ps. 23:1-3).

Spiritual leaders in the Lord’s church are similarly identified. Addressing the Ephesian elders, Paul said, “Shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood” (Acts 20:28-32). Their collective work is not only to protect and preserve, but also to build up believers—bringing them to a state of maturity (Eph. 4:11-13). Peter offered similar counsel to the eldership of local churches (1 Pet. 5:1-4).

While the religious world is often confused regarding its use of terms such as bishop/overseer, elder/presbyter, shepherd/pastor, collectively, they describe those who exercise spiritual responsibility for a local congregation. Stepping backwards from this specific usage, and considering various OT occurrences, we gain valuable perspective.

Differences Among Shepherds

Some are Good

Consider Joshua. As Moses neared the end of his long ministry, he asked the Lord to appoint a worthy successor who would faithfully lead Israel so that

the congregation of the Lord would “not be like sheep which have no shepherd.” God commissioned Joshua and Eleazar, the priest, assigning leadership roles to each (Num. 27:15-23). Specifically, Joshua was charged to carefully do according to all that is written in the Law of God, and not turn aside to the right or the left (Josh. 1:6-9). Joshua served faithfully in this regard, as is witnessed by his charge and legacy (Josh. 24:14-15, 31).

Observe David. Israel experienced seven years of division and instability after Saul’s death; however, the people eventually acknowledged the Lord’s sovereign choice, “You will shepherd My people Israel, and you will be a ruler over Israel,” and thus anointed David as king over all the tribes (2 Sam. 5:1-5). Saul’s disobedience was disqualifying, so the Lord sought out a man after His own heart to lead His people (1 Sam. 13:13-14). Attentive to both the flock of his father, Jesse, and the people of Israel, David “shepherded them according to the integrity of his heart, and guided them with his skillful hands” (Ps. 78:70-72).

Some are Bad

Shepherds sometimes fail miserably in their duty, acting foolishly and fecklessly (Ezek. 34:1-6), selfishly and sinfully (Zech. 11:15-17). The Lord said, “Woe, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding themselves!” Because they healed not, but harmed; sheltered not, but scattered; defended

not, but destroyed, divine judgment would be relentless and severe.

Reflect upon Rehoboam. Rejecting the wise counsel of the elders of Israel, and accepting the immature perspective of his peers, Rehoboam was hard and harsh, demanding and dictatorial: “My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke; my father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions” (1 Kings 12:1-15, esp. v. 14; 2 Chron. 10:1-19, esp. v. 14).

Evidencing the arrogance of youth, the gall of the greenhorn, and the naiveté of the novice, Solomon’s son heeded not the wisdom of his father, who said, “A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. The tongue of the wise makes knowledge acceptable, but the mouth of fools spouts folly... A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, but the slow to anger calms a dispute” (Prov. 15:1-2, 18).

Spiritual leadership is not entrusted to a novice, “lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil” (1 Tim. 3:6). Over the years, I have observed younger/immature Christians criticize their spiritual overseers, believing their youthful judgment superior to that of the elders, thinking they understand the needs of a congregation better than those to whom its care has actually been entrusted. Like Rehoboam of old, such attitudes are disruptive and divisive.

Parents need patience (Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:21). I attempt to approach my combined work as an elder/evangelist from the standpoint of a loving parent (1 Thess. 2: 7-8, 10-12; Heb. 12:4-13). Good parents discipline their children when necessary, but their primary interaction is not one of constant criticism, censure, and rebuke. While discipline must be appropriately and consistently administered, loving parents provide a healthy environment where their children may grow and thrive, while offering necessary instruction, and encouraging them to reach their full capacities.

Paul's charge to Timothy is equally applicable to evangelists/preachers and elders/pastors: "I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction" (2 Tim. 4:1-2). Carefully note the closing admonition: Reproofs, rebukes and all forms of exhortation should be administered "with great patience and instruction." Patience is needed by preachers and all others who would stand before a congregation (the flock of God) and present lessons from God's Word.

Analyze Ahab. Ahab, the son of Omri, was the seventh king of Israel (1 Kings 16:30). Despite reigning for twenty-two years (873-852 BC), his legacy is decidedly evil. Evidencing an adversarial attitude toward true prophets of God, and an acceptance of all forms of idolatry, Ahab sold himself to do evil in the sight of the Lord (1 Kings 21:20, 25-26).

Predicting the defeat of Israel and the death of Ahab, Micaiah said, "I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains, like sheep which have no shepherd" (1 Kings 22:17; 2 Chron. 18:16). Because of Ahab's failed leadership, Israel had

(in reality) been like sheep without a shepherd for many years! In the Christian era, congregations that do not guard against the spiritual descendents of Jezebel stand similarly condemned (Rev. 2:20-23).

Differences Among the Flock

Some Are Like Sheep

What are the desirable, spiritually praiseworthy characteristics of sheep? They are agreeable creatures. Although they frequently go astray, sheep are easily guided, dependent, trusting, etc. (Ps. 78:52-53; 119:176; Matt. 9:36-38; Mark 6:34).

Some Are Like Goats

What are the spiritually undesirable characteristics of goats? They are disagreeable creatures. Independent-minded and self-willed, they are not so easily led but may have to be driven. Seldom satisfied with their pasture, goats often think the grass is greener on the other side of the fence. Indiscriminate in diet, they will attempt to eat anything, including trash and tin cans. They are reckless, often climbing to precipitous and perilous heights, something sheep would never voluntarily do. Finally, they are stubborn—a frequent failure of those who are arrogant, self-willed, and entirely too full of themselves (Ps. 78:5-8; Ezek. 3:4-11; Zech. 10:3).

Contrasting Attitudes and Approaches

Compare the difference between Ezra and Nehemiah. Ezra was the more compassionate; Nehemiah, the more aggressive. The former wept over the sin of Israel, identifying with them in his confessional prayer, pulling out his own hair: "When I heard about this matter, I tore my garment and my robe, and pulled some of the hair from my head and my beard, and sat down appalled" (Ezra 9:3-15, esp. v. 3).

The latter militantly confronted wayward Israelites, contending with them, cursing them, pulling out their hair: "So I contended with them and cursed them and struck some of them and pulled out their hair, and made them swear by God, 'You shall not give your daughters to their sons, nor take of their daughters for your sons or for yourselves'" (Neh. 13:23-29, esp. v. 25).

Both are counted as faithful servants of the Lord. Their differing approach represented different personalities and different circumstances. In the case of Ezra, the people were penitent and pliant. In the case of Nehemiah, they stubbornly persisted in sin. In the first example, Israel acted like sheep. In the second example, they behaved like goats and were treated accordingly.

Conclusion

Spiritual leaders face a daunting challenge—meeting the needs of an entire congregation: correcting bad attitudes, cultivating good attitudes, confronting sin, encouraging faithfulness, etc. As they admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, and are patient with everyone (1 Thess. 5:12-14), they deserve the respect of those with whom they labor (Heb. 13:7, 17).

Are you a follower of the Good Shepherd, enjoying His provision and protection, trusting and obeying His word (Ezek. 34:12-14)? Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, who offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice for sin, is simultaneously our Great Protector: the Lion of the tribe of Judah (1 Pet. 2:21-25; Rev. 5:4-5). If you have wandered astray, will you return to Him while there is time and opportunity? **U**



Mark Mayberry
Editor

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“Jesus Christ Has Come in the Flesh”

by Kyle Pope

Discussing the biblical doctrine of the incarnation, Kyle reminds us of the unique blessings that occur because Jesus came in the flesh.

It is generally believed that the first epistle of John was written (in some degree) to counter the early stages of Gnostic belief. Gnosticism, in the first few centuries after Christ, spread throughout the ancient world and led many souls astray. In their view, Jesus could not really have come in the flesh because they felt that material things were inherently evil. To justify their own immoral behavior, Gnostics argued that since Jesus only *spiritually* came to earth (without ever actually having contact with the material world), they could do whatever they wished with their bodies, yet still be inwardly pure if they attained a secret knowledge (Greek: *gnosis*) which they alone possessed. In refutation of this false doctrine, John, through the Holy Spirit, declared that Jesus was One whom—“we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled” (1 John 1:1, NKJV). That might initially strike us as an odd way to describe Jesus’ coming to earth, but John’s point is that Jesus really lived in the flesh. He was not an apparition—He shared our flesh and blood. Because of this, John said further, “every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world” (1 John 4:3).

While our modern world may no longer have proponents of Gnosticism as it once existed in the ancient world,

there are still many who have their own reasons for choosing to deny that “Jesus Christ has come in the flesh.” As Christians, we must recognize that, since Jesus really lived in this world, certain conclusions are inescapable.

If Jesus has come in the flesh...

He is the way to eternal life.

Jesus offers mankind the way of salvation, but He declares that it is a “narrow” and “difficult” way (Matt. 7:14). Not all roads lead to heaven. Not everything done in the name of religion is profitable to us. While we might hope and strive and try to attain a relationship with God through some other means (i.e., through our imagination, or through our conscience, etc.), Jesus boldly declared, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me” (John 14:6).

His word must be followed.

In offering man the way to salvation, Jesus sets down a very exclusive standard of faith and behavior. We will not be judged according to some human philosophy or theory but by Jesus’ words: “He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day” (John 12:48). Since Jesus came in the flesh, the standard of truth is clearly set forth in His word.

We can’t follow our own way.

Jesus taught, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me” (Matt. 16:24). Jeremiah affirmed the same principle centuries before: “O LORD, I know the way of man is not in himself; It is not in man who walks to direct his own steps” (Jer. 10:23). Since Jesus came in the flesh and offered mankind the way that must be followed, in matters of personal lifestyle or in questions of religious practice, it is not about what we want, but about what God (in Jesus) wants for us.

Sin can be avoided.

Just as the Gnostics rationalized away the sinfulness of immorality, many today try to suggest that it is impossible for people to resist temptation and avoid sin. They do so either from some theological doctrine that claims that we inherit a sinful nature, or from a humanistic determinism that treats behavior as the result of genetics, instinct, or ancestry. The Bible clearly states that Jesus possessed the same human nature that we do. The Hebrew writer tells us that Jesus was made like us “in all things,” and that He has partaken of our “flesh and blood,” which is the very reason He can now act as our “High Priest in things pertaining to God” (Heb. 2:14-17). Yet, Jesus also was “in all points tempted as we are yet without sin” (Heb. 4:15). While

it is obvious that the flesh is often weak (cf. Matt. 26:41), to suggest that the flesh cannot avoid sin is to reject Jesus' own coming in the flesh.

Many of our friends are lost.

The fact that Jesus came and offered to mankind a new way of salvation sets before us an offer we can either accept or reject. To reject Jesus is to forfeit the only hope that any of us have for salvation. Those who make such a choice will one day hear the sad words, "I never knew you, depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness" (Matt. 7:23). The fact that Jesus actually did come in the flesh means that many in the world (including some of our own family and friends) will hear these sad words from the Lord.

We must one day face Him in judgment.

While on the earth, Jesus declared that, when the Day of Judgment comes, He will sit as judge of the world. In his gospel, John relates Jesus' declaration—"For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son" (John 5:22). In teaching His disciples about the final judgment, Jesus said, at the end of things, He will sit "on the throne of His glory" and all the nations will be gathered before Him so that he might separate them "as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats" (Matt. 25:31-32). If Jesus never came, we would have no accountability to Him. His coming in the flesh means that we cannot escape our responsibility to Him and our appointment to stand before Him

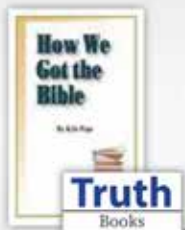
in judgment. We must never make the same mistake as the Gnostics in allowing ourselves to imagine that we can sin with immunity. Jesus' coming in the flesh demonstrates the inevitability of His second coming. The Hebrew writer declared, "as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment, so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation" (Heb. 9:27-28). **†**



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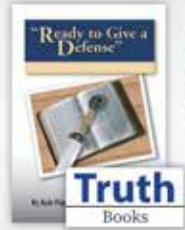
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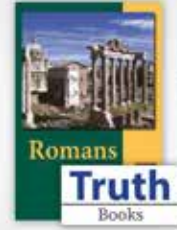
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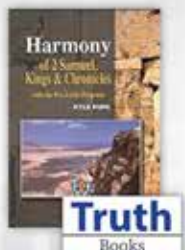
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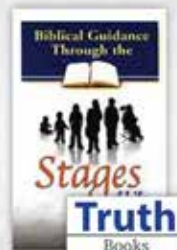
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Teaching Our Children: The Principle of the Lesson (Part I)

by Aleta Samford

Aleta focuses on the central purpose of a lesson—passing on our spiritual heritage to the next generation. God has provided His word to help us instruct and protect them.

“We come now to the lesson, the process to be mastered, the problem to be solved. This is where the teacher must pass on to the pupils the recorded experience of the race. (The lesson) must be such as to inspire these pupils with principles that shall be active forces in their lives and at the same time furnish them with an instrument of research and further study. This is the very heart of the work of the teacher, as well as the culmination and the fruit, of all the rest” (Gregory 67)

The lesson is mastered in the gathering of knowledge, the developing of understanding, and the acquiring of wisdom. This is where the teacher “passes on to the pupils the recorded experience of the race.” This is where parents and teachers of God’s word pass on the heritage and salvation we have in the Lord, and as a result, is where we can equip and prepare them for their own journey.

The Law of the Lesson tells us how to do this effectively. It states, “The truth to be taught must be learned through truth already known.” It may also be worded, “Through truth already known, the truth to be taught may be learned.” To help with what this means, I want to tell you about a challenge our family faced when our son was 11-years-old.

One morning before school, Jacob told me that a new philosophy class was beginning in his 5th-grade class, and he would need to arrive earlier each day for a while. A red flag went up immediately, because we parents had not been told that there would be any subjects added to the curriculum, much less a philosophy class. I had to investigate.

When I met with Jacob’s teacher, she said, “This is a new program we’re implementing to give students the opportunity to practice thinking. They’ll read about students their own age who are thinking about how to handle different situations. Then, we’ll write all their conclusions on the board and discuss them as a group.” As if to make me feel better, she then said, “Don’t worry, there are no wrong answers!”

She let me take a copy of the material home, and after reading it, my husband and I were convinced that the class would not benefit our son. The students in the scenarios

experimented with different ways to think about things, but thrown in the middle of their discussions were personal situations that arose, like racism, questioning God, the Bible and one’s beliefs, considering man on a level with animals, when is lying acceptable, and when is it okay to defy your parents. Red flags continued to fly. These grown-up issues were going to be subjected to and analyzed by the immature minds of children with the assurance that there were no wrong answers.

When I returned the material, I told the teacher that the idea of no wrong answers regarding these social and moral issues was a concern, because at home we taught Jacob that some things *are* wrong. I kindly told her that he’d be arriving at the normal time each day, and if the class was still in progress, we’d like for him to be allowed to do extra work in a basic subject.

Regarding moral issues, there are wrong answers, and there are right answers, and this distinction is clearly made in God’s word. Jesus assures us of this, saying, “You shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free” (John 8:32).

The highest standard in determining answers in the philosophy class was going to be the students themselves. In each situation, they would be encouraged to draw and state their own conclusions based on whatever knowledge they had up to that point, but not upon God’s word. We looked forward to years of imparting truths to Jacob at the rate a child could receive them, and upon that, teaching further truths. This is the common sense found in the Law of the Lesson.

My next article will continue to build and explain how we can implement the Law of the Lesson in our homes and our classrooms. **I**



Aleta Samford

Aleta is the wife of Gene Samford who preaches for the church that meets in Kemp, TX. She has taught Bible classes for 42 years and, to help other women join the ranks, presents a series of lessons based on God’s word, *The Seven Laws of Teaching*, and her own experiences. She may be reached at aletas10@sbcglobal.net.

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Sermon on the Mount: Exceeding the Righteousness of the Pharisees

by David Flatt

Jesus proclaimed a surprising prerequisite for entrance to the kingdom of heaven: our righteousness must exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees. What relevance can be found in this ancient warning?

For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 5:20, KJV).

The Pharisees were a notorious religious sect in the New Testament. They were dead set on ruining Jesus. Viewing Him as a political threat, they continually tried to discredit, humiliate, and outwit Jesus. No doubt, they had been spreading the false allegation that He was attempting to destroy the law (Matt. 5:17).

The Pharisees were one of many Jewish sects which emerged during the time between the close of the writing of the Old Testament and the birth of Jesus. They originated in response to the pervasive influence of Hellenism within Israel (ca. 280-198 BC)—a time of religious anarchy among the Jews when the Law of Moses was not read or kept, and there was an absence of spiritual leadership in the Levitical priesthood.

The Pharisees began with an admirable goal. As their name indicates, they wanted to separate Israel from an ungodly culture, seeking to accomplish this end by reinstating the Law of Moses. By calling Israel to repent of their sins and commanding them to keep the Law of Moses, they were doing God's work.

However, the Pharisees eventually strayed from these goals, becoming a political/religious institution focused on self-preservation.

They claimed to have authority in interpreting the law. As is typical of governing religious bodies, their interpretations were recorded and viewed as binding. These rulings, opinions, and traditions became known as the Talmud, Mishna, and Midrash. Complying with Pharisaical interpretations of the Law of Moses became more important than following the actual Law of Moses. Jesus condemned the enforcement of such man-made traditions over the actual commands of God (Mark 7:1-16).

The Problem

Their desire for self-preservation led to corruption, hypocrisy, and self-righteousness. The righteousness of the Pharisees was one of self-exaltation based on works. A clear example of this is found in Jesus' parable of the Pharisee and tax collector (Luke 18:9-14). The Pharisee prayed, "God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess" (Luke 18:11-12). The Pharisees thought God accepted them due to their knowledge and practices. They thought they were better than everyone else.

They certainly did not view themselves as sinners in need of God's grace.

The irony of what this Pharisee asserts in Jesus' parable is that the claim was untrue. From this point in the sermon and continuing through Matthew 6:18, Jesus identifies specific corruptions of the Pharisees. They were not better than other men but were extortionists, unjust, adulterers, and as dishonest as tax collectors. They used the very worship commanded in the law as a means of exalting themselves rather than God. At the end of Jesus' life, He rebuked many of the Pharisees' hypocrisy and corruption (Matt. 23). Their delusions of grandeur had blinded them from seeing their desperate need for Jesus.

Two Keys

Two essential elements are required for us to exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees. First, we must do what Jesus says. This takes precedence over anything anyone else would teach or foolishly attempt to enforce. In the following critiques, Jesus does not cite the Law of Moses; rather, He addresses how the Pharisees had corrupted the Law of Moses. He begins each critique by saying, "You have heard it said by them of old time..." Jesus is referring to the opinions of the Pharisees and other leaders about the law, not what the law actually stated.

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9:00 a.m. Lessons from Archaeology	Mesopotamia <i>Steve Wolfgang</i>	Canaan <i>Mike Willis</i>	Egypt <i>Leon Mauldin</i>
10:00 a.m. Learning from Ancient Failures	The Fall of Adam <i>Tommy Peeler</i>	The Antediluvian World <i>Buc Chumbley</i>	Sodom and Gomorrah <i>Dan King</i>
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When considering how we are to exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees, we may be tempted to rely on what past generations thought or practiced regarding some subject. Now, this does not mean we are to ignore history. Being aware of what past generations did in reference to serving God, and how they approached difficult issues of faith and practice, is highly beneficial. However, each new generation must come to terms with how to serve God. Solving matters of faith and practice are not as simple as picking a book off the shelf or doing a Google search to determine what we should believe and practice. We must prayerfully grapple with issues of faith and proper application of God's word. What past generations said on a matter does not take precedence over what the word of God teaches.

To exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees, we must be motivated by love in all we do. The Pharisees lacked love for God and their fellow man. They loved themselves. They loved being treated with reverence and esteem (Matt. 23:6-8). Love was misunderstood and misdirected. They obsessed over the law but neglected its weightier matters, such as justice, mercy, and faith (Matt. 23:26). Injustice, vengeance, and self-reliance evidence an absence of love.

In summary, the importance of doing what Jesus commands and being motivated by love cannot be overstated. Both points carry equal value and weight in our efforts to exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees. However, it seems at times these two points are often unbalanced. Some think doing what Jesus commands is all that matters—for such individuals, being right is most important. Others think motive is all that matters—sincerity trumps practice.

Jesus brought these two points into balance, emphasizing that God

only accepts those who worship in spirit and truth (John 4:24). One does not take precedence over the other. If we have the right answer, but are not motivated by love in giving the right answer, we are wrong. There is more to “soundness” than just teaching the right doctrine or engaging in the right form of worship (James 3:13-18). If our teaching and practice are not according to God's word, sincerity will not compensate for our presumption.

Practical Application

Jesus did not leave His audience to wonder how they were to exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees. As preachers, we could take a lesson from Jesus. Preaching that leaves people wondering how they can please God is of little value. In coming articles, we will consider in detail what Jesus taught in this area. However, in the space remaining, let us consider, in practical terms, how we may exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees.

Be Inviting

We must be inviting. Jesus said of the Pharisees, “But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut the kingdom of heaven in people's faces. For you neither enter yourselves nor allow those who would enter to go in” (Matt. 23:13, ESV). They excluded from the kingdom those whom they deemed unworthy. This is the very definition of usurping authority. When we look at people in the world, we have no right to determine who is to be excluded from the kingdom. This is not our place; rather, we should be inviting of people.

Teach the Gospel

We must teach the Gospel. This is our job. The kingdom is for everyone. The Gospel is for everyone. Jesus is for everyone. Will everyone come to Jesus? No. Our Lord knew this and even experienced rejection. We must

never hinder people from getting to the kingdom. We must help people get into the kingdom. This work requires love and understanding towards people struggling with sin.

Let us convert others to Christ, not to opinion. The Pharisees attempted to convert people. They wanted to make people think and behave like themselves. Hear Jesus' rebuke: “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel across sea and land to make a single proselyte, and when he becomes a proselyte, you make him twice as much a child of hell as yourselves” (Matt. 23:15, ESV).

The Pharisees were not trying to convert people to God or even to the law. Rather, they tried to convert people to their way of thinking. They tried to convert people to their party. The result was deadly. What Jesus condemns in this passage corresponds to why the Pharisees became an increasingly corrupt party over time. Seeking a restored relationship with God was not about obedience stemming from love. For the Pharisees, a restored relationship with God came through the acceptance of a man-made ideology. Human wisdom does not lead towards God, only away from Him. Their view of conversion sowed the seeds of their own destruction.

We must be careful in our understanding and approach to conversion. Conversion to Christ involves believing what God did through Jesus, submitting to His commands, and growing in His likeness. Conversion to Christ is not complicated. While we may have various opinions on any number of subjects, no one must agree with another's opinions to be converted to Christ. When we use our opinions as prerequisites for entrance to the kingdom, we become no different from the Pharisees.

Glorify God

The Pharisees attempted to glorify themselves. They obsessed over their public persona, using religious activity commanded in the law as a means to elevate themselves among the Jews. They loved their titles and status within the community. None of what they did was done to exalt God.

There will be times when others notice how we live, where we worship, and even abilities that we have developed. Some will even compliment these things. We can accept compliments with humility. There is nothing sinful in this. However, we must always be quick to give glory to God for what others may see in us. The apostle Peter wrote, "If any man speaks, let him speak as the

oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion forever and ever. Amen" (1 Pet. 4:11). Why are we to speak as the oracles of God and minister according to the ability God gives us? To demonstrate how wonderful we are? No, all that we say and do must be to God's glory.

Conclusion

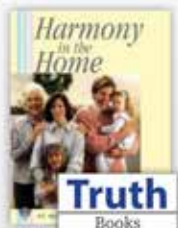
The Pharisees may be a rather extreme case of self-righteousness. However, there are important lessons we must learn from them. Their approach to serving God was unacceptable. Jesus was direct in what He said: if we do not exceed

the righteousness of the Pharisees, we will not enter His kingdom. Being motivated by love in doing what Jesus commands will ensure we reach the kingdom of God. Let us be honest and introspective about how we are attempting to exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees. Self-righteousness can subtly develop over time. Being inviting, converting people to Christ rather than our opinions, and glorifying God, will help us advance the kingdom of God on earth as it is in Heaven. **11**



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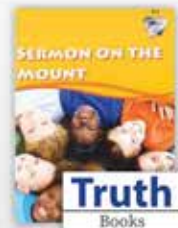
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A More Excellent Way

by Lance Taylor

Lance challenges us to think about *agape* love as a personal choice. Is our behavior patterned according to these exalted principles?

We spend considerable time, energy, and money pursuing more and better things in life—a better job, better house, better vacation, better food, better knowledge, and even a better faith. In all our searching for better things, we are really looking for what is best. By faith, we need to turn to God to find what is best for us. Psalm 118:8 says, “It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man.”

So, where is our trust? What path are we following? Are we walking in a manner that is pleasing to God, or are we placing confidence in what man says is better for us? Are we falling for the love of the world and the things in it? 1 John 2:15 says, “Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.” In asking these questions, my effort is to drive us to think about looking to God for the best way to live.

In 1 Corinthians 12, Paul discusses spiritual gifts and how we are unified as one body in Christ, although we all are individual members. He compares members of the Lord’s body to the various members of our physical body. Our place in the Lord’s church and our gifts (i.e., ability) to serve Him are given by the Spirit (1 Cor. 12:11). With these differing abilities comes the struggle among men and women to compare and compete with one another. In our human nature, we tend to rank abilities, skills, and talents in ways that give preference and prominence even

to those who have greater gifts. Paul even recognizes that there are “greater gifts” or “the best gifts” (1 Cor. 12:31). He says, “But earnestly desire the best gifts” (1 Cor. 12:31a). All of us would probably like to have more talent and feel more gifted by God, but we know there are limitations and boundaries to such gifts. Do you know what is not limited by our earthly body’s God-given gifts or talents? Look at the last part of 1 Corinthians 12:31, “And yet I show you a more excellent way.”

A more excellent way. More excellent than any of the gifts? More excellent than being an apostle, prophet, teacher, miracle worker, healer, etc.? Yes, Paul is about to discuss a way that is more excellent than any of the previously mentioned gifts. What is the more excellent way? Love. Charity. *Agape* in Greek. Read 1 Corinthians 13 as though it started with chapter 12 and verse 31. After all, men have placed the chapter and verses in the text. It would be difficult to find a perfect place to break the text in this section of Scripture, but many times, we read chapter 13 and overlook the last verse of chapter 12. The love described in 1 Corinthians 13 is what God alone has made known to mankind. It is a remarkable gift for us to know the love of God (John 3:16; 1 John 3:1; 4:7-8)!

Reading 1 Corinthians 13, you find in the first three verses that even if we have the greatest gifts, without love we are nothing and it profits nothing. What a statement about the value of love!

How do we get this love? How do we add this love to our lives? Is it intuitive? Is it a skill that is developed or learned? Is it something that you can naturally have, but I may never possess?

Love is defined in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a. We discover that love ultimately is a choice. That’s right, a choice. It is not a learned or natural ability. It is not a gift or blessing that lies beyond our comprehension. On the contrary, it is truly a choice. To love as described in 1 Corinthians 13, one must choose to take action and the result is a display of Biblical love. The world’s view of love is not God’s view. The world speaks of “falling in love” and “love at first sight” and how “love is in the air.” All of these misconceptions of love are dependent on good feelings, emotions, beauty, compatibility, and attraction. These views on love crumble when something goes wrong. They fail the test of time, the tests of life, and the test of faith.

Beyond 1 Corinthians 13, the Bible teaches us to love by choice. Consider Jesus’ teaching in Matthew 5:43-48. He commands us to love our enemies, those who curse us, those who hate us, and those who persecute us. Why? Jesus explains in verse 45-48 when He points out that this choice to love makes us “sons of your Father in heaven” and “perfect (complete), just as your Father in heaven is perfect.” Understanding this teaching from Jesus makes us realize that Biblical love is *essential*—not *optional*; it is complete and not with partiality.

In Romans 5, we also learn that Biblical love is a choice. In particular, look at verses 6-8. Notice that God's love was a *demonstration*—not an *inclination*. When worldly factors are involved, love becomes an inclination based on lust, beauty, attraction, emotions, feelings, compatibility, deservedness, etc. Yet, God demonstrated His love toward mankind when we did not deserve it, and when He would have had every right to be inclined not to love us. He loved us even though we were “without strength,” counted as “ungodly,” and were “still sinners” (Rom. 5:6-8).

Love by choice is without negligence, apathy, alienation, carelessness, isolation, inattention, and indifference. Biblical love does

not ignore its responsibility to do the right thing. Consider James 4:17, which says, “Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.” Let us avoid indifference. While it may be easy to ignore an opportunity to choose to love someone, it is not right for us to do so.

Returning to the characteristics of love in 1 Corinthians 13, we see the actions necessary to love by choice as God has taught us. Suffer long, be kind, do not envy, do not act proud, do not boast, do not be rude, do not be selfish, do not be angry, do not think evil, do not rejoice over evil, rejoice in truth, bear all things, believe all things, hope all things, endure all things, and never fail!

If we truly practice Biblical love as the first choice in our actions, then we will be walking and living “a more excellent way” by using our greatest gift given by God, the ability to love as He loves us. All of us have the ability to love this way. May we choose to manifest *agape* love each and every day. “And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love” (1 Cor. 13:13). **TL**



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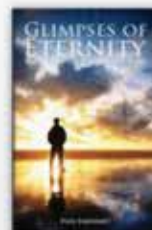
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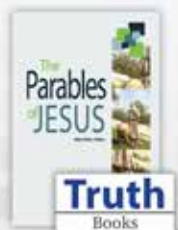
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Bobby L. Graham

Bobby L. Graham preaches and is an elder for the Old Moulton Rd church of Christ. He and his wife, Karen, have three children: Richard, Mary Katherine Winland (Darren), and Laura Paschall (Jeremy). He can be reached at bobbylgraham@pclnet.net.

QUESTION:

Are Gambling and Playing the Lottery Sinful?

Answer:

Gambling in any form, including the lottery, has proved to be a financial drain on those who can least afford the loss. It is also a social blight to the communities depending on it, and a moral curse to those participating in it. By leaving such a wake of destruction wherever it spreads, how can people recommend gambling or even a lottery?

Jimmy the Greek, a famous oddsmaker from a previous generation, warned about becoming involved in gambling: “They should never legalize gambling in America. If you think dope addiction is bad, a guy who gets hooked on gambling goes all the way. The average American does not have the discipline to quit. God forbid if they legalize gambling.” Jimmy quit gambling in 1961, did not visit the newly opened casinos in Atlantic City, NJ, and had no plans to do so. He further said gambling is for suckers and that he had seen many lose their homes and families because of gambling debt.

“But the lottery is just a game,” one objects. Friend, it is much more than a game. It is a legalized form of betting on the outcome of a drawing for a winner. In that respect, playing the lottery is precisely like betting on a football game. Both forms of gambling involve a game (football and

the lottery), but both are still gambling: placing a wager on the outcome of an event. Whether the event is a game of skill (football, horse racing) or one of chance (lottery), the outcome is not known because chance is involved even in a game of skill, thus allowing the placing of a bet/wager on its outcome. This is what gambling is, and the unknown element provides the thrill for millions!

Why are gambling and playing the lottery sinful? Consider the following brief list of scriptural reasons:

- Gambling/lottery violates the Golden Rule and its core principle of loving treatment of others as one desires to be treated (Matt. 7:12). Who would want another to try to “beat him out of his money” coming from the lottery?
- Gambling/lottery is addictive, appealing through covetousness and thrill to one’s desire to get more and have more. According to Paul in 1 Corinthians 6:12, the Spirit warns against being brought under the power of anything. When covetousness is removed from the picture, there will be no desire to gamble/play the lottery. It is a sin; it is the root of all evils (Col. 3:5-6; 1 Tim. 6:10).

- Gambling/lottery is stealing by consent, because it arises from the desire to take from another that which he does not wish to surrender, without giving that person a fair return for what is being taken. Stealing is sinful; in fact, it should be replaced by work, so that one then has what he can give to others in need (Eph. 4:28). Gambling is not an acceptable way of gaining wealth, but labor is! Though all participating in any form of gambling give their consent, the fact is that dueling also implies consent to have one life taken by another. In either case, consent does not make the practice moral or right in God's sight.
 - Some attempt to justify certain forms of gambling, like the lottery, because "good causes" are funded by the practice (schools, civic-club endeavors, etc.). However, Scripture shows that the principle of doing evil so that good might result is unacceptable to God (Rom. 3:8). The end does not justify the means; the means must first qualify as good in God's eyes before it can be used to support a good cause.
 - The odds of winning a lottery are so infinitely small that one's stewardship of the money/possessions God has entrusted to him has to be classified as bad stewardship when he gambles/plays the lottery. The Lord intends for us to practice good stewardship (Prov. 28:20; 1 Cor. 4:2).
 - God's word shows us how to gain wealth and to transfer it to others: (1) honest work (Eph. 4:28); (2) fair exchange/buying-selling (Acts 4:32-37); (3) giving (Matt. 7:11); (4) and investing (Matt. 25:14-30). Since He has not included or commended any form of gambling, we do not depend on such doubtful practices.
- Playing the lottery is not just a game. People who think so are deceived, thus making themselves even easier prey for the "gambling mania" sweeping the nation and the world and more likely victims of the destruction which gambling can produce. Friends, wake up, and realize what is happening to individuals, married couples, families, churches, and communities because of gambling's push to control our lives! 🚫



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The Roman Aqueduct at Caesarea

by Barry Britnell

Discussing the challenges that King Herod faced in providing water for the city of Caesarea, Barry marvels at the ingenuity of ancient civil engineers in providing a solution.

During the first century, the city of Caesarea served as the Roman administration center for the province of Judea. As a result, it experienced a tremendous amount of growth. Historians estimate that Caesarea had a population of more than 100,000 people. This created many civic logistical issues, the chief of which was providing clean drinking water for everyone.

King Herod was a builder, and also a dreamer. He used both characteristics and the resources at his disposal to accomplish his

mission. In this case, King Herod found the water source needed to solve his problem. Yet, he soon faced another issue: The water source was a spring near the base of Mount Carmel approximately ten kilometers (six miles) northeast of the city.

Undeterred, King Herod came up with a plan. He constructed an aqueduct to transport the water from the spring into the city. Once inside the city, the water was collected into a large cistern/pool and distributed to the people as it was needed.

Think about the engineering skills that would have been required to accomplish such a feat. There were no water pumps. There was no electricity. The spring could not have been more than a few hundred feet in elevation. The only way to get the water from the spring into the city was by the use of gravity. The aqueduct had to be constructed in such a way that water continually ran downhill until it arrived in the coastal city of Caesarea.

To make the math easy, let us say that the elevation of the spring was 200 feet above sea level, and the





The aqueduct Herod built at Caesarea-Maritima brought water from the Shuni spring, south of Mount Carmel, about six miles NE of the city.

length of the aqueduct was six miles. From your junior-high science class, you will recall that one mile contains 5,280 feet. Multiplying that number by six reveals the total length of the aqueduct would be 31,680 feet.

Therefore, what would the slope of the aqueduct need to be? Dividing 31,680 by 200, you arrive at a slope of approximately 150:1. In other words, for every 150 feet in length, the aqueduct could only drop a single foot in elevation. If it falls more quickly than that, then the water would never arrive in the city. That is incredible to consider. Keep in mind that you would also have to account for various contours in the land as the aqueduct stretched its way to the destination.

Despite the fact that they did not have computers, calculators, or many of the conveniences that we enjoy today, this aqueduct was built so well that it supplied water for hundreds of years. In all honesty, it is simply amazing. We truly do not give those first-century engineers enough credit for their brilliant minds.

Visitors to Israel today can see the Caesarean aqueduct at a few different

locations. The best place to view it is along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, a few miles north of the city of Caesarea. From that vantage point, you have the ability, not only to look at this beautiful structure, but also to climb onto it and admire the technical and physical labor required to build it. People who look closely will figure out that there are two aqueducts located next to each other. A little over a century later, Hadrian

had a second aqueduct built next to the original one to supply more water to the ever-growing city. **II**



Barry Britnell

Barry is the founder of Exploring Bible Lands, LLC (exploringbiblelands.com) and leads Bible Study tours to the land of Israel. He also works with Appian Media (appianmedia.org) to produce Biblically-sound videos used in teaching others about the Bible. He and his wife, Tabatha, have three children, and live in Athens, AL, and worship with the Capshaw church of Christ.



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FEATURES

Missing Stanzas:
recovered from archives,
relate meaning to Jacob's dream

328 • Nearer, My God, to Thee

1. Near - er; my God, to Thee; Near - er to Thee!
2. Though like the sun - der - et, The sun gone down,
3. There let the way ap - pear, Steps us - to heav'n;
4. Then with my wak - ing thoughts Bright with Thy grace.

Phrased Notation:
width of hymn set by length of phrases,
not by page margin

Even though it be a cross That rais - en me,
Dark - ness be o - ver me, My rest a stone,
All that Thou send - est me In mer - cy giv'n;
Out of my ston - y griefs Beth - el I'll raise;

D.S. al fine
U.S. - Nearer my God, to Thee, Near - er to Thee!

Still all my song shall be, Near - er, my God, to Thee.
Yet in my dreams I'd be Near - er, my God, to Thee.
An - gels to beck - on me Near - er, my God, to Thee.
So by my woes to be Near - er, my God, to Thee.

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Optional Arrangement:
in this case, a suggestion
to incorporate readings from Genesis 28

(7*5-8-3-...
U-7/0889)

Take the Name of Jesus with You • 329

1. Take the name of Je - sus with you, Child of sor - row and of woe.
2. Take the name of Je - sus ev - er, As a shield from eve - ry snare.
3. O the pre - cious name of Je - sus! How it thrills our souls with joy.

It will joy and com - fort give you; Take it then, wher - e'er you go.
If temp - ta - tions round you gath - er, Breathe the ho - ly name in prayer.
When His lov - ing arms re - ceive us, And His songs our tongues em - ploy!

Familiar Versions:
in this case, the version
published by Austin Taylor

CHORUS
Pre - cious name, O how sweet! Hope of earth and joy of heav'n.
Pre - cious name, O how sweet!

Pre - cious name, O how sweet! Hope of earth and joy of heav'n.
Pre - cious name, O how sweet, how sweet!

Pre - cious name, O how sweet! Hope of earth and joy of heav'n.
Pre - cious name, O how sweet, how sweet!

Song Leader Aid:
includes key, beat, and starting note

(7*5-8-3-...
U-7/0889)

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3. O LORD, our Lord.

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- Biblical wording restored

such a worm as I?
love be - yond de - gree!
man the crea - ture's sin,
melt my eyes to tears,
all that I can do.

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The Epistle of James: Its Value for Today

by Daniel H. King, Sr.

In light of its simple and practical content, brother King offers an overview of James and provides eight reasons why this book remains valuable in the present era.

The epistle of James has been a perennial favorite New Testament writing for many people throughout the years since it was originally penned. This is so, in spite of the fact that it was not written by one of the most popular or prolific writers, such as Paul or Luke, and it is not particularly theologically profound. Its simplicity and lack of doctrinal depth is, no doubt, largely responsible for this. There are times when every reader enjoys some “light reading” as opposed to difficult and challenging content. The Epistle of James provides that sort of experience for the typical reader.

Does its simplicity limit its usefulness? Must we go elsewhere in the New Testament to find rich lessons for our lives? How is it valuable in today’s world for a person who takes it in hand to read and understand it? There are many ways in which it may be viewed as an especially useful resource. We shall notice a few in the present essay.

1. Application

One key ingredient of James’ little letter is its tendency to deal with application rather than theory. This material is not theoretical in nature. It is all about practical application of Christian principles and teachings. It is not about the teachings themselves. James makes a few theological statements over the course of the five chapters of the letter, but they are

rare in comparison with the practical ones he expresses, and he does not explore the philosophical side of them (cf. 1:12; 2:1, 10-12, 19; 3:9; 5:7-9, 12, 14). Moreover, he does not spend any time at all explicating them. This writer is all about practical application, rather than theoretical understanding. Theoretical Christianity is not his bailiwick. James is a man of action, and his letter is about taking action.

2. Ministration

James concentrates on ministry, which means that he is interested in turning eternal principles into practical realities in everyday life. Thus, he concludes that the place and time of worship must be a welcoming and open environment. It must not be turned into an atmosphere of prejudice and favoritism; rich and poor ought to be treated similarly (2:1-6). The poor man cannot be left to starve or walk about in rags; he must be cared for and helped (2:15). Quarrels and fights must not be allowed to break out into open warfare; they must be settled (4:1-2). Complaining must cease (5:9). The sick must be prayed over (5:14). Sinners must be turned back from the errors of their way (5:19-20). James is all about ministry to God and man. He, therefore, describes himself as “a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ” (1:1). He saw himself as a minister in the true sense of that word. We must also see ourselves as such. Our task is to serve.

3. Perspiration

The Christianity which James impresses upon his readers has at its core a work ethic. Disciples of Christ must work. What they believe is important. It cannot be minimized. Right belief leads to right action, whereas wrong belief may well lead to wrong and sinful action. What people do, or fail to do, is also significant, and this has all too often been minimized by some theoreticians. The section at 2:14-26 is famous for its emphasis on how critical works are in the process of human salvation. Many theologians do not like the emphasis that James places upon works. At one point in his life, Luther considered the letter unworthy of having a place in the corpus of inspired books on account of this. None of this persistent debate over these matters has had any serious effect on the popularity of this letter. It has a critical role to play in the overall understanding of human action in the divine salvation. The headline text in James would, naturally, be this one: “Even so faith, if it has no works is dead, being by itself” (2:17 NASB). Solving problems and getting things done is at the heart of this brief but powerful letter.

4. Illustration

The work of this writer is filled with pictorial expressions of important concepts. For example, when James speaks of faith and works, he

immediately turns to illustrate the notion: “If a man says he has faith, but he has no works, can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace, be warmed and be filled,’ and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that? Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself” (2:15-17). James is an illustrator—painting pictures with his words.

5. Continuation

A good start is important, but when that is combined with a good finish, success almost inevitably follows in any endeavor. Persistence wins the fight. Unless you get a knockout in the early rounds, you must tenaciously fight on throughout all of the final rounds. James says that “the test of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result” (1:3-4). One who quits has no chance of ever winning. Staying in the contest is key to a “perfect result.” We cannot become discouraged or disheartened and quit. We have to continue with steady confidence until we have crossed the finish line. Jesus also taught the importance of persistence (cf. Matt. 10:22; 24:13). James writes, “Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial: for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised to those who love him” (1:12). Do not quit. Never give up.

6. Exposition

Students of James frequently observe that this work represents a loose but careful exposition of the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5-7; Luke 6). Many studies of this subject have been offered by scholars throughout the years showing similarity of language and expression as well as of theme and substance. We shall not here enumerate the comparisons, but suffice it to say that James

relies heavily on the words of Christ, especially as they were memorialized in that magnificent sermon. We would do well to imitate his method. Jesus was the Master Teacher. It would be impossible for us to improve upon either His words or His doctrines. James knew that and so he offered us a writing that exposed, for his audience, the truths that Jesus saw as important. If they were important to Jesus, they were deemed worthwhile by James.

7. Concentration

What we give our careful attention to is what is most precious in our minds and hearts, and so in our lives. Most people dedicate all of their time and effort in making and spending money. This is what they consider to be most important. We must make a living, that is true, but such concentration on earthly concerns leaves out heaven and will cause us to neglect our duties toward heaven, if we are not vigilant in the matter. James would discourage this approach to life. He would have us consider the spiritual verities and give thoughtful consideration to the will of God for our lives. This begins with a prayerful and careful investigation of the Word of God: “But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man shall be blessed in what he does” (1:25). Spiritual concentration starts with an “intent look” into the one source that reveals God’s will for mankind, the Bible.

8. Expectation

What we come to expect is very often what we get from any enterprise. If we expect failure, failure is nearly inevitable. If, on the other hand, we expect to be successful, our chances of success increase dramatically. James condemns the “double-minded man,” because his doubt is an unmovable impediment to the realization of his

fondlest desires. “But let him ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways” (1:6-8). The Lord’s people should be single-minded in their planning and praying. Expect a happy outcome, and it is likely to follow.

These are just a few of the serious matters with which this writer struggles as he guides his audience through the practical ramifications of everyday Christian living. Does the epistle of James have value for us today? Certainly! Kurt Vonnegut wrote, “New knowledge is the most valuable commodity on earth. The more truth we have to work with, the richer we become.” James is full of such truth.

In our view, there is little wonder that the letter of James has become such an ageless and timeless preference among the documents of the New Testament for many Christians. It has come to have a special place in their hearts. His work is simple but spiritually profound. For this reason, we will be rewarded richly every time we read and study it through. We encourage you to spend some of your time “looking intently” into this part of the Word of God. Your time will be well spent, and you will not be sorry of your decision to do so. 📖



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“Blessed Is a Man”

by Jim Deason

The wisdom literature of the Old Testament repeatedly affirms the blessed nature of one whose God is the Lord. In like manner, James announces blessings upon those who endure trials, seek after wisdom, and prove themselves doers of the word.

David wrote long ago, “How blessed are the people whose God is the Lord!” (Ps. 144:1). Without a doubt sacred history has proven this to be the case. Men who devote themselves to following the Lord are the most blessed of all the earth. Moses promised Israel that, if they would diligently obey the Lord, Jehovah’s blessings would rain down upon them (cf. Deut. 28) and God proved true to His promises over and over again. Joshua said, “Not one of the good promises which the Lord had made to the house of Israel failed; all came to pass” (Josh. 21:45). What Jehovah promises, He fulfills. God blesses His people.

In His mountain message, Jesus promised the blessings of God upon those who are poor in spirit, those who mourn, the gentle, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, and the peacemakers (Matt. 5:3-9). God’s blessings especially fall upon those who are “persecuted for the sake of righteousness” (Matt. 5:10).

Let’s press the “fast forward” button and stop 2,000 years later. It’s 21st-century America. It is virtually impossible for those of us within the family of God to “count your many blessings” and “name them one by one,” because there are just too many. To attempt to list them might seem as boasting, and to recount our troubles would appear insignificant. In His

lovingkindness, God seems to have emptied the storehouses of heaven and showered us with blessings until, as David said, our “cup overflows” (Ps. 23:8). To say that we should all be thankful seems far too little.

In this article I have been tasked with looking at James 1:12—“Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial...”

The Blessed Man Endures Trials with Joy

Even in a land of plenty there are trials to be faced. Difficulties between parents and children, or with other family members. Trials on your job, or maybe because you’ve lost your job. Financial problems brought on by bad judgment, or by outside circumstances unrelated to your judgments. Some trials are related to physical issues, i.e., sickness, disease, and possibly the death of a loved one. Everyone, at some point in their life (or maybe several times in their lives) will go through the valley of trial. Write it down as if it were written in the law of the Medes and Persians which cannot be changed (cf. Dan. 1:8), you will undergo trial! It is how you face the trial that is important.



Trials can be faced with joy when viewed through the prism of what they accomplish. James said that *trials* produce *endurance* which, in turn, produces *maturity* (Jas. 1:2-4). Paul expands upon this thought in Romans 5:3-5, where he says that *tribulation* produces *perseverance*, which develops (proves) *character*, and gives *hope* that *does not disappoint*. Argued backward it goes something like this: Our *hope* is of eternal life with God. We cannot have that life without developing the *character* of Jesus Christ. This character is *strengthened* within us through the *perseverance* gained by *trials* and *tribulation*. Therefore, anything that helps us attain our hope, even testing through trials, can be welcomed with joy because of what they accomplish in our lives.

The Blessed Man Seeks Wisdom

If knowledge is the accumulation of facts, wisdom is the ability to understand and use these facts in a practical and profitable way. One might say that wisdom is *common sense*. We've all known people with a "head full of knowledge" who didn't have "coming-in-out-of-the-rain" sense—my grandmother, a very wise woman, combined these phrases often. Knowledge is important, but without the wisdom to use knowledge a person is immature.

We need wisdom, especially when our faith is under fire. When we are in the heat of trial there are often things we know to be true, yet we sometimes lack the comprehension to put all our facts together for an accurate view of the big picture. Our lack of ability to see the big picture is directly affected by the severity of the pain we experience; the greater the pain, the less we are able to see. This is when wisdom becomes critical; a lack of it can prove fatal.

So, in the heat of the crucible, we turn to God. "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously..." (Jas. 1:5). It should be obvious that God wants us to have the wisdom to endure trials. He's willing to give that wisdom to all who ask in faith without doubting (Jas. 1:6).

Trials Are the Great Equalizer

One of the themes that courses its way through the book of James is the inequity that often exists between the rich and poor (cf. Jas. 2:1-13; 5:1-6; and perhaps also 3:13-18) and how each ought to treat the other. Persecution for righteousness' sake, however, knows no economical boundaries. Paul told Timothy, "Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted" (2 Tim. 3:12). Furthermore, even

without classical persecution, disease, hardship, and death come upon all—regardless of one's socioeconomic status. Trials are common to all.

The brother with little (Jas. 1:9) is to "glory in his humiliation," realizing that, though he has little of this world's goods, his reward in heaven is beyond compare. His trials are but "light affliction" compared to an "eternal weight of glory" that defies comparison (2 Cor. 4:17). The rich brother, through his trials, is taught not to fix his hope on his riches, but upon God who is the Giver of every good thing (cf. 1 Tim. 6:17; Jas. 1:17). The one thing that both the poor and the rich brother have in common is their faith that God will give them the strength to face trials. Faith in God brings them together as they face life's vicissitudes.

The Blessed Man Understands the Source of Trials

The nature of God is such that He cannot be tempted, nor does He tempt anyone (Jas. 1:13). To the contrary, God is the One who provides the way of escape from temptations (1 Cor. 10:13). God rescues the righteous from temptation (2 Pet. 2:9). Regardless of the circumstances in which we find ourselves, temptation arises from within the heart of man. We are "carried away and enticed" by our own lust—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life (1 John 2:15-17). It is this lust that conceives and gives birth to sin (Jas. 1:15).

God should never be blamed for our trials, especially our failures when tried. We are warned to be "quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger" (Jas. 1:19). I know this is true generally, but specifically in this context I believe James is talking about our conduct and words when undergoing temptation. Listen to God. Be careful what you say, and particularly who you blame. Do not be

angry with God when you are tempted and fall, lest you blaspheme Him.

The Blessed Man Is a Doer

Finally, to truly be blessed, one must be a doer of the word. Perseverance and the approval of God require action (Jas. 1:12, 22-25).

It has been said that there are three kinds of people in this world: There are those who *watch* things happen, there are those who *make* things happen, and there are those who *wonder* what happened. This may be an oversimplification, and perhaps an overstatement, but there is some truth to it. When some folks are tried, they draw up into a shell and just let things happen to them, wondering, "Why?" James declares that the right course is to take action (Jas. 1:25).

When facing the *pain* of trial, we often become too self-absorbed. It's the natural thing to do—to hurt and feel one's own pain. Usually, there are others around us who are hurting also. James instructed folks undergoing trial to look to the orphans and widows who have no one to care for them and extend yourself to help. The difficulties of your own trouble can be mitigated by extending yourself to others. James called this the practice of "pure and undefiled religion" (Jas. 1:27).

Indeed, "How blessed are the people whose God is the Lord!" (Ps. 144:1), those who have faced life's challenges and persevered through them. These are those who, "will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him" (Jas. 1:12). **■**



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“Listen, My Beloved Brethren”

by Donnie V. Rader

In the second chapter of James, the reader is admonished to avoid partiality, double-standards, and selective obedience; dedicated disciples adopt a radically different mindset, embracing a full, active, and obedient faith.

James introduces chapter two by presenting a problem of showing partiality (vv. 1-4). If a rich man and a poor man come into the assembly, and favoritism is shown to the rich, there is indeed a problem with partiality.

James implores his readers to listen. “*Listen, my beloved brethren:* Has God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which he promised to those who love him?” (v. 5, emphasis mine, DVR). The CEV translates it, “pay attention,” and Phillips renders it, “notice.” It means to pay very close attention. It is a call for his readers to develop a different mindset. Let us notice five areas in this chapter wherein a different mindset is needed.

From Partiality to Equal Treatment (vv. 1-9)

Partiality (vv. 2-4). Partiality is showing favoritism based upon external or worldly grounds. When that is done we “make distinctions” (v.4, ASV, cf. ESV) among people. The NCV says, “you are making some people more important than others” (v. 4).

What is the problem with partiality? First, it is contrary to the faith (v. 1). One cannot hold to “the faith,” i.e., the word of God, and at the same time show favoritism. Second, it makes distinctions from wrong motives (v. 4). The TEV renders verse 4, “...make judgments based on wrong motives...” Such judgment is not fair or impartial. Third, it disregards

the poor (vv. 5-7). “But you show no respect for the poor” (v. 6, NCV). The treatment the poor received in the illustration (vv. 2-4) is insulting! Fourth, it is contrary to love (v. 8). Fifth, it is a sin (v. 9). It honors the very ones who oppose the righteous (vv. 6-7).

We may need a different mindset.

We could be showing favoritism to the rich over the lowly. We could be showing favoritism to the educated over the unlearned. We could be showing partiality to one race over another. We could be treating family and friends different than others.

From Double Standards to the Same Standard (vv. 1-9)

Double standards. When we use one standard to judge one person, and a different standard for another, it is unfair. The problem James is addressing uses one standard for the rich and another for the poor.

What is the problem with using double standards? First, it doesn’t follow the one standard, the faith (v. 1). Second, it is selfish (v. 4). Third, it is unloving (v. 8). Fourth, it fails to treat one’s neighbor as he expects to be treated (v. 8).

It is possible that we need a different mindset. When we treat others one way but expect different for ourselves (Matt. 7:12), we are using a double standard. When we have one rule for our family and another for others, we are using a double standard.

When we criticize something in one, and accept or tolerate it in another, we are using a double standard. The hypocrite who holds others to a higher standard than he holds himself is using a double standard.

From Material Priority to Spiritual Priority (vv. 1-9)

Material priority. In the situations described in our text, emphasis is given to the external, not the spiritual (vv. 1-9). Importance is placed upon the material when one is impressed with the gold ring, the fine apparel, and the riches.

What is the problem with a material emphasis? Such priority is all backward. God gives emphasis to a rich faith (v. 5), being heirs of the kingdom (v. 5), and loving God (v. 8). Obviously, that is a different priority.

It could be that we need a different mindset. When we judge whether someone is “successful” based on his money, we are giving priority to the material (cf. Josh. 1:8). When we determine someone’s “worth” based upon his possessions, we are giving priority to the material. When we spend most of our time focused on the money we make or the things it buys, we are giving precedence to the material world. When we think of the work of the church in terms of what we spend on the physical building (rather than the spread of the gospel), we are indeed in need of a different mindset.

From Piecemealing to the Whole Law (vv. 10-13)

Piecemealing. This is where one takes one part of the law as important and binding, yet disregards another part as minor or insignificant. In our text, it seems that those who show partiality (ignoring part of the law) would be strict with some other section of the law (murder or stealing, etc., v. 11).

What is the problem with piecemealing? We must take the whole law. First, the law is a package deal. “For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in *one point*, he is guilty of all” (v. 10). “It is not as if he has broken *a law*, rather he has broken *the law*. Since he has chosen to breach it in this one particular, he has broken *the whole* of it” (King 210). Second, the author of one part of the law is the author of the rest. “For He who said, ‘Do not commit adultery,’ also said, ‘Do not murder.’ Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law” (v. 11). Third, we will be judged by the whole law (vv. 12-13), not just the part we like to emphasize.

It may be that we need a different mindset. It is not uncommon to hear one who is questioned about his sin say, “If that is all I ever do wrong, I don’t have much to worry about.” The idea is, “I have kept most of the word, so I should be okay.” Such a person needs a different mindset. When we redefine the law so that what I am doing is not sin, we need a different mindset. When we make distinction between laws that we think are important and those that are not, we need a change of mindset. We often emphasize one part of the word (wherein we do well) and ignore much of the rest. One may give great attention to attendance, yet ignore instruction about the discipline of children. One may focus on being a keeper at home yet disregard teaching on modesty. One may keep

his marriage together (for it is for life) while ignoring the direction of the Lord on leadership and submission.

From Inactive Faith to a Working Faith (vv. 14-26)

An inactive faith. An inactive faith can’t save (v. 14). It is dead (vv. 17, 20). It does not profit (vv. 14-16). True faith is more than an acknowledgment or verbalization. One whose faith is not working is no better than that of the devils’ (v. 19).

A working faith. Obedient works show our faith. “But someone will say, ‘You have faith, and I have works.’ Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works” (v. 18). James gives two examples of works showing faith: Abraham had faith, but he offered Isaac on the altar (vv. 21, 23). Rahab was justified by works when she “received the messengers and sent them out another way” (v. 25).

We may need a different mindset. When we cease working and acting upon our faith, we are dead. When we no longer read our Bibles or pray every day, we are dead. When we no longer worship and praise God, we are dead. When we are no longer charitable toward others or active in serving, we are dead. When there is little evidence of our spiritual life, we are dead.

James called his readers to a different mindset. *Listen, my beloved brethren!* 📖

Sources

King, Sr., Daniel H. *Truth Commentaries: The Book of James*. Edited by Mike Willis. Athens, AL: Truth Publications, Inc., 2017.



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“The Tongue Is a Fire”

by Gary Kerr

History records tragic examples of fires that started with a spark or a small flame but quickly spread into devastating infernos. No wonder the Holy Spirit guided James to employ this imagery to illustrate the power the tongue has for both good and evil.

And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and set on fire by hell (Jas. 3:6, ESV).

In October, 1871, the worst fire in American history roared through Wisconsin and Michigan, destroying millions of dollars' worth of property, killing an estimated 2,400 people, consuming nearly 1,900 square miles of forest, and destroying two billion trees. Known as the *Peshtigo Fire*, it is believed to have been kindled by rail sparks from passing trains igniting dry grass and brush beside the tracks.

At the same time the city of Chicago also endured a terrible fire—started, according to local legend, when Mrs. O’Leary’s cow kicked over a lantern! That fire killed over 300 people, destroyed more than three square miles of Chicago property, and left at least 100,000 people homeless.

How true are the words of James 3:5, which states, “How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire!” Why did James say this? Because, “the tongue is a fire” (v. 6). The tongue represents our ability to speak, and like fire, our speech has the potential to cause both great harm and great good. “Death and life are in the power of the tongue” (Prov. 18:21).

We don’t stop using fire because we fear the damage it might cause, and

it would be foolish to think that the only way to keep from sinning with our tongues would be to stop talking! *The key is control*. If we control and properly use fire, it can accomplish many wonderful and helpful things. If we control our tongues, we can harness its power to honor God and benefit others.

Let the words of my mouth...
be acceptable in your sight,
O Lord! (Ps. 19:14)

We frequently focus on the first twelve verses of James chapter three, and concentrate on the *negative* power of the tongue, but I believe James, in verses 13-18, is also showing us the powerful effects of a *positive* use of the tongue. Scot McKnight says this about the connection between “the tongue” and James 3:13-18:

If James 3:1-12 is about teaching and the tongue and if James 3:13 suggests that we are still talking to teachers, then it makes sense that the whole of chapter three is shaped toward addressing teachers. Furthermore, James 4:1-10 carries forward an implicit theme of James 3:13-18, namely, dissension, just as it carries forward a theme about the tongue.

The tongue—which represents our ability to communicate thoughts and feelings, whether we do so with words, or hand signs, or by writing—is a marvelous gift from God. It can be used to produce both terrible

negative results and wonderfully *positive* results. Using James chapter three as a guide, let’s look at both.

The Tongue and the Power to Destroy

The harmful potential of our tongue is much greater than our ability to control its use. James says whoever keeps from stumbling (i.e., a “slip of the tongue”) is “*perfect*” (i.e., “mature”) because they can “*bridle*” the whole body as well.

Although the tongue is among the smallest members of the body, its impact far outweighs its size. This truth is illustrated by James in two ways: (1) in the way a bit in the mouth of a horse controls the horse; and (2) in the way the rudder of a ship steers the whole ship. These both teach us that a small part of something (our tongue) can control the course of the whole thing itself—our bodies, our lives, our selves. James next points out the prospective destructiveness of the tongue, even though small. It can be like a tiny spark in relation to a forest fire, which can damage a wide area quickly and can be almost unstoppable. So, the tongue, as James says, “is a fire.”

James describes the tongue’s negative potential in other ways as well:

- As a “world of unrighteousness.” We often speak of the internet

as placing a “world of information” at our fingertips, but we have potentially more iniquity than we can imagine on the tips of our tongues!

- As that which is so situated in the body that it “stains” the whole person. A person can be considered honorable and dignified; and yet, by saying one foolish thing, bring upon himself shame and dishonor!
- As that which “sets on fire the entire course of life.” Many politicians or leaders—who worked hard and long to rise to a position of prominence—have come to utter ruin and have seen their careers completely destroyed by some careless word or foolish utterance.
- As that which is “set on fire by hell.” It is as if our tongues have a direct connection to hell itself. The devil has done much of his work in this world through the use of unrighteous tongues.
- As that which cannot be tamed. The tongue is an unruly evil—wilder and more unpredictable than the wildest wild animal, and it is “full of deadly poison!”

The Tongue and the “Wisdom from Above”

Who is wise and understanding among you? (Jas. 3:13)

Many who think themselves clever with words may be tempted to quickly raise their hand in response to James’ question. Yet, his next statement shows that true wisdom isn’t found in such things as clever replies, sarcastic answers, witty rejoinders, or by being victorious in debate. The claim to be “wise and understanding” can only be proven through “good conduct” and through “works in the meekness of wisdom.”

James speaks of two different kinds of wisdom, which are identified by their source: either “wisdom that comes down from above” (that is, from God); or wisdom from a more diabolical and evil source—and you can tell which it is by the pattern it follows.

The first kind of “wisdom” is characterized by “jealousy and selfish ambition” and is “earthly, unspiritual, demonic.” Because of its character and source, such wisdom does no good—only harm. James has already warned his readers that this kind of wisdom which often results in people failing to be “quick to hear, slow to *speak* (emphasis mine, GCK), slow to anger” (Jas. 1:19-20), cannot produce the righteousness of God.

Conversely, the “wisdom from above” follows a completely different pattern. It is “first pure,” that is, “free from ceremonial defilement” (Thomas). This doctrinal, Biblical purity must come first. All the other characteristics of true wisdom follow from it.

James goes on to define this “wisdom” as “peaceable” (“peace-loving,” NIV); “gentle” (“considerate,” NIV); “open to reason” (“willing to yield,” NKJV); “full of mercy and good fruits”; “impartial” (true wisdom will bend when it needs to; but it also knows when it must not bend); and “sincere” (“without hypocrisy,” NASB—there is no pretense to it; it does not try to be what it isn’t). What would be the result if we all conducted ourselves by following this pattern of the “wisdom from above?”

James closes this chapter with an important conclusion regarding *wisdom*: “And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace” (Jas. 3:18). What a wonderful, positive, and constructive use of the *tongue*—using it to make “*peace*” among brethren, families, neighbors, and

ultimately the most important kind of peace, *peace with God!*

Can you see how following James’ teaching about the proper use of “*wisdom*” can help us to harness the power of our tongue for good and avoid using it to kindle fires that cause pain and destruction?

What a wonderful blessing God has given us—the ability to communicate our thoughts and feelings to others! May we always strive to select the proper words, “*words of wisdom*,” and put forth the effort to be gracious in using them (cf. Prov. 16:24; Col. 4:16). Then, the power of our tongues can be used positively to offer healing and edification to our listeners, while at the same time helping us to please our Heavenly Father, the Giver of the precious gift of speech. 🙏

Source

McKnight, Scot. *The New International Commentary on the New Testament: The Letter of James*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2011. Accessed on-line via e-Sword on March 1, 2018.

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Gary Kerr

Gary Kerr has preached at Eastside Church of Christ in Bowling Green, Kentucky for the past nine years. He and Susan have been married for forty-three years, and they have three grown and married sons, and seven (as of this coming August!) grandchildren. He can be reached at gary.kerr@mightyisthelord.com.

“Therefore Submit to God”

by Allen Dvorak

Warning against divided allegiance, aggressiveness toward brethren, and arrogance toward God, the fourth chapter of James provides the solution: humble repentance, hopeful reliance, and full submission to the heavenly Father.

“See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil” (Deut. 30:15). Moses had brought the people of Israel to a critical point in their budding history. The people were camped on the eastern side of the Jordan River, prepared to enter the Promised Land. Not allowed to enter Canaan with them, Moses wrote Deuteronomy with the purpose of reminding them of their history and the covenant made at Mount Sinai. He challenged the people to choose between life and death, good and evil, the result of choosing to either serve Jehovah God or other gods (Deut. 30:15-20). It was a clear-cut choice that Moses called upon the people to make—allowing no middle ground.

Double-minded

James addressed some Christians who needed to make a similar choice. They were having difficulty choosing between God and the world and so he described them as “double-minded” and “adulterous people,” trying to maintain a relationship with God and the world at the same time (4:4, 8, ESV). James affirmed that this is not possible. “Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God” (4:4; ESV). As Jesus taught, God commands that we love Him with all that we are (Matt. 22:37). God does not accept the person whose

heart is divided in its loyalty. James’ readers needed to make a choice.

In the last section of chapter three (vv. 13-18), James contrasted wisdom that is “earthly, unspiritual, [and] demonic” with the wisdom from above (3:15, 17). Earthly wisdom produces bitter jealousy and selfish ambition leading to “disorder and every vile practice” (3:14-16). It appears from 4:1-3 that James was writing to some Christians who were following earthly wisdom. Quarrels, fights, murder, covetousness—these are the words James used to describe their conduct. There is no contextual reason to suppose that James used the words “fights” and “murder” in a figurative way. These “brethren” were behaving in a carnal fashion, and when they did think to ask from God, the motivation for their prayers was selfishness (4:2-3).

God desired that these Christians make the right choice (vv. 5-6). Note that there is a great deal of variation in the way that popular versions translate verse 5. James counseled them to humble themselves before God and submit to Him. If they resisted the devil, he would flee from them. By contrast, if they would draw near to God, God would draw near to them (vv. 7-8).

Arrogant

In addition to being double-minded, James accused his readers of being arrogant (vv. 6b, 16). Despite their

sinful behavior, their lives were filled with laughter and joy. James sternly admonished, “Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom” (Jas. 4:8b-9, ESV)

No doubt, in the midst of their “fights” and “quarrels,” these brethren had spoken evil of one another and, in their arrogance, had thus become judges of the law rather than doers of the law (vv. 11-12). “There is only one lawgiver and judge, he who is able to save and to destroy”—Christians need to humble themselves and be doers of the law, rather than elevating themselves to the position of judge. We need to be careful of how we talk about our brethren!

“If the Lord Wills”

Country music singer, Tim McGraw, sings a song entitled “My Next Thirty Years.” The lyrics give the impression that the singer has reached the age of thirty and speaks of his plans for the next thirty years of his life. He’s going to make some changes in his next thirty years—most of them good changes. He’s going to watch his weight, eat more salads, and get more sleep. The next thirty years, he sings, “will be the best years of my life.” He’s going to spend more time with his wife and other loved ones; he’s going to “make up for lost time” in his next thirty years.

Yes, it's just a song, but it expresses a common way of thinking, the way that these Christians were thinking. The singer is planning out his next thirty years as though living another thirty years is a given, but the truth is that not one of us is guaranteed even one more day of life! James wrote:

Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit"—yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that." As it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil. So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin (Jas. 4:13-17, ESV).

Note that James describes those whom he *quoted* (v. 13) as "boasting in your arrogance" (v. 16). It wasn't the fact that they were making plans for the future that earned his rebuke. They planned the future ("We will

go... spend a year... trade and make a profit") as though their will and plans were the only factors. The problem was, they were assuming that the future was in their control. This is evident from what James said they should be saying, i.e., "Instead you ought to say, 'If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that'" (v. 15). The simple truth is that we "do not know what tomorrow will bring" (v. 14a). We need to acknowledge our dependence upon God's will.

James compared our physical lives to "a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes" (v. 14b). That's why we don't know what tomorrow will bring. It is impossible to be certain about a future that we don't control, not to mention the fact that life is so fragile. Verse 17 begins with a conclusion word ("Therefore," v. 17; NKJV). Since life is fragile and uncertain, we should not put off until the future what we know is the right thing to do today. If we do, we sin.

In the days of Ahab, ruler of the northern kingdom of Israel, the prophet Elijah challenged the people gathered on Mount Carmel to make a choice. "How long will you go limping between two different opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him" (1 Kings 18:21). The people of Israel didn't answer Elijah, but James challenges us to answer that we will choose God—and submit to Him.

Editor's Note

A special word of thanks goes out to brother Dvorak for his work on this article. Right at the time it was due to be turned in, Allen's mother passed away. Our sympathy and appreciation go out to him for his good work during this difficult time. Thanks, brother! **T**



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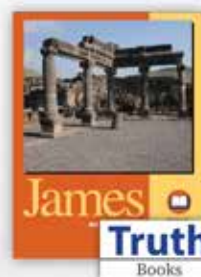


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“Establish Your Hearts”

by L. A. Stauffer

Being ready for the Lord’s return is a fundamental principle of putting on Jesus Christ. Brother Stauffer encourages us in this effort in his examination of James’ charge to “establish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord is at hand.”

Whether writing his epistle to the “dispersion” of Jewish saints living in a world of Gentiles or to Christians in general as sojourners living in the evil world of ungodliness (1:1), James concludes in the final chapter of the letter with a reminder to the brethren that they must prepare their hearts to withstand the wiles and influence of the devil, who, according to the apostle Peter, prowls about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour (1 Pet 5:8). In chapter four, James told these brethren that they must “resist the devil” so that he would flee from them and “draw near to God” so that He would draw near to them (4:7-8). His readers, like the dispersed saints to whom Peter wrote, found themselves seeking to

live sanctified and holy lives in the midst of greed, fraud, and persecution (5:1-6; see 1 Pet 1:1-2). James’ message to them is simple, fundamental, and clear: “*Establish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord is at hand*” (5:8).

In the opening words of the final chapter, James closes the letter with a warning to the disciples about the ungodly world in which they live, challenging them to prepare their hearts for another world. The words of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount express James’ warning to the brethren, “Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth... for where thy treasure is, there will be thy heart also” (Matt. 6:19, 21). The “rich” among them who were storing up earthly treasures are called by James to “weep” and

“howl” for the miseries that await the end of the covetous lives they were living. The rust of their gold and their moth-eaten garments will, along with the hire of laborers they kept back by fraud, bear witness to their covetous, spiritually idolatrous, and materialistic hearts. The cries of those whom they have defrauded enter the ears of the Lord of Hosts, providing testimony that the greed of these evil men has nurtured and nourished their hearts to fatten them for a day of slaughter at the judgment of God (Jas. 5:1-6).

James’ message to them: “Be patient therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient over it, until it receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; establish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord is at hand” (5:7-8).

Beyond the need to establish their hearts, James stresses the importance and value of prayer. If brethren are happy, he writes, let them sing praise, but if they are suffering, “let them pray” (5:13). If the need demands, let them call for the elders of the church to pray with them. Let them also confess their sins to one another and pray for forgiveness. He concludes, the “effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.” Elijah, James writes, illustrates God’s answer to fervent prayers when the Lord



responded with a drought in answer to the prophet's prayer for it not to rain and with fruitful blessings in answer to his prayer for it to rain (5:17-18). James completes the chapter by reminding the brethren to reach out to those among them who are in error, knowing that if they convert one from the error of his ways they save a soul and cover a multitude of sins (5:19-20).

Yet, take note of what may well be James' central point in this chapter. He sees the coming of the Lord to be at hand and the need for brethren in preparation for that coming to "establish their hearts" (5:8). Previously, James concludes that brethren in anticipation of the coming of the Lord must be "patient"—a word that means "longsuffering." He reminds them that the farmer or husbandman cannot rush the harvest, but must wait patiently for the former and latter rains before he can receive the precious fruit the soil produces. This denotes the longsuffering that saints must possess as they await the eternal harvest of righteousness and life that God's word, sown in honest and good hearts, will produce at the coming of the Lord. That coming, says James, is "at hand," meaning it could occur "at any time." To prepare for that day of harvest, James says the brethren must patiently *establish their hearts*.

The practical nature and message of this epistle is now joined to the urgency of being unmovably prepared for the Lord's coming by heartfelt dedication to God's word. James just made it clear in chapter four that man's life is as a vapor that appears for a moment then vanishes. Moreover, with the Lord's return, life may cease at any moment (5:7-8). This calls for a fixed and immovable heart of dedicated faith and commitment to God's will. When the time came for Jesus to go to the cross, He "set" His face toward Jerusalem (Luke 9:51). "Set" is the word James used, and it means to "fix," "establish,"

or "prepare." Jesus "*steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem*," meaning, He determined in His heart to yield His body and life to lawless and ungodly men who would crucify and slay Him (see Acts 2:23). Luke used this word again when he described the great chasm that was "fixed" in Hades separating the righteous from ungodly souls as they await the day of the Lord's return for judgment (Luke 16:26).

The recipients of James' letter who read it did not have to guess or need not wonder how to fix, set, establish their hearts in readiness for the coming of the Lord. James is clear throughout this epistle that brethren must maintain hearts of joy and patience amidst trials (1:2-4), hearts of faith that refuse to doubt and are confirmed by "works" (1:5-8; 2:14-26), hearts that are not drawn away into sin through evil lusts (1:12-16), hearts that are swift to hear, slow to speak (1:19), hearts that bridle their tongues, and are slow to wrath (1:19, 26), hearts that examine their lives in the perfect law of liberty and abide therein (1:23-25), hearts that love without respect of person and show mercy and compassion (2:1-13), hearts that display meekness of wisdom and humility (3:13; 4:6), hearts that know that life is as a vapor and are focused on today (4:13-16), hearts that display the stability and patience of Job (5:11), and hearts that are fervent in effective prayer as Elijah (5:17-18).

In the final chapter of his epistle, James echoes the statement of Paul: "If then ye are raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth" (Col 3:1-2). **T**



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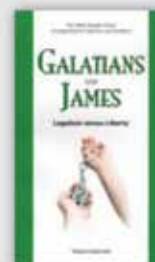
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FORT MYERS

Southside church of Christ
13641 Learning Court
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: David P. Schmidt
(239) 433-2838 or 482-2158

FROSTPROOF

Frostproof church of Christ
40 W. "A" St., Frostproof, FL 33483
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Wednesday 7 P.M., (863) 635-2607 or 635-4278

GENEVA

church of Christ
Ave. C and 2nd St.
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:45 A.M.
(407) 349-9998

KEY LARGO

Key Largo church of Christ
100695 N. Overseas Hwy.
33037 m.m. 100.7 on US 1
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: William LeDent (305) 451-1194

MARY ESTHER

church of Christ
6 Lane Drive
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Joey Rankin (850) 244-9222

MIAMI

church of Christ
Eglise du Christ de Miami
8343 NE 3rd Court
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Wednesday 7 P.M.
Minister: Junot Joseph (305) 244-8295

MIAMI

Flagler Grove church of Christ
(Nearest to Airport), 500 N.W. 53rd Ave.
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
Evangelist: John Buttrick (305) 634-5924

MIAMI

church of Christ
12780 Quail Roost Dr.
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Clark Pace
(305) 233-9590 or (954) 430-1437

OCALA

Anthony church of Christ
9778 N.E. Jacksonville Rd., Anthony, FL 32617
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.
Wednesday 6:30 P.M.
Evangelist: Greg Cruz (352) 629-5505
www.anthonycoc.com

ORLANDO

Azalea Park church of Christ
6800 Lake Underhill Rd.
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
(407) 277-7931

ORLANDO

church of Christ at S. Bumpy
3940 S. Bumpy Ave.
Sunday Worship 9 A.M., Bible Study 10 A.M.
Worship w/ communion 10:55 A.M. (No Evening Service), Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Adam Willingham
Office: (407) 851-8031

ORLANDO

Pine Hills Church of Christ
890 Hastings Street
Sun. Bible Study 10 A.M., Sun. Worship: 11 A.M.
Sun. Evening Worship: 6 P.M.
Wednesday Bible Study: 7:30 P.M.
(407) 293-2851 or (407) 290-8650

PALMETTO

Palmetto church of Christ
1575 14th Avenue W.
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.
Wednesday 7 P.M.
www.palmettochurchofchrist.com
(941) 722-1307

PANAMA CITY BEACH

Beach church of Christ
8910 Front Beach Rd.
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(850) 234-2521

SEFFNER

church of Christ
621 E. Wheeler Rd.
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 10:50 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
Evangelist: Bobby Witherington (813) 684-1297
www.seffnercoc.org

GEORGIA

CENTERVILLE

Centerville church of Christ
250 Collins Ave. (Near Robins AFB)
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
Evangelist: J. Wiley Adams (478) 922-1158

COLUMBUS

River City Church of Christ
3900 River Road, Columbus GA 31904
Bible Class 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelists Jeff McCrary & Bo Couchman
(205) 451-9028, rivercitychurchofchrist.com
backtothebible@rivercitychurchofchrist.com

CONYERS

Rockdale church of Christ
East Metro Atlanta, 705 Smyrna Road
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 5:30 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
Building (770) 929-3973

PINE MTN. VALLEY

church of Christ
Route 116 (near Callaway Gardens)
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
Evangelist: Tommy W. Thomas
(706) 628-5117 or 628-5229
www.pmvchurch.com

SAVANNAH

Coastal church of Christ
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
(912) 344-1687
coastalchurchofchrist@outlook.com

VALDOSTA

church Of Christ
4313 North Valdosta Rd.
(Located 1 mile E. of Exit 22 off I-75)
Worship 9 A.M., Bible Study 10 A.M.
Communion 11 A.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(229) 244-8630, www.northvaldostacoc.com

IDAHO

BLACKFOOT

church of Christ
370 N. Shilling • P.O. Box 158-83221
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
(208) 785-6168 or 681-1552

IOWA

DES MOINES

church of Christ
1310 N.E. 54th Ave.
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:40 A.M.
Wednesday 7 P.M., (515) 262-6799

GRINNELL

church of Christ
1402 Third Ave.
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Wednesday 7 P.M.
(641) 521-6485, (641) 236-3883
www.grinnellcoc.com

ILLINOIS

CHICAGO

church of Christ
1514 West 74th Street
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: James E. Scott
Bldg. (773) 224-9279, (708) 339-6126

DOWNERS GROVE

church of Christ
1236 63rd St., (1 and 1/2 mile E. of I355)
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 9:55 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
(630) 968-0760 • www.dgccc.org

GLEN ELLYN

Glen Ellyn Church of Christ
796 Prairie Ave.
Glen Ellyn, IL 60137
Sunday Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Sunday Evening 5 P.M.
Evangelist: Keith E. Brown
(630) 858-2290, (630) 377-3990

MATTOON

Southside church of Christ
1100 S. 17th Street
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(217) 234-3702

SOUTH HOLLAND

Southeast church of Christ
16224 S Vincennes Ave.
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.
Evening 4 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Donald Hawkins, (708) 339-1008
www.southeastchurchofchrist.com

INDIANA

CLARKSVILLE

Clarksville church of Christ
407 W. Lewis & Clark Parkway, 47129
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
Evangelist: Brian Anderson (812) 944-2305
or (812) 948-9917
www.clarksvillechurchofchrist.org

GREENWOOD

Greenwood church of Christ
371 W. Main Street
Sun. Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 4:30 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelists: Neil Tremblett
(317) 888-8288
www.churchofchristatgreenwood.org

HOBART

church of Christ
300 N. Liberty Street
Bible Study 9:45 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Jerry Cleek (219) 942-2663

INDIANAPOLIS

Castleton church of Christ
7701 East 86th Street, 46256
Sun. Worship 11 A.M., Sun. Bible Study 10 A.M.
Wed. Worship 11:15 A.M., Wed. Bible Study 7 P.M.
(317) 710-1204

JAMESTOWN

church of Christ
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:25 A.M.
Evening 4 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: David McPherson
(765) 676-6404 or (270) 994-4397
www.jamestowncoc.com

OOBITIC

church of Christ
400 Lafayette Ave. • P.O. Box 34
Bible Study 9:45 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M. Wednesday 7 P.M.
(812) 279-4332

PEKIN

church of Christ
(First St. & Karnes Ct.)
Bible Study 9:45 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Jeremy Goen
(812) 967-3437 or 967-3520
www.pekinchurchofchrist.com

PLAINFIELD

church of Christ West
2028 Stafford Rd., Ste. C., (Marsh Shopping Cntr.)
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 9:50 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Johnie Edwards
(317) 964-9404 or (317) 839-1769
www.churchofchristwest.org

SAINT LEON, IN

Church of Christ
7140 Hyland Rd., Guildford, IN 47022
174 exit 164 1 mile south on SR 1
Bible study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6:00 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
812-637-1252 or 513-367-7871

SALEM

Westside church of Christ
2000 West State Rd. 56
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 10:45 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(812) 883-2033, www.westsidechurchofchrist.net

TRAFALGAR

Spearsville Rd. church of Christ, 6244 S. 500W.
(1.2 mi. S. of Hwy. 135)
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Ed Rangel. (317) 878-5969
www.trafalgarchurch.com

KANSAS

TOPEKA

17th Street church of Christ
5600 SW 17th St.
Bible Study 9:15 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Wednesday 7 P.M.
(785) 235-8687 or 273-7977
www.17thstreetchurchofchrist.org

KENTUCKY

AUSTIN

Peter's Creek church of Christ
856 Thomerson Park Rd.
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M.
Evangelist: David Cox (270) 579-8074 or
(270) 646-0498, www.peterscreekcoc.com

BEAVER DAM

church of Christ
1235 Williams St.
Worship 10 A.M., Bible Study After Worship
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Mike Thomas
(270) 274-4451 or 274-4486

BRANDENBURG

Brandenburg church of Christ
612 Broadway
Bible Study 9:45 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 6:30 P.M.
Evangelist: Charles J. White (270) 422-3878

CAMPBELLSVILLE

Sunny Hill Dr. church of Christ
A.M. Worship 9:30 A.M., A.M. Bible Study 10:30 A.M.
A.M. Worship 11:30 A.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Steve Lee (270) 789-1651
stevelee4510@windstream.net
www.sunnyhillcoc.com

CANEYVILLE

Caneyville church of Christ
103 N. Main St. • P.O. Box 233
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 10:45 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Jarrod Jacobs (270) 589-4167 or
(270) 274-3065

DANVILLE

church of Christ
385 E. Lexington Ave.
Worship 10 A.M., Bible Study 11:15 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Scott Vifquain (859) 236-4204

FRANKLIN

31-W North church of Christ
1733 Bowling Green Road
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Steve Montz, (270) 586-3978
www.31wchurchofchrist.com

HODGENVILLE

Hodgenville church of Christ
613 S Lincoln Blvd.
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Don Brady (270) 358-6053
Dbrady1295@aol.com

LEITCHFIELD

Mill St. church of Christ
733 Mill Street, Highway 62 E.
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 10:55 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Michael Hardin
(270) 259-4968 or (270) 300-3239
www.millstreetchurchofchrist.org

LOUISVILLE

Valley Station church of Christ
1803 Dixie Garden Drive
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
Evangelist: Dudley Ross Spears (502) 937-2822

LOUISIANA

GONZALES

Southside church of Christ
405 Orice Roth Road, 70737, (Baton Rouge area)
Bible Class 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: R.J. Evans (225) 622-4587
rjevans@eatel.net

MANY

Lakeside church of Christ
12095 Texas Hwy. (Hwy. 6 W.)
12 miles west of Many
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(318) 256-9396

STONEWALL

N. DeSoto church of Christ
2071 Highway 171 (South of Shreveport)
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(318) 925-2733

MARYLAND

SEVERN

Southwest church of Christ
805 Meadow Rd.
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
Evangelist: Brandon Trout
(410) 969-1420 or (410) 551-6549
www.swcofchrist.com

MAINE

PORTLAND

church of Christ • 856 Brighton Ave.
Leave Maine Turnpike at Exit 48
(Breakwater School)
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Second service immediately following morning
worship. Mid-week Bible Study. Please call for
times & places. (207) 839-3075 or 839-8409

MICHIGAN

CEDAR SPRINGS

W. Michigan church of Christ
Sr. Citizen Center, 44 Park Street
(Grand Rapids Area)
Worship 11 A.M., Bible Study 12:30 P.M.
Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Joseph Gladwell, (616) 975-2778
westmichcof10@yahoo.com

MINNESOTA

DULUTH

church of Christ
4401 Glenwood St.
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.
Bible Study 5:30 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Taylor Ladd (218) 728-3233

ST. CHARLES

church of Christ
939 Whitewater Avenue
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Bible Study 2:15 P.M.
Wednesday 7 P.M., call for location
FREE Bible correspondence studies
Evangelist: Robert Lehnertz (507) 534-2905

MISSISSIPPI

BOONEVILLE

Oakleigh Dr. church of Christ
101 Oakleigh Dr.
Bible Study 9:45 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 4 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Building: (662) 728-1942

CLINTON

McRaven Rd. church of Christ
301 McRaven Rd. (I20, exit 36)
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Leonard White
(601) 925-9757 or 924-2645

MERIDIAN

Grandview church of Christ
2820 Grandview Ave.
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Sun. Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 6:30 P.M.
(601) 482-0543, (601) 479-3394 or (601) 934-3675
Contacts: Ron Cooper & Jim Young
youngins@comcast.net

MERIDIAN

7th St. church of Christ
2914 7th Street
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.
(601) 483-3101

SOUTHAVEN

church of Christ
2110 E State Line Rd. (Exit I-55), (Memphis area)
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: James A. Brown
(662) 342-1132 – church Building

MISSOURI

BLUE SPRINGS

Southside church of Christ
4000 SW Christiansen
Worship 9 A.M., Bible Study 10 A.M.
Worship 11 A.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Brett Hogland (816) 228-9262

BRANSON

Eagle Rock Road church of Christ
432 Eagle Rock Road
Sun. Worship 9:30 A.M., Bible Study 10:30 A.M.
Sun. Evening Worship 2 P.M., Wednesday 6 P.M.
Minister: Philip North (417) 239-1036
Email: primrosenor@suddenink.net
www.eaglerockroadchurchofchrist.org

CAPE GIRARDEAU

North Cape church of Christ
121 S. Broadview St. Suite 2,
Cape Girardeau, MO 63703
Sunday Bible Study 9:15 A.M. & 10 A.M.,
Worship 11 A.M., No Evening Service
Wednesday 6 P.M./CST, 7 P.M./DST
Evangelist: Jerry Lee Westbrook (573) 334-9673

DONIPHAN

Southside church of Christ
Hwy. 142 E. ½ mile (P.O. Box 220)
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(573) 996-3251 or 996-3513

FAIR GROVE

church of Christ
217 N. Orchard Blvd.
Bible Study 9 A.M., Bible Study 10 A.M.
Worship 11 A.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Walter Myers (417) 830-8972 or
(417) 736-2663

KENNETT

church of Christ
703 Harrison St.
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(573) 888-6778 or (870) 650-1648
Preacher: Nolan Glover
www.westsidechurchofchrist.us

LILBOURN

church of Christ
211 Benton Street
First Worship 9 A.M., Bible Study 10 A.M.,
Second Worship 10:45 A.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Ben Lawrence, (501) 470-5390

RAYTOWN

Sterling Ave. church of Christ
5825 Sterling Ave. (Near Sports Complex)
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Jerid Gunter
(816) 356-3096 or (270) 585-4331
www.sterlingavechurchofchrist.org

ST. JAMES

church of Christ
685 Sidney St.
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:15 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Lynn Huggins (573) 265-8628

ST. JOSEPH

County Line church of Christ
2727 County Line Rd.
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 9:50 A.M.
Wednesday 7 P.M.
(816) 279-4737
www.countylinechurchofchrist.com

NEBRASKA

BEATRICE

church of Christ • 7th and Bell
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.
Evening 6:30 P.M., 233-4102 or 228-3827
www.churchofchrist7bell.com

NEW JERSEY

VAUXHALL

church of Christ
Milbourn Mall Suite 6., 2933 Vauxhall Rd.
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
Contact: Harry Persaud
phone: (908) 964-6356 • cell: (908) 964-8570

NEW MEXICO

ALBUQUERQUE

Heights church of Christ
7801 Zuni Road, S.E.
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evanagelist: Darrel Yontz (505) 266-7577
www.heightschurchofchrist.com

NEVADA

RENO

Central church of Christ
2450 Wrondel Way, Suite A
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(775) 786-2888

NORTH CAROLINA

CHARLOTTE

Charlotte church of Christ
5327 S. Tryon Street
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Sun. Worship 10:30 A.M.
Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
(704) 525-5655
www.charlottechurchofchrist.org

OHIO

BEAVERCREEK

Knollwood Creek church of Christ
1031 Welford Drive
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:20 A.M.
Afternoon 3 P.M., Wednesday Afternoon 1 P.M.
Wednesday Evening 7 P.M.
(937) 426-1422
www.knollwoodchurch.org

CINCINNATI

Blue Ash church of Christ
4667 Cooper Road
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 10:45 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Russell Dunaway, Jr. (513) 891-3174
www.blueashchurchofchrist.com

CLEVELAND

Lorain Ave. church of Christ
13501 Lorain Ave.
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
(330) 723-0111 or (330) 590-0227
or (216) 322-9392
www.lorainave-churchofchrist.com

COLUMBUS

Laurel Canyon church of Christ
409 McNaughton Road
Bible Study 9:45 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(614) 868-1375, www.iccoc.net

DAYTON

West Carrollton
28 W. Main Street, 45449
Early Worship 9 A.M., Bible Study 9:30 A.M.
Worship 10:25 A.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Michael Grushon (937) 866-5162
or 848-3779, www.wc-coc.org

FRANKLIN

Franklin church of Christ
6417 Franklin-Lebanon Rd. 45005
Sun. Bible Study 10 A.M.
Sun. Worship 10:45 A.M.
Tues. Bible Study 6:30 P.M.
Evangelist: Josh Lee (937) 789-8055
or (937) 746-1249, www.franklin-church.org

FREMONT

church of Christ
3361 W. State Street, 1 mi. W. of Fremont
on U.S. Rt. 20
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 10:45 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(419) 849-3340 or 849-2980
www.fremontchurchofchrist.com

HAMILTON

Westview church of Christ
1040 Azel Ave.
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 9:45 A.M.
Evening 6:30 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Eugene Ford (513) 856-9288

HILLIARD

church of Christ
4840 Cemetery Rd.
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
(614) 876-4089

MANSFIELD

Southside church of Christ
687 Mansfield-Lucas Road
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 10:45 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 5 P.M.
James Bond: (419) 526-2868
Leon Bond: (419) 525-3684
church: (419) 522-8982

NEW LEBANON

New Lebanon church of Christ
1973 W Main Street
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.,
Evening 5 P.M., Wed. Bible Study 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Bruce Hastings (937) 687-7150
or (937) 478-0367

MARIETTA-RENO

Marietta-Reno church of Christ
80 Sandhill Road
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6:30 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Daniel Ruegg: (740) 222-9160 or
Steve Foutty: (740) 473-9028

NORTHWOOD

Frey Road church of Christ
4110 Frey Rd. (Toledo Area)
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Donald Jarabek
(419) 893-3566, (567) 694-5062

UHRICHSVILLE

church of Christ
638 Parrish Street
Bible Study 9:45 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6:30 P.M., Mid-week 6:30 P.M.

OKLAHOMA

MCALESTER

North A St. church of Christ
2120 No. A Street
Bible Study 9:45 A.M., Worship 10:45 A.M.
Evening 5:30 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Rob Lungstrum, Cell: (918) 931-1362
Office: (918) 423-3445

OKLAHOMA CITY

Seminole Pointe church of Christ
16300 N. May Avenue
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: John M. Duvall (405) 340-3189
or (405) 513-6691, www.seminolepointe.church

OREGON

SWEET HOME

Church of Christ
3702 E. Long Street, Sweet Home, OR
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 7 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
Building: (541) 367-1599

PENNSYLVANIA

PHILADELPHIA

church of Christ
7222 Germantown Ave., 19119
Bible Study 10:15 A.M., Worship 11:15 A.M.
Tuesday night 7 P.M.
Evangelist: James H. Baker, Jr. (215) 248-2026
www.mtairychurchofchrist.org

SOUTH CAROLINA

COLUMBIA

Lower Richland church of Christ
3000 Trotter Rd. (Hopkins, SC)
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(803) 730-0452, <http://lowerrichlandchurch.org>

SUMTER

Woodland church of Christ
3370 Broad St. Extension
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 5:30 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: A.A. Granke, Jr. (803) 499-6023

WEST COLUMBIA

Airport church of Christ
4013 Edmund Hwy. (Hwy. 302)
**OUR WEB SITE DISPLAYS OUR
CURRENT ASSEMBLY SCHEDULE.**
Evangelist: Seth Mauldin, Bldg. (803) 834-6978
<http://airport-church-of-christ.com>

TENNESSEE

COLUMBIA

Mooresville Pike church of Christ
417 Mooresville Pike
(.8 mi. N. of Hwy. 50/Jas. Campbell)
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 3:30 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(931) 388-5828 or (931) 381-7898
www.moorevillepikecoc.com

COSBY

Cosby church of Christ
4894 Hooper Hwy., 37722
(15 mi. E. of Gatlinburg on Hwy. 321)
Bible Study 10A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday Bible Study 6:00 P.M.
Evangelist: Olie Williamson
(423) 487-5540 or (423) 748-0844

JACKSON

Sunset View church of Christ
3618 Hwy 70 East
(Exit 87 off I-40, 7mi. @ Spring Creek)
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Steve Wilkerson (731) 967-0590
or 968-9851

JOHNSON CITY

Brookmead church of Christ
2428 Lakeview Drive
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Kevin Kay (423) 282-6251 or 426-1836

JONESBOROUGH

11-E church of Christ
240 Headtown Road
Bible Study 10:30 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Evangelist: David Wheeler
(423) 557-9119 or (423) 948-6464
www.christianadmonisher.jigsy.com

KINGSTON SPRINGS

Kingston Springs church of Christ
350 North Main Street
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Steve Walker, www.kscoc.com

MT. PLEASANT

Locust St. Church of Christ
108 Locust Street • Mt. Pleasant, TN 38474
931-379-3704 or 931-964-3924
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Daniel H. King, Sr.
www.lscoc.com

KINGSFORT

Kingsport church of Christ
4938 Fort Henry Dr. • P.O. Box 554
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 5:00 P.M., Wednesday 7:00 P.M.
Evangelist: Tom Kinzel, Bldg.# (423) 239-3979
or (423) 579-2002 • www.kptcoc.org

MARYVILLE

Smokey Mt. church of Christ
2206 Montvale Road
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Harold Tabor (865) 977-4230
Lon Spurgeon (865) 388-8749
<http://tinyurl.com/smchurch>

MEMPHIS

Rocky Pt. Road church of Christ
516 E. Rocky Point Rd., Cordova
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10A.M.
Wednesday 7 P.M.
rockypointchurch@gmail.com
www.rockypointchurch.org

MURFREESBORO

Cason Lane church of Christ
1110 Cason Lane
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(615) 896-0090 (Building)
www.casonlanechurch.org

MURFREESBORO

Northfield Blvd. church of Christ
2091 Pitts Ln. at Northfield Blvd.
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: David Bunting (615) 893-1200

NASHVILLE

Hillview church of Christ
7471 Charlotte Pike
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(615) 952-5458 or (615) 356-7318
Evangelist: Lee Wildman

NASHVILLE

Perry Heights church of Christ
423 Donelson Pike
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 9:55 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Johnny Felker (615) 883-3118
<http://perryheights.faiithweb.com>

PIGEON FORGE

King Branch Road church of Christ
560 King Branch Road
Worship 10 A.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Facilities available for Sunday evening services
upon request.
Evangelist: Roger Williams (865) 430-5980
www.KingBranchRoadchurchOfChrist.org

SHELBYVILLE

El Bethel church of Christ
1801 Hwy. 41-A North
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 9:50 A.M.
Evening 5:30 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Donnie V. Rader (931) 607-9099
dvrader@live.com

SHELBYVILLE

Shelbyville Mills church of Christ
1222 W. Jackson St.
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Jeff Curtis (931) 607-9118
djcurtis1963@hotmail.com

TEXAS

ALLEN

West Allen church of Christ
1414 W. Exchange Blvd. (2 miles west of Hwy. 75)
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 9:50 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
Evangelist: Jerry King (214) 504-0443
Building phone (972) 727-5355

ALVARADO

I-35 church of Christ
E. Service Rd. off I-35, N. of Alvarado
Bible Study 10:00 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 6:00 P.M., Wednesday 7:00 P.M.
(817) 295-7277 or 790-7253

ALVIN

Adoue St. church of Christ
605 E. Adoue St
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
Evangelist: Mark Mayberry (346) 216-1707
www.ascoc.org & www.markmayberry.net

AUSTIN

Schultz Lane church of Christ
Faber Rd. & Schultz Ln., Pflugerville, TX 78660
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 2 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
Evangelist: Ron Lehde

BAYTOWN

church of Christ at Pruett & Lobit
701 North Pruett Street
Bible Study 9:45 A.M., Worship 10:40 A.M.
Evening 6:30 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Jesse Flowers (281) 515-8939
Building: (281) 422-5926, Weldon: (713) 818-1321

BEAUMONT

Dowlen Rd. church of Christ
3060 Dowlen Road
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelists: Max Dawson & Benjamin Lee
(409) 866-1996

CONROE

Woodland Hills church of Christ
410 Woodland Hills Dr., 77303
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
phone: (936) 756-9322
www.conroechurch.com

CLEVELAND

church of Christ
310 E. Houston Street
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
Evangelist: Robert Davis (281) 592-5676
www.clevelandchurchofchrist.org

CORPUS CHRISTI

Hwy. 9 church of Christ
Worship 10 A.M., Bible Study 11 A.M.
Worship 12 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
Call for location: Keith Kalies (361) 776-2304
or Patrick Frazier (361) 235-1990

DICKINSON

church of Christ
2919 FM 517 Road E.
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 10:50 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 9:45 A.M.
Wednesday 7 P.M., (281) 534-4870
www.dickinsonchurchofchrist.org

DALLAS

Methodist Street church of Christ
211 Methodist St. • Red Oak TX, 75154
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: D. LeRoy Klice
(972) 576-3119 or 363-7672
www.methodiststreetchurchofchrist.com

DUNCANVILLE

Whispering Hills church of Christ
2126 S. Main (South Dallas)
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(214) 874-5701, info@whchurchofchrist.net

EDNA

church of Christ
301 Robison Street
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(361) 782-5506 or 782-2844
Elders: J. Mercer & S. Mercer

EL PASO

Eastringe church of Christ
3277 Pendleton Road
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(915) 855-1524

FORT WORTH

West Side church of Christ
6110 White Settlement Rd. 76114
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
(817) 738-7269

GRANBURY

church of Christ
4313 Old Granbury Road
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
817-913-4209 or 817-279-3351

HOUSTON

Fry Rd. church of Christ
2510 Fry Road (77084)
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:20 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
Bob Pulliam: (281) 832-4633, www.fryroad.org

HOUSTON

Spring Woods church of Christ
9955 Neuens Rd. at Witte Road
Worship 9 A.M., Bible Study 10 A.M.
Worship 11 A.M., Evening 6 P.M.
Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist (713) 419-1750
www.springwoodschurchofchrist.com

IRVING

Westside church of Christ
2320 Imperial Dr. (closest to DFW Airport)
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 9:50 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
Evangelist: Mark Roberts (972) 986-9131
www.JustChristians.com

LANCASTER

Pleasant Run church of Christ
831 W. Pleasant Run Road
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:20 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
(972) 227-1708 or 227-2598

LUBBOCK

Indiana Avenue church of Christ
6111 Indiana Avenue
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(806) 795-3377
www.lubbockchurch.com

LUFKIN

Timberland Dr. church of Christ
912 S. Timberland Drive
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 9:50 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelists: Harold Hancock & Reagan McClenny
(936) 634-7110 or 632-7070

MANSFIELD

Northside church of Christ
1820 Mansfield-Webb Road
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:20 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 5:30 P.M.
www.northsidecoc.us
Evangelist: Tom Roberts (817) 466-3160

NACOGDOCHES

Stallings Dr. church of Christ
3831 N.E. Stallings Drive
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:20 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelists: Randy Harshbarger & Jay Taylor

PLANO

Spring Creek church of Christ
2100 W. Spring Creek Pkwy., (North Dallas Suburb)
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
(972) 517-5582, www.planochurch.org

SAN ANTONIO

Grissom Rd. church of Christ
5470 Lost Lane at Grissom Rd.
San Antonio, TX 78238-2700
Bible Classes 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday (Ladies Class) 10 A.M.,
Wednesday (Bible Class) 7:30 P.M.
Terry Starling, Evangelist
www.grissomroadcoc.org

SAN ANTONIO

Pecan Valley church of Christ
268 Utopia Avenue, (I-37 S.E. Exit Pecan Valley)
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Clyde W. Carter (210) 337-6143

SHERMAN

Westwood Village church of Christ
314 N. Tolbert
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Jim Smelser

TEMPLE

Leon Valley church of Christ
4404 Twin City Blvd.
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
Evangelist: Jason Garcia
yourfriendjgar@gmail.com
www.biblemoments.org

WACO

Sun Valley church of Christ
340 E. Warren St. (In Hewitt, a suburb of Waco)
Bible Class 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Marc Smith
(254) 666-1020 or 420-1484

THE WOODLANDS

Woodlands church of Christ
1500 Wellman Road • P.O. Box 7664 (77380)
Bible Class 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:20 A.M.
Evening 5 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
(281) 367-2099
www.woodlandschurchofchrist.org

VIRGINIA

CHESAPEAKE

Tidewater church of Christ
217 Taxus Street
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Steve Schlosser (757) 436-6900

CHESTER

Chester church of Christ
12100 Winfree St., (Central to Richmond,
Hopewell, Petersburg, & Colonial Heights)
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 5:30 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
church Building: (804) 796-2374, (804) 385-2725
or (804) 271-0877

NEWPORT NEWS

Harpersville Rd. church of Christ
315 Harpersville Road
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Wednesday 7:00 P.M.

RICHMOND (METRO)

Courthouse church of Christ
Courthouse Rd. at Double Creek Ct.
(2.2 miles S of Rt. 288)
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Gene Tope (804) 790-1629
www.courthousechurchofchrist.com

RICHMOND

Forest Hill church of Christ
1208 W. 41st Street
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 6:00 P.M., Wednesday 7:00 P.M.
Evangelist: Jack Bise, Jr. (804) 233-5959

RIDGEWAY

church of Christ
2970 Old Leaksville Road
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 5:30 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(276) 956-6049
www.churchofchristatridgeway.com

ROANOKE

Blue Ridge church of Christ
929 Indiana Avenue N.E. (5 min. from Roanoke
Convention Center)
1st Lesson 9:15 A.M., Bible Study 10 A.M.
Worship 11 A.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
(540) 344-2755

VIRGINIA BEACH

Southside church of Christ
5652 Haden Road
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Robert Mallard (757) 464-4574

WASHINGTON

BELLINGHAM

Mt. Baker church of Christ
1860 Mt. Baker Hwy.
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
Evangelist: Joe Price (360) 752-2692 or 380-2960
www.bibleanswer.com/mtbaker

TACOMA

Manitou Park church of Christ
(meets at Gray Middle School)
6229 S Tyler Street
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Wednesday 7 P.M.
(253) 242-3098
tacomachurch@gmail.com
www.tacomachurch.com

WEST VIRGINIA

CHARLESTON

Oakwood Road church of Christ
873 Oakwood Road
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 10:50 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
oakwoodrdcoc@suddenlinkmail.com
www.orcoc.org • (304) 342-5637

CLARKSBURG

Westside church of Christ
Davisson Run Road
Sunday Morning 9:30 A.M.
(304) 622-5433
www.westsidechurchofchristwv.net

FAIRMONT

Eastside church of Christ
1929 Morgantown Avenue
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 10:45 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(304) 363-8696 or (304)844-2437

GLADESVILLE

Gladesville church of Christ
2906 Gladesville Rd., Independence, WV 26374
Sunday Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 10:45 A.M.
Sunday 7 P.M., Wednesday 7 P.M.
(304) 864-3078

MOUNDVILLE

Moundville church of Christ
210 Cedar Street
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10:30 A.M.
Evening 6:30 P.M., Mid-week 7:30 P.M.
Evangelist: Tony Huntsman (304) 845-4940

PARKERSBURG

Marrtown church of Christ
825 Marrtown Road
Bible Study 9:30 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 7:30 P.M.
(304) 422-7458 or 893-5227

WYOMING

RANCHESTER

Ranchester church of Christ
Hwy. 14 West, Ranch Mart Mall
Bible Study 9 A.M., Worship 10 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday 6:30 P.M.
Contact: Bob Reich (307) 655-2563

CANADA

CALGARY, AB

Northside church of Christ
803 20A Avenue NE
Bible Study 10 A.M., Worship 11 A.M.
Evening 6 P.M., Wednesday Bible Study 7 P.M.
+1 (403) 452-5116
www.churchofchristcalgary.com

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CHANGE**

**2018
TRUTH LECTURES**

now re-scheduled for

JUNE 25TH - 28TH

To be held on the campus of the Athens Bible School
in Athens, Alabama. The theme is
“In the Beginning...” (Growing from Genesis)