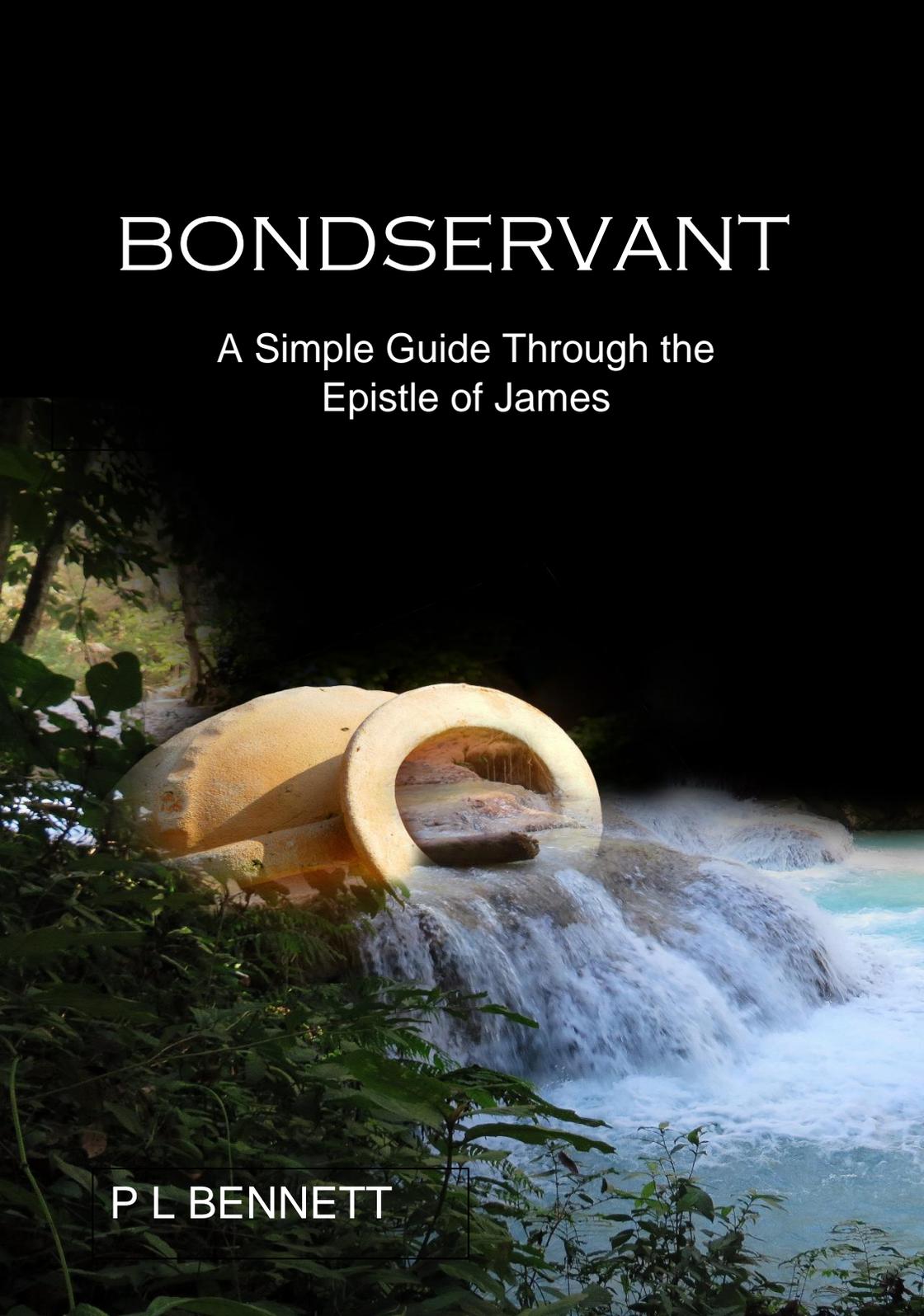


BONDSERVANT

A Simple Guide Through the
Epistle of James

A photograph of a waterfall cascading over a concrete pipe in a lush, green forest. The pipe is yellowish and has a circular opening. The water is white and foamy as it falls. The background is dark and filled with green foliage.

P L BENNETT

Learn how to flow in your calling... by harnessing the
teachings of the Bible!

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P. L. BENNETT

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INTRODUCTION

Bondservant provides the reader with a simple summation of the Epistle of James (also known as the Book of James) focusing on the main themes. This practical guide is not designed to replace reading, studying and understanding the Bible for yourself or spending time with the Holy Spirit for Him to reveal the deeper meanings to you. It provides the reader with an overview of the Book, with its' emphasis on practical Christian living and how to apply your faith to real life situations.

After Jesus was born, Mary and Joseph went on to have other children. James, author of the Epistle of James in the New Testament is one of Jesus' brothers. Although His brothers and sisters were sceptical towards His ministry and did not support Him, they did however begin to believe after His death and resurrection. James, the oldest of Jesus' brothers was a witness to His resurrection and became an Apostle after Jesus ascended to heaven, so was not one of the original twelve. The book was written in approximately A.D. 60 and provides a practical guide for the Christian; identifying very real struggles that Christians are faced with.

The book of James consists of five chapters. It is a small but powerful book which addresses the issues Christians are faced with, how to overcome them and what will happen if we do not follow the right processes. This book is very 'matter of fact' and provides practical help and advice for the Christian to put into practice when faced with struggles and challenges to their Faith. James does not compromise, he says it as it is. Today we tend to compromise with our language and try not to use the words 'hate,' or 'evil,' or 'lies.' We

think those words are too strong, so we find gentle phrases and alternative words that have similar meanings. He highlights the types of problems we are faced with, how to overcome them and points out the things we are doing wrong when we cannot overcome.

Like James, learn how to be the faithful Bondservant for Christ.

Chapter One

Against the Grain

James opens chapter one by showing his complete commitment to Jesus, declaring who he is in Christ. As a 'Bondservant' he is completely at the disposal of Jesus and will permanently serve Him for the rest of his life. And this is his choice, he has not been forced or coerced to preach and teach The Gospel. The Jewish people being an occupied nation are now scattered abroad, so this teaching is intended to be distributed worldwide. When we make the commitment to follow Christ, through our own choice we too become 'bondservants' of God. We choose to serve him for life, ensuring The Gospel is spread far and wide. It will not be easy but it will be greatly rewarding.

When you become a Christian you immediately 'go against the grain.' Everything you thought you knew, the way you behaved in the world and your thought processes will change. Jesus constantly went 'against the grain,' not because He set out to do this but because His ways and standards for living a righteous life is far removed from the life we live in the world. The way of The Lord is not the way of The World and James confirms this from the outset. His first advice is to be joyful when you are faced with diverse challenges and struggles.

Verse 2: **My Brethren, count it all joy when you fall into diverse temptations...**

No one would naturally become joyous when they are struggling, have issues and are stressed by life. But James says that these trials will test our Faith which in turn will be a source of strength for us to perfect us as Christians. He continues to name the various things that we may struggle with, what to do about them and what will happen if we don't apply these teachings to our lives.

Lacking in Wisdom

It is fair to say that with the state the world is in today we very rarely use wisdom when we make choices, in our lives: relationships, decision making, life choices and our actions towards each other. The absence of using wisdom in our daily lives, not only impact others but will have a direct impact on us. Wisdom is a rare commodity, yet is completely free. We cannot go out and buy it, as it is not for sale and it doesn't matter how positive we try to be, it will not just present itself before us. Wisdom, as defined by Nelson's Illustrated Dictionary of the Bible; is "the ability to judge correctly and to follow the best course of action, based on knowledge and understanding."

The true wisdom of God and those who serve Him far transcends the wisdom of the world. In God, this gift will flourish beyond your expectation. If you are not making the right decisions in your life you will have to live with the consequences of it, but there is a simple solution to this problem:

- Ask God for it, by Faith, without wavering
- If we waver, and are unstable in our beliefs we will not receive anything of the Lord

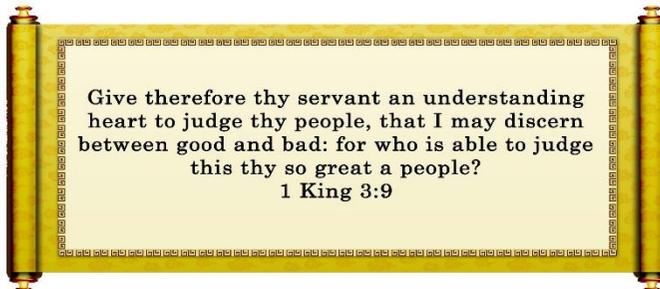
- If we continue to live without wisdom in our lives, we will continue to make the same mistakes again and again.

I find that wisdom is greatly under-rated in life. When you are applying for a job, how often do you see ‘wisdom’ listed in the list of requirements for the role? The following is a list of just some of the desirable qualities employers look for:

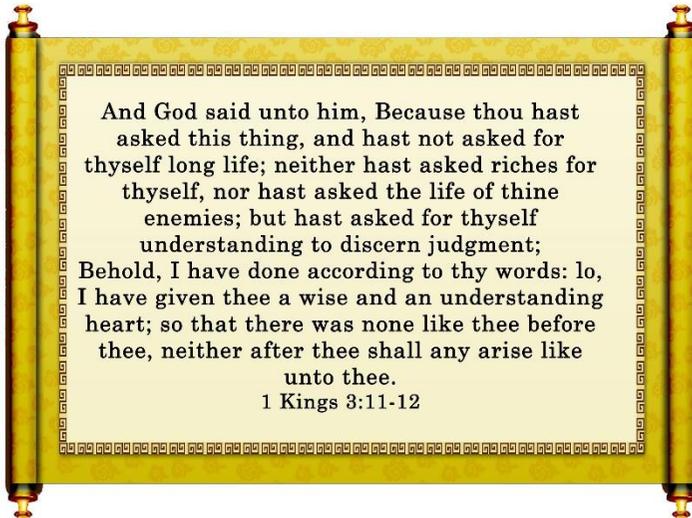
Strong communications skills
Excellent interpersonal skills
Driven and ambitious professionals
Knowledge and experience in the given field of work

I have never yet seen ‘wisdom,’ or any other Godly characteristics requested by an employer. Yet wisdom is the ability to judge correctly based on knowledge and understanding. In light of this I understand better why there are so many people incorrectly placed in a job they are ill equipped to do.

You may be thinking, what has ‘wisdom’ got to do with business? Who needs wisdom to be a successful businessperson? Well, let me draw your attention to Solomon, the richest man and king who ever lived; even by today’s standard. God appeared to Solomon in a dream and told him to ask for something from Him. Solomon asked for ‘wisdom’!



God was pleased with this request because Solomon needed the necessary skills to rule over God's people and no amount of riches or self-effort would have qualified him for the task. So God gave Solomon the great gift of wisdom and more.



From the gift of wisdom, so many other great qualities and skills were birthed. Sound judgement, a heart to do the right thing, empathy, astuteness, great communicator; and more: which made Solomon the greatest businessman both of his time and ours. Many travelled from far and wide to see him in action and to bestow great gifts on him. He amassed great wealth... and all from being a wise man with an understanding heart. Many businesses today could learn a lot from Solomon.

Today there seems to be a desire for gifts that bring fame, recognition and riches. But James confirms here that

wisdom is one of the first gifts we should desire and we should go directly to God for it.

Wealth and Status

Whilst it would be wonderful never to be financially embarrassed, never to be in debt or to struggle for life's essentials; there is more to life than riches. Not to make light of this situation however, which has broken many individuals and families through the centuries when they see no way out of their situation and resort to criminal behaviour, taking of lives or sinking into despair. Our normal reaction to such a state would be stress, fear, anxiety, insecurity living in lack or resorting to drastic means to turn the situation around. It is in these times that we must go against the grain and do the exact opposite of what is expected of us or what comes natural to us.

Verse 9: **Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted:**

James' advice here is:

- Rejoice that although you have little material goods and have low status in the world; in God, you are above all that. (This does not mean that you will suddenly become materially rich and wealthy; but you will be rich and wealthy in the things of God.)
- Wealth does not strengthen the rich, and their ways are not pleasing to the Lord.
- James uses the analogy of the sun rising for a moment in all its' glory; its' beautiful rays and burning heat withering the grass and flowers but it too perishes as it does not last, this is not its permanent state.

Many are rich in material goods and shine brightly for a while like the sun, but are very poor in love, humility, wisdom, morality; the things of God. By following the guidance of the Lord, rejoicing in Him and not being envious of what others have; we will grow in humility and rich in the blessings of the Lord. These are the qualities that will outshine the rich and pomp who care nothing for the poor.

Going through Trials

Whether you are a Christian or not, you **WILL** go through trials. The moment we rejected God and chose Satan in the Garden of Eden; we signed up for trials and misfortunes. There is no getting out of it nor avoiding or sidestepping it: Satan makes sure of that. We are faced with these struggles whether we are directly responsible through our actions or not. James tells us how to deal with these trials:

- Embrace your trials because God will bless you if you don't give up, and endure to the end
- The crown of life is eternal life with God after this life is over
- All those who continue to love God through their trials and do not give up will receive this gift of life

When we go through struggles and challenges in life we like to blame someone for this even when it is directly our own fault. More often than not the world likes to blame God. James tells us here to stop blaming God for our shortcomings and for the bad things that happen to us.

Verse 13: **Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:**

I have heard Christians say that because they didn't pay their tithes, God made something bad happen to them and they had to pay all their money to fix the problem, so God was punishing them for not paying their tithes! Or God made them get sick as a punishment for something they had done wrong. Or when marriages fail; if God didn't want them to get married He should have stopped them...the list of accusations go on and on! Somehow, we manage very well to shift blame onto God. But James is saying here, that we of our own free will, lust after things. We have a great desire to have what we want regardless of the cost which is sin and when conceived it brings forth sin! The definitive reward for Sin is Death.

God is life, He does not sin and is not sin, so He cannot give us the fruits of sin. Sin is from darkness (Satan), and God is the "Father of Lights," so His gifts are always good and perfect. God gives life! He will never stop being who He is, to consult Satan for some inspiration on how to punish us and make our lives a misery; then after He has inflicted pain on us He goes back to being a loving God! He will never do that. God never changes and never deviates from being who He is, and James confirms this in the following verse:

Verse 17: **Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.**

There are no shades, shadows, darkness or variations in God, He remains the same always. The Book of Malachi in the Old Testament 3:6 confirms this: For **I** am the Lord, **I change not**;

As Christians, we must know the God we are claiming to serve and never misrepresent Him or agree with others who do. When we follow our desires, and fall foul of life, the Lord does not interfere in our choices. He has given us free will. If He didn't step in to prevent Adam and Eve from disobeying Him, He won't step in now to force us to do His will. You cannot tell someone they love you, they have to tell you themselves and they have to show it through their actions. No one who values the love of another will try to force that person to love them, it has to be freely given or it means nothing. So, God will not make bad things happen to us so that we will chose Him, He allows us to make our own choices.

The remainder of chapter one guides us into good Christian living:

Swift to Hear Hear what others are saying quickly, whether it be those preaching and teaching the Word of God, or the things we hear in our everyday lives. Process that information to decide what is right and what is wrong.

Slow to Speak Once you have processed that information, think before you speak. Many people will say the first thing that pops into their head, which often results in others being offended, them being misunderstood or other consequences. This however, should not be the case for the Christian. Think

before you speak, take your time and if it does not need to be said; don't say it!

Slow to Wrath: The Christian should never be 'hot tempered,' quick to anger or fly into a rage for simple things. Whilst a Christian can be angry without sinning, someone who angers easily and often cannot produce the righteousness of God. This is something that needs addressing in the life of a Christian.

Reject Immorality: Do not live an immoral, wicked, corrupt life. This message is clear and simple.

Live by the Word: Don't just hear the Word and do nothing about it, Christians must put the Word of God into action. When we hear it, read it or study it, if we don't put it into practice we are likely to forget it; but when we do it, our lives will be blessed by it. We are not likely to forget something if we are living it.

Don't Deceive Yourself:

If someone claims to be religious, in other words claims to be spiritual or living a righteous life, but cannot control what they say and deceives themselves into thinking they are living right; then their Christianity is in vain. By Faith we should continue to do God's work and help others in the world, but not be corrupted or tarnished by the world.

Putting Chapter One Into Practice

Now you have read and understood it; put it into practice.

1. Know who you are in Christ, don't be afraid to declare it and commit to it.
2. Embrace the tests to your Faith by being joyous in your trials.
3. If you are lacking in Wisdom, ask God for it by Faith and do not waver in your belief.
4. If you do not have great wealth and worldly status, don't be envious of others. Be happy in the Lord and with what you have.
5. Don't be sad or worry about what you don't have.
6. Endure through your trials and do not give up. God will reward you if you persevere.
7. Do not blame God for the things that go wrong in your life.
8. Analyse the things you hear and act wisely.

Chapter Two

The Royal Law

James opens chapter two with the statement that the Faith of our Lord Jesus Christ is without partiality. He continues with an example of something that happens all too often in the world today; showing love and respect to some while rejecting others. He teaches us how to show love to each other and not show special love to some while dismissing others. Jesus was no respecter of persons, meaning He showed love to everyone in the same way. To the Lord no one is more important than the other. Partiality is a sin and if we respect or love someone who is rich, dresses well has a certain status and hate someone who is poor and not dressed well or treat them any less than the other person, we are guilty of committing that sin.

James tells us to fulfil the 'Royal Law' which is to love each other as ourselves.

Verse 8: **If you fulfil the Royal Law according to the Scripture, you shall love your neighbour as yourself, you do well.**

James continues to teach that we cannot attempt to keep one of God's law whilst breaking another. We must keep them all for if we break one we are guilty of breaking them all. The only way we can keep God's law is by strengthening our Faith in Christ. We cannot do it through self-effort. If our Faith is rooted in Christ we will produce the fruits of righteousness.

Faith without Works is Dead

We must exercise our Faith in God through our works. Knowing someone is in need and sending them away with a few well-meaning words of encouragement, but not giving them the things they need, is not beneficial to either parties. That is Faith without works. You encouraged them by your Faith but you did not follow through by helping them in their predicament.

Verse 17: **Even so Faith, if it has not works, is dead, being alone.**

The message here is that we must act on our Faith. We cannot say we have Faith or live by Faith, yet we do nothing to make that Faith work in our lives. Just to be clear, if we live our lives focused on works and do all the good we can, according to our standards; and have no Faith, this means nothing to the Lord either. And likewise, if we claim to have all the Faith in the world and do nothing with it, that too is meaningless. True Faith will always produce works for God. James uses the example of Abraham who had great Faith in God, so when God asked him to sacrifice his only son, he obeyed because he had a complete and unwavering trust in God to provide the sacrifice; and God did. Abraham's Faith was made perfect by his works in following God's command. Had he refused to do what God asked then his Faith would have been dead, no point to it. The final point James makes in this chapter is that just as the body cannot exist without the spirit so too Faith cannot exist without Works!

Example:

If I say I am a writer and I believe by Faith that God has called me to write, yet after declaring it and believing it I did not write anything; then I have no works attached to my Faith, so it would be dead! I wouldn't be benefitting from my Faith or my writing. When your Faith in God begins to grow, the things you are able to accomplish through Him is so awesome that it can be quite overwhelming at times. There should be a perfect balance between Faith and Works, one cannot be of benefit without the other.

Putting Chapter Two into Practice

Now you have read and understood it; put it into practice.

1. Do not show partiality, love everyone the same.
2. Love others as you do yourself.
3. You can only keep God's laws by Faith in Him and not in your own abilities.
4. Act on your Faith in God. It is not enough to just declare you have Faith, it should produce works.

Chapter Three

Teachers of the Gospel

Verse 1: **My Brethren (colleagues, members), be not many masters (teachers), knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnations (punishment).**

James begins chapter three with a gentle plea that many of us should not become teachers of the Gospel and continues with an explanation of his bold statement. He warns that we stumble in many things, but the one that does the most damage is the tongue, which he later describes as “the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity.” I think we can all agree with that statement. Tongues have started wars, destroyed civilisations and continues to cause humiliation and pain... this small member of the body is most powerful and James highlights this.

His reason for telling us not to rush to become teachers is because we have such a great responsibility in teaching the Word of God that if we mislead or teach incorrect doctrine, the Lord will hold us responsible and the punishment will be greater for us than for others. If we did not offend anyone with our words we would be perfect, but unfortunately this is not the case. James uses the analogies of a Horse with a Bridle and a large Ship with a Helm to explain that it is a small member of those large vessels that can control them or do the most harm. If those small members of the body can be controlled, then the whole vessel will be kept in check.

Our tongue can cause a lot of damage to others if we do not control it and be mindful of what we say. The message here is that our tongue is such a small member of our bodies yet it can be destructive and corrupt the whole body, by setting us on a particular path which could ultimately cause us to lose our Salvation.

Verses 9-10: **Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.**

We cannot claim to be living a righteous life, if as a Christian we are seen to be blessing God one minute then cursing each other the next: and from the same mouth!

Wisdom of God vs Worldly Wisdom

James goes back onto the subject of 'wisdom.' He continues to teach us about two types of wisdom, that of God and that of the world and how we can identify both. If a believer is wise and knowledgeable, then this will be apparent through the way they speak and live. However, if they have envy and contention in their hearts he is warning them not to be boastful and lie against the Truth which are the things of God. For this type of wisdom is NOT given by God but is 'earthly, sensual and devilish.' Envy and strife causes confusion and these are works of the devil and not of God. The wisdom from God is pure and brings peace, is gentle and can be reasoned with, is merciful and good; impartial and not hypocritical.

Putting Chapter Three into Practice

Now you have read and understood it; put it into practice.

1. Keep your tongue in check, think before you speak. The tongue is a small member of the body but can cause the most harm. It is dangerous and can cause you to lose your Salvation, so rein it in.
2. If you are a teacher be mindful that you teach the correct doctrine of Christ because you have a responsibility not to mislead people.
3. If you mislead anyone you will be judged more harshly than others.
4. God's wisdom is pure and is far greater than the wisdom of the world.

Chapter Four

Fighting Amongst Each Other

James opens chapter four with advice against the all too common practice of fighting amongst each other. He teaches us that this kind of behaviour comes from our own lusts and desires and not of the Lord.

Verse 2: **Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not.**

We fight, war and kill for the things we don't have, and we still cannot obtain them because we are not conducting ourselves in the right way. Instead of asking God, we fight amongst each other and even when we ask we don't ask in the right way, so we still don't receive from God. Remember, God does not bow down to us and does not come under our will.

Verse 4: **You adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?**

When we forge our friendships in the world and gain pleasures from it, that friendship will put a wedge between us and God. The Holy Spirit who dwells within us does not like this because as Christians He wants to give us the fullness of Grace, but we prevent Him from doing this.

Strength to Resist the Devil

As a Christian if we resist the devil He will leave us. We know he will always try to find a way back into our lives, but when we build on our relationship with God, the devil will

always be on the outside trying to find a way in. He will have no power over us. Unfortunately, all too often we don't acknowledge when the devil is in the detail. We are more than happy to blame God for everything that goes wrong in our lives, but rarely level the blame at the person who is truly responsible. We talk often of 'acts of God,' when natural disasters destroy regions culminating in mass loss of life; yet how often do you hear someone say; "this was an act of the Satan?" Once the devil gets a foothold in our lives or in situations, his ultimate goal is to destroy and that is what he does. God will always resist the proud and give grace to the humble.

We must make a conscious decision and have a desire to resist the things that are not of God. We cannot be passive bystanders in our Christian Faith. We must take our problems to God and ask Him to help us to overcome them.

Verse 8: **Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners and purify your hearts, ye double minded.**

The message hear from James is very clear. Get close to the Lord, allow Him to cleanse us, purify our hearts and do not be double minded. We can only achieve these things if we humble ourselves before God and remain in a close relationship with Him. The devil cannot remain in God's presence, so if we are in God's presence you can be sure the devil won't be! The Lord can only lift us up if we are humble. If we have already lifted up ourselves onto our self-made pedestals; what more is there for God to do with us?

Don't Judge

James goes back onto the subject of the tongue and warns against speaking evil of each other and judging each other. We should never judge anyone, regardless of what they are doing and how they seem to be living their lives. This is not the same as identifying when someone is doing something wrong. We must know what is wrong and what is right, to avoid being led astray; but never declare what you think their final reward will be because we don't know.

Verse 12: **There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who are you who judges another?**

Jesus is the only one who has the authority to Judge, so when we place ourselves in that position and start judging each other we are placing ourselves in the position of God. And we know what happened to Lucifer when he tried to put himself on the same level as God; an unceremonious fall from grace by being thrown out of heaven.

Presumptuous

We constantly make big plans for the future; often we live in the future with no respect for the present. Plans to go away for a period of time and live life according to our desires without acknowledging how fragile life really is. James warns against this as we do not know if we will live to see it.

Verse 14: **Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appears for a little time, and then vanishes away.**

He describes life as a ‘vapour,’ here only for a short time and then vanishing away. And finally, a most important message we should take away from this and use from this moment on.

When making the big elaborate plans for the future, do it with the realistic acceptance of what life is really like and with respect to the Lord for blessing us with it in the first place. Talk to the Lord about it, acknowledging that all the plans you are making, you make if the Lord will it and if you live to see the future. A wise person will always recognise the fact that so many things are out of our control, constantly changing from one minute to the next and should ask the Lord for His blessings for the future. Wisdom is in play again!

Putting Chapter Four into Practice

Now you have read and understood it; put it into practice.

1. Do not fight with each other. Remember someone can fight with you only if you are willing to fight back.
2. Practice walking away, it’s not a weakness, it is a strength.
3. Strengthen your relationship with God and not with the world.
4. Actively resist the things not of God, because they are of the devil. That is the only way you can get him to flee from you, although he will keep trying to come back.

5. Allow the Lord to cleanse you and humble yourself before Him.
6. Don't presume that the future is yours, be mindful that we do not know what will happen from one hour to the next.

Chapter Five

The Storing of Wealth

In this the final chapter, James speaks strongly against the rich who have gained their wealth by corrupt means. He speaks strongly against wealth being stored and not used for any worthwhile means. It is not a sin to be rich, but it is a sin when it is stored and is good for nothing but to 'gather dust,' while others are suffering.

Verse 3: **Your gold and silver is cankered (to become infected) and the rust of them shall be a witness against you.**

Heaping up treasures at the expense of others and becoming rich through fraudulent activities, living luxurious and self-indulgent lives caring nothing for others is not of the Lord. He hears the cry of those who have been treated unfairly. So, whatever situation we are going through, when others use and abuse us we must always know that God is not asleep and He has taken note of the injustice.

As Christians when God blesses us with financial blessings we have a responsibility to be guided by the Lord and ensure the finances are being spent in a way that is pleasing to Him. Helping others and progressing the work of His ministry.

Verse 8: **Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draws nigh.**

James tells us here that we should be patient, remain firm in our hearts because the Lord's coming is near and He will deal with everything on our behalf. We do not realise how

near the Lord's return is; because generations have grown up hearing this saying again and again. This book was written in approx. A.D. 60; we are now in the twenty first century and we are still saying The Lord will be returning soon. However, we need to remember that God's time and our time is not the same. For God, it has only been roughly two days since Jesus' first coming, but for us it's been aeons of time. So, the message here is to be patient and remain steadfast.

We are not required to respond or take action against anyone because God will deal with these injustices at the appointed time. He is the only one who has the right to judge and not us. We should not begrudge what others have, or try to take it from them. He uses the lives of the prophets as examples. They went through so much; they suffered and were killed, but their love for the Lord did not change, they were patient and trusted Him to deal with the guilty parties.

Do not Swear

Verse 12: **But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, be nay; lest ye fall into condemnation.**

Often in life we are asked to swear an oath to something or swear on the Bible in courts. As Christians, we should never do this. The Lord just wants us to say 'yes' or 'no' and to tell the truth.

James continues to tell us what to do when we are going through various situations in life:

- Afflicted, distressed, plagued with something - We should pray
- If we are happy - Sing songs of praise
- If we are sick – Ask the church elders to pray over us, anointing us with oil in the name of the Lord. Pray the prayer of Faith for healing and forgiveness
- Confess our faults to each other and pray for each other

Prayer is powerful and great things happen when we pray. James uses the example of Elijah when he prayed that it would not rain and it did not rain for three and a half years; and he prayed for it to rain and it rained again.

James finishes this book by reinforcing to the Christian that we should love and help each other. If anyone falls away from the Faith, we should help them to find their way back. The person who helps someone to find their way back to the Lord will be saving a soul and once that person comes back to the Lord all their sins will be forgiven of them. There is nothing greater that you can do for that person.

Putting Chapter Five into practice

1. Do not amass wealth through corrupt means.
2. If you are blessed with wealth and riches use it to do good and help others according to God's will.
3. Be patient and remember Jesus is coming soon.
4. Do not swear an oath and do not swear on the Bible.

5. Put the Word of God into practice when going through situations in life.
 6. Pray... a lot! Prayer is powerful.
 7. Love and help each other.
-

The Lesson

The Epistle of James teaches the Christian how to be a faithful 'Bondservant' for the Lord, through love for God and each other. It teaches us how to be like Christ and to go against the grain, not to follow the popular culture of the world. James teaches on wisdom, love, faith and building on our relationship with God; the foundations of the Christian Faith. The ultimate lesson in this small but powerful book of the Bible is to be Happy in Christ regardless of what you are going through because it will be worth the reward!