

JAMES LESSON 4
CHAPTER 2: 14 – 26
REAL FAITH IS NEVER INVISIBLE

KEY VERSE JAMES 2: 26

A. INTRODUCTION

a. IN THE VERSES THAT WE WILL READ, JAMES WILL SOUND MORE LIKE AN OLD TESTAMENT PROPHET THAN AN EARLY CHRISTIAN PREACHER – HIS LANGUAGE IS CONFRONTATIONAL. – HE EVEN INCLUDES ELEMENTS OF IRONY AND SARCASM. HIS PURPOSE WAS TO JOLT HIS LEADERA OUT OF A SPIRITUAL SLUMBER. THAT THREATENS TO SLIP INTO DEATH. HE IN INCESSANTLY DRIVES HOME THE SINGLE POINT: A “FAITH” THAT HAS NOTHING TO SHOW FOR, IT IS REALLY NO FAITH AT ALL. SUCH A FAITH IS HOLLOW SO THIN AND WEAK AS TO BE INVISIBLE. A FAITH THE REFUSES TO BECOME A LIVING SOURCE OF:

- 1. HEALING**
- 2. REDEMPTION**
- 3. BENEVOLENCE**

HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THE AUTHENTIC FAITH – VISION OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD.

***BRACE YOURSELF FOR THE VOICE OF THE APOSTLE JAMES**

***PRAYER**

***JEREMIAH 20: 9 JAMES SOUNDS LIKE THE PROPHET JEREMIAH**

b. IF WE TAKE JAMES MESSAGE SERIOUSLY AND THAT IS THE WHOLE GOAL, SO THAT HIS WORDS BURN DEEP IN OUR HEARTS; WITH THE HELP OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, THE EPISTLE OF JAMES CAN BE A PURIFYING FIRE IN OUR LIVES.

***MATTHEW 3: 11 HOLY SPIRIT AND FIRE**

***JAMES 3: 5 – 6 A MESSAGE OF DESTRUCTION**

***JOHN 17: 17 THIS IS THE PRAYER JESUS PRAYED FOR HIS DISCIPLES**

***GREEK WORD FOR SANCTIFY IS HAGIAZO, LITERALLY MEANS “TO SET APART AS SACRED UNTO GOD**

***OUR PRAYER FOR THESE VERSES: GOD “SET ME APART” FOR YOUR SACRED WORK**

***JAMES 2: 14 – 26**

B. DISCOVER

***QUESTION: WHAT IS THE EXPECTED ANSWER TO JAMES QUESTION IN JAMES 2: 14?**

***QUESTION: IN THE CONTEXT OF OUR PRESENT SOCIETY AND CULTURE, HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE PERSONS SET FORTH IN 2: 15?**

***QUESTION: WHAT KIND OF ATTITUDE IS JAMES DESCRIBING IN JAMES 2: 16?**

***QUESTION: HOW COULD ONE EVIDENCE HIS OR HER FAITH WITHOUT DEEDS OR ANY OBSERVABLE ACTION JAMES 2: 18?**

***QUESTION: WHAT KIND OF "FAITH" DO THE DEMONS HAVE JAMES 2: 19?**

***QUESTION: WHERE IN THE BIBLE DOES IT SAY THAT ABRAHAM WAS CALLED GODS FRIEND JAMES 2: 23?**

C. DISCERN

a. JAMES POSES SPECIAL CHALLENGES – JAMES INCLUDE MANY HARD SAYING IN THIS PASSAGE – HE SPEAKS ABOUT DEMONS BELIEVING – ABRAHAM BEING JUSTIFIED BY WORKS, AND EVEN COMMANDS GENTILE HARLOT NAMED RAHAP. THIS SECTION REPRESENTS ONE OF THE MORE PERILOS PORTIONS OF JAMES – WE NEED THE SPECIAL GUIDENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN SEARCHING OUT THE SENSE OF THIS PASSAGE.

***HEBREWS 10: 7 REFERENCE OF JESUS**

b. WHAT A CLEAR AND FORCEFUL EXPRESSION OF OBEDIENCE. JESUS DID NOT COME TO THINK ABOUT THE WILL OF GOD OR EVEN TO JUST TALK ABOUT THE WILL OF GOD, ON THE CONTRARY, THE LORD CAME TO DO THE WILL OF GOD – TRUE FAITH DOES THE WILL OF GOD.

***OUR PRAYER SHOULD BE, GOD GRANT ME THE POWER TO HAVE AN "ACTION – DRIVEN" FAITH!**

c. WE MUST MAKE SURE TO DEVISE A WAY TO CONTRAST JAMES USE OF "FAITH" WITH THE WAY HE USES "WORKS" OR "DEEDS". LET'S ALSO NOTE THE COOPERATION OF FAITH WITH WORKS.

***QUESTION: THE REFERENCE OF DEATH IN JAMES 2: 14 – 26**

d. THE FOLLOWING ARE SOME UNIQUE ASPECTS FOUND IN JAMES 2: 14 – 26

1. THE WORD FOR "DEEDS" OR "WORKS" FOUND IN JAMES 2: 14, 17 – 18, 20 – 22, 24 – 26 IS BUILT ON THE GREEK ROOT FOR "ENERGY" YOU CAN SEE HOW ACTIVE, FORCEFUL AND STRONG JAMES WORD FOR "WORKS" IS!

2. THE WORD FOR “SHOW” IN JAMES 2: 19 LITERALLY MEANS “TO POINT OUT WITH THE FINGER”. JAMES CAN POINT TO OBSERVABLE ACTIONS THAT EVIDENCE HIS FAITH IN GOD.

3. SOME FORM OF COMPLETE – MATURE – OR – PERFECT USED IN 1: 4, 15, 25 – 2: 8 AND 2: 22 WHAT KIND OF COMPLETION OR MATURITY IS JAMES SPEAKING OF IN THIS VERSE?

D. DEVOTE

***JAMES 2: 14 – 26**

a. THESE VERSES GIVES YOU SENSING NEED FOR CHANGE. THE INHERENT EXPECTATION OF THE SCRIPTURES IS THAT OUR FAITH IN GOD WILL MAKE A REAL DIFFERENCE IN HOW WE LIVE IN THE WORLD.

***1 JOHN 3: 17**

b. IT IS CLEAR THAT FOR JAMES, A REAL FAITH INVOLVES AN ESSENTIAL TRANSFORMATION OF EVERYTHING THAT WE SAY AND DO. – THE DEVOTE STEP IS ALL ABOUT ALLOWING THE SPIRIT TO ACTUALIIZE GODS WORD IN OUR LIVES, YET THIS REQUIRES A KIND OF SPIRITUAL PURSUIT THAT ONLY PRAYER CAN EFFECT.

***MATTHEW 5: 6**

***DO WE HAVE THAT KIND OF HUNGER FOR AN AUTHENTIC FAITH – THE KIND OF FAITH THAT JAMES SPEAKS OF.**

***JOB 29: 11 – 16 – MOST INTRIGUING BOOKS OF THE BIBLE**

***WHY DID HE HAVE SUCH A STERLING REPUTATION AMONG THE?**

c. BECAUSE PEOPLE OBSERVED HIS CARE FOR THE:

- 1. POOR**
- 2. FATHERLESS**
- 3. INFIRMED**
- 4. WIDOW**

IN THE SAM WAY, JAMES WOULD HAVE US PRAY THAT WE SEE WITH:

- 1. GODS EYES**
- 2. SPEAK WITH GODS VOICE**
- 3. HELP WITH GODS HANDS**

THE REAL EXPRESSION OF OUR FAITH MUST BE OBSERVABLE

d. THE FOLLOWING REMARKS ARE DESIGNED TO PROVIDE STRUCTURE FOR YOUR PRAYERS:

- 1. IF YOU NEVER SPOKE AGAIN, COULD PERFECT STRANGERS TELL THAT YOU ARE A CHRISTIAN?**

***JAMES 2: 18**

2. HAVE YOU EVER OBSERVED A REAL NEED AND FOR SOME REASON OR OTHER, SIMPLY WALKED AWAY?

***JAMES 2: 15 – 16**

***HOW DID THAT MAKE YOU FEEL?**

3. WITH REGARD TO FAITH AND WORKS, JAMES SEEMS TO BE CALLING FOR A PERFECT BALANCE BETWEEN THE TWO. PERCENTAGE WISE FOR JAMES, AN OUNCE OF FAITH PRODUCES AN OUNCE OF GOOD DEED, SO TO SPEAK.

***WHAT IS YOUR RATIO OF FAITH TO WORK IN YOUR LIFE?**

***HOW MUCH OF WHAT YOU BELIEVE ACTUALLY MAKES LIFE BETTER FOR THOSE AROUND YOU?**

E. DISCIPLE

a. JAMES DEMANDS A GODLY LIFE THAT IS ENLIVENED BY AN AUTHENTIC FAITH. JAMES SOUNDS LIKE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

***MATTHEW 5: 1 – 48**

b. LIKE JESUS, HIS WORDS ARE BEAUTIFUL AND TERRIFYING ALTOGETHER! IF AT TIMES, DON'T YOU FEEL A BIT OVERWHELMED BY JAMES, THEN YOU ARE NOT READING HIM CLOSELY ENOUGH. BUT WITH GOD, ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE.

***MATTHEW 19: 26**

c. THE FOLLOWING WILL HELP YOU BUILD AN ACTION FILLED FAITH – THE KIND OF FAITH JAMES WOULD BE PROUD OF.

THIS WEEK I COMMIT TO:

1. SEEK OUT ATLEAST ONE PERSON IN NEED AND TO TAKE SPECIFIC ACTION TO MEET THAT NEED.

2. PUT "SHOE LEATHER" TO OUR PRAYERS. THAT IS IF WE FEEL BURDEN ENOUGH TO PRAY ABOUT SOMETHING, WE SHOULD BE BURDENED ENOUGH TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT.

d. WITH REGARD TO MAKING DISCIPLES, MANY SINCERE BELIEVERS WANT TO HELP, BUT THEY DON'T KNOW HOW.

e. AS A PERSON OF FAITH WE SHOULD IDENTIFY A COMMUNITY NEED AND ORGANIZE A RELIEF EFFORT TO MEET THAT NEED.

f. WE CAN DO A LOT OF THINGS TO ACTUALIZE OUR FAITH. WHEN WE DO, WE WILL FULFILL THE WORDS OF JESUS WHEN HE SAID:

***MATTHEW 5: 16 – TO THAT JAMES WOULD SAY AMEN.**

**NEXT MONTH
LESSON 5
JAMES 3: 1 – 9
REAL FAITH SPEAKS TRUE**