

Epistle of James I Have God's Faith

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As we understand it, James was the brother of Jesus; I see no reason to say that he was not the brother of Jesus. We also have to understand that with the book of James we're dealing with something that is very unusual. You don't get this in the *King James* because of the way it's translated. So in my translation—*The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*—I try and bring it out in a much more personal way and much more understandable way, not that the *King James* is not good; it's all right, but we're dealing with ancient language.

Just to give you an example, let's show you to whom the book of James was written. Does this not make a big difference to who it's being written to? *Yes, it does!* James was highly esteemed by all of the Jews, not just Christian Jews, but *all* of the Jews. As you will read in the background, he was ignominiously martyred; I believe it was in 62_{A.D.}

The book of James was written to Jewish Christians; Jews of religion and nationality who became Christians. So, this epistle was written between, I would say, approximately 45_{A.D.} up to about 52_{A.D.} We have no exact timeframe. We don't have any timeframe, because it does not address the problem that the Church had called *the circumcision problem*. However, that does not necessarily mean that this was written before 52_{A.D.} It's just an indication that is was, but if you're just dealing with the synagogue you're not going to be dealing with a non-circumcision problem in the first place.

Let's go to James 5 and we will see something also very interesting concerning what he says later on:

James 5:14: "Is anyone sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the Church..." In this case the word is 'ecclesia'—the name for *church*—which means those who are *the called out ones*.

So, what we really are finding revealed in this: that this was sent to the Jews—also an indication to all the 12 tribes in addition to just the Jews—within the synagogue, because he says that if someone 'comes into your synagogue.' Then he says 'if any is sick, call the elders of the Church.'

What do we have? *We have within the synagogue, what we knew all the time:* Those

Jews, who believed in Christ and followed Christ, were a Church within the synagogue. That's interesting, not many people know that. I didn't fully comprehend it until I was translating it. Then I understood it.

Now, let's do just a little bit of Scriptural background before we get into the first part of the book of James, because it talks about faith, trials, and how we are going to *exercise the faith*.

We will actually see that the seven general epistles follow this exact outline as Paul gave here. I also need to mention, that these seven general epistles should, in the proper canonization of the Bible, come immediately after the book of Acts. You have Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, Acts, and then you should have James; 1st, 2nd-Peter, 1st, 2nd, 3rd-John, and then Jude, then Romans. The reason that that should be is because once you read them *you know that you are to keep the commandments of God*, without a doubt!

Whereas, if you read Paul first, especially if you read Gal. 3, where Paul said that Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law. Most Protestants think that Christ has redeemed us so we don't have to keep the law, because the law is a curse. The Law is not a curse; *breaking the Law is a curse!* That's why these should be there first.

How many even in the Church of God really get through and study the seven general epistles? I know when I was getting ready for it, Ed asked me the question: 'Well, I don't ever remember really studying those in all the years that I've been in the Church.' *True!* And the one we study the most of is 1-John. Why? *Because it has a lot to do with love!* We all want love—isn't that true? So that's why we study 1-John. But, we have to have all of it.

Notice what the Apostle Paul says here, in the love chapter, 1-Corinthians 13:13: "And now, these three remain: faith, hope *and* love..." That's the exact sequence of how these epistles are put together:

- faith is James
- hope is Peter
- love is John
- Jude is a special warning at the end

So, we have *faith, hope and love*. What we

need to really understand is that *true faith is based upon love!* And as a matter of fact, the whole Bible, when you really understand it and put it together, is based upon love. What did Jesus Christ say of the whole Bible?

Matt. 22—one of the things that this false prophet there was writing about was the thing that got to him was how could Jesus be a man of love and healing and still be intolerant and angry? *Because he doesn't know God;* it's very simple! When they were debating about which was the great law and the commandment:

Matthew 22:37: "And Jesus said to him, 'You shall love *the* Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.'" Notice the all out commitment that is there—*all of it!*

Christians are not narrow-minded. Have you ever been accused of being narrow-minded? 'Oh, you're narrow-minded.' Again, which way leads to death? *The broad way!* Christians are what kind of minded? *Single-minded!* Distinct difference between being narrow-minded and single-minded, because narrow-minded means that *you're not going to give any countenance to anybody for anything whether they even repent or not!* Single-mindedness is you're not going to give countenance to sin, but *where there's repentance, there's mercy, grace and forgiveness!* A vast difference!

This is how we're to love God, v 38: "This is *the* first and greatest commandment; and *the* second *one is* like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets" (vs 38-40).

Everything that God has ever spoken, and centered on is based upon love! Not only for the people that He's created in His creation, but also showing love that *God's way is right.* That's why Adam and Eve were cut off from the Tree of Life, after they took of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

We know the end result of what happened with the sin of Adam and Eve and what the world has come to. Would you want to live all eternity in this kind of environment, that we are living in now, with all the mayhem, sin and death? *No!* Eternity can only be experienced *when there is love and total commitment and obedience to God!* That's why He said, 'I'm going to put them out of the Garden of Eden and I'm going to put the cherubim to guard the way, lest they eat of the Tree of Life *and live forever,*' in their sinful condition. *Sinful condition* was not there; I added that.

Look at what the world has been because of Satan. Part of God's whole plan is also to stop the eternal wickedness of Satan. So, when you read in there that God destroyed these people because of this, or God destroyed these people because of that, or corrected them because of sin, *it was done in love, judgment and righteousness,* but based on love and we know from the Holy Days that there is going to be the second resurrection for all those that have not been called; so they will have an opportunity.

- What are you going to do with this little baby that was beaten to death the instant it was born?
- How is God going to undo that?
- *God is going to have to!*
- *God has a way to do it!*

You might study the whole Bible from that point of view. The whole Bible is based on love. Can you have faith in God without loving God with all your heart, mind, soul, being? *Not truly!* I mean, you can believe something, but like this book I just showed you: *The Lies We Believe.* It's absolutely amazing! This is a very good book. He also talks about 'religious' lies that people believe. Not all of them. He doesn't have all the Truth, but it's helpful. I find it's a very good book.

Let's look at some other things concerning faith, and this becomes very profound and interesting

Luke 18:8: "I tell you that He will execute vengeance for them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man comes, shall He find the true faith on the earth?" Compare that with 2-Thess. 2.

We are seeing this happen right now, inasmuch as the operation of it. I don't want anyone to say that we're seeing the *man of sin, the son of perdition* right now. That's not what we're seeing. But the *mystery of iniquity* does already work. We are saw this happen in one of the larger Churches of God. They are leaving the Truth and blinding themselves! The more that they are blinding themselves, the more new things that they say that they are understanding and uncovering. What they're doing is they're *walking in darkness* if that's in you as Jesus said.

- What kind of light is in you?
 - Is the light that is in you
 - Is it darkness
- or*
- Is it light?

Here's what happens; it's speaking of the 'wicked one'; 2-Thessalonians 2:8: "And then the

lawless one will be revealed (whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth, and will destroy with the brightness of His coming)." That ties in with *casting the beast and the false prophet* into the Lake of Fire (Rev. 19).

Verse 9: "Even the one whose coming is according to *the* inner working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders... [the lies we believe; getting set up for it] ...and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in those who are perishing because they did not receive the love of the Truth, so that they might be saved" (vs 9-10). Compare that; Jesus asked that when He comes to the earth: Will He find faith? *It's going to be hard to find! Why? Because the whole world is deceived!*]

What happens? Verse 11: And for this cause God will send upon them a powerful deception that will cause them to believe *the lie*—that that man is God. Interesting title, *The Lies We Believe*.

What kind of faith is it that we really have? This is something that is so important to understand.

Mark 9—this is when there was a casting out of a demon, which could not be cast out because the disciples didn't believe, and neither did the father believe, so it was some difficulties here.

Mark 9:21: And He asked his father, 'How long a time has this *demon* been with him?' And he said, 'From childhood. For it often throws him both into the fire and into the water, that it might destroy him. But if You have the power *to do* anything, have compassion on us *and* help us.' And Jesus said to him, '**If you can believe, all things are possible to the one who believes.**'" (vs 21-23).

The word *believe* is the verb *to be believing*, the verb of *faith*. In the Greek *faith* is 'pistos'; *to believe* is 'pisteuo.' Even in the English you have faith, which is to believe something. The noun is *faith*, but the verb is *believe*.

Verse 24: "And the father of the little child cried out at once, saying with tears, '**Lord, I believe. Help my unbelief.**'"

That's where we nearly always are in the case of human beings. We have to *grow in grace and knowledge, faith, love and hope* and all these sorts of things. Here is something we need to understand about faith. A lot of people say, 'Well, if I could just work up the faith.' You're not going to *work up* faith. ***Faith has to come from God!***

Revelation 14:12 "Here is *the* patience of

the saints..." We're going to see that in James the word should be *endurance* more than *patience*, because patience is a *quality of mind*. And as we will see it talks about in the *King James*, the patience of Job. You read Job; he was anything but *patient*, but he did *endure*.

Verse 12: "Here is the [endurance] patience of the saints; here *are* the ones who keep the commandments of God **and** the faith of Jesus."

That means Jesus' *very own faith*, that's what that means. If you "...keep the commandments of God **and** the faith of Jesus" He has to impart it. Faith is a gift; faith is something to pray for, not something you can work up. You can have a measure of your own faith and belief, but that's not faith unto salvation.

Mark 11:22: "And Jesus answered said to them, 'Have faith *from* God.'" He is saying, *have God's faith*, the faith of God. Why? *Because they looked at the miracle*, which was He cursed the fig tree on the way into the temple.

Verse 20: "And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from *the* roots. Then Peter remembered *and* said to Him, 'Look, Master! The fig tree that You cursed has dried up.' And Jesus answered and said to them, '**Have faith from God.**'" (vs 20-22). That's what he's saying; *that's the whole purpose of the book of James, to have God's faith!* Your faith is not going to do it, because *your faith* may believe a lie. ***God's faith won't believe a lie!***

He says, following up on that, v 23: "For truly I say to you, whoever shall say to this mountain, "Be taken away and be cast into the sea," and shall not doubt in his heart..."—provided it is the will of God as we tie that in with other Scriptures. God is not going to let it be used as a charlatan display for people running around in the name of God, casting trees into the ocean.

"...but shall believe that what he said will take place, he shall have whatever he shall say. For this reason I say to you, all *the* things that you ask *when* you are praying, **believe** that you will receive *them*, **and they shall be given to you**" (vs 23-24). It doesn't tell us when, and it doesn't tell us in what manner

Concerning prayer, v 25: "But when you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive, so that your Father Who *is* in heaven may forgive you your offenses. For if you do not forgive, neither will your Father Who *is* in heaven forgive you your offenses." (vs 25-26). So there's a little key in *faith and prayer*. Here's how our faith is to be:

1. it is to *come from God*
2. it is to be *living, active*.

You have to draw close to God by loving Him with all your heart, mind, soul and being. Therefore, then you can have faith.

Now, if you get to the place that you haven't been doing it like we all know we need to and you are like the man who said, 'help my unbelief'; then even God will do that.

1-Corinthians 2:1: "And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with superiority of speech or wisdom... [the wisdom of men] ...in proclaiming the testimony of God to you. For I decided not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. And I was in weakness and in fear and in much trembling *when* I was with you; and my message and my preaching *was* not in persuasive words of human wisdom; rather, *it was* in demonstration of *the* Spirit and of power; so that your faith might not be in *the* wisdom of men, but in *the* power of God" (vs 1-5). That's where faith needs to be. It needs to be *God's faith* and it needs to come *from God*. It is a gift, which He gives!

There are many important things that we can learn here with this. Many important things and we'll tie in some other Scriptures as we go along.

James 1:1: "James, a servant of God and of *the* Lord Jesus Christ..." What does it truly mean to be a servant? The Greek word there is 'doulos'—which means *a slave*. That means that you are bought and paid for by Jesus Christ, as a purchased, bought slave. What is a slave going to do? *Follow the will of his master and work for him!* This can also be translated *a bond-slave*.

We can also tie in the Scripture that we are 'bought with a price.' We are not our own (1-Cor. 6:19-20 [transcriber's correction.

James is not coming on here, saying 'Look, I am the great, lofty relative of Jesus.' He's not doing that. As a matter of fact, we find that James did not even believe Jesus until after He appeared to him, after His resurrection.

James 1:1: "...to the twelve tribes..." So, he was not just writing this to the synagogues alone where the Jews were, but to the twelve tribes where all the twelve tribes of Israel were. Did they know where the other ten tribes were?

The Jews today—I read it, I couldn't believe it; I'm reading some things in the Mishnah and the Talmud, so I know what I'm talking about with the Jews—say that the ten tribes are lost

because they were absorbed, that is intermarried into the rest of the pagan population.

But, *Josephus* records in his day, that there were millions of those who were the descendants of the ten tribes, which is far more than the number of Jews, by the way. There were millions of them during his day that lived in the area of what we call Parthia or the Caucasus, from which we get the white race that is called Caucasian, who then are the ones who have received the blessings of Abraham (Gen. 48 & 49). This is a very broad thing!

"...which *are* in the dispersion..."—Diaspora, the Greek word that also means *to be planting as a seed*—to disperse seed. Now what did Jesus say of all the tribes of Israel? *He would sift them through the gentiles and not loose one seed!* It's a very interesting word. So, he says:

"...Greetings!" (v 1). Next comes the hardest, most difficult thing for anyone to do. So he's not starting out here with an easy lovey-dovey way—is he?

Verse 2: "Consider *it*... [or *count it*] ...all joy my brethren, when you are beset by various trials." The *King James* translates it, 'when you fall into...' And the Greek means *when it happens to you*. Now that's a little difficult, and it doesn't mean that you are to count it all joy while you are going through it. But the end result of it is going to bring the joy if you do the will of God.

Now let's look at a couple of other Scriptures to go along with this. Let's look at Jesus' example; we will see the kind of joy that Jesus had, which becomes a very important example for us. In many ways, His life was really most miserable by human standards. He had no friend. He did love John; He loved His mother and Joseph; He loved everybody. But, how many loved Him in return? *None of them!* He was truly a lonely man.

When we have all kinds of trials flying against us, we have the Word of God. I don't know any place, brethren, where you can come to have any understanding of your trials and difficulties, except the Word of God. There's no other writing, there's no other book, there's no other way that will do it this way. We're not dealing with some counselor whose holding your hand and telling you good and nice and lofty things, because when you are in the midst of a deep trial those things are really very shallow.

Hebrews 12:1: "Therefore, *since* we are surrounded by such a great throng of witnesses... [all the examples in the Bible of the faithful

ones] ...let us lay aside every weight...

You've got to be willing to give up everything for God! That means in whatever trial you are going through, you set aside any of your own thoughts. Don't judge it based on your own thoughts, because you may be like this book, *The Lies We Believe*, and you're not perceiving it the way that it should be. That's why the Bible becomes so very important.

"...and the sin that so easily entraps us; and let us run the race set before us with endurance, having *our minds* fixed on Jesus, the Beginner and Finisher of *our* faith; Who for the joy..." (vs 1-2). When was there that joy? *Before and after the crucifixion!* That's when it was. Was it joyful going through the things that Jesus went through?

- To be scourged?
- To be spit upon?
- To be beaten?
- To be pummeled?
- To be crucified?
- To have the spear shoved into His side and He died
- To spill out every drop of blood that He had?

NO! He prayed, 'Oh, my Father, if it be possible, take this cup from Me: nevertheless, not My will, but your will be done.'

"...Who for the joy that lay ahead of Him endured *the* cross, *although* He despised *the* shame, and has sat down at *the* right hand of the throne of God. Now meditate deeply on Him... [you look to Him] ...Who endured such great hostility of sinners against Himself..." (vs 2-3)—and He did! All of our problems come that way, too.

Sometimes we run up against things that are just absolutely incredible to hold onto. But, it's the old saying: you think you've got it bad, because you lost a foot, and then you find someone who has lost both legs. And he thought he had it bad until he found a man who lost both legs and one arm. And he thought he had it bad until he found a man who lost both legs and both arms. And he thought he had it bad until he found a man who lost both legs and both arms and lost his hearing. And he thought it was bad until he found a man who lost both legs, both arms, his hearing and his sight.

If you think life is tough for you, go back and see the movie, which was excellently well done, on Helen Keller. She didn't ask for it. She didn't want it, but she was born deaf and she was born blind. So, we can look at that as a human example. And you know who she credits coming

through all that? *God and the love of the one who finally said 'I'm going to teach her.'* **Look to Christ, consider Him.**

"...so that you do not become weary and faint in your minds... [*and give up!*] ...You have not yet resisted to the point of *losing* blood in your struggle against sin" (vs 3-4)—or enduring any problem, that you're going through. It says that God is going to chasten you, God is going to correct you, that's all part of the trials that we go through.

Verse 5: "And you have already forgotten the admonition that He addresses to you as to sons: 'My son, do not despise *the* chastening of *the* Lord, nor grow weary of being reproved by Him.'" Lots of times God doesn't even have to chasten you or rebuke you. You run up against the problems of your own life, which are the result of sin!

"For whom *the* Lord loves He chastens, and He severely disciplines every son whom He receives.' If you endure chastening, God is dealing with you as *a Father* with *His* sons. For who is the son whom *the* Father does not chasten? But if you are without chastisement, of which all are partakers, then you are bastards and not sons. Furthermore, we have had our fleshly fathers who chastened *us*, and we respected *them*; should we not all the more *willingly* be subject to the Father of spirits, and live *forever*? For in the first case, they chastened *us* for a few days in whatever way seemed good to them; but in the second case, He *chastens us* for *our own* benefit that we may be partakers of His Holiness" (vs 6-10). **Looking toward eternal life;** that is fantastic and tremendous, brethren.

Verse 11: "Now truly, no chastisement... [or trial] ...for the present seems to be joyous, but grievous..." That's the thing concerning trials and chastening. When you are going through it, it is not joyous. Yet, James says, 'count it all joy' when you become involved in various trials. So, on the surface it seems like there is a contradiction, but there isn't, because the way that that is phrased by James is a looking back on it, rather than while you're being involved in it.

It is clarified here, v 11: "...nevertheless, **afterwards...**" I've gone through trials that I had thought would never end, but they do. Some are kind of continuous, they on go and they have little highs and lows all along with various degrees of intensity, but we can learn from them.

"...nevertheless, afterwards it yields *the* peaceable fruits of righteousness to those who have been exercised by it.... [and part of faith is this] ...Therefore, lift up the hands that are hanging down, and *revive* the weakened knees; and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which *is* lame be

turned aside; but let it rather be healed. Pursue peace with everyone, and Holiness, without which no one will see the Lord; looking diligently, lest anyone fall from the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble *you*, and through this many be defiled" (vs 11-15).

This book *The Lies We Believe*, shows how that many people end up in bitterness, because when they're going through trials and problems they focus in on that, and they try and a keep score, who's right/who's wrong. You can't do that. You have to turn to Christ and let Him do all of the scoring. ***The first thing is repentance and forgiveness and getting your life cleaned up!*** Don't try and count the score.

James 1:3: "Knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance." As I mentioned, patience is a *frame of mind*. Endurance is a *going through* the frame of mind, *going through* the difficulties— *enduring*. It's producing endurance. Remember what we read there concerning that 'he who endures to the end, the same shall be saved' (Matt. 24:13)—same root word *enduring*.

Verse 4: "But let endurance have its **perfect** work..."—*completeness*. Since most trials are not perfect—but miserable and a result of mistakes and trauma—it's kind of difficult to say:

"...let endurance have *its* perfect work so that you may be perfect and complete, **not lacking in anything**" (v 4). That's really something to keep hold of.

That doesn't mean that God is going to give you everything. That doesn't mean God is going to give you the world. But, that means that *you're not lacking in anything spiritually in relationship to faith, because you believe*. And if you do, then it doesn't matter what happens, in the final analysis. Going through it makes a big difference in the short term.

(go to the next track)

Let's see something interesting here with this and see how James 1:2 & 4 tie in with the beatitudes in Matt. 5. We are dealing with, vs 1-4, the attitude toward problems, toward trials. We're dealing with the reason that it is there, because it's *to test our faith* and *to give us endurance*. And we know the outcome: that we become complete and whole *spiritually*, lacking in nothing.

As we go along through the whole book of James, I think you'll be surprised how many of these things tie back into the beatitudes:

Matthew 5:10: "Blessed *are* those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness..."—otherwise, you feel picked on.

I've gone through that, too. We will see that Peter says, 'Count it all joy when you have fiery trials come upon you,' but don't anyone complain if you are being corrected for your own faults and mistakes. We can fill in the blanks with that.

It's like when I got a ticket recently speeding, coming up here. It wasn't God's fault; it was mine. I didn't count that joyous because I had to pay \$142; they raised the price! But, I was happy, from the point of view that I wasn't in a wreck, there wasn't any problem that way. That was not for righteousness sake that I got the ticket. There was no blessing in it. It was a penalty. So, we need to make sure that we understand the difference in it.

- if you are persecuted because you love God
- if you're persecuted because you believe
- God
- if you're persecuted because you keep the commandments of God

count that joy and a blessing!

Verse 10: "...for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are you when they shall reproach you, and shall persecute you, and shall falsely..." (vs 10-11). Did they not do that to Jesus? *Yes, they did!* That's why it's important that He said it, because He lived it and experienced it in perfection. Can we then believe the words of Jesus Christ? *Absolutely!*

"...say every wicked thing against you, for My sake. Rejoice and be filled with joy, for great is your reward in heaven; for in this same manner they persecuted the prophets who *were* before you" (vs 10-12).

Verse 48 talks about *perfection*. This is the ultimate character perfection that trials are going to bring, which *when we endure through faith*, we will achieve and finally at the resurrection.

Verse 48: "Therefore, you shall be perfect..." How are you perfect?

- through the power of God
- through the grace of God
- through the trials you go through

Verse 48: "Therefore, you shall be perfect, even as your Father Who *is* in heaven is perfect." That is the ultimate goal that we are shooting toward with faith and hope and love.

Let's talk about a little bit of endurance; Matthew 24:13: "But the one who endures to *the* end, that one shall be saved"—showing *endurance*.

Matthew 10:22: "And you shall be hated by all for My name's sake; but the one who endures to the end, that one shall be saved." his shows how long the endurance must be, to the end, either of your life or the return of Christ, whichever timeframe you happen to be living in the time that calls you in your life.

Romans 5:1: "Therefore having been justified by faith..." What does that mean?

- that you absolutely, truly believe God
- that Jesus Christ was that sacrifice given for the forgiveness of your sins
- that upon repentance God puts you in right standing, justified before Him, through Christ *by your faith*

That's why prophecy will never save anyone.

"...we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through Whom we also have access *by faith* into this grace in which we stand..." (vs 1-2). That is really something that God would do that.

- talk about *God's love*
- talk about *God's mercy*
- talk about *God's patience*
- talk about *God's endurance*

Put yourself in God's place for a minute and just view this whole world. Does it not take love, forbearance, patience and endurance to go through and complete your plan—*You* being God, from that perspective—in the time that God would have it done? How many of us would just intervene and we would kill the whole thing right now? *Yes, it takes that patience, takes that love, by faith!*

So, *we stand in that grace* "...and we ourselves boast in the hope of the glory of God" (v 2).

That's something—isn't it? *We rejoice in that hope*, that God says, 'Look, you're not going to be a human being forever. If you endure to the end, you have faith till the end, I will resurrect you and give you a spirit body of glory and of power.' *That's the hope! That is the hope, and we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God!* That's what's so important. God is interested in saving the individual that he calls.

Verse 3: "And not only *this*, but we also boast in tribulations... [trials, tests and temptations that come along] ...realizing that tribulation brings forth endurance."

As a matter of fact, you might look that up in your *Interlinear* and I think its translated

endurance there, too; it's the exact same Greek word. Isn't that what we need? *We need endurance! Absolutely!*

Verse 4: "And endurance *brings forth* character [experience]..." What does experience do? *That means you can help someone else, because, you have experienced it!* Isn't that true? Can you not help people more when you've experienced something? You can say, 'Yes, I've gone through something like that, I have experienced that! Therefore, I know that this is God's way to do it.'

However, that doesn't mean that in order to be able to help someone who has problems and sins, that you must necessarily do the same thing in order to understand it. People say, 'We'll help the drug addicts by sending out an addict.' That's a whole wrong premise. Maybe by testimony of a converted addict to another addict, he can help, that may be true; he's had the experience. But, what really needs to be beyond the experience is to have the situation where that you understand there are choices. It's the choices that are important. Concerning testing and trying, God does not tempt anyone with evil. He gives us choices, not evil.

"...and character [experience] *brings forth* hope. And the hope of God never makes us ashamed because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, which has been given to us" (vs 4-5). That makes the complete picture; That's what becomes exciting.

I know in my own life, and I know in your own life, what is the one thing that we fail to do? I'll confess my weakness in it. *We fail to pray when we are in trouble*, for whatever reason. Because:

- 1) You're ashamed to admit that you sinned. But, you know you did.
 - 2) You think that God is looking down on you; so therefore, you don't go to Him to pray, because you don't know whether God is going to hear you or not.
- If God knows everything and every hair on your head, does He already know that you've done that?
 - Whatever it may be, does He already know you're in some kind of trial?
 - *Yes, He does!*

So, what we need to do is get more in the practice and habit of praying *when* we find ourselves in different trials and problems and difficulties, because God is there. If you have the faith of Jesus Christ and God, then there will be a solution to the problem. How that solution comes

about will be determined by how God is going to work it out.

If there's more than one person involved, if it's just a personal problem, that's between you and God. If it involves someone else, it's between you and God and between the other person and God and between you and the other person. So, that becomes somewhat more complicated, because there are times when one person is willing and the other is not. you can't do anything about that other person who is not willing if there're not willing to choose God's way. that compounds the problem. But nevertheless that should give you steadfastness in looking toward the love of God, in being able to solve your problem and endure and gain the experience from it.

Let's come back to the book of James. I'm going to go ahead and we'll cover the next section. I'll read it all the way through. Then we'll go back to the verses, and we'll go through each one analytically.

James 1:5: "However, if anyone lacks wisdom..." I tell you, that's the thing we lack more of in any trial—isn't it. What is the thing that you say, that I say, that everyone says when they go through a problem and don't handle it correctly? You say that was *a stupid thing to do*. Politicians say 'I did not exercise good judgment there.'

"...However, if anyone lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, Who gives to everyone freely.... That is a present tense verb; He *is giving* to everyone *freely*; no charge, no cost!

"...and does not reproach *the one who asks*; and it shall be given to him. But let him ask in faith, not doubting at all because the one who doubts is like a wave of *the sea* that is driven by the wind and tossed *to and fro*. Do not let that man expect that he will receive anything from the Lord. *He is* a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways." (vs 5-8). Now those four verses there really tell us an awful lot, they really do!

Let's go back and look at each one of them there; v 5: "However, if anyone lacks wisdom, let him ask of God..." One of the biggest problems we have in trying to solve our own problems, is to do it our own way, ***rather than asking wisdom from God to do it God's way!***

What happens when we use our own wisdom? *We do stupid things!* Sure we do! So, you ask God. Does God want to give you wisdom? Does God want to provide for you? *Certainly, He does!*

Let's look at the beatitudes again. He will give to us. God is not necessarily going to give us the things that *we want* and the way that we want them or how that we want them, because God is not a *catalogue*. God is not an *order-filler*. God is not *QVC*. God does not react like an *ATM socialist*. Do you know what an *ATM socialist* is? *One who treats life like an automatic bank teller!* You walk up and stick your card in. No questions asked, you get exactly what you punch in there and you get it. No responsibility and you walk away. And furthermore, you hope that it doesn't charge your account.

The socialist attitude: *this is the way it ought to be for everyone*. But, that's not life. I call them the ATM socialists. They want everything now. They want it now and they want it to be fair and they want it to be given to everyone instantly. God is not that way, He says:

Matthew 7:7: "**Ask**, and it shall be given to you. **Seek**, and you shall find. **Knock**, and it shall be opened to you." This shows that there is some work and effort involved. That it's not going to be 'give me this Lord, give me that Lord, give me the other thing Lord.' He may give you something, but not what you're asking for. You may ask God for wisdom. Immediately a trial comes upon you and you say, 'God, why did I have this trial come upon me.' If He would talk to you He would say 'Well, you asked for wisdom, so I gave you a trial, so that you could learn to have wisdom in this trial.' Isn't that what we're talking about here? *Yes!*

Verse 7: "**Ask**, and it shall be given to you. **Seek**... [if it doesn't come right away, it will] ...and you shall find. **Knock**, and it shall be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it shall be opened" (vs 7-8). The Greek means:

- Knock—*and keep on knocking*
- Seek—*and keep on seeking*
- Knock—*and keep in knocking*

And it shall be given to you. That was the whole thrust of that.

James 1:6: "But let him ask in faith, not doubting at all..." Not doubting a thing; that becomes important.

Here's how we approach God. Not only that He exists, not only that He is, but ***He is everything that He said that He is, and much more than what is revealed to us!***

Heb. 11 talks about faith and what faith really is. You have to be asking in faith. Faith is more than just pretending you're going to believe.

There's the pretend faith, which little children have. They have faith in Santa Claus; that's all pretended by everyone. So, it's not that kind of thing. 'Oh, Santa Claus bring me a Nintendo.' I love the ad for the movie, where they show the Santa Claus and this little guy comes up with these two glasses and he looks up at Santa Claus and he's asking him for something and Santa Claus looks at him and pushes him down the slide with his foot. To me, that is really terrific in showing the futility and stupidity of the thing called Santa Claus. But, too many people treat God like Santa Claus. Too many people treat faith like a pretend belief, but it's more than that.

Hebrews 11:1: "Now faith is *the substance...*" That's what it is. It's the actual, *spiritual substance!* Is there such a thing as spiritual substance? *Yes, there is!* Are there things that we don't see that are there? *Yes!* That's what he is saying.

"...faith is the substance of *things* hoped for, *and the conviction* of things not seen.... [Why? *Because God IS!* That's why.] ...For by this *kind of faith* the elders obtained a good report. By faith we understand that the worlds were created by *the Word* of God, so that the things that are seen were made from *things* that are invisible" (vs 1-3). Which is a tremendous modern scientific statement when we understand it. It talks about the faith of Abel and the faith of Enoch.

Verse 6: "Now, without faith..." [separate from faith] ...*it is impossible to please God.* For it is mandatory *for* the one who comes to God to believe that He exists..." That God *is*, that He *exists*. If you just believe that there is a Creator, you're not any better than the demons. They believe and they tremble because they know the judgment of God that is coming.

Jim Eason had a guy on there also from Berkeley. I thought it was interesting. But legally and philosophically he is disproving evolution and proving that there had to be a Creator. And everyone says, 'Oh my, isn't that interesting, isn't that good?' As we were listening, I made the comment that it doesn't make him any better than the demons—does it? He doesn't want to believe the Scriptures. He doesn't want to believe God, but he wants to believe there is a Creator. If you believe there is a Creator, does that not mean that He has sovereignty over your life? They don't carry the next step up. You must believe that He is, that He does exist, that everything about Him. That what He says is absolutely true and right, the kind of faith that can only come from God. You can't work it up inside.

"...For it is mandatory *for* the one who

comes to God to believe that He exists, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him" (v 6). That's why.

James 1:6: "But let him ask in faith..." because *that faith that you have is the spiritual substance, that it is so!* Now, that's something! You can go to God and say, 'God here I am. I'm miserable and wretched and rotten, which we all are. I don't have the faith that I ought to, which you know.' We're not going to kid God—are we? Are we ever going to kid God about anything? *Of course not!* 'Help me in my unbelief. Grant me that faith, so that I'm not going to be' like it says here:

"...because the one who doubts is like a wave of *the sea...*" (v 6). You're just driven emotionally, like water, back and forth.

Go down someplace where you can watch the ocean, and watch those waves come crashing in. Surfers generally like to get out there two days before the storm arrives, because the wind has been driving those waves from the storm, which is still out in the Pacific, hasn't quite yet come. So they get out and they ride those waves in. But you watch when those waves hit the rocks; they are just tossed to and fro and crashing. That's a real good description of what it is when you don't have the faith, which is the substance, the spiritual substance, which comes from God.

"...like a wave of *the sea* that is driven by the wind and tossed *to and fro*. Do not let that man expect that he will receive anything from the Lord" (vs 6-7). You are asking for yourself, you're not asking the will of God. *It has to be the will of God!*

Verse 8: "*He is* a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways." Why is that so? *Because you are not loving God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, with all your being*, so therefore, you are double-minded.

It's interesting in the Greek, it is 'dipsuchos,' which means *two-souled* or *two-spirited*. 'God, I've got this part of my mind for *you* and I've this other part of my mind for *me*.' For work! You cannot have faith that way. Then what happens? You have a double standard. You're unstable, on again/off again; up/down, all that sort of thing. Which is different than the trials where you're up and down, because in the trials where you are up and down, then your faith remains stable, *if you have the faith that comes from God*. That's what we need to ask for.

Now then, we get into a whole different section here when we're getting into the rest of it. Next time I'll show some different things

concerning faith and concerning your attitude and concerning what happens when you are blessed and what kind of blessing it is that comes and then it will show the result of enduring the trials which are very, very important. Then we'll get into: Does God ever tempt you with evil? It is an interesting statement there.

Verse 13: "...God is not tempted by evil..." I'll let you think on that statement, because that says an awful lot. What does it mean? God is not tempted with evil? What would be the ramifications if He were?

All Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

Scripture References:

- 1) James 5:14
- 2) 1 Corinthians 13:13
- 3) Matthew 22:37-40
- 4) Luke 18:8
- 5) 2 Thessalonians 2:8-11
- 6) Mark 9:21-24
- 7) Revelation 14:12
- 8) Mark 11:22, 20-26
- 9) 1 Corinthians 2:1-5
- 10) James 1:1-2
- 11) Hebrews 12:1-15
- 12) James 1:3-4
- 13) Matthew 5:10-12, 48
- 14) Matthew 24:13
- 15) Matthew 10:22
- 16) Romans 5:1-5
- 17) James 1:5-8, 5
- 18) Matthew 7:7-8
- 19) James 1:6
- 20) Hebrews 11:1-3, 6
- 21) James 1:6-8, 13

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- James 2:2
- Galatians 3
- Revelation 19
- 1 Corinthians 6:19-20
- Genesis 48, 49

Also referenced: Books:

- *The Lies We Believe* by Chris Thurman
- *Josephus*

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