

## Lesson Four — James Chapter One, Part II: Life vs. Death

*Day One — Attitude, Attitude*

*Day Two — Our Old and New Natures*

*Day Three — Do Not Be Deceived*

*Day Four — The Salvation of the Soul*

*Day Five — The Sanctification Process*

Last week we began to closely observe James chapter one. We read what James told his brethren concerning trials — that they should not be surprised when they encounter *various* trials. In fact, they should consider trials to be joyous, because trials produce endurance, and endurance will have its perfect result — causing them to become perfect (mature), lacking nothing. In other words, trials cause one to come to spiritual maturity! This week we will continue in James chapter one to learn more about trials.

Why don't you stop right now and pray for your week of study. Perhaps you could also pray for the other people in your study, as well as your discussion leader. Then pray for me, too. Thanks!

### Day One — Attitude, Attitude

What attitude should we have towards trials? What attitude should we not have towards trials? So far, James has dealt with the proper attitude one should have towards trials (1:2f). James begins now to deal with what an *improper* attitude towards these same trials would look like. Read James 1:13-18, then look up the definitions in the Appendix:

#### James 1

13 Let no one say when he is tempted by evil, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone. 14 But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. 15 Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death. 16 Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. 17 Every good thing bestowed and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation, or shifting shadow. 18 In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we might be, as it were, the first fruits among His creatures.

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To get started in this passage, look up the following words:

tempted <3985> (check all the words *tempted* in v. 13)

carried away <1828>

enticed <1185>

lust <1939>

conceived <4815>

sin <266>

accomplished <658>

death <2288>

brought <616> (used in vs. 15 and 18)

Now re-read vv. 13-15 with the understanding of these definitions and make any notes you feel are helpful.

To whom would James be speaking in the passage? How do you know?

In the v. 13, James seems to be warning his readers that there is a temptation during a trial to blame God for tempting us to sin. What attitude is James telling us that we should have concerning this?

Write out the progression of the passage from vv. 14 through 15.

Now continuing through v. 18, compare and contrast the idea of bringing forth something in v. 15 to bringing forth something in v. 18. What do you see here?

Look closely at v. 14. James is referring to the old nature of man. What is it in a person that carries him away?

According to v.15, what happens when lust goes unchecked?

As a believer, do you have need to be concerned with your old nature (your sinful nature), or is there no need to worry about it because this nature is already dead? It is very important to understand this correctly. At this point, do you think that you need to be concerned about your old nature or not? Why, or why not?

What does the passage say will happen when sin is *accomplished*?

The word *accomplished* is an interesting word. This particular word is only used one time in all of Scripture, and it is herein James chapter one. The word has a very strong implication that the sin is brought to a **full and complete end**; it is **fully accomplished**. This is not referring to a sin that a believer just happens to fall into. This is referring to sin that *controls* the believer because that individual refuses to repent from it, *though he/she has the power, through the Holy Spirit, to do so*.

Before we stop for the day, we'll look at one related passage having to do with our sin nature and the result of *fully accomplished* sin. Then we'll pick it up again tomorrow.

#### Galatians 6

**1 Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted. 2 Bear one another's burdens, and thus fulfill the law of Christ. 3 For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. 4 But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have reason for boasting in regard to himself alone, and not in regard to another. 5 For each one shall bear his own load.**

**6 And let the one who is taught the word share all good things with him who teaches. 7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. 8**

**For the one who sows to his own flesh shall from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit shall from the Spirit reap eternal <166> life.**

eternal <166> (See also <165>)

What shall *sowing to the flesh* reap?

What shall *sowing to the spirit* reap?

Would this passage be speaking to a believer or a non-believer? How do you know?

Does a non-believer have the ability to *sow to the Spirit*? Why, or why not?

Does a believer have the ability to *sow to the flesh*? Why, or why not?

As we stop today, ask the Lord to continue to teach you as you go about your day. Meditating on the Word allows the Holy Spirit to work in your life.

## Day Two — Our Old and New Natures

Yesterday we were looking at what sin brings about when it is *fully accomplished*. We will continue looking at this subject today. Be sure to stop and pray for the Holy Spirit to be your Teacher.

Before we get started, you might want to quickly skim yesterday's work.

Below is printed a passage from Romans. As you read it, be sure that you understand that Paul is writing "to all who are beloved of God in Rome, called saints" (Ro. 1:7). He is writing to saved people! Now look what Paul says to these saints:

### Romans 6

**12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body that you should obey its lusts, 13 and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. 14 For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law, but under grace...**

**21 Therefore what benefit were you then deriving from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the outcome of those things is death. 22 But now having been freed from sin**

**and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life.**

Can a non-believer present their *bodies as those alive from the dead* and *their members as instruments of righteousness*?

Can a believer allow sin to reign in his mortal (fleshly) body to the point of obeying the lust of his body?

Can a believer go on presenting his body as instruments of unrighteousness? What would the outcome be?

In reading v. 22 in the above passage, remember what you have learned about the English word *eternal* (see <166>). As shown by the context of this passage, the passage is dealing with the idea of ***life in the coming age*** rather than *the free gift of life, which begins now and extends throughout all the eternal ages*.

It is important for us to see our *old sinful nature* and *sin itself* in proper perspective. The Apostle John made it very clear:

**1John 1**

**8 If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.**

Kenneth Wuest, in WUEST WORD STUDIES VOL. 4, has a very good comments on the previous passage, which has to do with the old nature. The bold print is added for emphasis. Wuest writes:

(1:8) ‘Sin’ here [in I John] is singular in number and is used without the definite article, all pointing to the fact that **the nature** is referred to, not the acts of sin....

John says therefore, “If we say that sin we are not having, ourselves we are deceiving.” Notice, if you will, the emphatic position of the pronoun, “ourselves.” The Christian who believes his evil nature has been completely eradicated is deceiving himself, no body else. All others can see sin stick out all over his experiences. And that sin must come from the indwelling sinful nature.

John says that the truth is not in the person. In the case of the Gnostics, that statement must be taken in an absolute sense. They were unsaved. In the case of the misinformed and mistaken present-day Christian, the statement will have to be qualified to mean that the truth of the indwelling sinful nature is not in him.

Translation. *If we say that sin we are not having, ourselves we are leading astray, and the truth is not in us.*

You see, a believer certainly does have his old nature with which to deal! At this point in our Christian walk, it is the spirit *alone* which has been **totally** redeemed from above by faith in the blood of Jesus Christ. He brought us to Himself, and has given us His Spirit by which we are to live. Now we, as a Christian, must choose to live by the Spirit rather than choosing to live by the flesh, *the choice is ours to make*. And Scriptures are replete with warnings and motivations given to us so that we make the spiritual choice. The flesh, however, is alive and well, and must be put down at every turn. The Spirit gives us the

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power to put the flesh down, but doesn't do it for us. We, ourselves, must choose. Hence, you have the warnings throughout Scripture.

The fact is that James is giving this warning in 1:13-15 to his brethren — fellow Christians. (Remember he is writing to believers who have been scattered due to the persecution in Jerusalem and surrounding area.)

We know from other passages in Scripture that once a person is “born from above”, having experienced spiritual birth, that he can never do anything to lose the security of the eternal gift of life because that gift of eternal life is based on the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross. And His work alone.

So as James is speaking to believers, what is he saying that ‘fully accomplished sin’ brings forth?

What does he mean by “death”? Do you understand what he is saying? Write out what you think.

In order to understand the picture of life and death as the potential for the *believer*, we must **stay within the context of the passage**. Death, as it is used in Scripture concerning mankind, *always means separation*. For the unbeliever, it has to do with being separated from God eternally. But for the believer, death has to do with being separated from God for a period of time — whether separated from God in fellowship here and now (until repentance and confession takes place [I John 1:9]), or separation from ruling and reigning with Christ during all or part of the millennial reign of Christ. But when dealing with a believer, death *never* means being separated eternally! It cannot be so. Context will reveal the way in which death should be seen in any given passage.

On the other hand, *life*, as it is used in Scripture, always means *union with God*. Any given passage may deal with life in the *eternal sense*; or any given passage may deal with life in the *millennial sense*. It depends upon the context of the passage. (The same is true for death.)

Here in the Book of James, we are considering what death might imply for a believer (1:13-16).

Let's look at a couple of instances concerning *death* in Scriptures. What brought about the death of Adam?

What did death mean for Adam?

When did Adam die?

Let's think about the Children of Israel. What about the first generation of the Children of Israel — were they redeemed?

Where did they die — in the wilderness, or in the land of inheritance?

What brought about their pre-mature physical death?

What did this physical death prevent them from experiencing?

The Children of Israel had been redeemed through the mighty acts of judgment and by God's outstretched arm. God had carried them to Himself on the wings of eagles (Exodus 19:4-5). Therefore, they will be raised to eternal life. Yet they missed their goal — that of their personal inheritance in the promised land.

Subsequently, Joshua encouraged the second generation of Israel not to fall in the same way their parents fell. Joshua spoke the following words to the second generation just prior to their inheriting the promised land, as God's Own Redeemed people. Read what choice the second generation of the Children of Israel had:

**Deuteronomy 30**

**11 "For this commandment which I command you today is not too difficult for you, nor is it out of reach. 12 It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will go up to heaven for us to get it for us and make us hear it, that we may observe it?' 13 Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will cross the sea for us to get it for us and make us hear it, that we may observe it?' 14 But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may observe it.**

**15 "See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, and death and adversity; 16 in that I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments, that you may live and multiply, and that the LORD your God may bless you in the land where you are entering to possess it. 17 But if your heart turns away and you will not obey, but are drawn away and worship other gods and serve them, 18 I declare to you today that you shall surely perish. You shall not prolong your days in the land where you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess it.**

Go back and circle what would bring them *life and prosperity*. Write the words *life and prosperity* in the left hand margin. Then draw a box around what would cause them to experience life and prosperity.

Now, circle the words *death and destruction* and write the words in the left hand margin. Then draw a box around what would cause them to experience *death and destruction*

This double message is a message spoken to the same group of people! Obviously, this same group of people had the ability to experience either outcome. The difference would be made in the choices that they made.

Are you wanting to cry out, **"Yes, but that was the God of the Old Testament"**?

Is He a different God? Or is He the same yesterday, today and forever?

You see, if they were not redeemed people they would, in no way be able to understand God's Word, much less, obey it. (See vv. 11-14 in the above passage.) It is only people spiritually alive people who can even

understand God's Word and who would be expected to obey it (1Cor. 2:13-14). That was as true in the Old Testament, as it is true in the New.

While it is true that the first generation experienced premature **physical death** as a result of their disobedience, it is also true that this death did, in fact, deny them their inheritance in their promised land. As well, Joshua warned the second generation about the possibility of their own premature **physical death**, as a result of disobedience and sin, just as their parents had died prematurely in the wilderness.

Herein implication for us is equally great! Yes, we are warned in the New Testament, as well, concerning premature physical death as a result of continued, obstinate sin and rebellion against our Father. But the implication goes beyond physical death for us, just as the implication went beyond physical death for the Children of Israel.

The disobedient and unbelieving of God's redeemed children lost their inheritance in the earthly land to which they were called out of bondage. They were called for the purpose of receiving, as a first born son of God, the right to rule over the entire earth with God dwelling in their midst as King. It is very important to understand they were unbelieving *with respect to what God said concerning the promised land*, but they were not unbelieving with respect to the blood of the paschal lamb. In Numbers 14:20, God told Moses that He had forgiven their sin (speaking of the first generation of the Children of Israel). They were a forgiven and a redeemed people. *Nevertheless* (a powerful and sad word, as it is used in Numbers), He would never allow them — the individuals who refused to believe and obey God concerning the land — to rest in the land to which He had called them. They had forfeited their personal right as first born sons. Only Joshua and Caleb of that first generation were able to realize their inheritance, because they *were whole-hearted toward God* (see Num. 14).

So what about us? In what way would sin cause us to experience death? You may not be able to answer this yet, but let's keep going and by the end of chapter one in James you should understand. We'll pick it up tomorrow.

Do you want to write down any thoughts or prayers as you close?

## Day Three — Do Not Be Deceived

Begin today in prayer.

Let's go back to our text. James makes a plea with a direct address in v. 16:

**James 1**

**16 Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.**

What does he warn the brethren about in v. 16?



There are a couple of places in Scripture where believers are warned against being deceived. We glimpsed one passage on Day One of this week. Let's look at it again:

**Galatians 6**

**7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. 8 For the one who sows to his own flesh shall from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit shall from the Spirit reap eternal life. 9 And let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we shall reap if we do not grow weary. 10 So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith...**

What are we not to be deceived about?

Look up these definitions:

destruction <5356>

eternal <166> (Also see the sheet in the Appendix entitled Eternity — Is it Eternal or Age-lasting?)

life <2222>

Be sure to look up both *eternal* and *life* together. And remember what you have previously learned concerning the word *eternal*. The phrase *eternal life* used here is in this passage must be kept within the context. Paul is dealing with *the works of believers and their reward*, not with the Work of Christ and the free gift. Therefore the phrase *eternal life* would have to do with the **coming age** and *the inheritance of the rights of the first born* rather than the free gift of life in eternity.

From the previous passage, what are we not to be deceived about?

Now read a companion passage below:

**1 Corinthians 6**

**9 Or do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, 10 nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, shall inherit the kingdom of God.**

The following questions may seem redundant to you, but please be patient. Repetition is the best means of keeping what you have learned!

What does it mean *to inherit the kingdom of God*?

How would one miss their inheritance in this kingdom?

Does it mean that one would lose their free gift of eternal life?

Are you beginning to see how this fits together within the context?

OK. Let's summarize what we have seen. So far, we have seen that James is encouraging the people toward faithful endurance in the midst of persecution and trials. He writes that these trials have the potential of bringing them to maturity (v. 4). This kind of maturity would accomplish something else for them — the right for them to wear the crown of life (v. 12).

James warns his readers that when God is taking them through trials He is doing it in order to purify their faith and make them stronger and more enduring, bringing them to maturity. But some might wonder if God would be testing (tempting) them towards evil. James says that God CANNOT tempt them with evil; but rather it is THEIR own lusts, via their flesh, that would be pulling them towards evil. And unless they control their lust, it would bring forth sin, and when sin is *fully accomplished*, it brings forth *death* (vv. 13-15). This death would prevent them from being able to receiving the crown of *life*.

Can you see the tension here between **life** and **death**?

Then James tells his readers not to be deceived about all that he is writing and to realize that God always brings forth trials for a revealed purpose — that of bringing believers to maturity.

Verse 16 seems to be a connector, connecting the previous passage (vv. 13-15) with the following passage (vv. 17-18). James is tells his readers two things: 1) that they are not to be deceived about the fact that fully accomplished sin brings forth death, explaining the whole process which leads to that death, and 2) that our Father in heaven is always good to His children. Read the passage.

**James 1**

**15 Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death. 16 Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. 17 Every good thing bestowed and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation, or shifting shadow. 18 In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we might be, as it were, the first fruits among His creatures.**

What does “bring us forth” mean?

Again, what does fully accomplished sin bring forth (v. 15)?

What does “the Word of truth” bring forth (v. 18)?

Now let’s look at a cross reference to the *perfect gift bestowed upon us from the Father of Lights*. Pay particular attention to v. 7:

**Titus 3**

**3 For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. 4 But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, 5 He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, 6 whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 that being justified by His grace we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal <166> life. 8 This is a trustworthy statement; and concerning these things I want you to speak confidently, so that those who have believed God may be careful to engage in good deeds. These things are good and profitable for men.**

Write in your own words what this passage is saying:

Go back to James 1:18 and underline the purpose for which God *brought us forth*. Now underline the purpose for which God *justified us* in Titus 3:7. Titus 3:7 is closely related to James 1:18. In both passages you see the fact that *God is the One Who bestowed the gift*, AND you see the *stated purpose for the gift*. But the purpose must be worked out by the one who received the gift (Titus 3:8, James 1:19ff, which we will be getting to before week’s end).

Several things must be understood here, then we can finish the first chapter of James and tie the whole thing together. You must understand that there is a **specific purpose for redemption**. (Remember the picture of the Children of Israel and their redemption from bondage **for the purpose of** being brought into the promised land **in order to be** the people through whom God set up His theocratic kingdom [Ex. 19:4-6]. James says that the one who endures will receive the crown of life, and then mentions and our being “first fruits.” Titus speaks of our being *made heirs according to the hope of eternal life* (inheritance of life in the coming age).

Let’s look at a cross-reference on first fruits and see what it has to do with.

**1 Corinthians 15** (the space between verse 23 and 24 has been added for a purpose)

**20 But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep. 21 For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive. 23 But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ’s at His coming, 24 then comes the end, when He delivers up the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power. 25 For He must reign until He has put**

**all His enemies under His feet. 26 The last enemy that will be abolished is death. 27 For HE HAS PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET. But when He says, “All things are put in subjection,” it is evident that He is excepted who put all things in subjection to Him. 28 And when all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him, that God may be all in all.**

Verse 20 speaks of Christ being raised as a first fruit, singular in the original language, but with an implied promise of plurality because He would be the first of many raised. In fact, ALL who are “in Christ” will be raised at His coming, but all in a specific order (i.e., those who have died in Christ will be raised first, then those who remain alive on the earth will be caught up to be with Him in the air [see 1 Thes. 4:16-17], then after the Tribulation, those who became believers and were martyred for their faith during the seven-year Tribulation [Revelation 20:4-6]).

Then there is a space in time of not less than 1007 years (the seven-year Tribulation and the 1,000-year reign of Christ) between vv. 23 and 24 (which is my reason for putting a space between the two verses — to give a visual demonstration of the extent of the time). This is when “then the end comes...” which is at the **end of the coming age**, after He has restored everything as it should be, and after the final enemy — *death* — has been put under His feet. “Then the end will come...” and eternity future will begin.

Verses 25 through 28a is almost a parenthetical thought recapping the thousand years and verse 28b “...that God may be all in all” describes an aspect of eternity future.

Do you understand these things?

Now, let’s relate this information to our passage in James. Notice the tension between death and life in James 1:15-18. Then add the information concerning first fruits in 1 Corinthians chapter fifteen. First fruits has to do with people who will be raised to reign with Christ for one thousand years until He has subjected everything to God.

Remember, we are trying to understand the **purpose** for the free gift in connection with the warning about not being deceived about sin — that fully accomplished sin brings forth death. We have already seen that the purpose has something to do with being *first fruits*, and *wearing a crown* or *being an heir*. Hebrews has another cross reference on the subject. As you read this passage, be sure to catch the *reference to time* in Hebrews 2:5.

**Hebrews 2** (the words ‘man’ and ‘Jesus Christ’ are added in the text below for clarity)

**5 For He did not subject to angels the world to come, concerning which we are speaking.**

**6 But one has testified somewhere, saying,**

**“WHAT IS MAN, THAT THOU REMEMBEREST HIM? OR THE SON OF MAN, THAT THOU ART CONCERNED ABOUT HIM? 7 “THOU HAST MADE HIM FOR A LITTLE WHILE LOWER THAN THE ANGELS; THOU HAST CROWNED HIM WITH GLORY AND HONOR, AND HAST APPOINTED HIM OVER THE WORKS OF THY HANDS; 8 THOU HAST PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET.”**

**For in subjecting all things to him [man], He left nothing that is not subject to him [man]. But now we do not yet see all things subjected to him [man]).**

**9 But we do see Him [Jesus Christ] who has been made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone. 10 For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to**

**perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings. 11 For both He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all from one Father; for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, 12 saying,**

**“I WILL PROCLAIM THY NAME TO MY BRETHREN, IN THE MIDST OF THE CONGREGATION I WILL SING THY PRAISE.”**

**13 And again,**

**“I WILL PUT MY TRUST IN HIM.”**

**And again,**

**“BEHOLD, I AND THE CHILDREN WHOM GOD HAS GIVEN ME.”**

Verse 5 tells us that God *did not subject to angels the inhabited earth to come*, speaking of the time when the angels will no longer have dominion over the inhabited earth. This will be when Christ comes in glory to set up His administration over the earth, which will be inhabited by people. Verse 10 mentions that it was fitting for Jesus Christ to “bring many sons to glory...” These many sons are the *first fruits*, whose names Jesus will proclaim in the congregation, and in whom He will put His trust.

Write out any thoughts that you have about all of this. What does it mean to you? Are you understanding it? Or do you still have questions?

Remember to pray for understanding! See you tomorrow.

## Day Four — The Salvation of the Soul

Today we will get back to James chapter one. Now that James has explained to them the purpose for their trials, has mentioned the crown, has warned them about sin, and told them that God has brought them forth in order that they might be first fruits, he is ready to tie things up into what the Holy Spirit, through James, calls the *salvation of the soul*. Read James 1:19-21 printed below:

### James 1

**19 This you know [KJV: So then], my beloved brethren. But let everyone be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger; 20 for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God. 21 Therefore putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls.**

Now that James has said all that he has about receiving the crown of life (v. 12), spiritual warfare with the possibility of sin bringing forth death (vv. 13-15), and the Heavenly Father having brought them forth by the word of truth — for the purpose of their being first fruits (v. 18), notice how James ties it together in v. 21. At first glance you might be tempted to think that James is speaking of receiving the free gift of eternal life, since the word “saved” appears in the text. But look closely at what he says. He is already calling them beloved brothers in v. 19, telling them what they are to do, and then telling them WHY they are to do it (v. 21). They are to *humbly receive the Word*, which has already been implanted in them, which is *able to save their soul*.

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Looking up some word definitions may help:

putting aside <659> (Look up the two words which form this Greek word: <575> and <5087>. This word is a verb in the *middle tense*, which means the subject is to do the action of the verb. Therefore, We are to do the action.)

filthiness <4507>

remains <4050>

wickedness <2549>

receive <1209> (This verb is also in the middle voice--the subject performs the action, and is an imperative, which means it is a command that the subject do the action).

implanted <1721>

is able <1410>

save <4982>

soul <5590>

Now re-read the passage with the insight of these definitions and write down anything that impresses you.

In staying in the context of this chapter, prayerfully consider these questions for personal application:

According to v. 18, what has the Father's *Word of truth* accomplished in the life of the believers already?

What purpose does God's *Word of truth* continue to have?

In keeping with the context of the whole chapter, Whose voice are we to be quick to hear? Why?

What would this mean in a practical sense, especially to those who are experiencing trials and testings?

According to the passage, why should we be slow to anger?

Do you see that the **accomplishment** of *God's Word of truth* was to *bring us forth* (lit. to give us birth) *as first fruits among His creatures* (v. 18), and the continued **goal** of this *Word of truth* is to *achieve the righteousness of God* (v. 20), in order for the Word, which is already implanted, which is able to save the soul.

As one hears and believes the Word of God concerning what Christ's death on the cross has accomplished (past tense — at one point in time) a new birth occurs in that individual. And as that individual grows in faith (i.e. continues to hear the Word [Ro. 10:17]) that Word becomes implanted in him and is *able to save his soul* (present tense — a continual process) to the end of becoming a first fruit, being glorified as a son and able to wear a crown! For review on the *salvation of the soul*, see Lesson Twelve of UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE — BIBLICAL SURVEY. Understanding this phrase is key to understanding the Book of James. Many people will read, study, and/or teach the Book of James from a perspective dealing with the *salvation of the spirit* rather than the *salvation of the soul*. This should not be and has caused confusion over the years.

As a whole, James is NOT dealing with the free gift of life for eternity wrought only through faith in the finished work of Christ. The **free gift** of God is the *salvation which has to do with spirit* — our birth from above — and is something that **one receives through faith and faith alone, not works** (Eph. 2:8-9). Since James is writing to people who have already been born from above and already have had the *Word implanted in them*, he is dealing with the salvation which they are to strive for — the salvation of the soul — and it is a salvation which will yet be revealed (1 Peter 1:5).

The present striving will be in the area of trials and testing, something James has already called to their attention. They must continue to endure.

(Do you understand the difference between the salvation of the spirit and the salvation of the soul? Printed below is a working definition of both:

The spiritual birth (our presently possessed salvation) **is receiving the free gift of life for eternity** through faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ, in His shed His blood for the payment of our sin on the cross. This salvation can only happen through the intervening work of God and can

never be done away with once it is present in a person's life. It is the salvation which we presently possess in full. We can add nothing to this salvation, nor take anything away from it. Jesus has accomplished it all for us. As He hung on the cross, he said, "It is finished."

On the other hand, the **salvation of the soul is receiving our inheritance in the coming age** and all the benefits which come along with the inheritance as a first born son. This salvation is what we are in the process of working out, through the grace that God the Father extends to us through Christ, as we allow the Holy Spirit to do a work in our lives with respect to finishing the race set before us. Our inheritance, or the *salvation of the soul*, will be realized in the future, at the beginning of and during the coming age — the millennial kingdom. We do not yet presently possess this salvation, we are in process of working it out. Either we will realize this salvation, or we may not realize it in that future day when Christ comes with His Father's angels, in His Father's glory, when He will recompense all believers for what they have done in their bodies (*c.f.* Phil. 2:12; II Cor. 5:10). This salvation has to do with a believer's inclusion or exclusion from the millennial reign of Christ.

Do you see the difference? Write out in your own words what the differences are:

We'll pick it up tomorrow. Be sure to meditate on what you are learning, asking God to give you insight.

## Day Five — The Sanctification Process

Begin in prayer.

We have been considering the differences between our spiritual birth (the free gift of salvation having to do with eternal life) and the salvation of our soul (the salvation that we are to work out in fear and trembling having to do with the reward of inheritance). Today we will see that James is not the only New Testament writer who considered these distinctions. Let's look at a few New Testament passages:

**1 Thessalonians 5** (Notice the three parts of man in the following verse)

**23 Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

Put this prayer of Paul's into your own words. Just what is Paul praying for?

**I Peter 1**

**3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus**



**Christ from the dead, 4 to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.**

**6 In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, 7 that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; 8 and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, 9 obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls.**

What do you see in this passage which has to do with the saving of the soul?

Write out the progression in this passage, beginning with rejoicing over trials. (Notice that this is the place James begins, too).

**Matthew 16** (Jesus speaking to His disciples)

**24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.**

**25 “For whoever wishes to save his life [lit., soul] shall lose it; but whoever loses his life [lit., soul] for My sake shall find it.**

**26 “For what will a man be profited, if he gains the whole world, and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?**

**27 “For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and WILL THEN RECOMPENSE EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS. ..**

Write out the progression in this passage for those who want to save their souls:

Write out the progression of those who will lose their souls:

What is the exchange?

What is the time frame when either of these situations come to fruition?

The writer of Hebrews speaks of similar things:

**Hebrews 10:36-11:1** (the space in 11:1 is added for a purpose)

**36 For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised. 37 FOR YET IN A VERY LITTLE WHILE, HE WHO IS COMING WILL COME, AND WILL NOT DELAY. 38 BUT MY RIGHTEOUS ONE SHALL LIVE BY FAITH; AND IF HE SHRINKS BACK, MY SOUL HAS NO PLEASURE IN HIM.**

**39 But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving [lit., to the saving of the soul.**

**1 Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. 2 For by it the men of old gained approval.**

Read Hebrews 11:1 in conjunction with 10:39. Keep the word “faith” in the same context. Hebrews 11:1 could read, “Now faith, to the saving of the soul, is the assurance of things hoped for....” Keeping 11:1 in context helps you to understand what kind of faith the writer is writing about.

Then in Hebrews chapter eleven you have a list of what the Old Testament saints were commended for. They were commended *for what they looked forward to in the coming age*, not the simple fact that they were saved unto eternity. This kind of faith — to the saving of the soul — brought about a certain life-style wherein they persevered under various trials, etc., etc. Reading Hebrews chapter eleven from this perspective goes a long way in giving understanding of the intent. Then Hebrews chapter twelve begins with this verse:

**Hebrews 12**

**1 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us...**

Are you beginning to see that the New Testament is replete with verses having to do with the same thing: warnings, admonitions, and motivations for us to keep on keeping on for the purpose of our being glorified with Christ when He comes into His own Kingdom? What do you think about it?

As we read Hebrews 12:1 within its context, and then go to James 1:21ff, it is easy to see that both authors are dealing with the same thing. There is always action (work) connected to the saving of the soul. Look at what James says:

**James 1**

**19 This you know [So then], my beloved brethren, but let everyone be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger; 20 for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God. 21 Therefore putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls.**

Now, for the actions which James writes as necessary to accomplish the salvation of the soul (and notice he speaks again of how we might be deceived):

**James 1**

**22 But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. 23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; 24 for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. 25 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. 26 If anyone thinks himself to be religious, and yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this man's religion is worthless. 27 This is pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father, to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.**

It is within the context of the saving of the soul that James tells his readers that they should *become doers of the word and not merely hearers*. “Work” is connected with the salvation of the soul, but not with the spiritual birth, as only the work of Christ can enter into the birth from above.

From the final passage in James chapter one, what does James say will happen to the person who simply listens to the word but does not do it?

What will happen to a person who looks intently at the perfect law?

In v. 26, a religious man is a man who fears God. Make a list of the actions James tells his readers they are to do if they are to become doers of the Word and not hearers only.

As we close for the week, ask the Lord to reveal something to you personally which will lead you into a closer walk with Him. Ask Him to put within you a heart that fully desires to please Him in all your ways.

## **Week's End Summary:**

Understanding James —  
To the Saving of the Soul

Lesson Four  
James Chapter One, Part II:  
Life vs. Death