

## Healing, Believing, and True Faith, Pt. 2

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We're continuing today in the new series entitled *Healing, Believing, and True Faith*. This is *Part 2*.

Physical healing is indeed obviously a very physical thing and we're going to continue to build up to those verses in James 5 as we go through the context of those things spoken of here in the book of James. And what's incredible is you really can't understand the full impact or the things that are being said in James 5 without really grasping the context of what precedes this. And that's why we're going through this in the manner that we are.

So, let's go back there and read that again, James 5. So often physical things, especially, well, just like in the subject of healing, are able to be better understood in the sense of that which is spiritual. God uses that a lot. He uses it for Passover and all the things associated with Passover. And that's just the beginning, obviously. But so many other things, the temple. Over and over, again, so many things that we can begin to grasp on a physical plane and associate them with what God is showing us as far as that which is spiritual. And this is really what this is all about.

So, **James 5:14—Is anyone among you sick?** The word meaning "feeble" or "weak," which involves whether it be disease or illness or whatever.

**Let them call for the elders of the Church, and let them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord.** And we can stop right there and should understand then that this is something that God tells us to do, He commands us to do this And there's balance in that because sometimes we have to learn what balance is. It's not just for when we're feeling bad, or something has happened to us where something is being repeated in our lives. We maybe have something associated just with getting older. Things happen in our bodies, and they repeat.

So, it's a type of thing, again, just to give a little bit of a balance here, that when we become so ill that we really wouldn't go to work, perhaps not to Sabbath services either because we don't want something to be passed along to others. That maybe is a more precautionary type of thing where sometimes may not even require anointing but we're just doing something to be cautious - on the side of caution, I should say, in the sense of not wanting to pass something along in case it's worse than what we maybe think it is. If that makes sense. So, again, balance.

But if there is something that is bad enough that you can't get out to work, you're feeling that bad or... It says it right there, then obviously to be anointed. But we also have examples

in scripture about three times. You know, God knows the first time we come before Him and ask to be healed, to be anointed, so if we have something that's more serious and we want to continue to go before God, perhaps it gets worse—and we'll cover some of this later on—but again, certainly fine to go ahead and ask for anointing again.

But to have the same thing happening to us in life on a continual basis where we have not been healed there is not a need to continue to get anointed month after month or every two months or every three months for the next several years over the same thing. Does that make sense?

So, balance. Because God wants us to learn balance and soundness of mind in some of these things and He teaches us in a lot of different ways.

So again, I just want to repeat some of that about sickness because after the Feast and some of the things I said there's been an onslaught of anointings. Which is fine, which is good, because we want to make sure that we're doing the right thing and pleasing to God. But we want to be balanced in it too so this is a series, hopefully, that will help us in some of that.

Then it goes on to say, **And the prayer of faith will save the weary.** There is a lot here. But you can't understand it all without going back through all the scriptures leading up to this. And that's why this word here, or the words used here about "sick," it's a different one than the one before that's about feeble and being weak. This one here is about... Really gets into an area that is spiritual in a lot of respects.

**And the prayer of faith will save the sick.** So, a physical example is given here to learn something on a spiritual plane, and you have to be careful how much weight you put on it in the sense of tying them together, that they are fully tied together, that it fully is about physical healing. Because it's not. So, that's why we need to be careful in how we're approaching this and our understanding of what's being said, to try to learn from what we're being shown as far as the context that leads up to this.

**And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up.** So, is that something... Because it's been taken this way a lot in times past. Is this taken as something that is an absolute promise from God, that if we get anointed and we're sick, and healing, and that God's going to raise us up, and if He doesn't something is wrong with us. Because that's how a lot of people took it, that something is literally wrong with us, that something has happened where we're not pleasing to God. That's a bunch of malarky. And it was a total lack of balance and soundness of mind when applying these things. And that was done a lot in times past within the Church.

But again, a lot of Philadelphia was about learning balance and soundness of mind. And that doesn't happen overnight as far as a big organization as it was. It takes time to bring us out of

Egypt, to bring us out of darkness, to continue to give things to us, to build upon it. Look how long we've been building upon things in PKG since the Apostasy, and we've continued to build. And there are things you can't understand, like in the beginning of PKG, that we understand now because of what we've gone through.

It's like a building project and it's constantly going on. So, throughout Philadelphia, an incredible time of development, of learning things that were true, but how to apply them is not so easy and it takes a lot of time to learn how to do that.

So, we went through an entire era of striving to do that, of growing in that, and that, again, takes a lot of time. Then we went through Laodicea. What can you say? Getting to a point where everything kind of became stagnant.

**And if they have committed sins, they will be forgiven.** So, it was taken that every illness, every sickness that you come up with, that you might have in life is because of your sins. Well, that's a bunch of stupidity too. We're getting older, people have illnesses, things that happen to them, weaknesses that happen to them, so are you sinning because you're getting older? That's how illogical that kind of thing was, but that happened a lot.

And those things were put together because of two verses that happen to be beside each other. Totally misunderstood. Totally misrepresented. Totally a lack of balance in what was being said. We should understand by what it's saying what this is about when you talk about sin and being forgiven, what this means. "They will be forgiven."

So again, going back here I think it's good again, as we did... Well, we need to go through this and just repeat some of these things that we've already gone through quickly and build upon them again because it's easy to maybe have a series and go through the first or the second and not see the full context of everything. So again, just a review here to make sure we have the context to continue on in *Part 2* here.

So, **James 1:1**, a quick review. **James, a servant of God and of the Lord Joshua the Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, Greetings.** You know, even going through some of this and things that were said in times past, sometimes it's hard to break through some of those things. But what an awesome thing when God shows us more, helps us to grasp it in a better context, in greater picture of how He's working in our lives in the first place.

So, when you look at this "twelve tribes that are scattered abroad," sometimes we don't comprehend or understand that some things have been given to apostles in times past that were a matter of things that were prophetic for the future, and they were inspired to say it. Because by no means did he go to the twelve tribes. By no means did he travel way up into Europe and work with and teach the peoples up in there these things. They didn't go up into there being taught. People were deeply involved in their own ideas, most of it pagan because

of the kind of captivity they had going way up into Assyria and up into parts of Europe and so forth.

It was that big church that came along later on that began to move into some of those regions and then pollute people's minds. But anyway, that's another story.

Prophetic, as we talked about last Sabbath, the twelve tribes, and understanding how God is still working to this day. I think of the Worldwide Church of God worldwide, and where the truth went out all over the world in many different languages. But the places that grew the most and those who responded the most at that point in time, candidly, were in the regions of those blessed nations. And there are reasons for that.

**My brethren**, so again, understanding this is to the Church, it's not to the world. Because you'll read some things later on, or we'll see some things later on as we go through the book of James that seems like it might be talking to the world. No, no, no, no. It's talking to the Church, always.

**...count it all joy when you fall into different trials**, different trial and testing.

And even when you talk about the twelve tribes - I want to go back to that because it's more than the locations of where they were and how God works at that particular time and because they were blessed and had abundance. It also has to do with the fact of what God is building in the Church from the time of the apostles on, obviously, within the Church and those who are going to fit into various areas of those names.

Because we're all going to carry names. All of us, Israel, spiritual Israel, but literally when it's all said and done, the whole world is going to fit into some part of the organization, the structure of twelve tribes. We only bear the names of the twelve tribes.

**My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into different trial**, different testing. So again here, there are things that come our way that happen because of time and chance, and we have to be careful how we take those. And it's not necessarily, well, it really isn't in the context of what's being said here, specifically talking about those. It's talking about specific kinds of trials and tests, ones that we bring on ourselves, ones where we're tried because of our nature.

So, that's really the context of James here. It's about our nature and what we need to see, and it's not about things that happen as a matter of time and chance and certain things that happen in life where God is molding and fashioning us and has things come into our life to work with us, to mold and fashion us, that might be difficult. That's another matter. How we respond to those can get into trial and testing because sometimes we don't respond as we should.

**Verse 5—If anyone lacks wisdom, let them ask of God, who gives liberally and without reproach.** In other words, what an awesome thing to know that we can go before God and if we're repentant, have that kind of attitude and that kind of spirit before God and we're repenting of sin, we go before God and it's without blame. God isn't holding anything against us like we tend to do as human beings. We don't forget and we hold things against people and people can't have peace and right relationships, which has been huge problems in times past throughout the history of the Church. And it's getting much, much, much, much, much better. It's a beautiful thing to watch.

**...and it shall be given them.** Again, that which is spiritual. Not just whatever we want. It goes back to the context of everything else that's spoken of in scripture. When we ask, we receive. But what are we asking for? It's a matter of what God said He'll give us. What's a primary thing He wants to give us on a continuing basis? His holy spirit. Because that's the only way we can change. That's the only way we can grow. That's the only way we can overcome.

**...without doubting.** Without questioning. So, in other words, we have to be on guard against our own nature. (Just going through this quickly again of what we already covered.) Without questioning. Without questioning God. Without thinking God's unfair or the Church is unfair or whatever it might be. And sometimes people have had to go through things that it was unfair, things were done that weren't just all the time. And that can try you. You can grow in that. Because if you're looking to God who is just and looking to Him to resolve things, to work with things in your life...

I've mentioned in times... Well, I don't even want to go into that. Anyway.

**For any who doubt, or question, they're like a wave of the sea...** Tossed around. That's what it's talking about here. Not settled. And that has to do with our thinking. Do we question things when they come along, like I mentioned about Covid. Do we question those things?

Because I think of the most incredible time when that happened, and a stupid time, when it had to do with make-up. Because people who didn't live through that, that's got to sound really out there. But people who lived through it, this was worth fighting over. That's what they thought. It's worth going off with some other minister who believed something different and leaving the environment that they'd always known because of disagreement, questioning, "Who is he to say something like that? How can they say that?" You know, questioning, doubting.

We understand some of the basics, how God works with us, how God molds and fashions us, where the truth comes from, we won't go astray, we hold to the trunk of the tree.

**Verse 7—For do not let anyone think that they shall receive anything of the Lord.** In other words, if questioning, if doubting. So, don't think that you're right with God. Because within the last year I've received emails of people who justified and told me, in essence, why they are right, why they're okay, and why they're okay with the Church and why they're okay with God, that they know God has forgiven them when I know that's not the whole story and not the full truth.

So, sometimes we can almost be like a protestant world if we get so far away from the soundness, the basics of what is true and right in our life, of God working within us, because we're straying away from the truth because of our own ideas, our own opinions about things and we hold on to those. We begin to lose the strength of God's spirit in us because we start squeezing that umbilical cord. That means less blood, less life, less of God's spirit coming through to us until the time sometimes we can totally quench it and totally be separated from God in those things.

So, it's easy to deceive ourselves. That's what this is about.

**For a double-minded person is unstable in all their ways.** So, this has happened over and over and over again in times past in the environment of the Church, that the farther people get away from the trunk of the tree, from God's holy spirit working in their life because of sin they're not sound-minded. The sound-mindedness begins to go by the wayside. And you can't help it then to be messed up and confounded in your reasoning because it's not coming from God, it's not being led by God.

**Let the lowly brother rejoice in that they're exalted.** Over and over again throughout the Bible, what an awesome thing to see that we are to strive to hold on to a humble spirit. We're to strive to humble ourselves before God. And that's a battle, to be of a humble spirit, of a humble mind. Because we tend to want to raise ourselves up, to justify ourselves, to look good, to... And to think we're right to the point where we'll believe it.

**Verse 12—Blessed is a person who endures trials/testing, for when they are tried, tested or approved,** in other words, they've gone through it, when it's completed then, **they shall receive the crown of life which the Lord promised to those who love him.** God has to be first, bottom line. That's what this is about. It's about God has to be first. We have to love God but to love God you have to love what He's given to us, that it helps us to know who He is, and that's His word, His truth, His way of life. And the more we love that, candidly, the more we love God because that's God. It's the word of God, the mind of God, the being of God that we're blessed to have in us in our minds, in our thinking.

**Verse 14—But everyone is tried/tempted if you will, tested when they are drawn away of their own lusts.** So, this is the kind of thing it's talking about when it starts at the very beginning here talking about "count if all joy" when you go through some of these things

because it's a matter of the battle in the self, of the self, of our own mind, and if we recognize that we're in a battle, we're at war, and the war, so much of it is right up here in our minds and how we think.

And so, what a blessing to go through things where we have to make those choices in life that help to transform the way we think. In other words, we should welcome being transformed, our minds being transformed. And that doesn't come easy, it comes through battle and fighting.

So, that's why we count it all joy, because we see the big picture of what God is doing in us and we don't want to stay this way, we don't want to stay the way we are right now. I want to do better. I want to have more of the mind of God. I want to have greater unity and oneness with God. I want to get rid of carnal, selfish human nature. That's what it's all about. And that takes humility to acknowledge that, to understand that, to desire that, to want that.

**Verse 15—Then, when lust has conceived, it brings forth sin; and sin, when it is finished brings forth death.** So, it's very simple. This is what happens if we're not thinking right and if we're not seeing the things we go through, the choices that we have to make, the importance of the decisions we make that start up here in how we think.

**Verse 19—Therefore, my beloved brethren, let everyone be quick to hear.** So again, it's that response, that thinking we have when it comes to God, in essence speaking to us, teaching us, molding and fashioning us. Because that's the context we read up to here. To see how God is at work in our lives, what our battles are. It's in self.

"Let everyone be quick to hear." And if we understand, this is how we should be every Sabbath, every Holy Day, every time we're taught from God, because this is where we receive what He has for us, this is where He molds and fashions us the most. It is. It's through what He tells us. It's through what we hear. So, God says, "be quick to hear." Don't be quick to turn away from it because of our selfishness, because of our thinking.

...**slow to speak.** Sometimes, you know, it's wiser then to be careful how we respond. I remember in this room here one time where someone wheeled around and... Oh, shouldn't have said that. Anyway, didn't like what they heard about the future, about what God was showing to the Church, which had to do with healing and what we're going through and what we're going to go through in the future.

So, we have to be careful that we don't make decisions right way as soon as we hear something, like many did when this thing of Covid came out. Because from area to area to area, which people have acknowledged these things now. And what a blessing to be able to acknowledge those things, to have a mind to realize, "Man, I was shaken by that when I saw it later on." That's basically to the context of what some people had to acknowledge, to see

how far we can go in something so simple, in something so physical and not see the spiritual purpose of what was being done?

That's right. It's good to be shaken up from time to time and for us to see ourselves. So, what a blessing when we can acknowledge that openly without... You know, with humility. Humility is a beautiful thing. The truth is the truth. Why try to shade it and hide it and be something different? And welcome, in that sense, we should welcome and want just what it said, "Count it all joy when you go through various things" because it's through that so often that God is teaching us things that we couldn't otherwise see.

...**quick to hear, slow to speak**. In other words, context, to speak against what's being given, what God is giving to us. ...**slow to anger**. Sometimes people can build things up in themselves where they get upset at someone else. And a lot of times it's me because this is where it comes to us. That's just reality of life and those are our battles sometimes. But if we see ourselves in that then... Which we should be able to more clearly see ourselves if something like that happens, think, "I've got a problem here if this is happening to me. Where am I going to go? Where is God teaching? Where is God leading and guiding and directing the Church?" Basics.

**Verse 21—Therefore**, all in context here, **Therefore**, because of all these things, **put off** or lay apart **all that's filthy**, foul, and foul conduct, bad behavior, wrong choices, wrong judgment—we should want to do that, obviously—and **overflow of wickedness**. It's kind of a unique way of saying this, "an overflow of evil." Because we can have that in our life. That's why I think of the word drama when I think of "overflow of evil" because it's like we can't get enough. It's like we can get used to that and think that's a part of life that we have to be this way, that we have to be deeply involved in drama, drama, drama.

No, you have the choice of peace. You can go before God and ask Him for peace, peace of mind to deal with things that are around you that are drama. Doesn't have to pull us into it that we become part of it.

So God says, put all these things away, get rid of them ...**and receive**, again here, takes humility but it's "meekness" here in this case. It's a teachable spirit so it takes humility to have a teachable spirit, to want to be taught, to want to be guided, directed, corrected, and instructed by God, to want to change up here. And I love this **and receive with meekness**, the context, **the implanted word**. God wants to put it up here with the spirit that He's given to us, the impregnation of His spirit so that it takes root, so it takes hold, so that it grows and can be built upon even more. What a beautiful example here, the implanted word, logos, God's word, God's way.



...which is able to save your lives. We just read James, what was it, verse 15, because this all goes together, "The prayer of faith shall save the weary and the Lord shall raise him up." Anyway, it's a part of what the context is about here.

...and receive with meekness the engrafted word which is able to save your lives. It's about saving, being saved. It's about salvation. It's about the process we go through in order to have this take place. And it's not talking about our physical life, it's talking about our spiritual life so that we can be able to be born into, if you will, God's Kingdom, God's Family.

**Verse 22—But be doers of the word.** That's what faith is. We can deceive ourselves into thinking we agree with something and that we believe something until something comes along that perhaps tries us, tests us where we have to make a choice and a decision. And always, it'll be brought to the surface, do we really believe God? Because if we do we're going to live a certain way.

...and not hearers only. This is something that can so easily happen. We can get into a rut. Laodicea got into that rut in a very big way. Heard sermons Sabbath after Sabbath, Holy Day to Holy Day, and got weaker and weaker and weaker because it was like there is nothing else to learn, there is nothing to build upon, there is nothing new, there is nothing...and just became kind of stagnant, lukewarm as time went along. And people were hearing a lot but not able to live it, not applying it anymore, and losing little bits here and little bits there. Ministers were losing a lot along the way because that's what stirred it up.

So, it says here, **deceiving your own selves.** So, we have to do what God has shown us, and if we don't why not? Something is wrong. That's what this is all about.

**James 2:8—If you fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, You shall love your neighbor as yourself, you do well.** So, it just keeps building on this and what is it doing? It's breaking down here that to be in a relationship with God, to do God's way of life, what does it come down to? The primary area where we learn these things is within the Church in our relationships. And what are they like? Only each one of us can answer that in life.

And so, that's what this is about. It's not about the world, though if we're not dealing right with one another within the Church we're not going to be dealing right with others in the world either. That's kind of a lost cause then. Because if we can't be on guard to do everything the way God says we should within the Body, we're sure not going to be trying out there. What are we going to be doing? Drama. Going to get caught up in things and drama is going to twist us up. I've seen it over and over again in God's Church, in the environment of God's church.

And then farther down in **verse 17—Even so, faith if it does not have works is dead.** Pretty strong language. Bold language, if you will. It doesn't beat around the bush here at all. It's

very strong if we understand what it said. "Faith without works is absolutely dead." So, we're fooling ourselves in essence if we're not living what God has given us to believe. And how does He give us what we believe? Well, every Sabbath, every Holy Day more and more to build upon.

And if we don't believe those things that are given to us and we have problems with any of it, doubting, we're in trouble and we're going to have some horrible battles because of wrong choices and wrong decisions in that. It's a matter of being totally surrendered to God's spirit, God's will, that we want that by choice. Maybe "surrender" is not a right kind of word but it's about self and our resisting it, if we understand, and to know what that means.

**Verse 21.** So, it makes it... Just a reminder here, it says, **Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar?** He didn't doubt. He just did it. What an incredible example here of what he did, what he was willing to do because he believed the power of God to resurrect. That's what it boils down to. And because of the promises there of what God had given to him he believed that God was going to fulfill those promises even if it meant his son having to be resurrected. That's what it comes down to. He believed that so strongly he was willing to do this.

And then God intervened to stop him, to bless him so he wouldn't go through something that God wasn't requiring of anyone, any human being, obviously. God was going to do that, Him and His Son, with His Son for the right purpose, the right reason, the Passover.

**So was he not justified by works?** Because he believed God he did it. Awesome! Beautiful example. ...**when he offered Isaac his son upon the altar.** He didn't question. I'll tell you what, it's hard for us to put ourselves back in that time period because things were so different, but to think of doing that to one's own child? I can't imagine. Let alone any human being, but your own child?

**Do you see how faith worked together with his works?** These seem simple, but you know what, it seems like it's been a very hard thing for the Church to fully grasp, to hold on to, to know what God is saying here in the sense of really living it. It's one thing to have knowledge of some things, but to live it is another matter. To be able to apply it is a totally other matter.

It's like I've given sermons in times past referring to people who maybe went to Ambassador College, had all these classes about childrearing and they can get up and give a sermon when they go out into the field somewhere in the ministry and still not have children. And they get up and give a childrearing sermon and you realize something is lacking here. Experience. It becomes very obvious to people who have children.

Or maybe marriage. And if they're not married yet, same thing. Like kind of living a little bit of la la land because you're just repeating knowledge. You don't really understand it yet because you don't have the experience. It's a huge difference.

**So, do you see how faith worked together with his works and by works faith was made perfect?** That's a beautiful thing to understand that God's given a process here where we can become stronger and stronger and stronger, where this mind, it becomes transformed and we literally become more at one with God, of the mind of God. There is nothing greater than to fight for that.

**So the scripture was fulfilled, which said, Abraham believed God.** That's where it starts.

So, sometimes we can listen to a lot of things that are given and if we're not careful we pick and choose. And so many in times past have picked and chosen of what they really want to believe one hundred percent and other things they have doubts about. I mean, everybody who's ever left that you know of in the past year, the past two years, the past ten years, everybody you have known that has gone through this has done this, where they picked out, you know, cherry picking, whatever it was that was easier for them to receive. But something where they might, maybe had, for whatever reason, some kind of doubt, question? Horrible.

**So the scripture was fulfilled, which said, Abraham believed God and it was imputed unto him for righteousness.** We are not righteous. We are not righteous. We're selfish by motivation as human beings. Now, we're to fight against that and we're to learn to apply, to live, to do the work of living God's way of life, and we're told how to do a lot of those things. Just in relationships alone we're told what to do and what to be on guard against, what not to do.

And the reality is, it's not a matter of how great or how good we are that we can obey God's laws and do some of those things, but it comes down to what we believe in the sense of our minds and to understand then because of the fact that we believe God. What an incredible thing that God says that's counted to us as righteousness. Not because we are, because we're not, but because we have chosen to believe God and to strive to live by what He has given to us. Then God counts that as righteousness to us even though we're far from it.

So again, Abraham acted upon the believe that God had offered him and that's what true faith is. So, that's why even in the sermon title here, *Healing, Believing, and True Faith*.

Going on, **James 3** now, picking it up here from where we left off, but bringing all these things into context. Because it's kind of hard to proceed in going into chapter three now and building up to chapter five and not remembering some of the things we've already covered. So, in context, going on.

**James 3:1—My brethren, don't become many teachers (instructors) knowing that such shall receive...** So, it's not "we." The term here that should be used, is **knowing that such**. The teachers. It's referring to the teachers, anyone who becomes a teacher.

So, it's talking about being careful that you don't make yourself a teacher. If you're not called to that, if that's not a part of what your function is within the Body, within the Church, you better be afraid of it. That's what he's saying here. Because anyone who teaches has the greater judgment upon them.

Judgment is a hard enough thing as it is by itself, but to affect other people's lives it should be one of the number one things that would scare the you know what out of you, to think that you're going to tell people something that's wrong, something that's going to hurt their life spiritually, that's going to lead them away.

That's why God referred to what happened during the Apostasy and afterwards, of all the things that were being not taught in truth at that particular point in time, that in essence He referred to that as being murder, of taking the blood of others, putting them to death. But on a spiritual plane. We've talked about some of that and how heinous that is, far, far worse than something physical.

**...knowing that such shall receive greater judgment.** So, be careful. What's the lesson here? Be careful what you tell others. Be careful if you think that you're so right about what you're having to say to others and you're trying to influence their life, you want them to listen to you. Because this is what teachers do, those kinds of teachers.

And I have seen this ever since I've been in God's Church. There have been teachers out there who want people to listen to them, their ideas, their thinking. Because the truth be told then they're not in agreement with everything, they want to teach something different, perhaps something as stupid as some conspiracy theory, and on and on it goes, something about some scripture that they feel like that they have come to understand in a way that the Church hasn't yet. Well, to do that is sin. It's just it's wrong because there is a way that God teaches us. And in God's time if that's right He'll show the Church, but in His time. And it has to be from Him. Before that?

**For in many things we all stumble.** This is true. In many things, we all stumble. But in that particular area it's a whole lot easier. Should be ever on guard to not want to be fitting into this category. So, don't want to be "many teachers within the Church" because if somebody is supposed to be God will make that happen. He'll give it.

And sometimes people don't agree with that then. "Well, who are they?" Well, if God has a plan and a purpose of something He's working out that you may not be keenly aware of be on

guard. Because He didn't come and counsel with each one of us as to what He should or shouldn't do, as to who should or shouldn't serve at any moment in time.

And so, people can have doubts and say, "Well, that's," can't think of the word now, especially if it's in the same family. What is the term? Nepotism. And that's happened a lot in God's Church, and it started with Herbert Armstrong and then his sons, and then one died and then it became Garner Ted, and then what do you do after he's out of the Church? And then...

Well, if God has a plan and a purpose you know what? Things are going to work out according to that plan and purpose.

**If anyone does not stumble in word, then they are a perfect person, "perfect man"** as it says here, but it's in all of us, obviously. We're perfect. So, the reality is we all stumble because nobody is perfect, far, far from it as human beings.

**...able also to bridle the whole body.** So, how under control are you by your mind? That's another way of putting it. Well, I've got a lot of work to do myself. I don't know about the rest of you. But we have a lot of work to do, don't we? And it's ongoing. It just continues on. Because as long as we're in this human body we're going to have a lot of work to do. It's just the way it is. It's a constant battle.

Growing, yes, but always... There's always going to be more there that we don't even see yet, that you don't even see in yourself. You can't! You can't see it all. If you saw it all you'd be so dismally discouraged you wouldn't even fight anymore! You'd just give up!

If God let you see everything about your nature and how you think and how evil it really is, selfish human nature, you'd be so discouraged and thinking, "I'm never going to make it." But the reality is He lets us see a little at a time. And what a blessing because that's a growing factor then. Because the reality is, what's the point of showing...?

It reminds me of Spokesman's Club where people were told... See, someone would get up and give a speech. Depending on what kind of a speech it was, five to seven minutes in length. And then they had someone get up and give an evaluation. And that individual was basically told how to evaluate the speaker. They were to find a couple of good things in the speech and a couple of things they could work on if they could. See?

A lot of times it was a whole lot easier for individuals to give a whole lot more than just two things that they needed to work on. It's like going to unload the whole boat here and tell them what's wrong with what and how they're speaking and what they're doing and so forth. And so, that's just human nature to do some of those kinds of things. So, we have to be careful.

We have to understand our own human nature, and thankfully, God isn't like that where He just unloads the whole thing on us all at one time, so we see everything. You know, there are people who got discouraged in clubs and would quit because of some of the things that were said. Sometimes the ministers even, some ministers didn't know how to do that right and they'd get up and cut someone down, chew them up, and spit them out. And they didn't come back.

That wasn't the purpose of club, you know, to tear someone up so bad that... This brings back some horror stories in my mind and seeing different ones get up and their evaluations and... I remember a club that got beat up over and over again for months after a duck project we had here. Some of you remember that. But we had this way of making money for the Church and anyway, I'll just leave it at that. So, basically, that's something only the Cincinnati area is basically going to understand and know.

But it's not the right thing to do and God doesn't treat us that way. And we shouldn't treat one another that way. And so, it's showing something here then that, you know, we all have things that we have to work on, we all have problems and weaknesses, and thankful God shows us a little bit at a time so that we can build upon it. Just like in club you maybe take in one or two things to work on, but the reality is if someone got up there, which is unfair of someone who has a ton of experience like a minister gets up there and rips someone to shreds of everything that's wrong?

I remember somebody from headquarters one time visiting in Salina, Kansas. Had a lot of respect for him - had to fight with it after that. But anyway, he got up there and ripped me to shreds. One end to the other. It's like, "What happened to the two things?" But I survived it and I learned from it. But those things are devastating, and I learned why some people would just give up and quit, because to go through that is a hard thing.

But the reality is for all of us to understand here, we all stumble. To acknowledge that. We all have faults. We all have weaknesses. We all have to build on things, to repent and conquer and overcome.

**And if anyone doesn't stumble in word, then they are perfect...** And we know that no one is perfect. So, we have to acknowledge we all stumble, we all have battles, we all have sin.

**...and able also to bridle the whole body.** Well, what a wonderful thing if we really could. But the reality is it's a battle to fight this and to keep everything under control. If we could keep everything under control you know what, we would never sin. And the reality is you can't do that because you're carnal. We're all carnal. We have the blessing of God's spirit in us to give us help to conquer that carnality, but the reality is it's always with us in our thinking, in our mind, and we have to battle it. It's an ongoing battle. What a blessing to know those things.

**Indeed, we put bits in horses' mouths so that they will obey us, and we turn their whole body.** Well, sometimes you can control them. We had some horses that weren't so easy to work with. But you know, what an incredible thing that in time because of something in their mouth, that depending on what kind of a horse it is, how free spirited it is, would depend on the kind of thing that was in it's mouth.

Sometime you have to have this thing that goes on the inside, not just on the outside, on the inside, a bar that when it pulls back on the reins it puts pressure into the tongue. Hurts. It's pain. But that's how they break different horses as well. And the horse learns it doesn't want that, so it responds to a gentler touch then because it doesn't want to experience the pain. And that's how many horses are broken.

But so the example is here we can do this with an animal like that, but if we understand that process.

**So that they will obey us and we turn their whole body. Indeed even ships....** What an incredible thing here. A ship that's so large, it says it's driven, pushed or **powered by strong winds are turned or directed** as the word is here, **by a very small rudder.** And when you look at the size of some of these ships and how small some of those can be. Now, it may take a long time to make a (depending on how big it is), to make the turn, but what an incredible thing.

It says, **wherever it is straightened to move forward.** The correct translation. "Wherever it's straightened," in other words, wherever that goes, that's the direction it's going to be able to move toward. Incredible!

So it goes on to draw the analogy then, **Even so, the tongue is a small member,** and gets us into a lot of trouble. That's the bottom line. **...and boasts great things.** Some things sometimes that comes out of the mouth sometimes is astonishing, what people can say, what I've heard in the length of time I've been in the Church since '69, within the ministry. Not since '69 in the ministry but things that you wonder "Don't you know what you're doing? Don't you know what you're saying?" Well, if they knew they wouldn't be doing it.

And so, we have that ability as human beings to have things come out of our mouth that are totally out of control, totally stir up things and cause giant problems, this drama thing. You know what can come out of here can either produce peace, help to produce peace or drama. It's as simple as that.

**See how great a forest a little fire kindles!** Doesn't take much. Huge fires.

And what an analogy to draw here, horse, a ship, a fire, and look what the tongue can do, what can come out of our mouths, the pain, the suffering, the hurt that can be caused by things that people say.

Look at the things that are being said out in the world today. Sick. Sick. Sick. It's on fire just by what people are saying and how they're treating one another and the division that's out there. It's not getting better, it's getting far, far worse. And every week it just gets... I'm not even going to read the things this week. There's just so much out there.

And it just gets worse and worse and worse, the division, the hatred that's being stirred up by a demonic world. I'll tell you what, we should be able to see that more clearly now, that there is a demonic world - they are on the loose. They have power that they have never exerted to this degree before. I hope you understand that. That they're actually exerting greater power because of technology. They can do more damage, more harm more quickly, more ferociously because of the use of that tool. And human beings are susceptible to it in a very big way.

**Even the tongue is a fire!** Look what it does. That's what it's showing here. ...**a world of iniquity.** It's a word in Greek meaning "injustice; unrighteousness." That's what comes out of it as a whole.

**The tongue in this way is set among our members.** So, the tongue is set among our members, meaning our body. So, we look at the body, like this rudder on a ship, and we look at how small it is **that it defiles the whole body - or stains or pollutes the whole body.** So, the point being is when we come to understand it more deeply, what's up here comes out here, and it shows what's up here. And sometimes it's a bunch of garbage, evil, sickness, perversion.

**...and sets on fire the course of nature.** Hurts relationships. That's the way the world is today. On a spiritual plane in that respect it's on fire. And when you think about what God is going to do at the end of seven thousand years, seven thousand one hundred, it's going to be literal, things that take place because of mankind not controlling, not wanting to control and just letting anything come out that they want because their way is just in their own minds, and they'd rather die than not to have their own way. What an incredible thing!

**...and sets on fire the course of nature;** see, it goes on to even say it, **it even sets on fire the fire of hell, gehenna,** which is about judgment, which is about where it's going if it doesn't repent, if it doesn't change.

So again, things that we're able to believe and see and know, and if we see these things we're going to want to do what is right, we're going to strive to do what is right, which is a matter of believing God then and being a part of the solution and the answer. Which is faith then, living it. True faith, if you will. Not just going through the motions of hearing something and kind of giving the image of agreeing with everything.



Because either we do, or we don't. That's what it comes down to. And God's refining all that. And that which doesn't, decisions and choices are being made. God's making them.

**James 3:7—For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed.**

That may not be the best word for the translation here but it's "subdued." Means mankind is able to have control of it one way or another, even if it's defeating it, whatever it might be.

**...and has been subdued by mankind.** So, it's not the other way around. Mankind is the greatest in creation on this earth in the sense of being able to bring everything else into control, in the sense of being able to control it, whatever it might be in nature. Not necessarily taming it. Thinking about hmmm... Don't want to get into some of that. But I've never seen anybody out trying to tame a whale. What's the point? What are you going to do? Where are you going to go? Anyway, a lot of examples we can begin to think of. Rattlesnake? Uh, I don't think so.

So, it's not talking about that. It's having the control over these things.

**But no one can subdue or tame if you will, but subdue the tongue.** What an incredible thing to say! Mankind can't subdue, bring under control his own tongue in the way God says to without God's help. We have to have God's help. We have to have God's spirit to rule this little thing inside of our mouth that causes a lot of problems in life.

And to understand that then it goes back, we understand it goes back to what's up in here somewhere, wherever it is. And you don't even know where it is. You don't even know... They haven't even measured it because they can't measure God's spirit. They can't even measure the spirit in mankind. They can't see it.

What an incredible thing to understand. It's like, what an awesome thing when Herbert Armstrong, when God gave to him things about nature, that they all have an essence inside of them that God put in them that is the same in the sense of... Like geese right now. I hear geese at nighttime flying around. It's like, you've got to be kidding. They're out there at night flying around? It's a good thing there are red lights on towers or something. Just kidding.

But they're able to do that. God's put that in them. There is that which they know how to do it. You look at different animals, how they survive, how they live. And for people to think they just evolved, you think, how stupid. Ignoring all laws of science sometimes in order to hold on to this thing about evolution. You think, how stupid. It shows the ignorance of mankind, how dumb mankind can really be when you throw everything out the window.

It's like the big bang theory. How can you throw all the rest of science out the window in order to believe something so dumb?

So, there is that which is in our minds just like it is in the animal kingdom, except they haven't been given the ability to think and reason like we do. Repetition of certain things can be taught through whatever it might be to some animal, but for them to conscientiously to sit down and reason and thinking about things through in the sense of all life to the degree we do as human beings? Nothing like it.

There are some that can... Some say, "Well, what about the squirrel? I've seen squirrels stop, and they stop, and they reason and they think about some of this, how to get in that place." That's all by that which is in nature that's in their mind that God already put there. It's not like what we are as human beings.

So, anyway, what an incredible thing that man can't measure it, doesn't know it's there, doesn't know how... Can't see it. It's spirit, an essence. And then God gives us His holy spirit with that so we can learn, begin to learn to control this, which means we're learning to change, be transformed in how we think about things.

**It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.** Because this is and so this is. Because this is what shows, it reveals. It's the works that reveals what's believed up here. Whatever we speak, whatever comes out of our mouth truly reveals what we believe, our unity and oneness with God. Awesome, if we understand that, which is a matter of works, which is a matter of living by faith, or believing that we can do certain things that we're really not supposed to do.

**So, full of deadly poison. With it, we bless our God and Father, and with it, we curse those made in the similitude or the likeness of God.** So, what is this about? Because this is a correct translation. Some of these words sometimes are not translated really all that well.

So again here, "With it we bless our God." You know, we can go and pray, and we can talk about certain things having to do with the Feast or certain things, maybe something that's been heard in a sermon we learned maybe back in 2005 even, even maybe about the name of Joshua and so forth and we can talk about various things. And in that respect blessing God, thanking God, because blessing has to do with thanking as well, being thankful for the things we receive. And maybe glorifying God, praising God in prayer, whatever it might be.

"And with it we curse those made in the similitude," or the likeness. Who is that? Who is being spoken of? Only the Church, as a whole, because until one receives the impregnation of God's spirit they are not yet being made in the likeness of God, in the sense of that which has to be transformed in the mind, that which can grow and one day be born into God's Family. So, just in the human flesh is not enough, it's a matter that this mind has to be changed and has to receive God's holy spirit through repentance and baptism and then the process of growing and conquering and overcoming.

And so, it's talking here about a relationship within the Body. How can we have wrong relationships with anyone in the Body within the Church of God and somehow think we have a relationship with God, that we believe God and that we're really living by faith just because we can pray to God about various things?

And get to the point if we're not careful we know, we know enough that we can just stay at home and study our own Bibles or go with some other group or have a group get together and have Bible studies, and maybe even on the Sabbath have some kind of study and maybe sooner or later someone actually gets up and starts preaching (supposedly), and we're growing that way.

It doesn't work that way. God's spirit is not in that. We understand where God's spirit and how God's spirit works. Awesome! It's amazing how many have lost that through time.

**So, With it, we bless our God, and with it, we curse those made in the similitude, the likeness of God. Out of the same mouth proceeds blessing and cursing.** Of that kind of mouth. Now, we're not perfect, we understand that. We all stumble in things we say. But this is talking about that which begins to become set in the mind if we're careful, that we ignore and we don't repent of and we don't live it right before God.

**My brethren, these things ought not be so. Does a spring send forth fresh water and bitter with the same opening?** Well, beautiful example. I love these kind of examples that are used here because it uses things that are physical in order to help us to better grasp something spiritual, which it's leading up to in chapter five later on.

**Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs?** Pretty simple answer. Pretty easy to see these things but it's hard to see self. It's hard to see what goes on up here, it really is. And really, we can't without God's help. We really can't grasp the reasoning, the motivations, the thinking that takes place up here, to see it against the light of God's spirit and truth without God's help. That's why we have to cry out to God for help constantly and ask for His holy spirit to mold and fashion us, to lead us, to constantly work with us.

**Thus no spring yields both salt water and fresh.** So, in other words, simple things we can understand on a physical plane that God wants us to understand simply so by believing it on a spiritual plane, and then because we believe it to start living it more fully, more completely exactly the way He says we should live it.

Which means, James 2:8, the royal law, we should be very concerned about how we treat one another. And it goes on then talking about things we need to make sure we're fighting against and conquering and overcoming, that we need to get rid of the overflow of evil that's in a carnal human life that's not in unity and oneness with God.

And so we can change, and we do change. And so, I think of how this blends in with everything that was given at the Feast even and built up to the Feast this last year and here we're going on past it now and some of the same kinds of things that God is showing us. And I'm excited by that because it reveals how He's working with us in a very unique way. To see things on a plane that is awesome, bringing us into a greater oneness and unity with Him. How blessed are we?

So it goes back again, **James 3:13** it says, **Who is wise and understanding among you?** Now, there we go again. Just what it said in the beginning, toward the beginning there, "Do you lack wisdom." Yeah, we all do. We all need more because that comes from God. We want more of the mind of God, the word of God dwelling in us.

**Who is wise and understanding among you?** Well, we better be careful there. We better have a humble spirit because we realize we have wisdom that God has given to us, we want to strive to use it properly, we want to strive to be at one with Him, but we know we're lacking still. We'll always be lacking in this body.

**Let them show from out of,** not "by", but **from out of good conduct their works in the meekness of wisdom.** So, for us as human beings God is showing us in that sense that wisdom for us to receive is to understand we'd better have a teachable spirit. We better have a humble spirit. Otherwise, we're not going to be able to receive the wisdom, the mind, the word of God as we should, to be able to really see it up here.

**But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts...** In other words, its about self, things always seem to be about self, and we want to raise up self, we want self to be seen as better than what it really is and put on these façades sometimes and it's not in spirit, and in truth in our lives and how we are. We need to be truthful before God in how we live and what we live, in what we're striving, and what we say, and how we say it.

**But if you have bitter envy...** So, I think of a letter I got here a couple of weeks ago. Bitter, bitter, bitter, bitter, bitter, bitter, won't be forgiving. Now I have to write a letter back, which takes time to put together in the sense of trying to help someone see themselves more clearly, that if you can't forgive certain things and you keep bringing the same thing up over and over and over again because you want your way about something that you don't think you're getting and you're just bitter, you have a bitter spirit inside of you. Where...?

God is not in that. That should never be around God's Church. So, why listen to anything I'm saying? Why? What's the point? You're wasting time.

**But if you have bitter envy...** Can that happen? It happens to people. A bitterness can work inside an individual and begin to have... Because this is about thinking towards others. It goes

back to this James 2:8, royal law. You can't live that without God's help, without God's holy spirit.

And so, here it is, bitter because sometimes people don't grasp envy that's inside of them. They don't understand jealousy. They don't understand one's own selfishness. You've got to understand those things are all evil and dangerous and the more we see of those things then the more we can combat them and fight against them.

**...and self-seeking in your hearts.** Always wanting our way. You know, any dispute, any argument, you know what it is? Self-seeking. If an argument exists and peace doesn't follow, isn't brought forward then it's just a matter of self-seeking. One's own way, one's own will, what one wants. It's not a matter of peace, it's just a matter of drama because self is wanting to win out. Self wants to win. Every argument, every dispute fits in this, bitter envying and self-seeking in the heart.

Says, **Do not boast and lie against the truth.** Because that's lying. That's lying against God. In other words, you're not living by true faith. You don't even believe God because you're not doing what you're supposed to do. So your works, the faith supposedly you're living by, you're not living it, so you don't believe God in this, you don't believe that this is what you're supposed to do. You don't believe you're supposed to shut this thing up sometimes and be quick to listen instead of wanting to have your own way, to be justified because you want to make sure that somebody hears all you have to say about how something is so bad about someone else, because you want some kind of relief, to feel better because you just feel bad because you so loathe someone else. What a sick mind! It's calling a spade a spade. How horrible!

So, God's letting us know that can't ever exist in God's Church because if it's in the environment of God's Church it's probably not going to be long lived. Especially not now. It's not going to be around too long because of what God's doing within the Church.

"But if you have bitter envying and seeking your heart...boast against... you lie against the truth." So, that's what's happening here because it's not living what it should be. It's not living by faith. It's not true faith.

Sometimes we can deceive ourselves by going to Sabbath services, by sending off tithes, that we're living by faith. Bull! That is not a measure of one's righteousness. Those are things that should just naturally be there from the very beginning before one is even baptized. They should just exist because that's the right thing to do. Go to Sabbath services. Go to the Holy Days. Tithe. Be obedient to God. Give Holy Day offerings. Those are simple, basic things that should have been handled a long time ago.

So, the reality is one should never get into a position where they think that because they have fellowship with others and because they're doing those basics that somehow they're always right with God. That isn't what determines our being right with God. It's what we're living day by day, week by week. That reveals what we are, whether we're really living by true faith or whether we're doing things that we know are wrong, that we should know are wrong!

Just like that letter I received; I should never have had to receive that. I shouldn't have to read through that kind of filth, stupidity, and garbage. And after today, I probably don't have to write the letter, but I will.

**This kind of wisdom does not descend from above.** Selfishness, self-seeking, boasting is not a part of God's Church. It is not in God's Church. It's not even in the courtyard of the temple! Because people who are at least in the courtyard of the temple have a little bit of common sense of how to treat one another even though they don't from time to time and get caught up in things they shouldn't be doing. They're way out there. They're in some other country. They've gone on a long trip and probably won't come back! That's how far out they are.

**This kind of wisdom**, in other words, from self, selfishness, **does not descend from above but is earthly, sensual, demonic.** Why does it say that? Is it the demon's fault? Is that what it's saying? Because you're stirred up by demons? No, it just means that's the spirit, it agrees with the demonic world, it agrees with Satan. It's the same mind that Satan has.

You want to be like Satan? You want to be like demons? God brings us into a fellowship that's unique and different and not to be like that. Where we're to be for one another, where we're to have unity and oneness with one another because that unity is with God. And so, we'll automatically have that and share with one another. It's a beautiful thing when lived right. But it's ugly when it's not, when people can't get along.

And that doesn't mean people don't make mistakes and can't repent of that, but that's being a peacemaker then, to make things right, to work to make things right. And we should know how to do that as well. Forgiving, being forgiving to others. Sometimes people won't forgive. That's why things just keep being brought up, being brought up. It's like you got a big tank of vomit out here and just keep going out there and getting bucketfuls of it and bringing it back in the house. Doesn't this smell good?

Have you ever smelled vomit? Do you know how bad it can stink? And you want to just bring it in? Let's put it on the table while we're eating because then they start talking about things they shouldn't talk about at the meal, about someone else, or whatever it might be. It's like, "Oh, bring that bucket a little closer. Smells so good!" I'm sorry but that's how we should see things, with that kind of clarity in our minds, and be repulsed by things with that kind of clarity of mind.

**Verse 16—For where envy and self-seeking exist...** Envy and self-seeking. But we as a whole don't tend... When people are involved in that they don't tend to see themselves that way because they can't see any longer. That's the shame of it all. We can get so far away from God and God's spirit that we just don't see anymore like we should.

So, **Where envy and self-seeking is confusion and every evil thing are there.** That really says it all. That's the way it always is and always has been in the church. I should say in the environs of the Church, because when I say "in the Church," it means something different to us. It should. If we're in the Church it means God's spirit is in us and we're in God and Christ and they're in us, and that spirit is evident.

But if we're in the environment of the church, that should be a warning. That doesn't mean we're in the Church. And ever since I've been in the Church I've seen a lot of that - way too much as far as I'm concerned.

**For where envy and self-seeking is confusion and every evil thing are there. But wisdom,** again, that which comes from God, the mind of God, the word of God, **that is from above is first pure.** So, if that's not reflected in how we're thinking and talking about others something is wrong. It should be an alarm. So easy to see. What a shame that it can't always be so easy to see.

**...then peaceable.** Oh, I'd love to be able to give that one away. Peace, to always be peaceable. But we have to work at it. I have to work at it. You have to work at it. God says we're to be peacemakers. Jerusalem has a name that has great meaning that has to do with being peacemakers. And if we can't do that we're not going to be in God's Kingdom.

**...then peaceable, gentle.** In other words, in our dealing with others. And there are times we just have to catch ourselves in those things when we're not doing that.

**...willing to yield.** Do you know what that means? It means giving up your way, willing to yield, to have peace, not your way.

**...full of mercy.** We can always use more of that! Because that's going to determine how we treat one another in the first place. We receive mercy. You know what, that's... I love the expression of grace in the Greek language because grace is about receiving mercy from God, love from God, forgiveness of sins, and on and on it goes, the love. But to stop there and just to be receivers of it, it doesn't work that way. But too often that's been the case in the environment of God's Church. And always on the receiving end but never living that.

Because grace is to work through us toward one another within the Body. In other words, we're to learn to have and give mercy to others, peace, love, and on and on it goes. The things we receive from God are the very things we're to have come out of us toward others.

Seems like a simple thing, but it's not with our carnal human nature. That's why we need help every day of God's spirit.

So again here, **Wisdom that is from above is first pure.** Easy measuring sticks here. ... **peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy, and good fruits.** Because these are all good fruits. If it comes from God and there is fruit in it, it comes from God. It's a result of God's spirit.

...**without partiality and without hypocrisy.** In other words, it's true. True faith. Truly believing God and applying what we're learning and what we're receiving and not just going through the motions of just hearing it. Because thousands and thousands and thousands since I've been in the Church have done that, tens of thousands, tens of tens of tens of thousands have just listened, and that's where it stopped at some point.

**Now, the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace.** So, if we don't know how to be a peacemaker, if we don't work at these things, which is what faith is all about because God gives us the truth, the ability to believe, that we should be peacemakers, how important it is that Jerusalem is named that way. Because we're to become a part of spiritual Jerusalem. Means a lot to God. It should mean a lot to us.

So, "The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace." So, we're to do something. We're to be peacemakers. We're to learn how to live. Which is about our relationships. And if we don't change things about how we have relations and our relationships towards others, some of them just starting with the ability to forgive, to realize we just need to forgive, be forgiving. Who am I to hold something against someone else? That's spoken of a bit later here pretty strongly.

**Now, the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.** It's the only way it works. It's the only way we can grow spiritually. And our testing ground is within the environment of God's Church. What a beautiful thing.

**James 4:1—From whence/where are wars, battling...** See, this is, if we're not careful, we can think he's talking to someone else here. No, he's talking to us. It's the Church. "Where do wars?" And you think, wars in God's Church? That's what he calls them. "Battling," same word that's used there, battling, wars. I've seen a lot of wars, a lot of battling in God's church. Anybody who went through the Apostasy?

...**and fighting?** See, it shouldn't be. Such things shouldn't even exist. But they always have. And to one degree or another. But I'm encouraged by the fact it's becoming more refined, where those are less and less and less. That's a beautiful thing.

...**and fighting,** which is a word for striving or... When people don't get along and they fight, they quarrel, whatever it might be, this is what it's talking about, that kind of battling.



You're battling, you're fighting. How do we do that? But we do as human beings. We have to fight against those things so that they don't happen, or they happen less and less.

So, **where do they come?** From among, as it says here, **from among you? Do they not come thereon of your own lusts...?** Hmm. What does that...? Meaning because of your own personal pleasure, what pleases you, what pleases self. That's where they come from.

So, what pleases us? Well, what should really please us if we can grasp what James is saying here, what God is saying, what He's giving to us is that peace, living right, thinking right toward others should be the thing that's pleasing to us. But too often when selfishness gets in the way what pleases us is when we get our way. Drama. Drama. Drama.

**Do they not come thereupon of your own lusts that make war in your members?** So, what happens? Things come out of here, we tense up, we get agitated, we get angry. We all have guilt there, things we have to battle from time to time in life. And hopefully, they become less and less in life because we hopefully get a hold of it.

**You lust**, in other words, desire or crave for self one's own way. Because that's the context here, **and do not have**.

**You kill...** Think, wait a minute, that can't be talking to God's Church. Huh, yeah, it is. Been a lot of killing in God's Church and it's the worst kind of killing there is when it's done on a spiritual plane.

**You kill and desire to have...** See, wanting to build these bridges, Passover and Pentecost, and they're both coming up on the bridge and they want to share with each other. And in order to really meet at the bridge and start having fellowship with one another on a regular basis they both have to give in some way. They have to compromise with some truth and put it aside in order to have a false peace.

What kind of thing is that? But that's what ran rampant after the Apostasy. Horrible to think those kinds of things took place. And there's warring then going on inside of people's lives because they want their way, fight for it.

**You lust and desire to have; you kill and desire to have.** The word means "envy to have; zealous to have." Some became quite zealous at some of these things unless they heard something they didn't like, and then you're ostracised.

**...and do not receive it. You fight, quarrel, strive together, and make war.** God calls it what it is on a spiritual plane, and we have to see those things then on a spiritual plane. Been a lot of warring through time. Demonic world, the angelic realm, and then mankind is created and it just kept on except now it's with mankind. Warring, battling, fighting, it's the nature of man.

It's the nature of what's taking place right now because the spirit world is stirred up and it's easier for them to stir others up because it's already in the hearts of people. And if it's in the hearts of people... Look what's coming out. Some of the kinds of things that are coming out now they're scary. You think that some of these things aren't like before WWII? Oh, yes, they are. Now, how far some of these things will go? But they're headed that direction. We'll see what happens and how it transpires. Hopefully, it's over with quickly. Then we don't have to see some of these things before that period of time.

**You fight and make war, yet you do not have.** In other words, what do you mean "you don't have?" Well, you don't get what you want because if you want your own way you're never going to get it. You're never going to be completely satisfied. Something else is going to come along because that's just the way of such nature.

But it says here **because of not asking.** So, in other words, we in God's Church, this shouldn't be the case because we need to ask. Ask what? Ask for help to fight against such things. Because if we can see some of those things that hurt relationships then we have to ask for help. And it starts here.

You can't change anyone else. You can strive to make peace with them, and that's on you. That's what God holds each one responsible for, and hopefully, other parties who have God's spirit will respond in kind. But it's always on us to seek to make peace, to seek to make things, strive to make things right, to work in that direction. And you have to ask for God's help to do it because you can't do it on your own. That's the whole point of this.

**You ask,** when one does ask then, it's going on then and addressing that, **and do not receive, because you ask,** literally means, **you ask badly or evilly,** (now there is such a word), **out of evil motivation.** Because it's wrong. In other words, it doesn't agree with God.

So, what an incredible thing that the mind can actually pray about something, a dispute, a problem with others in the Body that's perceived, and because one wants their own way can be found praying about how this individual needs to be helped and want to help them to see because we're so right about what we see that we can go too far and be praying about something in order to get our way. Can that be done? Yeah, it can be done. You have to be careful.

**...so that you may consume it upon your own personal pleasure.** In other words, what satisfies self. So, in other words, the motivation isn't right, what pleases us because we want to see things done... So, we can pray to God about wanting something to be handled and taken care of in a certain way. If we're not careful, because we think that's the right thing, and pray for help that that be accomplished and be praying against God's spirit, be praying against God's will. Don't want to be guilty of that.

It goes on to say, **You adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?** So, the point being in all this is there are two ways to handle things in God's Church. Our way, which is a demonic way, which is evil, or God's. And to be handled God's way is a matter of seeking God's will and seeking to apply, asking for help to apply. How long do we ask then for help to be a peacemaker, to do our part regardless of what the other party does? But to strive to be gentle, to be pleasing, to be right with someone else, to be forgiving, that takes a lot and that's why we have to go before God and ask Him for His spirit to accomplish those kinds of things.

**Whoever, therefore, will be a friend of the world,** in other words, you don't want to do it like the world. Because that's what it's saying here, don't do it the way of selfishness because that's the way of the world. We have God. We have God's spirit dwelling in us. We have help that we can go to and ask for in the right way, in the right mind. What a beautiful thing here that James is going through and explaining.

...**friendship of the world is enmity with God.** Can't do it like the world. Can't get it in books out there. The world is so screwed up in their ideas about how to resolve things. No, there's a right way to do things and God shows the right way.

**Whoever, therefore, will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.** Pretty strong language. Who wants to be that?

**Do you think that the scripture says in vain, The spirit that dwells in us lusts to envy?**

And we're going to stop there today.

"The spirit that dwells in you lusts to envy." So again here, what an incredible thing going through all this context, because there's a lot here to drink in. There really is. All the way through James there's a lot, and it's building up and it has already in many things it's addressed. There have been many things addressed already but it's about a right and a true relationship with God and striving to bring in physical things so that we can understand more clearly that which is spiritual. And that's what the book of James is all about.

Toward the end of the sermon I do want to tack on something that I was going to include in the context of the sermon, but with the scripture I was going to interject it I thought, maybe I hadn't better yet. It's about the Feast coming up. So, this will be on the tape.

Please, no one make reservations anywhere until the website is up that says you can make reservations. To do so is against the teaching of the Church. Very clear, okay? We're not to be the first one there. Not to make... Because that actually hurts the church when those things are done because we have contracts that are signed that are a matter of how many people or how many rooms are taken to where the church can be held accountable then. Because you can't get contracts out there unless you have a certain number of rooms or whatever, as a

whole, wherever they are, that are under the link. Because that links it then to the church so they know exactly.

Just like this last year from here, locally, I was able to get the entire list of everybody who was staying there. It tells me the number of rooms, everything else. Course we went way over, which is great, and they've worked with us in a great way.

This other place is not working with us in such a great way. To me they've already gone against things that they already stated and said in the contract and everything else, but we're kind of over a barrel now. But it's going to work out! It's going to work out because we're going to live what's right. Carnally, I'd like to sue them, but that's my carnality. Already, I'd like to. But that's not going to happen so we're going to make it work.

But please, don't make reservations anywhere. I'll just tell you a little bit. Already, they're not going to allow the Hilton Garden Inn to be a part of the contract, and mostly they want us to be in one section called The Courtyard and yet the contract says very clearly... I'm not even going to go into the contract. But anyway, the Townplace Suites, we're going to get some rooms in there. And if we go over a certain number then we'll be able to get a whole lot more.

And I imagine most are going to want the Townplace Suites because they have a refrigerator and stove and everything else, but some of us, a lot of us are going to have to say, "I'm willing to bite the bullet to be in the other part to let families have that because they need it more than I do." And I like going out and eating anyway and I really don't have to make all my food. And I'm sure Laura agrees with that because she's the one that would be doing it.

So anyway, I just wanted to throw that out at you to show, so you know where we are and something to pray about. They don't even answer... They don't answer phone calls. They don't answer emails. It is so frustrating working with this world today, it really is, especially when they don't live honestly. And sadly, we're getting to that more and more in the world and sometimes you're just over a barrel and you've got to make the most of a situation.

I don't even know if we'll have a Feast this next year the way things are going in the world, and maybe even... Maybe that's where we are as well.

But anyway, I just wanted to throw that out so that everybody is on the same page.