

*Making Life Count Series*

*A Bible Study Book on the Epistle of James  
James 5:1-5:20*

**4**



*Growing to a Deeper Level of Spiritual Maturity,  
Demonstrating and a Higher Quality of Christian Character.*

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***Christ E Free Church Pulpit Series  
November 2013***

[ Revised 2/9/14 ]

*Jesus Christ*  
*Our Highest Calling,*  
*Our Greatest Purpose,*  
*Our Soul's Source and Joy*  
*And Our All-Consuming Passion.*

## Table of Contents

p.6) When the End is Not in Sight, Nov.3, 2013	James 5:1-7
p.15) Patience Until the Lord's Return, Nov.10,2013	James 5:7-13,
p.27) Patience, Prayer and Pursuing Sinners, Nov.17<2013	James 5:13-20

In his writing to the early scattered believers, James is calling the present Church to be growing to a deeper level of spiritual maturity, while evidencing a higher quality of Christ-like character.

The heart break is that James is addressing a church with such sin evidencing traits. The great hope is that there is abundant grace for all who repent and submit to God!

# ***“When the End is Not In Sight?”***

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TEXT: James 5:1-7

November 3, 2013

Theme: Growing to a deeper level of spiritual maturity,  
evidencing a higher quality of Christ like character.

*Your gold and silver have corroded, and their corrosion  
will be evidence against you and will eat your flesh like  
fire. You have laid up treasure in the last days.*

--James 5:3 ESV

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When wealth is lost, nothing is lost; when health is lost, something is  
lost; when character is lost, all is lost.

---Billy Graham

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**Review:** If you haven't read the previous booklet, #3, it ended with "Making Life Count". It would be worth getting the guide and reviewing that lesson. As Christians, each of us must do what we can to make life count for Christ, so our life will not be a wasted life.

Addressed to the Rich: vs.1-6 and to Christian Brothers: vs.7.

## **INTRODUCTION.**

Imagine a farmer going through his daily routines, day in and day out. He plows, sows, fertilizes, milks and repairs. Until one day he says to himself, "I've worked too hard for too long and what do I

have to show for it? So, three weeks before harvest time, he quits. What has happened? He has not kept the “end” in sight. He has allowed circumstances to lead him to an unfortunate end.

I believe many Christian, are not living with the “end” in sight, and as a result, they allow frustration and disappointed expectations to cause them to give up, before the harvest comes. IT is important to keep the end in sight, so we don’t contribute to our own spiritual defeat.

### **STUDY IT** – *As a Disciple of Jesus, What do I learn?*

James gives us 2 perspectives: The Courtroom and the Consolation.

## **PART 1: THE COURTROOM**

### **THE MISERY OF A WASTED LIFE (1-3)**

James does not speak against the rich in general, but specifically those wealthy who have been oppressing those of lesser means. These rich people were sinfully acquiring their wealth and sinfully using their wealth.

He presents a court room analogy again. (ch2) He is looking for evidence of faith, while himself, pointing out the evidence for them being condemned, due to their own sinful actions.

### **Coming Consequences**

James address the coming consequences or their sentence for their sinfulness.

<p><b>5:1</b> Come now, you rich, weep and howl for the miseries that are coming upon you.</p>
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Compare 4:9 which has some of the same terms referring to their need to repent from sin. But now in 5:1, James speaks similarly referring to the coming consequences for their actions. He points out the miseries and regrets which are coming upon them, that is the oppressors.

## The Witness Against the Rich

**5:2)** Your riches have rotted and your garments are moth-eaten.  
(3) Your gold and silver have corroded, not just money.

*“Though they were rich, they have become poor... (Rev 3:17)*

We can be rich in self-sufficiency or reliance, rich in money, rich in our own strength and/ or good works. We can be rich in pride, or beauty. We can be rich materially, but poor on the inside where it matters or poor in faith.

**Mat 6:19** ESV "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal,

Remember 1:9 – the end result of the rich who are pursuing wealth.

**Jas 1:9-11** ESV Let the lowly brother boast in his exaltation, (10) and the rich in his humiliation, because like a flower of the grass he will pass away. (11) For the sun rises with its scorching heat and withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beauty perishes. So also will the rich man fade away in the midst of his pursuits.

As he goes about his business, he will fade, and his pursuits will come to nothing. Wealth, will fade. Riches will turn to poverty. No matter how hard he works or how hard he tries, that which he is striving for will become more and more elusive until it slips through his fingers, never to be retrieved. All he worked for, all he lived for will be gone.

This will be the witness against the rich. When the end is not in sight, we tend to live for our present desires, rather than our future, eternal reality. This is the misery of a wasted life.

## THE TESTIMONY OF A WASTED LIFE (v3b-4

\*he temporary things we live for in this earthly life, will be burned up and become evidence against us of a wasted life.

**5:3-4** (3) Your gold and silver have corroded, and their corrosion will be evidence against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You



have laid up treasure in the **last days**. (4) Behold, the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, are crying out against you, and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts

Evidence is referring to the proof or testimony or the witness against their sin. This will be evidence of a wasted life, lived for temporary, worldly pleasures.

**1Pet. 1:6-7** ESV In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, (7) so that the tested genuineness of your faith--more precious than **gold that perishes** though it is tested by fire--may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

**1Pet. 1:18-19** ESV knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with **perishable things such as silver or gold**, (19) but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

## **Their Corrosion**

The “corrosion” is the same word used in 3:8, which referred to poison.

**Jas 3:8** ESV but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly **poison**.

Likewise, the poison of their fleshly, worldly, selfish, sinful life pursuits will be like a deadly poison, which is exhibit “A” for evidence against them. And that poison of life consuming pursuits apart from Christ, will be the instrument that consumed and condemned their lives.

This poison will “*eat your flesh Like fire*” (5:3) . Remember the “fire” in chapter 3?

**Jas 3:6** ESV And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body,

setting on fire the entire course of life, and is itself, set on fire by hell.

How easily a spark grows to a fire and how quickly the fire spreads and consumes a forest or a life. Oh the damage brought about by human lust and greed and the devastating regret that can consume and destroy like a fire. This fire can burn you away, as your life is tested by fire. The danger is that we may be fully consumed with nothing to show for it.

## **The End is Not in sight**

Living life with selfish motives – with no thought or purpose of things to come, is evidence of spiritual immaturity.

**5:3c** “*You have laid up treasure in the last days.*”

**Mat 6:20ESV** but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.

Living life apart from the will of God and failing to make life count for Christ is like driving down the freeway knowing the bridge is out, but somehow filled with the adrenaline rush and the intoxication of speed. All you can do is press the accelerator harder to the floorboard, knowing that the crash is coming soon.

**Mat 6:20ESV** but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. (21) For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

*This is the testimony of a wasted life.*

## **THE REALITY OF A WASTED LIFE (v4-6**

*\* This wasted life is a life that did not count for Christ.*

These are the grievances or charges against these rich people.

## **They sinfully *acquired* their wealth (v.4**

This is addressing their greed, cheating, and injustice.

**James 5:4** Behold, the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, are crying out against you, and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts.

Perhaps they recited Ps.71:4 as a prayer of desperation to God.

**Psa 71:4** ESV Rescue me, O my God, from the hand of the wicked, from the grasp of the unjust and cruel man.

### **They sinfully *used* their wealth** (v.5

*\* This is on their own people – Christians.*

**James 5:5** You have lived on the earth in luxury and in self-indulgence. You have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter.

(comp. “selfish pleasures” , 4:3)

1) lived luxuriously, extravagantly

2) lived selfishly, wastefully

3) treated others mercilessly, without compassion

4) fattened their hearts. – fed their own affections, their own selfish passions,

Kind of like a sheep being fatted for the slaughter. They were fattening themselves for judgment. This is what can happen when our focus is on ourselves, “when the *End is Not in Sight*.”

### **They sinfully abused the Righteous** (v.6

*\* They have sinfully lived for themselves and wasted their lives.*

**Jas 5:6** ESV (6) You have condemned and murdered the righteous person. He does not resist you

1) They condemned or judged others. They have perverted justice.

**Pro 15:27** ESV Whoever is greedy for unjust gain troubles his own household, but he who hates bribes will live.

**Pro 1:19** ESV Such are the ways of everyone who is greedy for unjust gain; it takes away the life of its possessors.

2) They are Guilty of Murder of the innocent (v.6b)

**Jas 5:6** ESV (6) You have condemned and **murdered the righteous person**. He does not resist you

They “*murdered the righteous person*”. In other words the people you are oppressing are righteous. You, on the other hand, are the unrighteous. In other words, they were living unrighteously, or *sinfully*. And what makes matters worse, the righteous person *did not resist them or didn’t fight back for their rights*.

Is it because the righteous person is a wimp? Or doesn’t have the backbone to stand up against the wealthy bullies? No. They do not resist, because they are righteous. In other words, they do not fight, or slander, or take to court, because they are righteous and they are able to entrust the situation and its results to God. In 1 Cor. 6, we have Christians taking one another to court, evidencing their inability to be Spirit led and obediently loving one another.

**1Pet. 2:21-23** ESV For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. (22) He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. (23) When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.

The righteous people who were being oppressed and abused, trusted in God and His perfect will and did not fight, but entrusted their situation and their future to God – as did Christ.

*These were the grievances from the courtroom.*

## **PART 2: THE CONSOLATION**

### **COMFORT FOR THE RIGHTEOUS (v6b-7)**

Why were the righteous able to keep from fighting back? Why would they? The truth is, they lived their lives in light of the latter days (v3) and their assurance in the return of the Lord Jesus who, when He returns, will make all things right. He will judge the wicked, He will also reward God's righteous children for their faithful lives which counted for Christ.

**Jas 5:7 ESV** Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains.

**Patience is crucial:** *It is part of God's purpose.*

\* This is something everyone of us needs to grow in.

**The Lord is coming:** *It is part of God's Plan.*

\* God will make all things right and reward you.

**Seasons Will Change:** *The harvest will come.*

\* There will be eternal fruit for your labors and endurance.

### **Off the Page and Into My Life**

**OBEY IT** - *As a disciple of Jesus Christ, what will I do about it?*

- 1) Be Patient: allow your faith to be strengthened by your circumstances. Allow steadfastness to grow. (1:3)
- 2) Live by what you know to be God's will. Even when people, circumstances and even life itself, treats you harshly and unjustly.
- 3) Show yourself to be the Righteous person – growing to a deeper level of spiritual maturity, evidenced by a higher quality of Christ-like character. This is what it's all about. This is of utmost importance.

**TELL IT** - *As an Obedient Disciple, What will I pass on to others?*

- 1) I will encourage others, even unbelievers, that we are in the *last days*.
- 2) I will encourage others I meet, with the good news that God will one day, make all things right.
- 3) I will ask others if they are living with *the end* in sight and in a manner which honors God and does not consist of a wasted life.

----- Thinking Things Through -----

- 1) What does it mean to make your life count for Christ? What does a life that counts for Christ look like?
- 2) What does it mean to waste your life? What does a wasted life look like?
- 3) How do I live, in relation to finances and possessions? When people look at my life, what do they see as being most important to me?
- 4) What does my life convey about what it means to be a true believer in Christ?

*Your gold and silver have corroded, and their corrosion will be evidence against you and will eat your flesh like fire.*

*You have laid up treasure in the last days.*

--James 5:3 ESV

----- Praying It Through -----

Oh God, how easy it is for me to get caught up in the things I want. How easy it is to neglect your direction in my pursuits and choices. Please help me to grasp how very important it is to use the life you have given, to honor and glorify You!

In Jesus' Name, --Amen!



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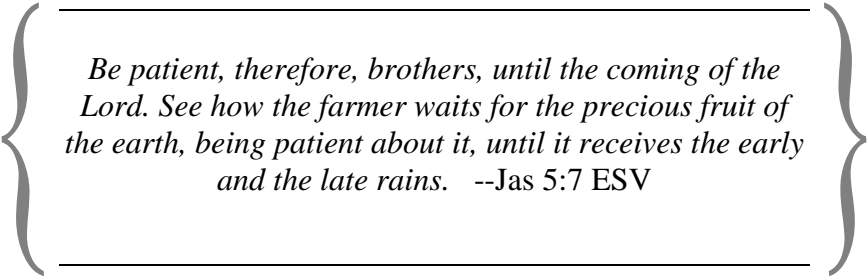
## “Patience Until the Lord Returns”

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TEXT: James 5:7-12

November 10, 2013

Theme: Patience, The Lords coming and daily trials



*Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. --Jas 5:7 ESV*

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We could never learn to be brave and patient,  
if there were only joy in the world.

--Helen Keller

### INTRODUCTION.

Life is a time of growth and maturing spiritually. It is character building and purifying. Each and every physical difficulty has a spiritual purpose. Trials are purposed to purify the True Believer.

In Ch.1, James began with trials and here in Ch.5 he closes with trials, as he reminds us of the promised return of Christ. IF you are here today and you find yourself in the middle of some trial or difficulty, be sure there is a purpose and certain of the hope that is to come.

James helps burn away the fog of life. He challenges us to keep in view our blessed hope of Christ's return.

**STUDY IT** – *As a Disciple of Jesus, What do I learn?*

**PATIENCE UNTIL THE LORD RETURNS** (v7-9)

Today, we are urged to remain patient until the Lord Returns. In the previous verses, James has rebuked and warned those rich people who have sinfully acquired their wealth and sinfully used their wealth. They have used and abused others to get where they are and what they want, without considering that we are in the last days. They have failed to keep in mind that Christ will one day return to make all things right.

These people are guilty of living selfishly, wastefully and sinfully living. The Lord's coming or the return of Christ is referred to as the source of our hope and the reason for living Godly lives.

**James 5:7** Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains.

“Be patient” , Why?

Not only is James writing to *warn* the oppressors but he also writes to remind and *encourage* the oppressed. This is not a wasted time for them, but a purifying time. It is also a time filled with hope in the promised return of Jesus Christ.

“Harvest time” is a reference to a time of eventual rewards and eternal blessings for those who remain patient and focused until Christ comes back.

**Joel 2:23** ESV "Be glad, O children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God, for he has given the early rain for your vindication; he has poured down for you abundant rain, the early and the **latter** rain, as before. [compare also Hosea 6:3]



This promise in Joel as well as in Hosea, is a reference to the difference Christ will make, the blessings in which He will bestow and the transformation and hope He will bring when He returns. The *latter rain*, is a reference to a time when God's people will repent from their sins and return to God and God in turn pours out his promised blessings upon those who have endured.

With this, OT reminder, James encourages the believers to be patient. They are urged to endure mistreatment, even from other Christians. Trust God that the church will be made right – *God will make all things right!*

## **The Return of Christ to Earth**

The return of Christ to the earth is intended to be the focus of our HOPE. The return of Christ is promised in the OT. And the promise for His 2<sup>nd</sup> coming is given before His first coming ever took place.

## **The Kingdom of Righteousness**

When Christ returns, He will establish the righteous rule of His righteous kingdom. A truly righteous government? That is a foreign concept to us, because we have nothing to compare it to. The very best of human governments are broken and flawed and impure at best.

**Isa 9:7** ESV Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

Sometimes the unrighteous governments on earth, can cause us to deeply long for the righteous eternal kingdom of Christ.

**Mat 6:33** ESV But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

These people James wrote to, were experiencing and living under unrighteous people and ungodly circumstances. They were

personally being treated unjustly. Injustice was rampant and wide spread – *much like today*.

### *The Righteous judge*

James assures us that there is only one lawgiver and Judge...  
(James 4:12 ESV)

Abrahams also was assured that, *the Judge of all the earth [will] do what is just?(or righteous)"* (Gen 18:25 ESV)

Jesus Himself offers us an example of faith under fire.

**1Pet. 2:22-23** ESV He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. (23) When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself *to him who judges justly*.

When Christ returns He will establish the righteous reign of a righteous kingdom . He will also bring about the Rich Rewards for Christ Followers.

**James 5:7** Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains.

In 1:12 and 2:5, James makes references to loving Christ, looking forward to seeing Him and the rich rewards for His patient followers. The rewards in the Lord's coming is like the rewards for the farmer when the precious fruit of the earth is harvested. We will receive the rewards for our labor and our patience in *the faith*.

The concept of "Christ" in James is from 2 perspectives.

1) There is the concept of Christ's literal promised and expected return to the earth. This is "the blessed hope" (Titus 2:13)

2) There is also the concept of the life of Christ evidenced in the life of every true Spirit controlled, believer. And in this, will be great rewards for every faithful follower of Jesus Christ.

*James refers to The Return of Christ to the Earth.*

Now he also refers to ...

## THE REIGN OF CHRIST IN THE CHURCH

\* *James presents a Now and Near contrast. The reign of Christ is right now – Today and until He comes.*

**James 5:8** You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.

“You be patient” *NOW*. “Establish your heart”, *NOW*. While the Lord’s return is at hand or *NEAR*. This involves living as though He *could* return today. This has always been the perspective of the church. For 2000 years they have lived and even written as though Jesus may return anytime. This was their focus and it affected the way in which they lived and conducted themselves.

“Establish your hearts...” – i.e. *NOW*, set your heart or affections on the return of Christ, which is *NEAR*.

**Col 3:1-3** ESV If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. (2) Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. (3) For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

“Set your minds” is to refer to the focus your affection. The phrase literally means to “face the belly” in the direction of one’s interests or passions. Belly or inner most part of a person is the source and storage of one’s passions, affections and desires. We are to focus our passions, affections and desires on Christ.

**2Tim. 4:8** ESV Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have *loved his appearing*.

*We are encouraged to be patient until the Lord returns.  
We are also challenged.*

## **How are we to Live? (v9 - Application**

Is it appropriate for any of us, to go on living as we have been, ignoring the change God wants to take hold in our earthly live? Is it appropriate to believe that the return of Christ is *NEAR*, yet fail to live like it *NOW*?

**Jas 5:9-10** ESV Do not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door. (10) As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

How are we to live? *Consider this --*

### **What kind of people are we? --NOW**

*We are God's people - NOW*

Christians are part of God's family. (Jn.1:12) . That is who we belong to. That is the family we are **NOW** part of.

**1Pe 2:9-10** But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that you should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light: (10) Which in time past were not a people, but are **NOW** the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but **NOW** have obtained mercy.

*Are we living like we are true Children of God? If not, then why not?*

*We are the Body of Christ, the church - NOW*

**1Co 12:27-28** ESV **NOW** you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. (28) And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues.

If you are not involved in a local church, you are not living God's will and purpose for your life. "I don't need Church". But you do need Church to be obedient to God. God has a purpose for you in

His church. Am I treating others in the body of Christ honorably and lovingly? We are intended to be the representatives and ambassadors of Christ to a lost and unbelieving world.

**2Cor. 5:20** ESV Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

How am I doing at connecting with others, that I might connect them to Christ and to other Christ followers, the church?

### **What kind of people *should* we be? (5:9**

\* We should be the kind of people who point others to Christ **NOW**. The kind that evidence the love and life of Christ in our lives. The kind that live so others can know Biblical truth and Christ-like character from observing our lives and listening to our speech **NOW**.

James tells us to make 1 change.

...Do not grumble against one another (James 5:9a)

In several areas of the Old Testament, the Israelites were referred to as grumblers. They grumbled against Moses, and the grumbled against Aaron. The grumbled against one another and they even grumbled against God Himself. Being a “grumbler” is not a positive character trait to have. In chapter 2, we have already been given the *Rule* for relating properly to others.

**Jas 2:8** ESV If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing well.

They were urged to demonstrate loving-kindness, long-suffering, and patient-steadfastness. (see ch.1:1-3 / ch.5:7-9). Now James gives us the motivation for Christian living, even under injustice and oppression.

## **CHRIST AND HIS COMING**

\* When Christ returns, He will make all things right. He will

judge all sin. He will reward all true believers in Jesus. He is both Rewarder and Judge.

### **Judge sin (4:12)**

As the Judge of sin, He will be *punishing*.

**Jas 4:12** ESV There is only one lawgiver and judge, he who is able to save and to destroy. But who are you to judge your neighbor?

Consider Jesus' own words regarding sinfully judging others.

**Luk 6:41-42** ESV Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? (42) How can you say to your brother, 'Brother, let me take out the speck that is in your eye,' when you yourself do not see the log that is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take out the speck that is in your brother's eye.

When Christ returns, He will bring judgment against sin. (5:16)

**James 2:3-4** ESV and if you pay attention to the one who wears the fine clothing and say, "You sit here in a good place," while you say to the poor man, "You stand over there," or, "Sit down at my feet," (4) have you not then made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?

The Christians James writes too were practicing evil prejudice, ch.1; evil thoughts, lacking good works, ch2; evil speech, ch3; evil selfish living, ch.4; evil injustice, ch.5. And James is bringing out the fact that God's own people need to get their own lives and relationships with Him cleared up. Consider the words of Peter.

**1Pe 4:17-19** ESV For it is time for judgment to begin at the household of God; and if it begins with us, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God? (18) And "If the righteous is scarcely saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?" (19) Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good.

James 4:12, refers to the Judge who can “save and *destroy*”. Destruction will come upon all the enemies of God, who have rejected God and His Son’s sacrifice for their sins. Jesus also warned....

**Mat 10:27-28** ESV What I tell you in the dark, say in the light, and what you hear whispered, proclaim on the housetops. (28) And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear him who can **destroy** both **soul and body** in hell.

4:12) The Righteous Judge can punish sin and purify the saints.

### **Purify the Church (4:12)**

He will Judge sin, which is **NEAR**. This is in reference to his judging sin. But he is also changing the church **NOW**, which is a reference to purifying the church.

Imagine a guest in your house and he is trashing the place, eating all your food, breaking your furniture, getting mud throughout the house and basically disrespecting your place and not offering to help clean things up a bit. Basically, he is taking advantage of your hospitality!

There may come a time when you say enough is enough and you “purify” the house by asking this guest to leave or at least change his behavior. When Jesus Christ comes it is His goal to have an already purified Church.

**Eph 5:25-27** (ESV) ...Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, (26) that he might **sanctify** her, having **cleansed** her by the washing of water with the word, (27) so that he might present the church to himself in **splendor**, **without spot** or **wrinkle** or any such thing, that she might be **holy** and **without blemish**.

Christ is purifying us **NOW**. If you are looking for a perfect church, you won’t find it. Christ still has a work to do in the church, that is in every Christian’s life individually. Then the

church will be what the church ought to be – Holy and Christ like. But until then, we are all imperfect, so the church is imperfect.

“Purifying the church” means Christ purifying each of us, because it is together that we make up the church. We are growing. HE is purifying.

Reflection Question: How is the Lord working to purify you? Are you experiencing frustration, stress, trials, hardship, or even injustice? God is purifying His church.

## **Blessings in Purifying**

*Consider the prophets of old (v.10-11a)*

**James 5:10-11a** (10) As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. (11) Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast (cp. 1:3)

They were steadfast in the faith and in the message God gave them, even when their message was rejected and they were persecuted, many unto death. James 1:2-3 speaks of joy in our trials, because the testing of our faith develops perseverance, patience and steadfastness.

*Consider Gods people who suffered (v11b)*

**James 5:11b** You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.

In suffering – God was purifying and strengthening faith. Not sinful – but Godly, not punishment, but purifying.

Al has a rare bone disease and had around 40 surgeries. Tumors grow in his bones and the tumors begin growing star like spikes on them. They continue to grow, pushing the sharp points into the flesh, nerves and even blood vessels or arteries. Every year he has to have full body scans to locate and evaluate the painful tumors.



He then has surgeries to attempt to alleviate the pain. He said, “I don’t know that I’ve done to deserve this?” “Why is God punishing me?” I told him that I could not answer that, but perhaps God was not punishing him, but rather God’s purpose may be to purify him. He then said, “*I think I can live with that.*”

If we can appreciate it, purifying is a blessing from God, though it may be through much pain and hardship. We must keep “the end” in sight. Christ’s return and God’s purposes make all the difference.

### ***Who we are and who we represent (v12)***

**Jas 5:12** But above all, my brothers, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or by any other oath, but let your "yes" be yes and your "no" be no, so that you may not fall under condemnation.

The rich oppressors were cheating, lying, stealing, breaking their word and dishonoring one another, *and* dishonoring the name of Christ. It is possible to learn good lessons, from bad examples.

Don’t swear. We should not have to swear. Don’t break your word. Let your “yes”, be as good as an oath. Let your simple “no”, be as good as swearing under oath, because your word is your word. No fingers crossed. No, “oh I was just kidding.”

### **Off the Page and Into My Life**

**OBEY IT** - *As a disciple of Jesus Christ, what will I do about it?*

- 1) I will ask God, “how do you want to purify me? How do You want me to change?”
- 2) I will attempt to focus my attention, not as much on my problems, but more of the object of my faith, Jesus and His promised return.
- 3) I will live NOW, like His return is NEAR.

**TELL IT** - *As an Obedient Disciple, What will I pass on to others?*

- 1) I will remind others of the coming of Christ and the need to stay focused on pleasing Him.

2) I will encourage others in the faith, so as to help establish each person's heart firmly on the Lord Jesus Christ, above all things.

**Tit. 2:11-14** ESV For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, (12) training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, (13) waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, (14) who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

----- Thinking Things Through -----

- 1) When you think of the coming of the Lord, what comes to your mind? Peace? Fear? Guilt? Joy? Anxiety? Dread? Peace?
- 2) If Christ returned today, would you be ready? Will you be found pure? Will you be found to have been making your life count for Christ, by reaching others with the good news of salvation through faith in Jesus?
- 3) Is there something that is yet undone in your life? Something that would possibly leave you with regret if Christ returned today? What would it take to get fully prepared for Christ's return? Why not jot down some things? Lay down some steps to take? Why not set some "*Return of Christ*" goals while you have the opportunity?

*Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains.*

--James 5:7 ESV

-----Praying It Through-----

Lord I'm not ready for Christ to return. Life is not together – things are not working well at this point. Please take my life and help me get things in order for your promised return. I want to be able to look forward to seeing Jesus.

In Jesus' Name,

--Amen!



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## *“Patience, Prayer and Pursuing Sinners”*

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TEXT: James 5:13-20

November 17, 2013

Theme: Patience, The Lords coming and daily trials

*Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.* --James 5:16 ESV

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New Year's Resolution: To tolerate fools more gladly, provided this does not encourage them to take up more of my time.

--James Agate

### **INTRODUCTION**

Throughout the book of James, many topics have been addressed; prejudice and favoritism; pride and humility, poverty and riches, fairness and injustice, slander and loving speech; relational wars; learning without obeying; claiming faith without demonstration of faith; and failing to keep their hope of Christ's return before them.

James comes to the end of his letter with a connection of 3 key concepts. (1) Patience, as we look to the Lord's return; (2) Praying, as God's means of eternal Kingdom power; and (3) Pursuing sinners, as God's expression of His own heart for those enslaved to sin.

I believe this is not a sort of, "...Oh, yeah and PS, don't forget to write." I see this as a purposeful final summary focus and culmination of his entire letter.

## **STUDY IT** – *As a Disciple of Jesus, What do I learn?*

### **THE PROMISE OF PRAYER AND ITS INTENDED EFFECT**

James 5:12-16a

Prayer is a very real and effective means of addressing real life problems. These problems can be physical, emotional, mental and/or spiritual problems. And Prayer is given as the answer to these problems. The question is: Do we really believe this?

#### **the Prayer of faith**

James speaks of the prayer of faith. He asks 3 questions and offers 3 "natural" responses.

#### *the prayer of suffering (v.13a)*

**5:13a** "Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray..."

v.13) James' Question: Is any among you suffering or afflicted? That is referring to hardship, troubles or trials. This is a reference to circumstances.

James' Instruction: Then let him pray or talk to God about his problems. We are reminded in v.11, that Job made it through worse life experiences than what James' audience is experiencing. Job prayed and talked to God extensively.

Peter wrote to encourage such circumstances.

**1Pet. 5:6-7** ESV Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, (7) casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.

*the prayer of praise (v13b)*

**5:13** Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise.

Question: Is anyone merry? This refers to being cheerful or of good courage. Are things going well for you?

The instruction here is: Let him sing praise or *literally*, make melody; sing psalms, or praise the Lord. Talking to God through praise, should be a natural response for the believer in Christ.

*the prayer of weakness (v14)*

**Jas 5:14** Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.

v.14) Question: Is any sick? This is sick generically; 1) to be weak, feeble, to be without strength, powerless; 2) to be weak in means, needy, or poor 3) to be feeble, or physically *sick*.

The instruction: “*Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord*”. (Jas 5:14) The Elders are to talk to God together regarding the state of the needy Christian. This is a reference to the effects of the “suffering” circumstances in v.13.

*the promises for prayer (v15)*

Here the elders are being obedient, but they are also setting an example. Be assured, the Elders are not intended to be presented as an elite group of priest like super Christians. No one needs another human to forgive their sins. We have one Mediator between God and man, that is the man Christ Jesus.<sup>[1Tim.2:5]</sup> Elders are, however, expected to be men, who are mature in the faith, seasoned in prayer and knowledgeable of Holy Scripture and above all, models of what to do in this kind of situation.

*the promise of saving the Sick (v.15)*

v.15) “And the prayer of faith will **save** the one who is **sick**, and the Lord will **raise him up**. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.”

**SAVE** here is from a *general* form of a word that can mean (1) to save, or keep safe and sound; 2) to rescue from danger or destruction; or (3) to protect from injury or peril. It can carry the meaning of saving a suffering one from perishing or from the present suffering; or (4) to deliver from the penalties of the Messianic judgment. (THAYER)

Scripture teaches that there are some suffering situations that may be a result of physical problems being experienced as God’s punishment for Christian’s sins. In 1 Corinthians chapter 11, the context is the church and the Passover meal.

**1Cor. 11:28-31** ESV Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. (29) For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself. (30) That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died. (31) But if we judged ourselves truly, we would not be judged.

John also reflects these circumstances when he addresses a “sin unto death”.

**1Jn 5:16-17** ESV If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not leading to death, he shall ask, and God will give him life--to those who commit sins that do not lead to death. There is sin that leads to death; I do not say that one should pray for that. (17) All wrongdoing is sin, but there is sin that does not lead to death.

This is not to imply that everyone who is sick is suffering because of personal sin. However in James 5:16 he states *if he has committed sins*. We know that from the beginning to the very end of the book of James, he deals with the sins within the church, between other believers. It would seem to imply that the afflictions

referred to may be the result of the trials upon the weaker Christians by the more dominant ones. And perhaps the sickness being described, is referring to sickness upon the abusive Christians as God's judgment upon those unrepentant Christians, living in known, ongoing sin.

**SICK** refers not merely physical sickness a general work referring to the result of *toil*, meaning to *tire or faint* generally, but not specifically or necessarily physical *sickness*.

This specific form of this word for *sickness* in v.15 is used rarely in the new testament: (1) **Rev 2:3** ESV "*I know you are enduring patiently and bearing up for my name's sake, and you have not grown weary.*" (2) **Heb 12:3** ESV "*Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.*" And (3) here in James 5:15 it can refer to sickness, but is more general and broader in application.

James uses a very generic word that can imply *sickness*. He also uses a very general term which refers to *saving* in a multitude of possible applications. Now he uses a word that has a general definition to lifting or *raising up*.

v.15b) "**raise him up**" is not the typical word to refer to physical restoration or even resurrection. But this is a more general word that can mean... (1a) to awaken from sleep; (1b) to arouse from the sleep of death, or to recall the dead to life. It can mean (1c) to cause to rise from a seat or bed; (1d) to raise up, produce, cause to appear (1d) to raise up, i.e. cause to be born. It can even refer to (1d) to raise up buildings, or construct [ Lexicon ]

This is not merely a reference to future, spiritual life, but present help, forgiveness and deliverance from sin and restoration of any kind. This then would refer to physical illness, weakness or emptiness; Mental weariness or exhaustion; Emotional depletion and powerlessness, and even spiritual lack or immaturity of faith.

James seems to be using these 3 key terms in very general applications so as not to point to one particular area of help, but any and all areas of human need that we might experience. His words remind me of the promise of Isaiah, for the strength of God,



being promised to those who find themselves fully depleted by life's circumstances.

**Isa 40:28-31** ESV Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. (29) He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength. (30) Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted; (31) but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.

POINT: God is our Source of help for all and every need we may experience. The key to that help is communicating and communing with God through prayer and even group prayer.

the promise of forgiveness of sin (v. 15c)

**James 5:15c** “*And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.*”

Connected with that promise is...

### **The Commandment to Confess** (v.16)

Where there are human relationships of any kind, conflict is to be expected. Conflict is not necessarily a bad thing. However, unresolved conflict and strife are bad. Even in the Church, strife and unresolved conflict may at times seem to be *typical*, but they are **NOT** Biblical.

**Jas 5:16** ESV (Therefore), confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed...

I don't know how you are reading this, but I see these last verses as the purposeful final, focus and culmination of James' entire letter. I see James calling the wealthy oppressors to confess their sin to those they have oppressed.

He is also calling those who are being oppressed, to pray for their oppressors. The purpose is that God might raise them up or *restore* them. These were slanderers, grumblers, oppressors,

cheaters, liars, those who were hearers of God's word but not doers.

James says, "we need to get past what is *typical* in the church and get back to the *Biblical* expectation of God for His church."

Confess your sins against your brothers in Christ *to* your brothers in Christ. Confess your unforgiveness towards those who have sinned against you. When the body of Christ starts working like this, then healing, both physical or emotional, as well as mental and spiritual can begin to take place.

It doesn't matter how many discipleship classes or SS lessons or sermons we listen to. If we are living sinfully against one another, we cannot expect God's blessing, but His judgment against the household of God.

<p><b>1Pet. 4:17</b> ESV For it is time for judgment to begin at the household of God; and if it begins with us, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God?</p>
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### *sin related problems and prayers (v16a*

v.16) The following thoughts are directly related and predicated upon the thoughts immediately preceding. They are connected and related. One should give us insight into the other. One verse of scripture should help us understand the other verse of Scripture – *accurately*.

James 1:25 – "Law of freedom"; James 2:8 – "Royal Law" of loving your others;

James 1-5:6 – James Addresses the sins of the church.

James 5:19-20 – James urges the church re: addressing sin in the lives of other brothers and sisters in the church.

And in the very midst of this address of sin, we have James 5:13-15 –this traditional passage regarding the prayer of faith for the sick.

### *sin related promises (v16b)*

**5:16b** The fervent prayer of a righteous person accomplishes much.

To the sinful oppressors, James writes...

**James 5:6** ESV You have condemned and murdered the righteous person. He does not resist you.

The righteous person is the one being oppressed. The unrighteous person is the one doing the oppressing. What is the state of the prayer life of the unrighteous, sinful man? His prayers are frustrated and fruitless. He addresses that also in chapter 4.

**James 4:2-3** ESV You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. (3) You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.

The sinful, unrighteous people do not receive answers to their prayers. But the prayer life of the righteous person is effective and powerful and will receive answers from heaven. Praying selflessly is one key to a fruitful prayer life.

## **THE PRAYER OF THE RIGHTEOUS PERSON (v17-18)**

The righteous person was the person of peace and the one who's prayers God promises to bless. Elijah was not a super human or even a super Christian, but much like you and I.

### **Prayer for Rain (James 5:17; 1Ki.17:1; 18:1; 42-44)**

Elijah had a productive prayer life. We know that he prayed that rain would cease and it did.<sup>[James 5:17/1Ki.17:1]</sup> He also prayed to God and fire fell from heaven<sup>[1Ki.18:36]</sup> Then he prayed that it would begin to rain and it did.<sup>[1Ki.18:42]</sup>

**1Kings 18:42-44** ESV So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Mount Carmel. And he bowed himself

down on the earth and put his face between his knees. (43) And he said to his servant, "Go up now, look toward the sea." And he went up and looked and said, "There is nothing." And he said, "Go again," seven times. (44) And at the seventh time he said, "Behold, a little cloud like a man's hand is rising from the sea." And he said, "Go up, say to Ahab, 'Prepare your chariot and go down, lest the rain stop you.'"

Elijah was a man of effective and powerful prayer, yet he was still much like us.

## **Perseverance in Prayer**

Elijah prayed once and got no results. How many of us would quit right there? God didn't hear. God didn't answer. So I quit.

But, he prays again and again, without results. Then seven times he prayed. Finally his servant says, "I see a little cloud about the size of a man's hand". The size of a man's hand may not be what Elijah wanted. Perhaps he was counting on something much bigger. From Earth's perspective, a cloud the size of a man's hand would appear small. However, a cloud the size of a man's hand, viewed from heaven's perspective, might actually be the size of the state of Texas.

Elijah persevered in prayer until God's purpose was accomplished. The duration of praying 7 times did not deter him. The "smallness" of the size of answered prayers did not disappoint him.

How often have we stopped praying when answers don't come - *immediately*. How quickly have we become disgruntled when the answers are not of the magnitude that we had expected. The prayers of the righteous person and the perseverance of those prayers, are effective.

## **THE PURSUIT OF SINNERS (v19-20)**

\* This is not an add on, but is connected with the whole of James' letter. This reflects a heart that evidences a genuine concern for the sinners around us, even those who have sinned *against us*.

**James 5:19-20** (19) My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, (20) let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

What an incredible promise for those truly concerned for the lost sinner or the erring saint. What a powerful kingdom impacting influence we can have on the spiritual lives of others.

But also, what a loving and forgiving heart this requires, on behalf of those being misused and taken advantage of. This involves the righteous person, taking the spiritual lead and pursuing the sinning Christian as a shepherd pursuing a wandering lamb. Paul writes of the eternal value of this kind of attitude and the Difference a Faith like that can make.

**Gal 6:1-3** ESV Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. (2) Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the *law of Christ*. (3) For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

## **Prodigals and Wanderers**

*the man with two prodigals (Lk. 15:11)*

Luke 15:11 – A man had two sons, both were prodigals. One remained home, the other wandered away. Both had spiritual needs.

*a shepherd with a wanderer (Lk. 15:4)*

A shepherd had 100 sheep. 99 stayed with the flock. 1 strayed and wandered away. It had to be pursued. And Luke tells us that the shepherd pursued the lost sheep *until it was found*. The fact is, people – and even some Christians - tend to stray and need other Christians strong enough and loving enough and even courageous enough to do the Biblical thing and attempt to bring the straying

brother or sister back on track. This is always a challenge.

### **When Someone Cares to Pursue.... (5:19b-20)**

James ends his letter to sinful Christians, not by pointing the finger of detest, but of highlighting the blessing of Christian love.

AA states, “the only time we look down on another person, is when we are extending a hand to help them up”. Oh the demonstration James gives us of the true Royal Law of Christ<sup>[James2:8]</sup> in Christian love. Oh the evidence of a deeper spiritual maturity, displayed by a higher quality of Christ-like character.

No smirk of disgust at those who struggle with things we don't think we struggle with. No gossiping about others, while attempting to elevate ourselves. No unspoken judgmental pointing of the finger, while secretly hiding in the closet of our own sinful practices.

*From James...*

#### ***1) This is a call to make things right with others.***

This may present some challenging theology to come to grips with. But it is a very practical motivation for living as obediently to God and peacefully loving toward one another, as we work and serve Him until Christ Returns.

Is there any unresolved conflicts among us? Is there any unconfessed sin or offense between one another? Is there any unforgiveness that needs to take place? We are called to make it all right.

#### ***2) This is also a call to pursue the unsaved in our lives.***

Are there any unsaved loved ones, friends that are on our hearts? Do we have spiritual concerns toward anyone we know?

Pray for them. Contact and invite them this Sunday. Don't forget. Don't neglect. Don't Delay and put off till the last minute. Do all we can and trust God to do all He must do.

*My Hope America* Sunday and Thanksgiving Tureen Dinner is next Sunday, Nov. 24. We are praying for and inviting friends, family members and coworkers who may not know Christ to our Thanks Giving holiday service and dinner to follow. During the service the sermon time will be a Billy Graham evangelistic video from My Hope America.

### Jesus Friend of Sinners, by Casting Crowns

Jesus Friend of sinners we have strayed so far away

We cut down people in your name

but the sword was never ours to swing

Jesus friend of sinners the truth's become so hard to see

The world is on their way to You, but they're tripping over me

Always looking around but never looking up, I'm so double minded. A plank eyed saint with dirty hands and a heart divided

Oh Jesus friend of sinners

Open our eyes to world at the end of our pointing fingers

Let our hearts be, led by mercy

Help us reach with open hearts and open doors

Oh Jesus friend of sinners break our hearts for what breaks yours

The Theme of James has been A Faith That Makes A Difference. He writes, expressing God's heart for the church, that we are growing to a deeper level of spiritual maturity, evidencing a higher quality of Christ-like character.

May God bless YOU, as you implement these lessons from James into your own Christian journey.

### **Off the Page and Into My Life**

**OBEY IT** - *As a disciple of Jesus Christ, what will I do about it?*

1) Be willing to connect with others, in order to connect them to Christ and to other Christ followers, the church.

- 2) Pray fervently and effectively, for those you see who are struggling against sin.
  - 3) Be available, to extend a helping hand to someone, to help them up and out of whatever they may be in.
- Speak Truth lovingly. Encourage Them patiently.

**TELL IT** - *As an Obedient Disciple, What will I pass on to others?*

- 1) I will tell others of the patience of God toward me in my spiritual journey.
- 2) I will listen more than talk, in that through the sharing of others, I may gain wisdom in what to say and what not to say.

----- Thinking Things Through -----

- 1) When was the last time, you allowed someone who needed to talk, to take up your time? How do you think they felt, when they left your presence? Heard or simply tolerated?
- 2) How often do you go out of your way to help others in a tough situation?
- 3) How do you view the people who seem to need the most from you? People you are able to help and influence for Christ or “high maintenance” people?

*Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working. --James 5:16 ESV*



-----Praying It Through-----

Holy Father, give me the heart of Christ for others who are hurting.  
Help me to see others through the eyes of Jesus and to sensitively  
do my part to help others find spiritual life and wholeness.

In Jesus' Name,  
--Amen!

*The Prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi*

*(While this is traditionally attributed to Saint Francis of Assisi, the lack of  
documentation casts doubt as to the accuracy of authorship.)*

*Lord, make me an instrument of Your peace;*

*Where there is hatred, let me sow love;*

*Where there is injury, pardon;*

*Where there is error, truth;*

*Where there is doubt, faith;*

*Where there is despair, hope;*

*Where there is darkness, light;*

*And where there is sadness, joy.*

*O Divine Master, Grant that I may not  
so much seek To be consoled as to console;*

*To be understood as to understand;*

*To be loved as to love.*

*For it is in giving that we receive;*

*It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;*

*And it is in dying that we are born...  
to eternal life.*



# ***Don't close this booklet yet!***

*without considering this all important question.*

---

## **Is Jesus Christ the Savior of *your* soul and the Lord of *your* life?**

Every person is born guilty of sin and in need of forgiveness.

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; --  
*Romans 3:23*

Our sin is against God, therefore our forgiveness can only come from  
God.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten  
Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but  
have everlasting life. --*John 3:16*

God has appointed His Son as the payment for sins and sent Him to die  
in our place.

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal  
life through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
-- *Romans 6:23*

God's love is demonstrated through the sacrificial payment of Jesus  
Christ in our place for our sins.

...but God shows his love for us in that while we were still  
sinners, Christ died for us. ---*Romans 5:8*

For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord  
will be saved." -- *Rom 10:13*

But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he  
gave the right to become children of God, - *John 1:12*

Before you close this book, why not be absolutely certain that you are  
truly a citizen of God's eternal kingdom and loving family?

***Trust in Jesus Christ today and receive forgiveness for your  
sins and citizenship into God's family and His Kingdom.***

## **The ABCs**

**A** - Admit you have sinned and are in need of a Savior.

**B** - Believe Jesus died in your place, and you can no way help yourself.

**C** - Confess your sins to God. *He already knows.*  
- also Confess Jesus as you LORD.

**Prayer:** Take time to talk to God right now and open your heart and life to His instruction and leadership.

**Connect** with a local Bible believing, Christ centered church.

**Commit** yourself to meeting regularly with other Christians who are growing in their faith.

**Heb 10:24-25** And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, (25) not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

**Act 2:41-42** So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls. (42) And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

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For more information or for spiritual help, please contact us at:  
Christ E. Free Church, PO Box 619, 19682 Hill Rd,  
Saegertown, Pa, 16433, Ph: 814-763-2934, [www.christefca.org](http://www.christefca.org)

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**We have a free booklet on:**

**Water Baptism:** *The First Step of Believer's Obedience.*  
*and also*

**A New Creation:** *Beginning Your New Life In Christ*

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*It is our prayer that you find Jesus Christ to be, your greatest purpose, your highest calling, your soul's source and joy, and your all-consuming passion.*

*Other Free Booklets*

1 PETER, pt.1-2 (2Vol): *Suffering in Sojourning*

1 PETER, pt.3-5 (3Vol): *The Church God Always Wanted*

100 YEARS OF MISSIONS: *So Where Are We Now?*

A NEW CREATION: *Beginning Your New Life In Christ*

ADVENT: *The Submission of Christ*

AMERICA ADRIFT: *A Culture in Crisis and the Challenges Before the Church*

CHALLENGES OF FAITH *From Characters in the Bible*

CHRIST'S COMING KINGDOM: *What Will Be Will Be*

CPR Evangelism: *Helping others Step from Death to Life*

DIRTY DISCIPLESHIP: *Preparing the Soil of the Heart for the Seed of the Word.*

ETERNITY: *What Will It Really Be Like?*

GIFTS AND FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: *A Match Made in Heaven*

GOD'S BLUEPRINT FOR THE FAMILY: *The Intelligent Divine Design*

GROWING THROUGH GRIEF: *When Pain Won't End and Hope Seems Lost*

HOLY WEEK QUESTIONS: *Life After Death & How Dead Will We Really Be?*

IN THE PRESENCE OF THE ALMIGHTY: *Life Transforming Prayer & Communion*

IN THE SHADOW OF THE SHEPHERD: *Sheep Becoming Like the Servant Shepherd*

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Ruth: *Our Unmerited Blessedness in the LORD.*

SURVIVING THE STORMS OF THE SOUL: *The Presence of God for the Troubled Soul*

THE HOLY SPIRIT: *The Friend You Need To Get To Know*

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN: *Seeing and Living the Kingdom of Heaven*

THE WONDER OF IT ALL: *The End Times of Trials, from Mark 13*

TRAGEDIES OF LIFE: *Things God Allows & Blessings from Heaven's Perspective*

WATER BAPTISM: *The First Step of Believer's Obedience or Disobedience.*

WHAT GOD HAS JOINED TOGETHER: *A Handbook for Pre-Marriage Considerations*

YOUR LIFE IS LIKE...: *The Challenge to Disciple A Community*

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***May each lesson bring a growing submission, a deeper obedience  
and an increase of the righteous reign of the Lordship  
of Jesus Christ in the fullness of His Spirit  
in His Church and throughout our mission field***

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