

# Covenant People's Ministry

## DO NOT ERR: EXPOSITION OF JAMES #1



by Pastor Jeremy John Visser

### (Introduction:)

Brothers and sisters, this morning I'd like to present the first of two sermons covering the entire Epistle of James. By way of introduction, this letter was written to us about 45 a.d. by James, the half-brother of Jesus Christ (Matthew 13:55, Mark 6:3 and Galatians 1:19). There are six "perfect" things found in this book -- #1) Perfect work of patience. #2) Perfect knowledge. #3) Perfect gifts. #4) Perfect Law of liberty. #5) Perfect faith by works. #6) Perfect man by restraint.

This letter is very important to honest Christians so let's dive in:

### (Divers Temptations:)

**"James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting (James 1:1)."**

Notice that this epistle is addressed only to the scattered twelve tribes? It isn't addressed to "everyone who believes" but instead keeps with the very teachings of Jesus Christ who said; **"Go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matthew 10:6) and "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matthew 15:24)."** Granted, many false prophets like to teach a 'spiritual Israel' but if we continue reading we can see for ourselves that is simply not the case.

**"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing (James 1:2-4)."**

Yes, James starts his teaching by addressing only his brethren or racial kinsfolk. He tells us to be joyful at various 'temptations' because when we overcome the lust of the flesh we are rewarded with an increased faith in God. James continues a little later in this same chapter to explain that God does not tempt man but instead that every man is tempted by their own flesh but nonetheless we should all strive to be perfect and entire not found 'wanting' but completed in Christ.

**"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed (James 1:5-6)."**

This is a promise that we should all pay attention to -- God gives everyone Biblical wisdom when they ask. How many refuse to humble themselves and even ask for "eyes to see and ears to hear" before reading the Word of Yahweh? Sadly, few people do and instead they feel they're wiser than God but this promise also makes them "without excuse (Romans 1:20)" so no man can say they weren't warned when Jesus says; **"Behold, I have foretold you all things** (Mark 13:23)."

James also compares those who "waver" or doubt in the same manner as Jude; "Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever (Jude 1:13)." Think about how ocean waves throw 'foam' upon the shore but it quickly evaporates into nothingness yet add the fact that these same faithless 'believers' are tossed back and forth being nothing but double-minded and never able to come to the Truth.

(Double Mindedness:)

**"For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways. Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted: But the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away (James 1:7-10)."**

Still speaking of the faithless, James continues to say that they will receive nothing from Yahweh. It should really be no surprise because; "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination (Proverbs 28:9)" but "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to YHVH: but the prayer of the upright is his delight (Proverbs 15:8)." A wavering double-minded man is unstable in all his ways, not some -- let's all beware of these types of dangerous brethren.

Like the waves of the sea that disappear, James continues to call the faithless "rich" in the ways of the world but explains that they also will pass away like grass. Remember that "The love of money is the root of all evil (I Timothy 6:10) and because of this fact he later says that "God [has] chosen the poor of this world rich in faith (James 2:5)." Faith is the key and

power -- it's our faith that overcomes the world (I John 5:4)" so let's all increase it by resisting temptations with continual prayer.

**"For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways (James 1:11)."**

The deeper student knows that same Sun is Jesus Christ (Malachi 4:2) and at his appearing the faithless will wither away into nothingness. Here, James is inspired by the prophet Isaiah who taught; "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of Yahweh bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass (Isaiah 40:7)." Again, we discover another admonition against the worldly and rich man so let no man deceive you -- Jesus taught that the poor inherit the Kingdom of God (Luke 6:20).

**"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him (James 1:12)."**

This "crown of life" is explained even more in II Timothy 4:8; "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." Notice that followers must overcome temptations and look forward to his return in order to receive that crown? Much like freely-given wisdom, God guarantees this reward only to those Christians that love Him enough to be humble.

(Good Gifts:)

**"Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed (James 1:13-14)."**

These verses teach so much -- First, God doesn't tempt us rather our own flesh desires. Second, God can't be tempted by evil which sheds more light on the supposed "temptation" of Christ. Lastly, every man is tempted by the things of the world yet "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man (I Corinthians 10:13)." James further explains the consequences of succumbing to those common temptations and the end result is death. We really have no choice -- God or mammon.

**"Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death (James 1:15)."**

Sin is a very serious issue yet so many judeo-christians cannot even give the Biblical definition of the word. The scriptures plainly teach that "Sin is the transgression of the law (I John 3:4)" so we must always follow the commandments of God in order to remain blameless. Sadly, many mainstream "prosperity" Christians choose to follow the lawless one instead of the eternal Law by which we're all judged and Jesus Himself taught and added to. Like the curse placed on Adam, sin brings death.

**"Do not err, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning (James 1:16-17)."**

Do not err -- how do we keep from doing that? Jesus teaches; **"Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God (Matthew 22:29)"** and **"Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the scriptures, neither the power of God (Mark 12:24)?"** so we must compare all things to the Word of God in order to save us from error. Almost every cult -- including judeo-churchianity -- will be in violation of the scriptures in one way or another -- the Bible is what helps us spot false teachings.

**"Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures (James 1:18)."**

Here we're taught that we are begotten by the very Word which is Jesus (John 1:1) meaning we're the sons of God. James also explains that we're to be considered Yahweh's own 'firstfruits' much like John; "These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb [Jesus] whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb (Revelation 14:4)." In short, it's called predestination.

(Engrafted Word:)

**"Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God (James 1:19-20)."**

What words of wisdom! As Christians we're to be observers that listen to all matters yet not being so hasty as to join in debates. Being "slow to wrath" means that we will be angry but that we should keep our emotions under subjection; "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city (Proverbs 16:32)." Again, like this entire letter from James, he is speaking to his racial kinsfolk as 'brethren' is taken from adelphos which means "womb (#G80)."

**"Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls (James 1:21)."**

When a cutting is engrafted into a root-stock or another tree it eventually brings forth fruit of its own yet we're to save our souls by meekness. Jesus taught; **"Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth (Matthew 5:5)"** and 'meek' means one who is teachable. Have you ever known so-called Christians who think they know it all and are waiting for their rapture? These types of people will not even have a chance two reasons -- they refuse to "lay apart filthiness" and will not do the Word or Law.

**"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was (James 1:22-24)."**

How many people will listen to the Word of Yahweh but refuse to follow the perfect Law? In order for one to 'do' the Word we must also be familiar with God's Will which is His Law yet so many false brothers love pushing Satan's lawless agenda by teaching that somehow we can now steal, murder, commit adultery and much worse. The sad thing is that Jesus taught that we're to "sin no more (John 8:11)" not to 'continue in sin' so let's all strive to do what God has forever commanded us.

When a Christian looks into a mirror they are able to see their true self but upon leaving it behind they will forget their true nature -- we must always remain humble and seek God's Kingdom on earth. James says that these 'hearers' are already deceived but the followers of Jesus will be blessed in all their deeds -- keeping and following the Law is important because Jesus taught us; "**Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled** (Matthew 5:18)."

**"But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed** (James 1:25)."

Yes, the New Testament teaches us that we're to follow "the perfect law of liberty" and for us to continue therein -- we cannot merely listen to what God commands while refusing to follow orders and expect blessings from Yahweh. However, if we do follow the Law we're also promised to be blessed in all our doings so again we have no choice in the matter -- God or mammon. If you think of the scripture as a mirror than surely you can see why [the wicked](#) hate it so much -- it condemns them.

(Pure Religion:)

**"If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain. Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world** (James 1:26-27)."

Pure religion belongs only to those who "keep himself unspotted from the world" meaning that it's either one or the other. The Messiah teaches us; "**No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other** (Matthew 6:24)" so don't be fooled by those teaching you can do both. A choice must be made when deciding between man's corrupt law or Yahweh's perfect and unchanging Law -- No King but Jesus!

James is also teaching us that there will be false brethren who seemingly appear to be religious but in reality are no more Christian than the jews themselves. We must look at what these people say with their own mouths not their actions. For example, I once knew this hypocritical catholic that made a point of visiting the only widow in a small town so everyone could see him doing it -- wrong! Our works are to be done for God in private, not for the world's acceptance or to look 'holy.'

**"My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons. For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring,**

**in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts (James 2:1-4)?"**

Yes, God does not respect persons (Acts 10:34) so neither should we because man can only judge according to appearance while Yahweh tries the hearts (I Chronicles 29:17). How many Babylonian "churches" would turn away a homeless man instead of feeding him as they should because they dislike his attire or feel superior to him? We can never be partial or judge a book by it's cover; "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained [angels](#) unawares (Hebrews 13:2)."

**"Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him? But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats (James 2:5-6)?"**

My point exactly -- it's the faithful poor man who is an heir of the kingdom, not vice-versa. Be weary of 'prosperity doctrines' that promise monetary riches or worldly "blessings" for accepting Jesus, this concept is foreign to the Word of God. James plainly teaches that it is the rich who oppress and accuse Christians so we should always be careful to never judge a poor man that God has accepted. Never strive for money because it's a "god" also -- only strive for a Christian nation with Jesus as King.

(Royal Law:)

**"Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called? If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors (James 2:7-9)."**

Still speaking of the rich, James says that it is them who blaspheme the name of Jesus Christ so let's be on guard. Loving one's neighbor as themselves is considered 'the royal law' and the word translated as neighbor is plēsion which plainly means "countryman or race (Strong's #G4139)." We must always love our own people yet at the same time refuse to judge them based on their appearance or riches. Placing one brother above another is considered sin in the eyes of Yahweh.

**"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law (James 2:10-11)."**

So many judeo-Christians love to use this verse claiming that the Law was "done away" with yet when read in context we can see that's not the case -- the Law is good yet must be followed completely. Think of how many followers feel that we must only obey the ten commandments but refuse to acknowledge the food Laws or Passover -- it's all or nothing.

We're saved by grace (Ephesians 2:8) but in order to call ourselves Christians we must do what the Creator Jesus has commanded us.

**"So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty. For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment. What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him (James 2:12-14)?"**

If you pay attention, James is teaching that we must follow or 'do' the Old Testament Law in addition to Jesus' added commands. These passages also shatter the "once saved always saved" doctrine because we must have works or fruits because "faith without works is dead." We're not saved by mere faith nor 'accepting Jesus' like it's even our place to do so, rather it's the grace of Jesus that is our salvation and that requires love, faithfulness, action and so much more. Again, do the Word.

(Daily Food:)

**"If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone (James 2:15-17)."**

What do you consider food? When Jesus instructed Peter to "Feed my sheep (John 21:15-17)" He wasn't referring to Purina© rations, He meant the Word of Yahweh. We must share the Truth of the Word while being wiser than serpents (Matthew 10:16) yet work from within the system like Daniel standing for Christ. We can also take these verses at face value as well and see that it proves the hypocrisy of those who refuse to give food to their racial kinsfolk who are hungry. Works prove Faith to God.

Imagine being inside of a modern post-WWII 'church' that would cast out their brethren based on appearance -- could you imagine the type of 'gospel' they'd be preaching behind their pulpit? [False prophets](#) teach the erroneous "once saved, always saved" doctrine telling followers that future sins will never separate them from God promoting the lawless one's false kingdom. Beware of **"The blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan (Revelation 2:9)."**

**"Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead (James 2:18-20)?"**

The devils also believe, and tremble -- think about this statement for a moment. [Demons](#) never doubt the fact of God's existence nor the Godhead and this very fact makes them "tremble." The word translated as 'tremble' is phrissō (pronounced fris'-so) and occurs nowhere else in the New Testament and it means "bristle or shudder (Strong's #G5425)" so imagine how a lying judeo-Christian's hair must stand on end when presented with the Biblical Truth that Jesus was God and that our God is one (Mark 12:29).

Again, in order to have any 'works' of our own we must hearken to the numerous Laws found within our Holy Bible and every Word of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Faith can only be seen by Yahweh and because of this all things must be done for His honor but the end result of our labors should always be the fulfillment of His commandments. God's Law is the final authority, it will heal our land and solve all our problems so let our efforts always be to promote God's law over man's while exposing snakes.

(Imputed Righteousness:)

**"Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect (James 2:21-22)?"**

Ah! The Old Testament -- is it any wonder that "New Testament only" churches are lost? Think about this, Jesus Christ teaches us; "**Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends** (John 15:13) and later in this epistle James asks; "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." This is a foreshadowing of the coming Messiah and His perfect sacrifice.

**"And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only (James 2:23-24)."**

If we're to believe Yahweh as Father Abraham did then we must do so by familiarizing ourselves with His eternal Word. Nonetheless, before anyone says there was no Law until the time of Moses, remember that even he followed God's Law; "Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws (Genesis 26:5)." Our actions should dictate the Will of Yahweh and as such we must do as He has commanded, He never changes (Malachi 3:6).

**"Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also (James 2:25-26)."**

Rahab seemingly broke man's law when she received the messengers and hid them yet "By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace (Hebrews 11:31)." Who should we "fear" most -- God or the world? The answer is found within the very Words of Jesus Christ; "**Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell** (Matthew 10:28)."

(Intention:)

My intention with this series will be given in [the second part](#).

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