

James 1

v2

“Consider it all joy” / “wholly joyful”

- It is something to be celebrated. To lift your voice and sing about!
- In the illness, when the finances fail, through abandonment, grief and enemy attack... WE CAN REJOICE!!
- It is a wonder to the flesh; it is incomprehensible to the worldly view... But those who know their God. Those who have learned to praise...

v3

“patience” / “endurance and steadfastness”

- As the song says “these trials only come to make me strong”
- God is sovereign!! In everything He is at work. There is nothing outside of His knowing or sight. He is in it all. We can rest in His goodness.
- We can rejoice because no matter the trial, He is sovereign and He is teaching, moulding, leading, strengthening our faith. May we submit and rejoice!

v4

“let patience have her perfect work”

- So do not rush the trial. Do not run from His sovereign hand. Submit and rejoice and let the Lord do His precious work in your life.
- As we submit and praise Him in it all we will find His shaping and moulding to be the more wonderful. We shall see the “exceedingly abundantly”.

v5

“let him ask of God”

- If we lack the wisdom to understand the sovereignty of God. If we lack the wisdom to respond without fear.
- Then ask of God... Come into His presence. Bring your lack before and confess your need.

“who gives to everyone liberally”

- He gives of His divine wisdom liberally. The wisdom of creation, life, love and eternity!
- Consider what we have access to. Consider what we can avail of.
- So ask! Seek!

v6

“Only it must be in faith, no doubting”

- This condition often trips me. No doubting!!
- Maybe I've conflated “trials” with struggling in temptation. Asking for wisdom to overcome temptation is different from seeking wisdom to endure the trial when you're already in a place of intimacy with The Lord. You can ask with much more confidence and faith when you are not struggling with sin and shame. Pair this with the fact that we cannot and should not count it all joy when we fall into various sins!! (Fail to endure temptation)

v7-8

“unstable in all his ways”

- If we seek The Lord but have doubt in Him... Then we are indeed incredibly unstable; Spiritually, mentally, emotionally.
- It is a foundational uncertainty which will affect our joy, our mood, our motivation, our integrity... etc.
- We are perhaps already struggling with sin and lack of victory/overcoming and it is becoming a sad and vicious cycle.

v12

“Blessed is the man that endureth temptation”

- It is good and comforting to be reminded that temptation itself is not sin. However, it is a showing of something in us that we must confess.
- To endure temptation, it is a great help to recognise it. We are so readily focused on ourselves, on our own desire, comfort, need that we are giving no thought to spiritual matters and don't even recognise evil desires as temptation, as something to run from! We can get so caught up in the moment and only become aware after the failure.
- It is also a great lesson to consider Joseph who, when tempted greatly, ran! May we learn to run from temptation and to remove ourselves from the situation/circumstance.
- May we also learn to be aware of ourselves. To recognise, acknowledge and confess our weaknesses. The more we are aware of our weakness the more we can pray over them and take preventative measures to lessen the opportunity for temptation.

v14

“But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.”

- Temptation is a symptom of a deeper root. Much like a boil in the skin reveals itself on the surface. We are best not to touch or interfere with the body's process. When we do we risk scarring and infection making the problem far worse.
- Psalm 101:3 “I will set no evil thing before mine eyes” We can take strong, effective measures to starve temptations. If we learn to deny ourselves and deny our lusts, we will find temptation has far less opportunity and far less time in our minds.
- This is key to overcoming! It is our own lust that we are tempted by!! It is our own flesh that is crying out for satisfaction!! The more we feed it the stronger it will become!!
- Recognise your flesh, recognise it for what it is! Confess it before The Lord and STARVE IT!! Fast the physical and pray (feed the Spiritual)!

v15

"Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin: and sin, when it is finished/matured, brings forth death."

- If we truly understood and appreciated the damning consequences of our failure we would think very differently about our actions.
- The truth in this verse is revealed by The Holy Spirit. The magnitude and scale of our failure is only seen in the Spiritual.
- This verse is talking about so much more than shame. We are so self-focused and so self-revolved that we focus so much on self-pity and disappointment in ourselves! Constantly talking about "our struggle" and how hard it is for us!! This is a selfish, ignorant, fleshly mindset!
- "death" to so much more than just us. Our sin will affect us and everything that we touch and influence!!
- If we truly feared God and His holiness we would run – from temptation! But even in failure if we truly love our Saviour we will run - to Him! (repentant)

v16-18

"Do not be misled, my beloved brethren... Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above"

- Referring back to verse 13. God tempts no man!! It is against His very nature of being!
- He is all holiness, all righteousness, pure and perfect. All that comes from Him above is "good and perfect".

"with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

- Who was, Who is, Who is to come! The Alpha and Omega, The Beginning and The End! He changes not!! The same yesterday, today and tomorrow"
- The I AM!!

"Of his own will he birthed us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures."

- We do not and cannot fathom how much He loves us; how much He desires us; How much He cares, gives, prays and hopes for us!
- He has placed His glory upon us... That we might be a testimony of His greatness.
- Not mankind. Not "the church". But every individual that would surrender, confess, believe and follow...

v19-20

"Let every man be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger... For man's anger does not work the righteousness of God."

- Let us be careful to listen; to be thoughtful in our response and speech. Let us remember to speak "as the oracles of God" 1 Peter 4:11
- Let us remember that we have been forgiven much. That we too have received much love, patience, prayer...
- Let us be ever mindful that we represent Jesus by His Holy Spirit.

v21

"So lay apart all filthiness and profusion of naughtiness,"

- There is a work to be done on our part. We have an effort to make.
- The is a laying apart to be done. A separating and disposing of.

v25

"he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."

- We have a responsibility to hear and to do.
- The natural fruit of a heart washed in the regeneration of God will be to do the word. The fruit of Salvation, the fruit of the New Life will be to serve. To serve the Lord and to glorify Him in our service. The heart that is Born Again will follow after Jesus example and seek to do the will of His father.

v26

"If anyone thinks himself to be religious and bridles not his tongue"

- This adds well to verse 19.
- If anyone thinks of himself as religious, upstanding, holy, pious... but cannot control his tongue... then his religion is vain/useless.
- Let us be so wary of pride. It lays waste to any testimony. We can believe that we have a testimony and think that we're walking with the Lord but if we are polluted with pride it is for nothing.
- Be so very careful with our conversation. May we be so careful with out tongue. It takes much prayer, much humility, much patience and discipline.