



WEEK 6 – SUNDAY 27 JULY

Welcome to the study of the Book of James

It is suggested by scholars that this letter (Epistle) was written by James who is thought to be the brother of Christ. According to John 7:3-5 James was not a believer. He only became a true follower after the Resurrection. According to the Galatians he headed up the Christ Church. The Book of James outlines the faith walk through *genuine religion* (1:1-27), *genuine faith* (2:1-3:12) and *genuine wisdom* (3:13-5:20). We will even pick up in our readings the discourse on faith in action..... hence our theme LIVING AS A Christ FOLLOWER. It is about “Walking the Talk.”

Week 1. Trails and Temptations – 22 June.

Week 2. Listening and doing – 29 June.

Week 3. Faith and works – 6 July.

Week 4. Taming the Tongue – 13 July

Week 5. Two types of Wisdom – 20 July.

Week 6. Worldliness and Riches – 27 July.

WORDLINESS AND RICHES

Our EARTHLY TREASURES can never be compared to the treasure which awaits us when we see our Lord face to face. Our WORLDLY TREASURES are all but a temporary pleasure and should be compared to the TRUE RICHES which will and can be our eternal reward. We need to choose.

Worship Song: CeCe Winans – Lord, I Need You Now

<https://youtu.be/eOoNOe-SkGM?si=LmlfmQv2JKMVJB62>

Readings: Psalm 73:1-7; 16-17; 23-26 / James 4:1-5:6 / Luke 16:19-34

Psalm 73

¹ Surely God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart. ² But as for me, my feet had almost slipped; I had nearly lost my foothold. ³ For I envied the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. ⁴ They have no struggles; their bodies are healthy and strong. ⁵ They are free from common human burdens; they are not plagued by human ills. ⁶ Therefore pride is their necklace; they clothe themselves with violence. ⁷ From their callous hearts comes iniquity; their evil imaginations have no limits. ¹⁶ When I tried to understand all this, it troubled me deeply¹⁷ till I entered the sanctuary of God; then I understood their final destiny. ²² I was senseless and ignorant; I was a brute beast before you. ²³ Yet I am always with you; you hold me by my right hand. ²⁴ You guide me with your counsel, and afterwards you will take me into glory. ²⁵ Who have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you. ²⁶ My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever.

James 4:1-5:6

Submit yourselves to God

4 What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? ²You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God. ³When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures. ⁴You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. ⁵Or do you think Scripture says without reason that he jealously longs for the spirit he has caused to dwell in us? ⁶But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: 'God opposes the proud but shows favour to the humble.' ⁷Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double minded. ⁹Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. ¹⁰Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up. ¹¹Brothers and sisters, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against a brother or sister or judges them speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it but sitting in judgment on it. ¹²There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the one who is able to save and destroy. But you – who are you to judge your neighbour?

Boasting about tomorrow

¹³Now listen, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.' ¹⁴Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. ¹⁵Instead, you ought to say, 'If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that.' ¹⁶As it is, you boast in your arrogant schemes. All such boasting is evil. ¹⁷If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for them.

Warning to rich oppressors

5 Now listen, you rich people, weep and wail because of the misery that is coming on you. ²Your wealth has rotted, and moths have eaten your clothes. ³Your gold and silver are corroded. Their corrosion will testify against you and eat your flesh like fire. You have hoarded wealth in the last days. ⁴Look! The wages you failed to pay the workers who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty. ⁵You have lived on earth in luxury and self-indulgence. You have fattened yourselves in the day of slaughter. ⁶You have condemned and murdered the innocent one, who was not opposing you.

Luke 16:19-31

The rich man and Lazarus

¹⁹'There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. ²⁰At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores ²¹and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores. ²²'The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. ²³In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. ²⁴So he called to him, "Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire." ²⁵'But Abraham replied, "Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. ²⁶And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been set in place, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us." ²⁷'He answered, "Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my family, ²⁸for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment." ²⁹'Abraham replied, "They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them." ³⁰"No, father Abraham," he said, "but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent." ³¹'He said to him, "If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.'"

Let us be honest...most of the drama in our lives usually starts with someone wanting something they don't have. That's exactly what James is talking about when he asks, "*Why do you fight and argue with each other?*" His answer is kind of hard to hear: it's because of our own selfish desires. We get jealous, we want what others have, and we start acting out even towards God. Instead of asking him for what we need, we either ignore him or ask for the wrong reasons, hoping he'll just help us get what we want.

So, James isn't trying to guilt-trip us, but he is trying to wake us up; inviting us to live differently: to stop chasing the world's version of success and to come closer to God. He says we should humble ourselves, resist the devil, and let God lift us up. This isn't just about going to church or doing religious stuff, however, it is about real change and reconnecting with God in a deep way. He also checks our attitude when it comes to making plans. When we say, "*I'll do this or that next year,*" without even thinking about what God might want. James reminds us that life is short. It's like a mist that disappears quickly. So instead of acting like we're in control of everything, we should learn to say, "*If God wills.*" It's not about being scared of the future but about trusting that God knows better than we do.

So what do we do with all of this? We choose humility. We make space for God in our everyday lives. We treat people with kindness and fairness, and we stop letting pride and greed run the show. James is calling us to be different by living with purpose, walking humbly, and caring deeply for others. That's where real peace and joy are found - not in what we own or achieve, but in who we are becoming with God by our side.

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

1. What are some ways you've seen jealousy or selfish desires cause drama - either in your own life or among your friends?
2. James talks about asking God with the wrong motives. What do you think that looks like in real life?
3. What does it actually look like to "humble yourself and draw near to God" in your everyday routine?

DAILY MEMORY VERSE AND PRAYER

Monday	<p>MEMORY VERSE: Proverbs 3:5-6 "<i>Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.</i>"</p> <p>PRAYER Lord, I don't want to rely on my own plans. Help me to trust you with my future and to follow your lead every day.</p>
Tuesday	<p>MEMORY VERSE: James 4:7-8 "<i>Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and he will come near to you.</i>"</p> <p>PRAYER Jesus, I want to come closer to you. Help me resist the things that pull me away and give me strength to live for you.</p>
Wednesday	<p>MEMORY VERSE: Micah 6:8 "<i>He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.</i>"</p> <p>PRAYER God, help me to live with kindness and fairness. Show me how to walk humbly with you and care for others like you do.</p>
Thursday	<p>MEMORY VERSE: Matthew 6:33 "<i>But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.</i>"</p> <p>PRAYER Father, help me to stop chasing what the world says matters. I want to put you first and trust that you'll take care of everything else.</p>
Friday	<p>MEMORY VERSE: Psalm 90:12 "<i>Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.</i>"</p> <p>PRAYER God, life moves fast. Help me not to waste it. Teach me to live wisely, with purpose, and with you at the centre.</p>

Written by: Magogodi Nkuna

Week 6 - Treasure in Heaven

Scripture: Matthew 6:19–21 (NIV)

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

Discussion:

Have you ever saved up for something really cool—like a toy, a video game, or a pair of new shoes? It’s fun to have nice things, and there’s nothing wrong with enjoying them. But the Bible tells us something important: those things don’t last forever. They can break, get lost, or be taken away.

Jesus teaches us to put our hearts into things that last forever—like loving others, being kind, telling the truth, praying, and helping others. These are called heavenly treasures, and they make God smile!

When we choose to share instead of keeping everything to ourselves, forgive someone who hurt us, or help a friend who’s having a tough day—that’s like putting treasure in God’s treasure box in heaven. And guess what? That treasure never disappears!

Jesus says, *“Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”* That means what we care about the most shows what’s in our heart.

Let’s Think About It

- What’s something kind you did recently?
- How can you build treasure in heaven this week?

Prayer

Dear God, thank You for teaching us what real treasure is. Help us care more about being loving, kind, and honest than about having lots of things. Show us how to put Your love first in everything we do. Amen.