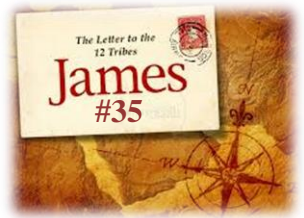




Chico Alliance Church
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Pastor David Welch



“Mirror, Mirror In My Hand” Pt 2

James Review

Mirror, mirror in my hand who are the faithful in the land.

For the past 35 weeks, I have asserted that James’ letter serves as a mirror for our faith.

We didn’t finish our James wrap up last week.

God intended His word to transform not just inform.
The Word acts as a mirror to expose needed areas of transformation.

Just like when we stand in front of the mirror to check on different aspects of our appearance, James wrote to expose different aspects of our faith.

We check our hair, check if there is anything in our teeth, make sure we shaved, washed our face, for the ladies, applies appropriate makeup.

James tackled several areas where our trust in God is tested and approved.
True faith affects how we live.
True trust is validated by how we respond to life.

James is all about the behavior of genuine belief in God.

True faith...

- I. Joyfully endures tribulation anticipating the joy of spiritual maturity and stability.**

The reason we can consider the unexpected storms of life as something joyful is the fir conviction that those storms are God's tool to produce maturity and stability in our life.

If a positive attitude is not our response to storms, then we should honestly evaluate the genuineness of our trust.

Do I really believe that God is all good all the time?

Do I really believe that God orchestrate everything for good and God's glory?

Do I really believe that I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me?

Then the storms of life will be views as opportunities to demonstrate that fact.

II. Humbly accepts your station in life.

If you have plenty, realize that true riches are not material.

If you suffer loss, realize that spiritual riches have greater value.

God blesses those who endure life's tribulation.

*Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.
James 1:12*

III. Takes personal responsibility for sin and don't blame God.

Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one.

Temptation or solicitation to do evil does not come from God.

We fall to temptation to do wrong because we have not addressed left over fleshly drives and desires.

If we allow those left-over sinful passions embedded in our flesh to find expression, we will experience a deadening of the soul and eventual destruction to our life and relationships.

Each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death. James 1:14-15

How do you deal with left-over fleshly drives?
We keep them under control.

Walk in the spirit.

Or live by the direction and power provided by the Holy Spirit.

Put to death the deeds of the flesh.

Put on Christ.

Make no provisions for the flesh.

IV. Receives and practices the truth

The person of faith keeps their heart open and receptive to God's truth for the purpose of incorporating those principles not our daily life.

Put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. James 1:19-21

Prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. James 1:22

The one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does. James 1:23-25

It will be evident by the control of our tongue, our compassion for others and our passion to live pure lives.

If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless. Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world. James 1:26-27

V. Avoids partiality and prejudice

The person of faith treats all people with integrity and respect regardless of their race, beliefs, education, dress, status, political party.

God calls us to love our neighbor as ourselves.

God calls us to show love and kindness and pray for our enemies.

VI. Demonstrates your faith by your actions.

James spent significant space in his letter making sure that we understand the true nature of faith.

Faith is sufficient intellectual and emotional persuasion regarding a person or proposition to inspire ready response.

Do we believe we are saved by the work of Jesus on our behalf?
Then we should demonstrate the depth of that belief by surrendering to Him.

Belief without corresponding action is not belief at all.

I may claim to trust a chair, but my belief is questionable if I never sit in it.

What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but he has no works?

Can that faith save him? James 2:14

You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder.

But are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow, that faith without works is useless? James 2:19-20

It is vital to stand in front of the mirror that exposes the true fruit of faith.

It is vital to our salvation.

It is vital to our daily walk.

Without such active, verifiable faith you cannot please God. Heb 11

Whatever is not of faith is SIN! Rom 13

Don't claim true belief if you don't show the behavior that validates it.

Behavior doesn't produce belief or faith, but true belief always produces tangible corresponding behavior.

The one who claims to have trusted in Jesus as their personal Savior but rarely talks to Him or has little desire to learn more about Him or has not desire to serve him does not have genuine faith.

VII. Controls your speech

True faith keeps a guard on what comes out of our mouth.

Words can hurt or heal.

Words can encourage or discourage.

Words can build up or tear down.

The tongue is a fire, the very world of iniquity; the tongue is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body, and sets on fire the course of our life, and is set on fire by hell. James 3:6

James goes so far as to assert that we can measure our level of maturity by the level of control of our tongue.

But no one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison. With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God; from the same mouth come both blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be this way. James 3:8-10

The control of the tongue begins with a heart check.

"Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad and its fruit bad, for the tree is known by its fruit. You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. The good person out of his good treasure brings forth good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure brings forth evil. Matthew 12:33-35

Paul calls us to filter our words so that only the upbuilding words get through.

Let NO worthless word proceed from your mouth, but ONLY such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear. Ephesians 4:29

Do our words give grief or grace?

VIII. Lives in wisdom

Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. James 3:13

Our daily behavior demonstrates our level of wisdom.

Right thinking produces right living.

Right believing produces right behaving.

The mirror doesn't lie.

Our behavior either reflects wisdom or foolishness.

Our attitudes reveal the source of source of our faith.

But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice. James 3:14-16

On the other hand, true wisdom is discerned by godly behavior.

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction. Proverbs 1:7

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight. Prov 9:10

Knowing God is the key to godly wisdom and godly living.
Godly wisdom produces godly living.

What does it look like?

The wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace. James 3:17-18

If our relationships are not characterized by these characteristics, an honest assessment of our trust in God must be done.

Pure as opposed to impure or crass.

Peaceable as opposed to stirring up conflict.

Gentle as opposed to harsh or callous or insensitive and cruel.

Reasonable as opposed to stubborn, inflexible, obstinate.

Full of mercy as opposed to judgmental, critical.

Full of good fruit as opposed to no impact in the lives of others.

Impartial as opposed to partial.

Sincere as opposed to hypocritical and not really caring for others.

IX. Lives above your sinful passions

You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. James 4:4

An honest look in the mirror exposes self-centeredness.

Self-interest is the source of all manner of relational conflict.

What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? 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. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions. James 4:1-3

Such conflict exposes pride.

Scripture calls to give preference to one another; outdo one another in showing honor rather than seeking notoriety.

Consider others more important ourselves rather than thinking I know better than anyone else.

God demands absolute fidelity to Him.

Or do you suppose it is to no purpose that the Scripture says, "He yearns jealously over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us"? James 4:5

If we continue our proud resistance to God, He will oppose us.

"God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble." James 4:6

James prescribed a thorough remedy to deal with pride and foolishness.

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you. James 4:7-10

1. Humbly submit to God's authority in our life with the will.
2. Resist any authority you may have surrendered to Satan
3. Enthusiastically draw near to God with the heart.
4. Earnestly address and sinful ways and acknowledge the gravity of our sin.
5. Humbly present yourself to God to His service.

REPEAT AS OFTEN AS NEEDED

X. Considers God's will in all your plans.

Don't plan out your life without since God may have a different agenda.

*Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that."
James 4:15*

It is not wrong to plan.

Just realize that nothing about the future is certain except God.

XI. Anticipates the Lord's return in the midst of struggle.

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. You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. James 5:7-8

In the meantime, don't grumble or complain.

XII. Prays when suffering.

Faith cries out to God.

Lack of faith digs in and just tries harder on their own.

Faithful prayer recognizes the need for outside help.

XIII. Sings praise when happy.

The Bible urges us to sing praises to God at all times but especially when we are happy.

XIV. Calls for help when weak.

Is anyone among you weak? 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. And the prayer of faith will save the one who is weak, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. James 5:14-15

Whether we are weak in body, soul, faith, spiritual fatigue the answer is to enlist help from others.

Pride prevents us from involving anyone else.

This is an important part when we realize that our faith is struggling.

It appears at the end of the letter meant to expose weakness in our faith.

The answer is to involve others in our life.

Confess your sins to one another and pray for one another to experience God's healing and strengthening of our faith.

XV. Seeks to win the wanderer

My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, 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. James 5:19-20

Rather than shoot our wounded or abandon the hurting, we are to seek to bring them back, restore, heal, affirm, encourage, strengthen those who wander.

James was clear that we ALL wander and stumble in MANY ways.

James outlined here the things that demonstrate a healthy walk of faith.
The mirror of God's word exposes fake faith.

- Complains about tribulation and doesn't really care about spiritual growth.
- Struggles to accept or perceive value in one's current station in life.
- Blames God and others for failure to live above temptation.
- Either doesn't receive or doesn't practice the Word or both.
- Exhibits attitudes of partiality and prejudice toward those who are different.
- Talks the talk without the walk.
- Doesn't control their speech.
- Lives foolishly in proud jealousy and selfish ambition.
- Constantly experiencing with broken or strained relationships.
- Plans out their life and schedule without considering what God wants.
- Lives in the here and now.
- Complains when suffering
- Neglects praising God when feeling good.
- Refuses help when struggling with weakness.
- Ignores or judges the wanderer.

The entire Bible is a mirror.

To ignore its direction will harden you.

To heed its instruction will mold you.

More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb. Moreover, by them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward. Who can discern his errors? Declare me innocent from hidden faults. Keep back your servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me! Then I shall be blameless, and innocent of great transgression. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer. Psalm 19:10-14

Lord let the things I think about and the things I talk about be pleasing to You.

*Now to Him who is continually able to keep you from stumbling,
and to make you stand in the presence of His glory*

*blameless with great joy,
to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord,
be glory, majesty, dominion and authority,
before all time and now and forever. Amen.
Jude 1:24-25*