



FAITH AT WORK

A STUDY OF JAMES

JAMES 2:26

Imagine a Dinner Party...

- What's the difference?
- What causes the difference?
- Is one better than the other?
- How do we make sense of what happens to us?



Faith and Perspective
James 1:13-18

James 1:13-18

1. Wrong Conclusion (13)
2. Wrong Voice (14-16)
3. Right Theology (17-18)

1. Wrong Conclusion (13)

- “I am being tempted by God”
 - Charge: “It’s your fault, God! You put me in this situation.”
 - Gen. 3:12; Numb. 11:10-15

1. Wrong Conclusion (13)

- “I am being tempted by God”
 - *Peirasmos: trial, test, temptation*
 - Depends on who is doing it
 - God tests to strengthen (Gen. 22)
 - Satan tests to break (Matt. 4)

1. Wrong Conclusion (13)

- “I am being tempted by God”
 - Wrong because:
 - God is not tempted by evil things
 - God’s character is only good!
 - Basis for all morality

1. Wrong Conclusion (13)

- “I am being tempted by God”
 - Wrong because:
 - God does not tempt anyone
 - God’s actions are only good
 - Basis for love

1. Wrong Conclusion (13)

- So, if it is not God's fault, who's fault is it?
- Why do we fail the tests? Because we listen to the ...

2. Wrong Voice (14-16)

- Each one is tempted by his own lust
 - *Lust: strong desire or craving*
 - Some bad, some good
 - Problems: inordinate? strategies to satisfy?

2. Wrong Voice (14-16)

- Each one is tempted by his own lust
 - *Carried away and enticed*
 - Why do we take the bait?
 - The problem is not the bait but our desire for the bait

The Story of Manna

1. God promised to lead Israel to a *land flowing with milk and honey* (Ex. 3:8)
2. 45 days after the Exodus, Israel doubted God, and He gave them manna to test them (Ex. 16:1-7)

The Story of Manna

3. 2 years later they were tired of manna and desired meat (Num. 10:11-13; 11:4-6)
4. 38 years later Moses explains it to them (Deut. 8:1-3)

The Story of Manna

5. Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tested by the devil (Matt. 4:1-4)
6. Paul told the Corinthians to not desire wrong things but to endure through the tests (1 Cor. 10:1-13)

2. Wrong Voice (14-16)

- Each one is tempted by his own lust
 - We fail the tests when we listen to the wrong voice (our own lusts)
 - Abraham passed: “because you obeyed My voice” Gen. 22:18

2. Wrong Voice (14-16)

- Each one is tempted by his own lust
 - In the midst of trials we are to *bear up under* (i.e. – endure) the test / temptation and be faithful to what God has said (be *doers* – 1:25)

2. Wrong Voice (14-16)

- Do not be deceived (*led astray*)
 - Sin or Righteousness? – Romans 6
 - Flesh or Spirit? – Gal. 5:16-24
 - Lust or God's Word? – James 1

2. Wrong Voice (14-16)

- Do not be deceived (*led astray*)
 - God does not tempt to sin!
 - What you *believe* determines how you *perceive* (e.g. – 1:3)
 - ... and how you live

3. Right Theology (17-18)

- *Every act of giving (which is good) and every gift (which is complete)...*
 - Addresses the nature of the Giver and the value of the gifts given
 - God gives just what you need

3. Right Theology (17-18)

- *Every act of giving (which is good) and every gift (which is complete)...*
 - Gifts = tests / trials (2)
 - Therefore, receive them with joy!

3. Right Theology (17-18)

- [continually] *coming down from the Father of [the] lights*
 - Gen. 1:14-19; Ps. 8:3

3. Right Theology (17-18)

- [continually] *coming down from the Father of [the] lights*
 - The God who created the universe is the same God Who gives these good gifts, on a continual basis

3. Right Theology (17-18)

- with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow
 - God doesn't change! (*Immutable*)
 - Mal. 3:6; Rom. 4:20-25
 - God is consistently only good

3. Right Theology (17-18)

- Do we determine what *good* means?
 - *Good = pleasant, agreeable?*
- How might this affect how we pray?
- How does all of this affect our view of ‘spiritual warfare’?

3. Right Theology (17-18)

- We cannot use circumstances to determine what is true about God
- We must use what is true about God and ourselves to rightly interpret our circumstances and recognize how God is working to mature us

3. Right Theology (17-18)

- In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth
 - Salvation is an act of God's will
 - The simple gospel, empowered by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 10:17)

3. Right Theology (17-18)

- In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth
 - The always and only good God willed us to be saved from sin
 - Why would He tempt us to sin?

3. Right Theology (17-18)

- so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures
 - Of converts? (1 Cor. 16:15)
 - Of creation? (Rom. 8:19-22)

So What?

- Adopt the right perspective on trials
 - They come from a good God
 - They are good
 - They are for our good

So What?

- In the midst of trials/tests:
 - Take God at His word and act on it (faith – Heb. 11)
 - Be faithful to the faithful God—He is growing you (Rom. 5:3-5)