

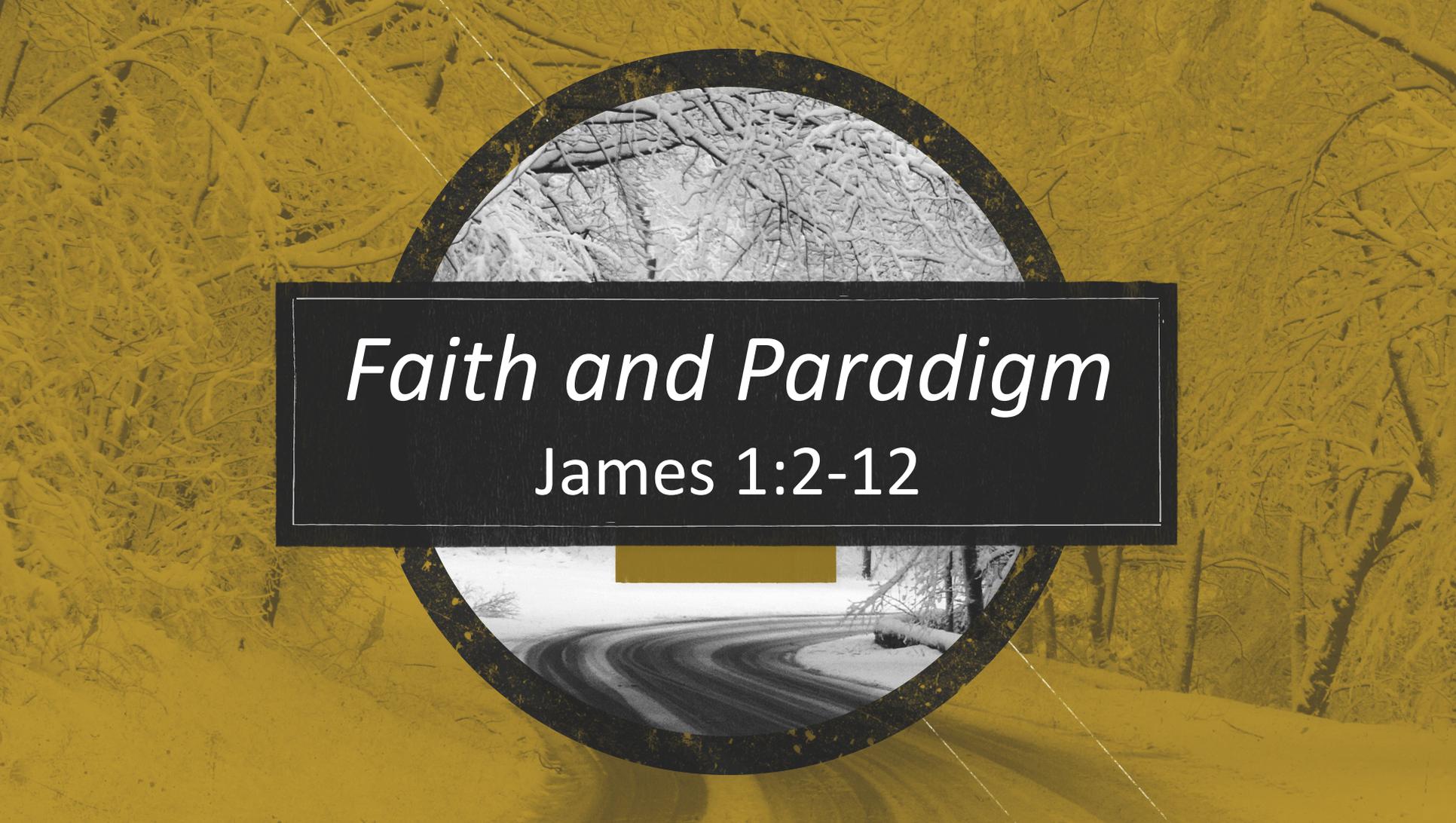
FAITH AT WORK

A STUDY OF JAMES

JAMES 2:26

What's Your Story?

- Does God have the right to *allow* you to suffer?
- Does God have the right to *make* you to suffer?
- How should we respond?



Faith and Paradigm

James 1:2-12

Paradigm Shift

- *a fundamental change in approach or underlying assumptions*
- James is calling us to a paradigm shift in how we view the trial of life



*The Godly Response
to the Trials of Life*

James 1:2-12

1. Response (2)
2. Reason (3)
3. Result (4)
4. Resource (5-8)
5. Reward (12)

1. Response (2)

- Consider it all joy
 - Paradigm Shift: “Make a conscious decision to adopt the attitude that trials are a wholly joyful thing”

“Christian people must not expect to be spared suffering; but there is this lovely distinction—that, in our case, anything untoward can come into our lives only by God’s express permission; it reaches us, not by luck or chance, but because it is His definite will for us; and if it is His will for us, it must be His best for us.” – Guy H. King

2. Reason (3)

- Knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance
 - Faith: taking God at His word and acting on it (see Heb. 11)

2. Reason (3)

God gives us both instructions and promises. When we act on those, regardless of the circumstances, we see His faithfulness and learn to trust Him more (see Heb. 11:11)

3. Result (4)

- Spiritual maturity comes from our continued faithfulness to God's unfailing faithfulness
- God is maturing all aspects of our character to make us like Jesus Christ

4. Resource (5-8)

- If any of you lacks wisdom
 - *Why wisdom?*
 - *Why not answers? direction? protection?*

D. Edmond Hiebert

“...James viewed wisdom as related to the practice of righteousness in daily life. It is that moral discernment that enables the believer to meet life and its trials with decisions and actions consistent with God’s will.”

4. Resource (5-8)

- Wisdom is a mark of maturity
 - Luke 2:40, 52; 1 Cor. 2:6; Heb. 5:11-14; Acts 6:3, 10; Col.1:28

4. Resource (5-8)

- Wisdom sees the hand of God in the trials of life
 - Prov. 3:11-12 (Heb. 12:1-11)

4. Resource (5-8)

- Wisdom seeks learning, not relief
 - Ask: “*What* can I get out of this?”
 - Not: “*How* can I get out of this?”

4. Resource (5-8)

- Wisdom comes from God
 - James 3:13-18; Prov. 2:6; Eph. 1:17-19; Phil. 1:9-11; Col.1:9-12

4. Resource (5-8)

- Wisdom comes from God
 - He gives it liberally to all who ask in faith
 - Without *doubting: to separate*
 - Double-minded: *two-souled*

4. Resource (5-8)

- Wisdom lives for God
 - E.g. - Heb. 11:24-26

Pulpit Commentary

“The only wise man is he who regards the glory of God as the end [goal] of his life, and who makes his acts and habits means to that end.”

Dewey Bertolini

“I live for the purpose of giving God glory; therefore I must make every choice in light of this goal.”

4. Resource (5-8)

- Wisdom, like faith, requires action
 - James 3:13-18 (2:14-17)
 - Wisdom without application is merely information*

Wisdom Applied (9-11)

- Responding properly to life's circumstances (i.e. - paradigm shift):
 - Humble – focus on high position
 - Rich – pursue spiritual things

5. Reward (12)

- Blessedness

- *The favor of God; fullness from God; satisfaction that comes from God, not favorable circumstances*

5. Reward (12)

- Blessedness
 - Comes from perseverance (12) [endurance] and obedience (25)
 - Psalm 1

5. Reward (12)

- Crown of life
 - Better: *the crown, which is life*
 - Eternal life (NOT salvation!)
 - A greater capacity to experience and enjoy the fullness of heaven

5. Reward (12)

- Crown of life
 - This capacity is developed by enduring through testing
 - Rev. 2:10; cf. Matt. 19:27-30

5. Reward (12)

- Promised to those who love Him
 - Deut. 13:1-5
 - Peter: Luke 22:31-34; Matt. 26:69-75; John 21:15-17

5. Reward (12)

- Promised to those who love Him
 - Trials reveal the depth and strength of our love for God by testing our obedience to God (see John 14:15-31)

So What?

- Consider tests a joyful thing
- Be faithful no matter what
- See life from God's perspective (seek wisdom)
- Learn to love God more thru testing