



True Jesus Church

James & 1,2 Peter



B I B L E S T U D Y G U I D E

James & 1,2 Peter

TRUE JESUS CHURCH

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Suggestions for Bible Study

Read Carefully

Observation is the most basic step in Bible study. Misinterpretation is often the result of careless reading. Only when we know what the passage says can we interpret what it means. Before each lesson, read the passage closely. Read it a few times until you become familiar with it. Observe words, phrases, paragraph structure, relationships, emphases, as well as anything that seems unusual. In doing so, you will discover things that you could never have if you read it casually.

Use A Pencil

Keep your pen or pencil busy by recording your observations and thoughts as you go through the passage. Mark key words and phrases. Take note of the relationship between words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs. Jotting your observations down on paper helps you focus your mind on the Bible text and leaves a much deeper impression on your mind. Your notes will also become valuable reference material the next time you come back to the passage.

Study with Prayer

“No one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God” (1Cor 2:11). The guidance of the Holy Spirit is key to understanding and being inspired by God’s word. Pray everyday and ask God to reveal to you the truth in His words. Whenever you come across a difficult passage, rely on the Holy Spirit by putting it in your prayer. Through your life of prayer, God will open your inner eyes to know His will and give you the strength to put it into practice.

Let the Word Speak to You

Bible study is not an intellectual exercise. Its aim is to change the reader in his thoughts, behavior, and lifestyle to conform to God’s will. The final goal of every Bible study is to apply God’s word in our lives. God reveals His will to the humble. So always approach the Bible with an attitude to be taught and corrected. When you are willing to let God’s word be a mirror to reflect your shortcomings and are determined to carry out His command, your Bible study will have achieved its intended purpose.

Using This Guide

Hands On Approach

This guide is not meant to be your coffee-table reading. Use it as a tool to make your study or discussion more effective. Make use of the spaces in the lessons to record your thoughts and observations.

Outline

One of the exercises under the section “observation” is to record an outline of the passage. Spend time to work on this important exercise because it helps you get the big picture of the entire passage as well as see the relationship between the parts. It also trains you to read the passage carefully and thoughtfully. Try to write the outline without copying the headings from your Bible. Each entry in the outline should accurately reflect the main idea of the paragraph.

Key Words

Key words are words that give meaning to the text or are related to the main idea. Key words are often repeated to mark emphasis. Key words tell you about who, what, when, where, why, or how. Since there are no right or wrong key words, your list may be different from the one provided at the end of the book.

Length of Lesson

Although the lessons are also designed for group Bible study, sometimes a lesson may be too long for a study session. If this happens, the Bible study leader who began the lesson should inform the next leader of where the passage was left off and the discussion results from the first study.

Thoughts on Questions

The end of this book contains suggested answers that serve as pointers when you need help. Since many of the questions do not have standard answers, use the answers provided only as reference. With these thoughts on questions as a starting point, you should be able to come up with more complete answers on your own.

Preparing for Group Bible Studies

Before leading a group Bible study, you should go through the lesson in advance to get a good understanding of the material. Then select questions based on the amount of time you have for discussion and the group’s size, makeup, level of biblical knowledge, etc. Try to also

design additional application questions that you think would suit the particular needs of the group.

The Inductive Method

The inductive approach is an effective way to study the Bible. It follows 3 basic steps: observation, interpretation, and application.

- 👁️ **Observation**—*What did God say? How did He say it?* This type of questions helps you look at the Bible passage carefully and equips you for a sound interpretation.
- 🔑 **Interpretation**—*What does it mean?* When answering this type of questions, let the Bible interpret itself whenever possible. Look at the immediate context (the surrounding verses) as well as the broader context (the surrounding chapters and the whole Bible) to derive the intended meaning. Also ask the Holy Spirit to enlighten your heart to know the spiritual things that God wants to convey to you.
- 👣 **Application**—*How can I put this into practice?* Application questions encourage you to think about what God is teaching you personally through your study. What are His commands? What shortcomings in you is He pointing out? What message of encouragement does He have for you today? It is in examining your relationship with God and acting out God’s word that the words of the Bible can truly come to life.

Because the order of the questions in this guide generally follows the order of the Bible text, we did not group the questions according to the 3 steps mentioned above. Instead, we have used symbols to identify the type of question. By helping you become acquainted with these 3 basic types of questions, we hope that you will acquire the ability to develop meaningful questions for future personal studies as well as group discussions.

Footnotes

Two numbers follow each quote, e.g. (4/134). The number before the slash refers to the reference source listed at the end of this book. The second number indicates the page where the quote is located in the reference source.

1

Introduction to James

A Living Faith

Author

The author identifies himself as James (1:1). This was probably James, the Lord's brother (Mt 13:55; Mk 6:3; Gal 1:19; 1Cor 15:7), a leader of the Jerusalem church (Acts 12:17; 15:13; 21:18; Gal 2:9).

Recipient

The epistle is addressed to "the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad." This means that the recipients were Jewish Christians in the Dispersion, although the expression "twelve tribes" could also refer to spiritual Israel—all the believers in Christ, including Jews and Gentile. The content of the epistle seems to favor the view that the readers were Jewish Christians. Examples of this include the reference to "synagogue" (2:2) and the use of the Hebrew title for God, "Lord of Sabaoth" ("Lord Almighty"; 5:4).

Because the epistle is written to a general audience rather than a specific person or congregation, it is classified as one of the Catholic Epistles, along with the epistles of Peter, John, and Jude ("Catholic" means "universal").

Date

Uncertain. Probably A.D.45-50 or the early sixties.

Purpose/Occasion

The Christians of that period were under various trials (1:2)—possibly persecution. James wrote to the believers to encourage them to rejoice and be patient. In terms of their personal conduct and fellowship among one another, some believers failed to live in a manner that reflects their professed faith in Christ. Thus, the epistle addresses problems such as misleading views on faith and sin, superficiality, favoritism, and strife, and calls believers to a righteous, holy living.

Unique Characteristics

1. Similarity to the book of Proverbs, with emphasis on conduct.
2. Simple, straightforward sentences that recall the Lord's teachings, in particular the Sermon on the Mount.
3. Predominance of commands (59 imperatives out of 108 verses).
4. Frequent use of picture words and analogies in a way similar to OT writings. E.g. wave of the sea (1:6); flower of the field (1:10-11); mirror (1:23); bits, rudder, fire, poison, spring, fig tree (3:3-12); vapor (4:14); farmer (5:7).

Central Verse

"For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also" (2:26).

Survey of James

James does not have a clearly discernible structure. But try to identify groups of paragraphs that share common subjects as you write down paragraph titles in chart A, found at the end of this lesson.

Themes

Faith and Works

The central teaching of James is that faith needs to be put into action (2:17-20). Only the faith that is accompanied by works can justify and save (2:14, 21-26). Faith is demonstrated through patience (1:2-4; 5:8-11), prayer (1:6; 5:15), impartiality (2:1), love (1:27; 2:15,16), humility (4:6-16), refraining from indulgence (4:3,4; 5:1-6), and doing good deeds (4:17).

Consistency in Action

As people of faith, Christians ought to be consistent in their conducts. Not only should we hear the word, we should be doers of the word (1:22-25). Our actions towards the poor should be the same as our actions towards the rich (2:1-4). We must not use the mouth that praises God to curse men, who are created in God's image (3:9-12). We cannot love God and covet the pleasures of this world (4:1-5). We must be truthful and let our "Yes" be "Yes" and our "No," "No." (5:12).

Law and Judgment

James teaches us that God's law is the measure of all our conducts. If we persistently abide by the "law of liberty" and carry it out, we will be blessed in what we do (1:25). As we live according to the law of God, we need to keep it in its entirety. If we claim to love our neighbors but show partiality, we are convicted by the law as transgressors. Anyone who stumbles in one point is guilty of all (2:8-11). Since we will all have to give an account, we must speak and act as those who will be judged by the law (2:12). If we fulfill the law by being merciful to one another, we will also be shown mercy at the judgment (2:13).

James also reminds us not to judge our brothers because in so doing we are judging the law (4:11). Rather than take judgment upon ourselves, we need to let God the Lawgiver be the ultimate judge (4:12).

Sin

To lead a righteous life, believers need to be aware of the seriousness of sin and how to deal with sin. James teaches us that sin comes from evil desires and its consequence is death (1:13-15). We become sinners when we transgress against the law of God (2:9). In fact, if we know to do good but do not do it, we have sinned (4:17).

In order to lead a life free from sin, we should receive the implanted word, which is able to save our souls, and live by the law of liberty (1:17-25). We need to cleanse our hands and purify our hearts (4:8). As a community, it is our responsibility to help one another overcome sin. This is done through intercession and confession of trespasses to one another (5:15,16). When we see someone wander from the truth, it is our duty to turn him back in order to save his soul and cover a multitude of sins (5:19,20).

Riches

The epistle consistently warns us of the pursuit of riches. Just as the grass withers and its flower falls, the rich man will fade away in his pursuits (1:9-11). It is not the rich that God favors, but He has chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him (2:5). Therefore, we ought not despise the poor and exalt the rich (2:1-4).

We must not indulge in luxurious living, for those who store up riches for themselves in the last days, especially those who treat the poor unfairly, are storing up wrath for themselves (5:1-6). Instead of

boasting about our earthly ambitions, we ought to humbly depend on the Lord's will in our day-to-day living (4:13-16).

The Coming of the Lord

Eschatology is a theological theme in this epistle, although it is sometimes implicit in the text. James speaks of receiving the crown of life when a believer has been approved after enduring temptation (1:12). The future judgment is another indirect reference to the coming of the Lord (2:12; 3:1). If we humble ourselves in the sight of the Lord, He will lift us up (4:10). Heaping up of treasures is considered an evil, especially in view that we are in the last days (5:3). James also teaches patience based on the expectation of the Lord's immediate return (5:7-8). Believers should not grumble against one another, knowing the Judge is standing at the door (5:9).

Key Words/Phrases

Perfect, faith, works, trials, temptation, poor, rich, wisdom, tongue, good conduct, pray, world, submit, judge, blessed.

1:1		Test of Faith	Trials and Temptations
1:2-4			
1:5-8			
1:9-12			
1:13-15			
1:16-18			
1:19-21			
1:22-27		Nature of Faith	Word and Works
2:1-7			
2:8-13			
2:14-26		Faith and Works	Tongue
3:1-12			
3:13-18		Works of Faith	Wars
4:1-3			
4:4-10			
4:11-12			
4:13-17		Application of Faith ¹	Future
5:1-6			
5:7-12			
5:13-18			
5:19-20			
			Others ²

Chart A Survey of James

1. Walter M. Dunnnett, *An Outline of New Testament Survey* (Chicago: Moody Press, n.d.), pp. 143-144.
 2. Irvine Jensen, *James, A Self Study Guide* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1971) p. 27.

2

Testing of Faith

The Basics

Setting

James begins his epistle by discussing the testing of faith—a subject that will serve as the underlying principle for his subsequent exhortations on faith and works. The testing of faith comes in the form of outward circumstances or inner temptations. With a matured faith, we will rejoice in various trials and be victorious over temptations.

Key Verse

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning” (1:17).

Did You Know...?

1. **“Greetings”** (1:1) is translated literally as “rejoice.”
2. **Temptation/Trial** (1:2,12-14): The Greek word *peirasmos* has two basic meanings. If its purpose is positive, *peirasmos* is translated as “trial,” as in verse 2. If it is evil in origin and leads to sin, it is translated as “temptation” (12-14; cf. Lk 4:13).
3. **Testing** (1:3,12) means “proving” (the process) or “approval” (the outcome).

Observation

Outline

- _____ (1:1)
- _____ (1:2-4)
- _____ (1:5-8)
- _____ (1:9-12)

_____ (1:13-15)

_____ (1:16-18)

Key words/Phrases

General Analysis

1. What are the two different types of trials? How do they differ?

🔑

2. Pick out some sets of contrasts in this passage. 👁

3. Record all the teachings about God in the passage. 👁

Segment Analysis

1:1

1. How does James identify himself? What does this imply about his relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ? 👁 🔑

2a. If the term “twelve tribes” is interpreted literally, who would it refer to? What if it is interpreted symbolically? 🔑

2b. What do the words “scattered abroad” suggest about the believers’ circumstance? 🔑

1:2-4

3a. Have you been in a situation where various trials seem to all take place at once in your life? 🐾

3b. What should be our attitude when various trials come upon us? Why? 👁 🐾

3c. What makes us complain in trials? What enables us to rejoice? 🔑 🐾

4a. What does it mean to “let patience have its perfect work?” 🔑

4b. What does it mean to be “perfect and complete, lacking nothing”? (cf. Eph 4:13; Col 4:12). 🔑

1:5-8

5a. In view of verses 2-4, what kind of wisdom is verse 5 referring to?



5b. Are there circumstances in your life right now that require you to pray for wisdom?



6. Why does James remind his readers that God gives to all liberally and without reproach?



7. In light of verse 6, how are trials in our lives a testing of faith?

What serves as a measure of our faith in trying times?



8. What kind of prayer is offered by a double-minded person? Have you ever offered such prayers?



1:9-12

9a. What "exaltation" and "humiliation" do you think James has in mind in 9-10?



9b. Why should the lowly brother glory in his exaltation and the rich in his humiliation?



10. How is the rich man like the grass and flowers?



11. What is the main teaching concerning trials in this paragraph?



12. Considering your present pursuits in life, how important is material wealth to you? What do you learn from James' teaching here?



13a. Who will receive the crown of life?



13b. Based on the context of this paragraph, how do we demonstrate our love for the Lord?



1:13-15

14. Why would a person say, "I am tempted by God"?



15a. Record the progression of temptations based on 14-15.



15b. Knowing the nature of temptations, what is the effective way to guard against spiritual death?



1:16-18

16. What is the emphasis of this paragraph?  

17. What assurance can we have from knowing that God is “the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning”?  

18a. How has God “brought us forth by the word of truth”? Why is this a good and perfect gift? 

18b. What does James mean by “a kind of firstfruits” of God’s creatures? (cf. Ex 34:22; Lev 23:10; Rom 8:23) 

3

Be Doers of the Word

The Basics

Setting

In the opening of the epistle, James encouraged believers to rejoice in various trials, emphasizing God’s abundant grace and goodness. In this lesson, we will study the importance of responding to God’s grace by doing the word of God.

Key Verse

“But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves” (1:22).

Did You Know...?

1. **Observe** (1:23,24): This word is used to describe the attentive scrutiny of an object. James uses this strong word to illustrate the irony that anyone who hears the word but does not do it is like a man who studies his appearance carefully in a mirror and immediately forgets what he looks like when he walks away.

Observation

Outline

- _____ (1:19-21)
- _____ (1:22-25)
- _____ (1:26-27)

Key Words/Phrases

General Analysis

1. How does verse 18 serve as an introduction to this lesson? 



2. Record what this passage teaches about the believer and the word of God. 

Segment Analysis

1:19-21

1. Based on this paragraph, what is the right way to receive the word of God? Explain your answer.  

2. Why does being a swift listener and a slow talker help us control our anger?  

3. What reason does James give for being slow to wrath? What does it mean?  

4. What do we need to do in order to receive the implanted word?  

1:22-25

5. Why would we be deceiving ourselves if we are hearers of the word only? 

6a. If we only hear the word but do not do it, how are we like the man who forgets his appearance? 

6b. James uses the word “observe” to liken a person who is only a hearer to a man who scrutinizes his appearance in a mirror but immediately forgets what he looks like. So even an attentive and serious hearer immediately forgets the word if he does not do it. Why is doing God’s word the best way to remember the word? 

7. Are you a hearer only, or also a doer? Why do many people enjoy being hearers but do not like to be doers? 

8. Why is God’s word “the perfect law of liberty”? 

9a. What does verse 25 teach us to do?  

9b. What promise can be found here? 

9c. Think of some teachings in the Bible that you have heard many times but have not yet put into practice. Then make an effort to carry them out today. 

1:26-27

10a. What is the difference between false religion and true religion?



10b. How does someone who practices false religion deceive himself? (26) 

11. Based on this paragraph, what are three specific areas where we can practice true religion? 

12. What does it mean to keep ourselves “unspotted from the world”?



4

The Sin of Partiality

The Basics

Setting

Having stressed the importance of practicing God’s word, James now cites partiality as a specific example to illustrate the need to let our actions be consistent with our belief in God’s word. In conclusion, James reminds us that since we will all stand before the judgment, our speech and conduct must always conform to God’s law of love.

Key Verse

“So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty” (2:12).

Observation

Outline

- _____ (2:1-4)
- _____ (2:5-7)
- _____ (2:8-13)

Key Words/Phrases

General Analysis

1. Go through the passage and list the reasons why partiality is wrong.  

Segment Analysis

2:1-4

1. Why is partiality incompatible with the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory (1)? 

2a. What was the setting of James' illustration? 

2b. Can partiality take place in the congregation of believers today? Cite some examples. 

3. In what ways have you been guilty of partiality? 

4. Those who show partiality become "judges with evil thoughts" (4).

4a. How does partiality make people "judges"? 

4b. What "evil thoughts" lie underneath partiality? 

5. When we commit the sin of partiality, what does our partiality reflect about our values?  

2:5-7

6a. What does verse 5 teach us about God's salvation?  

6b. What does this have to do with the discussion on partiality? 

6c. Having been chosen by God, how have we become rich in faith? 

7. What is James' point in reminding the believers about the oppression and blasphemy of the rich? 

8. With this passage in mind, compare God's love and man's love. 

2:8-13

9. Why is partiality a transgression, according to 8 and 9?  

10. What is the underlying principle of the whole law?  

11. What is the point of 10 and 11 regarding partiality? 

12. How does verse 12 serve as a reminder to you in your daily walk?



13. Take note of the word “for” in verse 13. How does the teaching in this verse help explain verse 12?

5

Faith and Works

The Basics

Setting

The passage of this lesson continues and elaborates on the exhortation to be doers of the word. With examples and illustrations, James makes a strong argument that faith without works is dead.

Key Verse

“Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect?” (2:22).

Observation

Outline

- _____ (2:14-17)
- _____ (2:18-20)
- _____ (2:21-24)
- _____ (2:25-26)

Key Words/Phrases

Segment Analysis

2:14-17

1a. According to James, what kind of faith is one that is without works?

1b. What does it mean? 🔑

2. Explain the words, "Can faith save him?" Is James teaching that faith in Christ is not enough to save a person? 🔑

3. What is the point of the illustration in 15 and 16? 🔑

4. Think of examples in your life where your faith is found only on your lips rather than in your actions. 🗨️

2:18-20

5. There are two views about where the quotation in verse 18 ends. The first view holds that there is only one speaker, whose words extend to the end of the verse. According to the second view, the man's words end at "...I have works," and the rest of the sentence is the author's response. We will adopt the second view for the purpose of our study.

5a. What is wrong with the statement, "You have faith, and I have works"? 🔑

5b. What is the point of James' response, "Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works"? 🔑

6. In your life, what criteria do you use to measure your faith? 👁️

7. What kind of belief do the demons have in God? How is such belief different from a genuine faith? 🔑

2:21-24

8. Read Paul's teaching on justification by faith in Romans 3:21-4:25. He insists that man was justified apart from his works. James, on the other hand, stresses that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only. To explain the apparent contradiction, answer the following questions.

8a. According to Paul, at what point in his life was Abraham justified? 👁️

8b. According to James, when was Abraham justified by works? 👁️

8c. Does James deny that Abraham had been justified by faith earlier on in his life? Support your answer. 🔑

8d. Was Abraham's offering of Isaac out of his faith in God's promise? (cf. Heb 11:17-19)  

8e. Now read Jas 2:22. Explain the words, "by works faith was made perfect." 

8f. What point in Abraham's life is James referring to in 23? In what sense was "the Scripture was fulfilled"? When was the Scripture fulfilled? 

8g. In conclusion, how is James' use of the term "works" different from Paul's use of the same term? 

9. In light of this passage, what characterizes Abraham's faith? Do you also have the same faith?   

2:25-26

10. Read Hebrews 11:31 about Rahab's faith. What did she believe that led her to receive the spies? (cf. Josh 2:1-21) 

11. What does Rahab's example illustrate? 

12. What does verse 26 teach about the relationship between faith and works? Explain this relationship in your own words.  

Taming the Tongue

The Basics

Setting

In the first chapter of the epistle, we learned that practicing God's word involves controlling our tongues (1:19, 26). After an extensive discussion on faith and works, James now returns to the subject of the tongue and applies the principle of faith and works to this area of daily life. He warns us of the unruly nature of the tongue and teaches us why we as believers must control our speech.

Key Verse

"Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so" (3:10).

Did You Know...?

1. **Teacher** (3:1): "The privilege of anyone speaking—thus "teaching"—in the meetings of the early groups of Jewish Christians was a carry over from the Jewish synagogue services, where even strangers were allowed to speak. Recall from the gospels how Jesus took advantage of this opportunity (Matt. 12:9 ff.; Mark 1:39; Luke 6:6 ff.). The book of Acts also reveals that the apostles used this synagogue privilege to preach the gospel (e.g., Acts 13:15 ff.)." ^{1/81}

Observation

Outline

- _____ (3:1-2)
- _____ (3:3-5a)
- _____ (3:5b-6)

_____ (3:7-8)

_____ (3:9-12)

Key Words/Phrases

Segment Analysis

3:1-2

- 1a. When James says, "Let not many of you become teachers," does he have in mind those who have the divine gift to teach in the church? (cf. 1Tim 1:6-7). 

- 1b. What motive is James warning us against by this command? 

- 1c. What should be the correct motivation for teachers?  

- 1d. Why would teachers receive a stricter judgment? 

2. How does that fact that we all stumble in many things relate to the command in verse 1?  

3. Why is a person who does not stumble in word able to also bridle the whole body? 

4. Think of common mistakes we make with our tongue. 🗝️

3:3-6

5a. What illustrations does James use to describe the tongue? 👁️

5b. What do these illustrations teach us about the tongue? 🗝️

6. How does the tongue “defile the whole body”? 🗝️

7. What does it mean that the tongue “sets on fire the course of nature”? 🗝️

8. What is the source of the tongue’s destructive power? 👁️ 🗝️

9. Based on your own experience, what damages can the tongue do? 🗝️

3:7-8

10. Why is man able to tame beasts, birds, reptiles, and sea creatures, but unable to tame the tongue (8)? 🗝️

11. What are some examples of speech that carries “deadly poison”? 🗝️ 🗝️

3:9-12

12. According to James, why is it wrong for a believer of God to curse others? 👁️ 🗝️

13. How does it help us in our daily lives to remind ourselves that everyone is created in God’s image? 🗝️

14. What lesson does James want us to learn from nature? 👁️ 🗝️

Final Thoughts

15. Should we just keep quiet all the time in order to avoid stumbling in our speech? Knowing the source of the tongue’s destructive power, how can we let our tongues bring a positive influence? 🗝️

16. Think of examples in the Bible where the tongue is put to good use. 👁️

17. What guidelines do you use to help you decide what speech is appropriate for you as a Christian? 🐾

7

The Meekness of Wisdom

The Basics

Setting

James has dealt with the subject of speech in the previous passage to illustrate the principle of faith and works. Now he takes up another example, which naturally extends from the discussion of the tongue—strife among believers. It is quite obvious that strife was a serious issue that plagued the community of believers. Thus James uses strong words of admonition to point out their sin and show them what they must do to remove the sin from among them.

Key Verse

“Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you” (4:7).

Observation

Outline

- _____ (3:13-18)
- _____ (4:1-3)
- _____ (4:4-10)
- _____ (4:11-12)

Key Words/Phrases

General Analysis

1. Generally speaking, which paragraphs in the passage are about the problem? Which ones offer the solution? 

2. What kinds of evil does this passage discuss? 

Segment Analysis

3:13-18

1. Does verse 13 remind you of the themes we have studied in this epistle?  

2. How is “meekness” (13) essential in dealing with the problem that James is addressing? 

3a. Why do many people, including some believers in this case, consider envy and strife as “wisdom”?  

3b. What is the source of such wisdom?  

4. According to James, what is the root of confusion and evil in the community of believers?  

5. Are you at odds with another fellow believer? What can you learn from this passage? 

6. Why does purity come first with respect to the wisdom from above (17)? 

7. Explain the analogy of verse 18. 

4:1-3

8a. What kind of “wars” and “fights” do you think existed in the congregation? 

8b. Have you seen similar problems in today’s congregation? 

8c. According to James, what is the cause of such problems? 

9. What can we learn from verse 3 about the motive of prayer?   

4:4-10

10a. What is "friendship with the world"? 🔑

10b. Why is this equivalent to "enmity with God"? Can't we be friends with the world *and* with God? 🔑

10c. Why does James call them "adulterers and adulteresses"? (cf. Jer 3:8, 20; Hos 2:2-5; 9:1) 🔑

11. What kind of jealousy is meant in verse 5? (Ex 20:5; 34:14) 🔑

12. It is a great encouragement to know that God "gives more grace." How is God's grace pertinent to the present discussion? 🔑

13. James exhorts us to submit to God and resist the devil (7). Based on your study of this passage, explain why this is the key solution to the problem of envy and strife? 🔑

14a. How can you "draw near to God" in your life (8)? 🔑 📖

14b. What do "hands" and "hearts" each represent in verse 8? What does it mean to cleanse and purify our hands and hearts? 🔑

14c. What kind of person is "double-minded" (8)? 🔑

15. Why should we lament, mourn, and weep? (cf. Mt 5:4; 2Cor 7:10,11) 🔑

4:11-12

16. Why is speaking evil of a brother and judging a brother equivalent to speaking evil of the law and judging the law? 🔑

17. What should and should not be our role in respect to the law? Why? 🔑 📖

Concerning The Future

The Basics

Setting

We have studied the exhortations on doing the word and having a faith that is accompanied by works. We have also learned two areas of application, namely speech and strife. In this lesson, we see that James relates faith not only to the present but also to our attitude towards the future. The teachings in this passage stress our accountability towards God, who is in control of the future and will judge everyone when the Lord comes.

Key Verse

“Instead you ought to say, “If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that” (4:15).

“Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain” (5:7).

Did You Know...?

1. **Lord of Sabaoth** (5:4): This designation comes from the Hebrew expression that means “the Lord of Hosts.”
2. **Early and latter rain** (5:7): “In Palestine the early rains came in October and November soon after the grain was sown, and the latter rains came in April and May as the grain was maturing. Both rainy seasons were necessary for a successful crop. Knowing this, the farmer was willing to wait patiently until both rains came and provided the needed moisture.” ^{2/201}

Observation

Outline

- _____ (4:13-17)
 _____ (5:1-6)
 _____ (5:7-12)

Key Words/Phrases

- _____

General Analysis

1. How does each of the three paragraphs relate to the main subject—“the future”? 

- _____

2. Compare the tone of the second paragraph (5:1-6) and the third paragraph (5:7-12). 

- _____

Segment Analysis

4:13-17

1. What is James warning us against? Planning? Profit-making? 

- _____

- 2a. What two things about our lives does verse 14 remind us of? 

- _____

2b. How does the reminder in verse 14 determine the way we live our daily lives? Do you live your life today with this in mind?  

3. What attitude is James teaching us to have in verse 15?  

4a. How does verse 17 relate to the preceding verses?  

4b. Why is it a transgression (violation of God’s law) if we do not do the good we know? 

4c. Where do you stand when you measure yourself with the teaching of this verse? What good deeds do you need to start doing? 

5:1-6

5a. What sins does James denounce in this paragraph? 

5b. What does the conduct of these rich people tell us about them with respect to God? 

6. Why should these rich men and women weep and howl? 

7. What is wrong with heaping up treasure in the last days (3)? 

7b. Are you heaping up treasure in the last days? What are you doing with your possessions? 

8. Explain the words “you have fattened your hearts as in a day of slaughter.” (cf. Jer 12:3). 

5:7-12

9. What does the word “therefore” tell you about the situation that called for patience?  

10. What does it mean to establish our hearts (8)? What does it involve?  

11. How is grumbling a sign of impatience? 

12. What lessons does James want us to learn from Job's suffering?



13. What makes a person swear? Why is this wrong? (cf. Mt 5:33-37)



14. In view of the teachings of this paragraph, in what ways can you be more patient?



9

Helping One Another

The Basics

Setting

From our studies of the epistle, we have noticed that it is full of strong admonitions and warnings. James has effectively corrected the misconceptions and misconduct among the believers by pointing out the meaning of true faith. Now, as the epistle draws to a close, he provides an assuring guidance to the community of believers. Like the opening of the epistle, the tone of this final passage is comforting and greatly encouraging. A message of faith, hope, and love pervades these closing exhortations.

Key Verse

“Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much” (5:16).

Did You Know...?

1. **Elders** (5:14): These were men who were appointed to be shepherds and overseers in the church (Ac 20:17,28; 1Pet 5:1-2).
2. **Anointing with oil** (5:14): Oil was used in Biblical times as medicine (cf. Isa 1:6; Lk 10:34). But James may be using this expression in a symbolic sense.

Observation

Outline

(5:13)

(5:14-15)

_____ (5:16-18)

_____ (5:19-20)

Key Words/Phrases

General Analysis

1. Record what the passage teaches about

1a. Prayer

1b. Sin

1c. Brothers and sisters in the church

2. Based on this passage, what are some practical ways for us to put our faith to work?   

Segment Analysis

5:13

1. What can we learn from verse 13 about our relationship with the Lord in our daily lives?   

2. How does prayer help us in our suffering? Recall your own experience.  

5:14-15

3. Explain the significance of the following in terms of praying over the sick: 

3a. Call for the elders of the church

3b. Anoint with oil

3c. In the name of the Lord

4. According to James, what is the key to an effective prayer? Why?  

5. Why do you think James also mentions the forgiveness of sins here? 

6a. Have you ever prayed for someone who was sick? Have you requested others to pray for you? Did you learn anything from your experience? 

5:16-18

7a. What is the purpose of confessing our sins to one another if only the Lord Jesus Christ can forgive us of our trespasses? 

7b. How do we confess our trespasses to one another?  

8a. Why is it important for the members of Christ's body to pray for one another? 

9. What does verse 16 teach about prayer?  

10. Why does James remind us that "Elijah was a man with a nature like ours"? What lessons can we learn from Elijah's prayer? 

5:19-20

11a. What does it mean to wander from the truth? How do you know if a brother has wandered from the truth?  

11b. How do you turn back such a brother or sister?  

11c. What effects result from turning them back from error? 

12. What does it mean to cover a multitude of sins? What does this tell us about what we need to have in ourselves in order to turn back a sinner?  

13. How does this paragraph relate to the passage as a whole? 

10

Introduction to First Peter

Joy in Suffering**Author**

The author identifies himself as Simon Peter (1:1), a witness of the sufferings of Christ (5:1; cf. 3:18; 4:1). Widespread external attestations by Polycarp, Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Clement of Alexandria also support Peter's authorship. However, it appears that Silvanus made a valuable contribution towards writing the first letter (5:12).

Simon Peter, the son of Jonah, was a commercial fisherman with his brother Andrew. His home was based in Bethsaida (birthplace) and Capernaum, north of the Sea of Galilee (Jn 1:44).

Jesus identified Simon from his occupation and called him to become fishers of men (Lk 5:1-11). Jesus gave him the name Cephas, or Peter, which means "rock." During Jesus' ministry, Peter, the leader of the twelve disciples, confessed Jesus as the Messiah (Mt 16:13-16). As one of the three disciples closest to Jesus, he bore witness to the Transfiguration (Mt 17:1-9). Although he had vowed to follow the Lord unto death, his courage evaporated at the time of crisis and turned into outright denials of the Lord (Mt 26:34,35; 69-75). Yet despite Peter's bitter failure, the Lord appeared to Him at Jerusalem after the resurrection (Lk 24:33-34).

On the day of Pentecost, Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, witnessed to the multitude and preached that Jesus was the Christ. Later, while at Joppa, he received revelation from the Lord through a vision that Gentiles would be included in the salvation grace. Obeying the Holy Spirit's instructions, Peter brought the gospel message to the first Gentile believers (Acts 10:1-48).

The apostle and servant of Christ then travelled to Judea and Samaria proclaiming the Gospel to Gentiles. At the Jerusalem Council, Peter spoke from his personal experience and warned against excluding Gentiles from the faith (Acts 15:6-11). However, on one occasion, he was reprimanded by Paul when he withdrew from the company of Gentile believers for fear of the Jews who advocated circumcision (Gal

2:11-14). But despite this open rebuke by a much younger minister, Peter still considered Paul as a beloved brother and acknowledged the wisdom Paul had received from the Lord (2Pet 3:15).

Recipient

In his first epistle, Peter indicates that he was writing to "the pilgrims of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia" (1:1; See Map A). These were believers scattered in northern Asia Minor.

Date

Peter's first epistle was probably written in 62-64, before the great fire in Rome that led to Nero's persecution of Christians.

Place

5:13 indicates that Peter was in Babylon when he wrote the first epistle. Some interpret "Babylon" as a figurative reference to Rome (cf. Rev 17:18), whereas others believe that it was either Babylon on the Euphrates in Mesopotamia or Babylon on the Nile in Egypt during the first century.

Purpose/Occasion

The words, "pilgrims" and "Dispersion" (1:1) indicate that Christians were going through sufferings as strangers scattered in various places. Many perceived Christians as evildoers, slandered them for their godly behavior, and oppressed them for their faith. With comforting words of encouragement, Peter exhorts them to endure sufferings through the grace of God and lead blameless lives in the midst of unbelievers. He further reminds them of the glory that awaits them.

Central Verses

"Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (1:13).

"But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you" (5:10).

Survey

1. After reading the epistle once, record a descriptive heading for each of the paragraph divisions in chart B. In particular, observe the symmetry in the epistle: Outlook on trials (1:3-12); Christian living (1:13-25); Identity of Christians (2:1-10); Christian living (2:11-3:12); Outlook on trials (3:13-5:11).
2. Peter identifies believers in a number of ways (e.g. “obedient children” in 1:14). Write down as many of these identities as you can find.

Themes

Look up the list of references under each theme and summarize its related teachings.

Sufferings and Trials

1:6-7 _____

 1:11 _____
 2:12 _____
 2:19-20 _____

 2:21-23 _____

 3:14 _____
 3:16 _____
 3:17 _____
 3:18 _____
 4:1 _____

 4:4 _____

4:12 _____
 4:13-16 _____

 4:19 _____
 5:1 _____
 5:9 _____
 5:10 _____

Glorious Hope

1:3-4 _____

 1:7 _____
 1:8 _____
 1:13 _____
 1:21 _____
 4:13 _____
 5:1 _____
 5:4 _____
 5:10 _____

Holy Living and Separation

1:14-16 _____
 1:17 _____
 2:1 _____
 2:4-5 _____
 2:9-10 _____

 2:11-12 _____

3:8-12 _____

4:1-3 _____

Submission

2:13-17 _____

2:18-19 _____

2:23 _____

3:1-2 _____

4:19 _____

5:5-6 _____

Key Words/Phrases

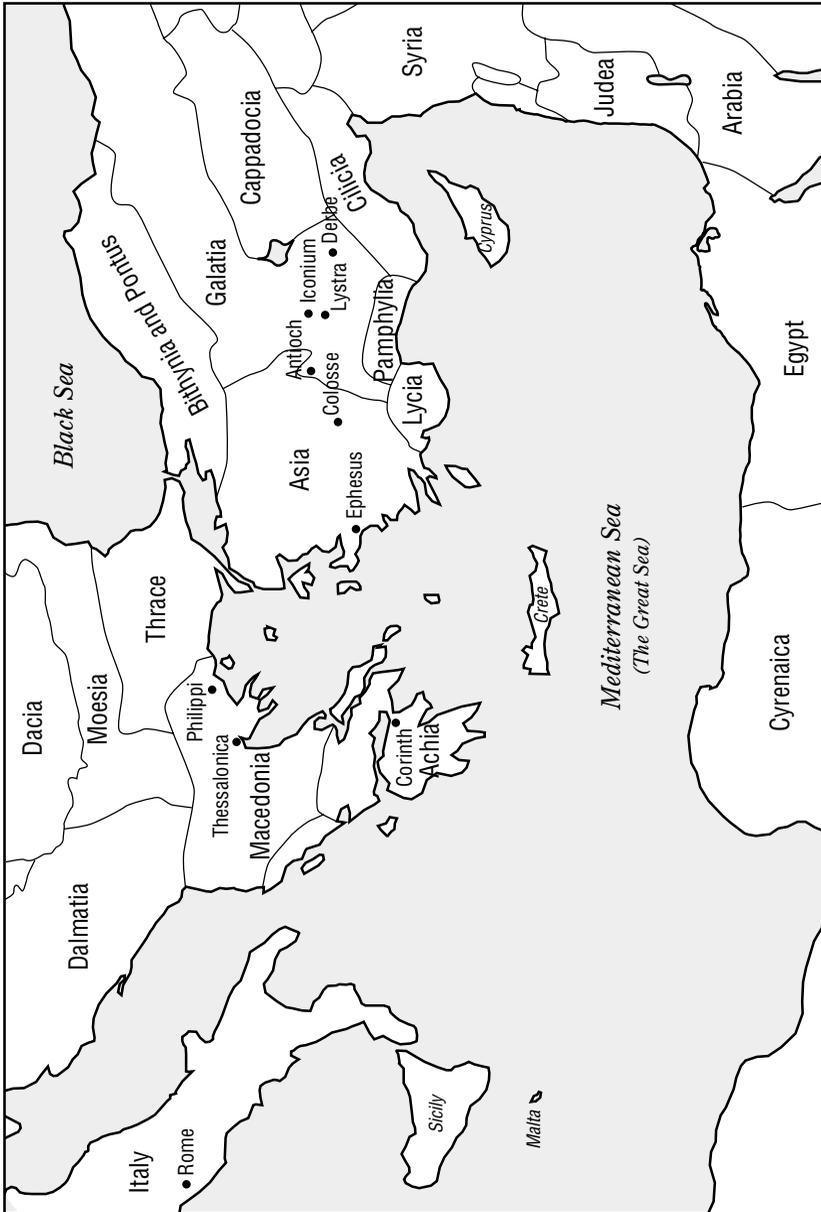
Pilgrims, elect, call, hope, salvation, last time, trials, glory, revelation, sufferings, grace, holy, precious, submit, do good.

Modern Relevance

Although we may not be suffering as strangers in a foreign land, in a spiritual sense, we are all pilgrims on earth. Consequently, we often face the pressures of the secular society and suffer discrimination for maintaining a certain ethical standard based on our faith in Christ. Thus, Peter encourages us to rejoice and glory in our trials when we suffer for the faith. As God’s elect, we ought to live holy lives while waiting for the coming of the Lord, even if it results in suffering. Peter furthermore gives practical guidelines on how to conduct ourselves as citizens, employees, husbands or wives, elders or younger people. While fulfilling our social and familial obligations, we need to conduct ourselves with a clear conscience so that God’s name may be glorified even among unbelievers.

1:1-2				
1:3-9		Salvation	Outlook	
1:10-12				
1:13-21				
1:22-25		Holy Nation	Conduct	
2:1-3				
2:4-8			Identity	
2:9-10				
2:11-12				
2:13-17		Submission	Conduct	
2:18-25				
3:1-6				
3:7				
3:8-12				
3:13-17				Suffering
3:18-22				
4:1-6				
4:7-11		Glory	Outlook	
4:12-19				
5:1-4				
5:5-9				
5:10-11				
5:12-14				

Chart B Survey of 1 Peter



Map A Geography in the time of the early church

11

The Hope of Salvation

The Basics

Setting

The readers of Peter’s epistle were pilgrims of the Dispersion (1:1). As aliens in foreign lands, they were undergoing trials of various kinds (1:6). Peter’s epistle to them is full of encouragement. He opens the letter by assuring them of their identity as the elect and the great salvation they have received.

Key Verse

“who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time” (1:5).

Did You Know...?

1. **Apostle** (1:1) means “messenger.”
2. **Dispersion** (1:1): the dispersion of Jews among the Gentiles after the Babylonian captivity

Observation

Outline

- _____ (1:1-2)
- _____ (1:3-5)
- _____ (1:6-9)
- _____ (1:10-12)

Key Words/Phrases

Segment Analysis

1:1-2

- 1. How does Peter identify the believers? 

- 2. What does Peter say about God’s election in terms of the following? Briefly explain the meaning of each.  

 - 2a. God the Father

 - 2b. the Spirit

 - 2c. Jesus Christ

1:3-5

- 3a. Explain the meaning of “begotten us again to a living hope.” 

- 3b. How was this new birth to a living hope possible?  

- 4a. What do verses 3 and 4 tell us about what we hope to receive but have not yet received? 

- 4b. Why does Peter emphasize the future aspect of salvation in these verses? 

- 4c. What aspect of salvation is to be revealed in the last time? 

- 5a. Verse 5 teaches us that we are kept by God’s power. From what are we being kept? 

- 5b. What part do we play with respect to God’s protection?  

- 6. How does it help us in our Christian walk to always look forward to the inheritance God has prepared for us? 

1:6-9

- 7. How do the various trials we encounter bring out the genuineness of our faith?  

- 8a. According to Peter, what gives us joy? 

1 Peter 1:1-12

8b. In your life, do you experience joy inexpressible and full of glory? If not, how can you obtain this joy? 🗝️

9a. What is the concrete expression of our faith in Christ? 👁️ 🗝️

9b. What is the result of such faith? 👁️

1:10-12

10. What do we have today that the prophets of old inquired about and searched for carefully? 👁️ 🗝️

11. What is the message of this paragraph? 🗝️

12

1 Peter 1:13-25

The Life of A Sojourner

The Basics

Setting

In the beginning of the epistle, Peter has reminded the readers of the glorious hope they have. Having this living hope, Christians ought to center their lives on Christ and His word. Thus, in this passage, Peter urges the pilgrims to live in a way that reflects the hope that they have.

Key Verse

“Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ” (1:13).

Did You Know...?

1. **Gird up the loins of your mind** (1:13): “The figure is of a man gathering the folds of his long garment and tucking it into his belt so that he can move freely and quickly (cf. 1 Kings 18:46; Jer 1:17; Luke 17:8).” ^{2/223}
2. **Holy**: (1:15-16): “The basic idea of holiness in the Bible is that of separation from all that is profane. The developed sense of holiness includes various meanings translated into English as ‘purify,’ ‘sanctify,’ ‘separate from,’ ‘dedicate,’ etc. The simplest understanding of holiness is that of loving conformity to God’s commands and to his Son (cf. 1 John 2:4-6).” ^{2/224}
3. **Love** (1:22): In verse 22, Peter uses two Greek words for love. In the first reference (“sincere love of the brethren”), the word is *philadelphia*, meaning brotherly kindness or a fondness “that is based on the loveliness or attractiveness of an object.” ^{3/1571} The second reference (“love one another”) is *agapaō*, which is used in Scripture to depict God’s self-sacrificing and all-encompassing love.

Observation

Outline

_____ (1:13-16)
 _____ (1:17-21)
 _____ (1:22-25)

Key Words/Phrases

General Analysis

1. Based on this passage, list the reasons for each of these commands: 
 - 1a. "Be holy in all your conduct"

 - 1b. "Conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear."

 - 1c. "Love one another fervently with a pure heart."

- 2a. How does each of the three paragraphs touch on the subject of the present and the future?  

- 2b. Why is this subject pertinent to the teachings of this passage? 

Segment Analysis

1:13-16

1. The word "therefore" in 13 implies that there is a reason for the following command. What is this reason?  

- 2a. What does it mean to "gird up the loins" of our mind? 

- 2b. What characterizes a sober life?  

- 2c. Why should we rest our hope *fully* on the grace of our Lord Jesus? How will such hope determine our lifestyle?  

3. How does verse 14 help us understand the meaning of holiness?  

4. Why should we obey the God who has called us rather than our lusts?  

1:17-21

5a. How does verse 17 suggest about the nature of our earthly lives?



5b. Do you consider yourself a stranger or a settler on earth? What differentiates the two lifestyles?



6a. Verse 18 reminds us about our redemption. What have we been redeemed from?



6b. What is the price of redemption?



6c. What does the redemption have to do with our conducts?



1:22-25

7. What does this paragraph teach about the word of God?



8. What is the concrete expression of our obedience to the truth?



9. According to Peter, how should we love one another? Explain your answer.



10a. What does it mean that we have been born again through the word of God?



10b. How does the knowledge that God's word abides forever affect your daily life?



13

1 Peter 2:1-10

The Gracious Lord and the Chosen People

The Basics

Setting

In the first chapter of the epistle, Peter calls the believers' attention to the great salvation they have received and exhorts them to conduct themselves in a manner that is worthy of God's grace. In this passage, which is a key passage in the epistle, we will learn of the special relationship that God has with the believers through Jesus Christ. Knowing how precious Christ is and how noble our identity is motivates us to a new life and continual spiritual growth.

Key Verse

"But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light" (2:9).

Did You Know...?

1. **Chief Cornerstone** (2:6): "The cornerstone, which determined the design and orientation of the building, was the most significant stone in the structure." ^{4/1890} "At great cost and care the corner foundation stone was obtained, moved, and laid. Hillyer mentions one stone in a quarry that was sixty-nine feet by twelve feet by thirteen feet ("Rock-Sone' Imagery," p. 66, n.34)" _{2/230}

Observation

Outline

- _____ (2:1-3)
- _____ (2:4-8)
- _____ (2:9-10)

Key Words/Phrases

Segment Analysis

2:1-3

1. How does this paragraph relate to the previous passage (1:13-25)?



- 2a. How does God's word make us grow? What are the signs of spiritual growth?



- 2b. When was the last time you had the desire and hunger for the word of God and grew as a result of feeding on God's word?



- 3a. What does it mean to have tasted that the Lord is gracious?



- 3b. How is this relevant to the desire for the milk of the word?



2:4-8

4. What kind of stone is meant when Peter calls Christ the living stone in verse 4? 🔑

5a. How do we, the living stones, relate to Christ, the living stone? 🔑

5b. How are we “being built up” (5)? 🔑

6a. How does the analogy of the spiritual house and holy priesthood aptly describe believers? What is the purpose of the spiritual house and holy priesthood? 🔑

6b. What does this purpose teach us about how to conduct our lives? 🔑 🗨️

7a. What are the two kinds of responses to God’s chosen and precious stone? 👁️

7b. What are the results of these responses? 👁️

2:9-10

8. What thought is behind the words “chosen,” “royal,” “holy,” “special”? 🔑

9. In what ways are Christians royal priests? What kind of sacrifices should we offer up to God (5)? 🔑 🗨️

10. How should believers live as citizens of a holy nation? 🔑 🗨️

11a. We are God’s own special people. In what ways has God demonstrated to you that you are special? 🔑 🗨️

11b. How does it help you in your daily walk to know that you are special to God? 🗨️

12. According to Peter, what is the purpose of God's calling? 



13. How does verse 10 sum up and reinforce the teachings of the passage?  

The Basics

Setting

Peter has been urging the believers to conduct themselves in holiness, fear of God, and love. Now he addresses specific groups of believers regarding their specific social roles. In each situation, he shows us how we should glorify and honor God by living blamelessly among our fellow human beings.

Key Verse

“Having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation” (2:12).

Observation

Outline

- _____ (2:11-12)
- _____ (2:13-17)
- _____ (2:18-25)
- _____ (3:1-6)
- _____ (3:7)
- _____ (3:8-12)

Key Words/Phrases

General Analysis

- 1. In each of the paragraphs of this passage, Peter gives the purpose or goal of submission. Identify and record them. 

Segment Analysis

2:11-12

- 1a. Compare “fleshly lusts” and “soul.” Why are they incompatible? 

- 1b. Why should sojourners and pilgrims choose the soul over the flesh? 

- 2. What form of persecution does Peter speak of here? 

- 3a. Who will glorify God in the day of visitation? 

- 3b. What is the day of visitation? 

2:13-17

- 4. In what sense is our submission to every ordinance of man “for the Lord’s sake”? 

- 5a. According to 15, what is God’s will for Christians? 

- 5b. What is the “ignorance of foolish men”? 

- 6. How can we be free but also be bondservants of God? Isn’t there a contradiction? 

2:18-25

- 7a. According to Peter, what kind of endurance is commendable? 

- 7b. What must we maintain in our hearts when we suffer?  

- 7c. Have you had an unreasonable employer or manager? What can you learn from the exhortation here? 

- 8. What is the purpose of our calling, according to 21? 

9a. What example has Christ set for us? What lessons can we learn from Him?   

9b. What purpose did Christ's suffering accomplish?  

10. Why is Christ called the Shepherd and Overseer of our souls? 

3:1-6

11. How can wives win over their unbelieving husbands?  

12a. According to Peter, what is true beauty for women?  

12b. Why do you think these characteristics are beautiful? What positive influence can such beauty bring to the household?  

12c. Which do you pay more attention to or spend more time on? Outward adornment? Inward beauty? 

13. Contrast the fear in verses 2 and 6.  

3:7

14. Explain what it means for the husband to dwell with his wife with understanding. 

15. How should the husband act towards his wife, knowing that she is the weaker vessel and coheir of the grace of life?  

3:8-12

16. What is the main point of this passage?  

17a. How does this paragraph sum up the entire passage?  

17b. What is the ultimate motivation for love and submission? 

Attitude in Suffering

The Basics

Setting

Having counseled specific groups on submission in the last passage, Peter summed up his exhortations with the command to do good and shun evil. In this passage, Peter continues this thought and speaks to all believers about the blessings and significance of suffering for doing good. He urges us to remember and imitate Christ, who is the perfect model of suffering for righteousness' sake.

Key Verse

“For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit” (3:18).

Observation

Outline

- _____ (3:13-17)
- _____ (3:18-22)
- _____ (4:1-6)
- _____ (4:7-11)

Key Words/Phrases



Segment Analysis

3:13-17

1a. According to verses 13 and 14, what are two kinds of fear?

1b. Why should we not be afraid?

2. What does it mean to sanctify the Lord God in our hearts? What does this have to do with suffering?

3a. What must we be always ready for?

3b. What lessons can we learn from verse 15 about witnessing? Explain the meaning of “with meekness and fear.”

3c. In what ways is the hope within you evident to those around you, so that they ask you the reason for your hope?

3d. Have you been asked about the reason for your hope and were not able to answer? What does that tell you about your faith? 🗝️

3:18-22

4. Based on this paragraph, what lessons can we learn from Christ's sufferings? 👁️ 🗝️ 🗝️

5. Explain the meaning of Christ preaching to the spirits in prison. 🗝️

6. How does baptism save us? 🗝️

4:1-6

7. How does suffering equip us to do the will of God? 👁️ 🗝️ 🗝️

8a. When a Christian chooses to live for the will of God, what kind of suffering will come to him? Have you gone through such suffering? 👁️ 🗝️

8b. Why should we not fear such suffering? 👁️ 🗝️

9. Explain verse 6. 🗝️

4:7-11

10. How does verse 7 connect this paragraph to the previous paragraph? 👁️ 🗝️

11a. In view of the end of all things, what should our prayers be like? 👁️ 🗝️ 🗝️

11b. What reason does Peter give for the need for love? Explain your answer. 👁️ 🗝️

11c. What evidence is there that shows we love our brethren deeply? 👁️ 🗝️ 🗝️

13a. What gifts have you received from God? Have you used them to serve others? If so, have you done so “without grumbling” (9)?



13b. What is the goal of our service?

13c. How can we serve “as with the ability which God supplies”? In other words, how can God’s ability rather than our own effort be evident to others in our service so God can be glorified?

Suffering and Glory

The Basics

Setting

This passage may be considered the climax of the epistle. After Peter has called the believers to imitate Christ’s sufferings, He now asks them to turn their eyes towards the glory that has been bestowed on them and the glory that awaits them. Just as he opened his epistle with the reminder of the wonderful grace of salvation, He concludes His exhortations by pointing to the glorious blessings of God. Throughout the passage, Peter also assures us of the faithfulness and grace of God, who cares for us during trials and will Himself exalt us in due time.

Key Verse

“But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you” (5:10).

Did You Know...?

1. **Be clothed** (5:5): This expression “refers to a slave putting on an apron before serving.” ^{2/251}

Observation

Outline

- _____ (4:12-19)
- _____ (5:1-4)
- _____ (5:5-7)
- _____ (5:8-11)
- _____ (5:12-14)

Key Words/Phrases

General Analysis

1. Record what the following verses teach about God’s glory: 👁

1a. 4:13

1b. 4:14

1c. 4:16

1d. 5:1

1e. 5:4

1f. 5:10

1g. 5:11

Segment Analysis

4:12-19

1. What does verse 12 indicate about a common misconception of trials? What, instead, should be our attitude towards trials? 👁



2a. In what sense do we “partake of Christ’s sufferings” when we go through fiery trials? 🔑

2b. In our trials, why is it important to remind ourselves that we are partaking of Christ’s sufferings? 👁

3. Why is it a blessing to be reproached for the name of Christ (14)? 👁

4a. What is the judgment that comes to the house of God? 🔑

4b. Why does Peter bring up the subject of judgment here (17-18)? How does it relate to the suffering of Christians? 👁 🔑

5a. In our suffering, why should we remember that God is the “faithful Creator”? 🔑 👁

5b. How do we commit our souls to God in our sufferings? 🔑 👁

5:1-4

6. Note the references to Christ in this paragraph and explain their significance in the exhortation to the elders.  

7a. What attitudes should the elders have? 

7b. As a spiritual overseer, whether you are an elder, deacon, pastor, parent, teacher, counselor, or youth leader, what aspects are you lacking in your service? 

5:5-7

8a. Why is humility necessary in order for us to submit to one another? 

8b. How is submission to one another related to submission to God? 

8c. What assurance do we have when we humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God? Have you enjoyed this blessing in your service and in your walk with God?   

5:8-11

9a. What does verse 8 tell us about the devil? 

9b. What must we do to overcome him?  

10a. How is God identified in verse 10? How is this important in the exhortations on suffering?  

10b. What will God do for us after we have suffered a while? 

17

Introduction to Second Peter

Steadfastness in the Faith**Author**

Simon Peter (1:1), who is also the author of 1 Peter (cf. 3:1).

Recipient

The epistle does not identify a specific group as the recipient. Hence, it was probably written to believers in general.

Date

Peter wrote the second epistle shortly before his death (1:12-15). Since Peter was martyred during Nero's reign (A.D. 54-68), the date of this epistle should fall between 64 and 68.

Place

Unknown.

Purpose/Occasion

This epistle mainly focuses on steadfastness in the faith until the Lord's coming. He warns the believers to be aware of false teachers who indulged in sensuality and spoke presumptuously as well as scoffers who denied the Lord's coming. Peter reminds the believers to remain true to the faith, which the apostles had received directly from the Lord, and to be diligent in seeking spiritual growth. He emphasizes the certainty and imminence of the Lord's return, urging them to look forward to and be prepared for that day.

Central Verse

"For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty" (1:16).

Survey

Read the entire epistle and record your observations in chart C.

Themes

Summarize the teachings in 2 Peter on the following themes.

Prophets and Prophecy

1:19 _____

1:20-21 _____

2:1 _____

3:1-2 _____

The Coming of the Lord

1:16 _____

3:3-4 _____

3:9 _____

3:10 _____

3:11-12 _____

3:13 _____

Judgment

2:3 _____

2:4 _____

2:5 _____

2:6-7 _____

2:9-10 _____

2:12-13 _____

3:7 _____

Knowledge

- 1:2-3 _____
- _____
- 1:5-6 _____
- 1:8 _____
- 1:12 _____
- 1:16 _____
- 1:20 _____
- 2:12 _____
- 2:20-21 _____
- _____
- 3:3 _____
- 3:17 _____
- 3:18 _____

Key Words/Phrases

Know, remind, prophecy, diligent, the day of the Lord, judgment.

Modern Relevance

The message in 2 Peter is particularly relevant to Christians today. While the promise of the Lord’s return seems to have been long delayed, many attempt to sway the conviction of true believers, sometimes even using the name of religion. These “false teachers” speak boastfully against the faith and influence others with godless living. New secular ideologies and trends constantly rise to challenge our beliefs. In view of such threats to our faith in these last days, we cannot afford to be spiritually stagnant. Not only do we need to hold fast to the sound doctrine, we must be diligent and make every effort to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. Only then will we enter the kingdom of Christ richly when the Lord comes.

1:1-4			
1:5-11		Reminder	Diligence
1:12-15			Truth
1:16-18			
1:19-21			
2:1-3		Warning	False Prophets and Scoffers
2:4-10a			
2:10b-16			
2:17-22			
3:1-7		Reminder	Truth
3:8-10			Diligence
3:11-13			
3:14-18			

Chart C Survey of 2 Peter

The Basics

Setting

In view of the false doctrines that threaten the faith of the believers, Peter begins his epistle with an earnest call to grow in the knowledge of God and the Lord Jesus. He reminds them of God's abundant grace and urges the believers to respond to this grace with a diligent and active faith.

Key Verse

"Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble" (1:10).

Did You Know...?

1. **Brotherly kindness** (*philadelphia*; 1:7) denotes warm affection for one another. The word often is used of the love of friends.
2. **Love** (*agapē*; 1:7): "Such love entails the treatment of things with value or respect, and consequently, action which is done for the benefit of that object." ^{3/1571}

Observation

Outline

- _____ (1:1-4)
- _____ (1:5-11)
- _____ (1:12-15)
- _____ (1:16-21)

Key Words/Phrases

Segment Analysis

1:1-4

1. What is the "righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ" (2)? What does it have to do with our precious faith? 

2. What does this paragraph teach about the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ? 

3. What can we learn from verses 3 and 4 about the effect and goal of God's salvation?  

1:5-11

4. Describe the two kinds of believers mentioned in this paragraph. 

5. What clues in this paragraph indicate that the growth of the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ comes by experience? 

6. Verse 8 teaches us that we should not only have the qualities listed in 5 to 7 but abound in them. For each of the qualities, think about how you can abound in it (cf. 8). 

7a. What prevents us from stumbling in our faith (10)? Why?  

7b. What does it mean to make our call and election sure? 

1:12-15

8. What does Peter predict about himself? 

9a. In this paragraph what does Peter say repeatedly that he will do? 

9b. Why is this task so important? 



1:16-21

10a. What does Peter want to convince the believers about in this paragraph?

10b. What two things does Peter use to confirm his message? 

11a. Which event does Peter allude to regarding the majesty of the Lord Jesus?  

11b. How does this event relate to the power and coming of the Lord Jesus? 

12a. How is the prophetic word like the light in darkness until the dawning of day and rising of the morning star? 

12b. What reason does Peter give for the trustworthiness of prophecy?  

12c. What should be our attitude towards the prophecies of Scripture?   

Final Thoughts

13. With Peter’s exhortations in mind, what measures do you need to take in order to strengthen your knowledge of the Lord Jesus?



19

False Teachers and Their End

The Basics

Setting

Peter has reminded the believers the necessity of being diligent in the knowledge of the Lord to keep from stumbling. This passage reveals the danger that faces the church and warns us against this serious threat. Peter predicts the rise of false teachers, depicts their teachings and conduct in detail, and speaks of the certainty of their condemnation. His purpose is so that believers of all times may be careful to guard against the destructive power of false teachers.

Key Verse

“But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction” (2:1).

Did You Know...?

1. “**Did not spare the ancient world**” (2:5): See Genesis 6 and 7.
2. “**Turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes**” (6): See Genesis 19.
3. **Balaam the son of Beor** (2:15) was willing to curse God’s people because he was greedy for the money Balak offered him (Num 22-24). He also taught Balak to lure the Israelites into idolatry and sexual immorality (Num ch. 25; 31:16; Rev 2:14).

Observation

Outline

(2:1-3)

(2:4-10a)

(4)

_____ (5)

_____ (6-8)

_____ (9-10a)

_____ (2:10b-16)

_____ (2:17-22)

Key Words/Phrases

Segment Analysis

2:1-3

1. Where are false prophets and teachers found? 

2a. What does this paragraph say about the message of false teachers? 

2b. What damages can false teachers bring to the community of believers?  

2c. Why are these false teachers able to win many followers (2)?  

2d. What must we do to guard ourselves? 

3. What is the motive of the false teachers? 

2:4-10a

4. What is the main message of this paragraph?  

5. Based on this paragraph, what characterize the ungodly? 

6a. What assurance do you see in verse 9?   

6b. Have you ever experienced the Lord's deliverance from temptations? Write down or share one such experience. 

2:10b-16

7. Record the sins of the unrighteous described in this paragraph. 

2 Peter 2:1-22

8. What is Peter’s point in mentioning the angels in verse 11? 

9. In what sense are the false teachers “spots and blemishes” (13)? 

2:17-22

10. Explain the meaning of the analogies in verse 17. 

11a. What kind of liberty do the false teachers promise? 

11b. Why is such liberty a false liberty?  

12. What do verses 20-22 teach about apostasy and its consequence?  

Final Thoughts

13. With this passage in mind, what are the basic distinctions between true and false teachers? How can we make the right judgment based on their teachings and conduct?   

20

2 Peter 3:1-18

The Coming of the Lord

The Basics

Setting

Knowing the danger of false teachers that faces the believers, Peter cannot but remind the believers again to heed the words of the prophets and apostles. He strengthens the believers’ hope in the Lord’s coming by stressing its certainty and exposing the fallacy of the scoffers. Then he exhorts them to be diligent in spiritual growth in order to welcome the coming of the Lord.

Key Verse

“You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen” (3:17-18).

Observation

Outline

- _____ (3:1-10)
- _____ (1-2)
- _____ (3-4)
- _____ (5-7)
- _____ (8-10)
- _____ (3:11-18a)
- _____ (3:12-13)
- _____ (14-18a)

_____ (3:18b)

Key Words/Phrases

Segment Analysis

3:1-10

1a. What does Peter want the believers to know and be mindful of?



1b. Peter tells the readers that the purpose of his epistles is to stir up their pure minds by way of reminder. Today, how can our pure minds be likewise stirred up?



2a. What is the message of the scoffers?



2b. What characterizes the lives of the scoffers?



2c. What does this tell us about what motivates their scoffing?



2d. What rationale will these scoffers use to deny the promise of the Lord's coming?



3a. According to verse 5, what is the problem with the scoffers?



3b. How can we also make the same mistake today?



4a. Why does Peter use the creation and the flood to refute the argument of the scoffers?



5a. What does Peter want us to not forget?



5b. What is his point (cf. Ps 90:4)?



6. How should we act in response to the apparent delay of the Lord's coming (9)? How is this different from the way many people react to the apparent delay?



7. How do verses 9 and 10 answer the false claim that the Lord is slack concerning His promise? 🔑

8. What will happen to the physical existence when the Lord comes? 👁

3:11-18

9a. What changes should you make in your life, knowing that all things will be dissolved? 👣

9b. According to Peter, what should our lives be like in response to the coming of the Lord? 👁 👣

10. What does it mean to look for and hasten the coming of the day of God (12)? 🔑

11. What characterizes the new heavens and new earth? 👁

12. Explain the exhortation of verse 14. 🔑

13. Why do you think Peter mentions Paul's letters in 15-16? 🔑

14a. What does Peter warn us about in 17? 👁

14b. What does it mean to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? 🔑 👣

14c. How is such growth the antidote to the danger described in 17? 🔑

Thoughts on Questions

Lesson 2

Observation

Outline

- Greetings to the Twelve Tribes (1:1)
- Rejoice in Various Trials (1:2-4)
- Asking in Faith (1:5-8)
- Trials for the Poor and the Rich (1:9-12)
- Source of Temptations (1:13-15)
- God as the Source of All Good Gifts (1:16-18)

Key words/Phrases

Joy, various trials, testing, faith, patience, perfect, lacking, ask, no doubting, glory, pass away, temptation, approved, desires, drawn away and enticed, sin, death, good gift, Father of lights, word of truth, firstfruits.

General Analysis

1. Trials can come in the form of outward difficulties, such as persecutions or loss of material wealth, or in the form of inner temptations. While we tend to avoid outward difficulties because of the pain involved, we are lured by temptations because of the pleasure they offer. Outward difficulties are morally neutral and may even benefit us spiritually, but inner temptations are innately evil because they come from a desire that is contrary to God's law and result in sin.
2. Joy and trials; faith and doubt, the lowly and the rich; exaltation and humiliation; life and death; evil and good.
3. See verses 5, 7, 12, 13, 17, 18.

Segment Analysis

1. James considers himself as a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ (1). The word "servant" means slave. As a slave submits to his master in everything, James is obedient to the Lord. In the same way a slave belongs to his master, James belongs to the Lord, both body and soul.
- 2a. The literal meaning of "twelve tribes" would be Jewish Christians. If interpreted symbolically, the term refers to spiritual Israel—those who by faith have been baptized into Christ and become the children of Abraham (cf. Rom 9:6-8; Gal 3:7-9, 26-29; 6:16; Php 3:3)

- 2b. Whether the scattering alludes to the Diaspora—the dispersion of Jews among the Gentiles after the Babylonian captivity, or to the dispersion of believers after the stoning of Stephen (Acts 8:1), the believers who lived abroad were often living in adverse conditions. As aliens in foreign lands, many of them suffered religious or social oppressions.
- 3b. We should consider it all joy (verse 2; "all joy" means "complete joy"). The reasons for such joy are found in verses 3 and 4.
- 3c. A person would naturally complain if he is not prepared to suffer (cf. Acts 14:22; 1Thess 3:3; 1Pet 4:12) and does not see the purpose of his suffering. As Christians, we can rejoice in trials because we know that we can develop spiritual character and that our faith may be tested and approved through suffering (Rom 5:3-5; Jas 1:12; 1Pet 1:6,7; 4:1,2,12,13).
- 4a. We need to endure to the end.
- 4b. It means reaching spiritual maturity, not lacking any Christian character.
- 5a. The wisdom to understand the purpose of trials. The wisdom to see our shortcomings and where we can grow. The wisdom to handle life's various trying circumstances.
6. Since God does not rebuke us for our insufficiency but generously provides for our needs, we can pray to him and ask for wisdom with full confidence and assurance.
7. Whether we can still pray to the Lord with unwavering faith when we face trials will indicate whether our faith in God is genuine.
8. An example of a double-minded prayer is one where we seek for God's help on the one hand while devising a "backup plan" in case God does not answer our prayers.
- 9a. Considering the context, both exaltation and and humiliation refer to trials in believers' lives.
- 9b. The lowly brother should glory in exaltation because trials of faith is an honor bestowed by the Lord (Acts 5:41; 1Pet 4:13,14). The rich should glory in his humiliation because trials of faith remind him that life and material abundance are fleeting.
10. Just as the grass withers and the flowers fall under the burning heat, so the rich man is humbled when going through fiery trials.
11. Trials put both the poor and the rich believer on equal footing. They make us realize that our lives are weak and fragile, and that we should not depend on or boast of our material possessions (cf. 1Tim 6:17).
- 13a. Those who love the Lord (12).
- 13b. If we relate verse 12 to the previous verses, we understand that those who love the Lord are those who withstand trials and learn to look lightly upon material pursuits. They choose to love God rather than Mammon

(Mt 6:24). In other words, they serve the Lord wholeheartedly without being enticed by selfish ambitions.

14. A person may attribute temptations to God in order to justify his sin.
- 15a. Drawn away by desires and enticed > desire is conceived > gives birth to sin > sin is full-grown > brings forth death.
- 15b. Since the power of sin keeps growing stronger until it takes control of us, we must subdue our evil desires even before they are conceived. We need to flee youthful lusts (2Tim 2:22) and put to death the misdeeds of the body (Rom 8:13). Let our hearts be filled with God's word and God's Spirit so that there would be no room for evil.
16. God is the author of everything that is good and perfect. There is not the slightest evil in Him (1 Jn 1:5).
17. God is trustworthy. Therefore, we can always depend on His goodness and pray to Him without fear of being disappointed (Lk 9-13; Rom 8:31,32).
- 18a. We have been born again through the word of God (1 Pet 1:23). By hearing the gospel and believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, we have the best gift from God—eternal life (Rom 6:23).
- 18b. While the whole creation eagerly awaits the day of final redemption, we who have received spiritual redemption become the first to have a foretaste of that glorious moment.

Lesson 3

Observation

Outline

Receiving the Implanted Word (1:19-21)

Continuing in the Word (1:22-25)

Practicing Religion (1:26-27)

Key Words/Phrases

Swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath, righteousness of God, receive with meekness, implanted word, doers/hearers, deceives, forgets, law of liberty, religion, tongue.

General Analysis

1. Verse 18 describes the rebirth through God's word. The passage of this lesson continues this thought by exhorting us to practice the word and let the word of life take effect in our daily lives.

2. Believers need to receive the word of God with meekness (21). The word is able to save our souls (21). We should be doers of the word, and not hearers only (22). We need to look into God's word (25). We need to continue in God's word (25). We will be blessed if we do the word (25).

Segment Analysis

1. 1. We need to be swift to hear (19). This means that we should be attentive to the Lord's instructions and accept them readily. 2. We need to receive the word with meekness (21). Meekness means a gentle and submissive spirit. We should humbly accept the word of God and not be stiff-necked.
2. When we listen to and meditate on the word of God, we are yielding to God's guidance rather than our emotions. We will have a clear mind to gain a spiritual perspective as well as the strength to control ourselves. Anger often comes from misunderstanding or an unforgiving attitude. But if we give others a chance to explain themselves, we will be more understanding and forgiving, and perhaps even realize that our anger is not justified.
3. We should be slow to wrath because "the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God" (20). Sometimes we may justify our anger with the intention to correct the wrongdoings of others. But since the wrath of man itself is contrary to the fruit of the Spirit, we should not use our anger as a means to bring about God's righteousness. Even if someone is clearly in the wrong, we should restore him gently (Gal 6:1).
4. We need to "lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness" (21). This means removing anything in us that is contrary to God's nature and will, including "the wrath of man" (20). Only then can God's word have room to grow and take its effect in our hearts.
5. If we think that reading or hearing God's word is enough to please God or grow spiritually, we are fooling ourselves. The blessings of God's word come to us when we carry it out (25). Those who hear the word of God but do not put it into practice is like the man who builds his house on the sand (Mt 7:26-27). Such faith may appear strong and beautiful on the surface, but it will collapse when trials come. Furthermore, if we know God's will but do not carry it out, not only will we not benefit from God's word, we will also come under judgment (Lk 12:47,48).
- 6a. We will only be temporarily aware of our spiritual blemishes and shortcomings but do nothing to correct them. In fact, we may deliberately forget about them in order to remove a sense of guilt (cf. 2Pet 3:5).
- 6b. It is when we carry out God's word that we can truly know God and understand His word (cf. 2Pet 1:5-8). With the comprehension that

comes from experience, the word of God will stay in our hearts permanently (cf. Heb 5:14).

8. God's word is the perfect law (Ps 19:7) because it is faultless. It is a law of liberty because when we abide by the word of Christ and depend on the Spirit of Christ, we are no longer condemned or bound by the desires of our sinful nature (Rom 8:1,2). We have the freedom to turn from sin and submit to God.
- 9a. 1. We are to look into God's word through diligent study and constant meditation. 2. We are to continue in God's word by carrying it out consistently and persistently.
- 9b. We will be blessed in what we do if we do God's word.
- 10a. False religion consists of superficial piety (cf. Mt 6:1,2,5,16; 15:8; 23:27,28) or a false sense of religious sincerity. True religion is characterized by a renewed life that manifests God's righteousness and love (cf. Eph 4:20-24).
- 10b. A person may feel that he is a sincere worshiper because of his regular church attendance or offering. But if God has little place in his heart, or if he does not obey God from his heart in his daily life, his feeling of being religious is but a false sense of security because he is still in fact far from God.
11. 1. Bridle our tongue. 2. Take care of orphans and widows in their trouble. 3. Keep ourselves unspotted from the world.
12. It means being free from any thought, speech, or conduct that comes from the desires of the sinful nature (1Jn 2:15-16). It means not conforming to the pattern of ungodly living (Rom 12:1-2).

Lesson 4

Observation

Outline

Judging with Evil Thoughts (2:1-4)

Dishonoring Those Whom God Has Chosen (2:5-7)

Law, Mercy, Judgment (2:8-13)

Key Words/Phrases

Faith, partiality, poor, judge, rich, law, love, sin, transgressors, so speak and so do, mercy.

General Analysis

1. 1. It is contrary to faith in Christ (1) 2. It is based on evil thoughts (4). 3. It dishonors what God honors and extols what God despises (5-7) 4. It is a transgression of the law of love (8-9,11). 5. It disregards future judgment (12).

Segment Analysis

1. If we truly honor the Lord Jesus Christ, we would also honor everyone He has created, especially our fellow believers, whom He has redeemed with His blood.
- 2a. Assembly of believers (2).
- 4a. Partiality involves judging others based on such external criteria as wealth, looks, or power.
- 4b. Injustice; pride; contempt for the poor and needy.
5. Our partiality shows that we place high values on material or physical possessions, such as wealth, education, power, or beauty.
- 6a. God has chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world (Lk 4:18; 1Cor 1:26-29), and to these who love Him, God has given them spiritual riches and the inheritance of His kingdom.
- 6b. It is wrong to despise the poor because God has chosen them and given them the greatest wealth and the most honorable status. Despising them is despising God.
- 6c. We have become heirs of God's glorious kingdom and have received abundant blessings in Christ (Lk 12:32; Eph 1:3; 1Pet 1:3-4).
7. Partiality is a serious offense against God, especially when we favor, admire, and flatter those who violate God's command and blaspheme His glorious name.
8. While God loves everyone equally regardless of their appearance or possessions (Acts 10:34; Gal 2:6), human beings tend to love only those who are rich, beautiful, and powerful.
9. It is contrary to the command, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."
10. Love (Gal 5:14; Mt 22:36-40; Rom 13:8-10)
11. Because God is the giver of the law, breaking even just one point of the law is an offense against God and His whole law. Thus, showing partiality is not just a minor offense. It makes us transgressors against God.
13. Verse 12 teaches us to speak and act with the future judgment in mind. Verse 13 reminds us of the severity of judgment on the unmerciful.

Putting these two verses together, we understand that in order to be shown mercy at the final judgment, we must speak and act with mercy (Mt 5:7). Since partiality involves unmerciful treatment of the poor, this principle further reinforces the case against partiality.

Lesson 5

Observation

Outline

Dead Faith Cannot Save (2:14-17)

Faith Cannot Be Separate from Works (2:18-20)

Abraham's Example (2:21-24)

Rahab's Example (2:25-26)

Key Words/Phrases

Faith, works, dead, show, Abraham, justified, working together, made perfect, fulfilled, Rahab, body without the spirit.

Segment Analysis

- 1a. A dead faith (17).
- 1b. Such faith is useless and ineffective. It does not profit anyone and is unable to save (14,16).
2. The phrase is better translated as "Can such faith save him?" The "faith" James speaks of here is a dead faith. Notice that James does not state that the man has faith, but that the man *says* he has faith. James' argument is that such a faith, which is not true faith at all, cannot save the man. On the other hand, true faith in Christ brings justification.
3. Faith without works is but a lip service, which profits no one.
- 5a. The statement implies that faith and works are separate, distinct qualities, and that a person can have faith without works. But according to James, it's simply impossible to have a living faith without works.
- 5b. James challenges the one who says, "You have faith, and I have works" by asking him to show his faith without his works—an impossibility. James, on the contrary, is able to demonstrate his faith by his works. The argument is that faith does not and cannot exist without works. There is no such thing as a true faith without works.
6. A concrete yardstick of faith is whether we willingly and actively obey God's word from our hearts.

7. Demons believe in God in the sense that they have conceptual knowledge of God. But their inclinations and works are contrary to God. Knowing that they are under condemnation, they tremble in their belief of God. Genuine faith, however, manifests the divine nature of Christ. With such faith, we have no fear of judgment (1Jn 4:17).
- 8a. Abraham was justified by God when he believed in God's promise that he would have numerous descendants (Rom 4:3; cf. Gen 15:6).
- 8b. Abraham was justified by works when he offered Isaac on the altar (21).
- 8c. His quotation in 23 confirms that he does not deny justification by faith when Abraham believed God's promise.
- 8d. Yes, Abraham's works were based on his faith in God's promise.
- 8e. Abraham's subsequent works of obedience sufficiently demonstrated his faith in God's promise. In other words, his faith was "perfect," or genuine, because he acted upon his belief. The justification by works did not contradict, but confirmed the justification by faith.
- 8f. The Scripture's declaration that God justified Abraham, as recorded in Genesis 15, was fulfilled when Abraham acted upon his faith by offering Isaac, as recorded in Genesis 22. In other words, Abraham's works proved that the Scripture's declaration of Abraham's faith was true. Based on our analysis thus far, we see that there is no contradiction between Paul and James. Abraham was justified by faith in the sense that he did not earn God's righteousness by his good works. On the other hand, Abraham was also justified by works because his subsequent works demonstrated and validated that he was a true believer.
- 8g. For James, works are the natural fruit of faith subsequent to conversion. These works are not for the purpose of earning salvation, but they confirm our faith in Christ. The works that Paul discusses are works of the law, with which the self-righteous hopes to win salvation. Rather than demonstrate faith in Christ, these works are done to take the place of faith. Therefore, the difference ultimately lies with a person's attitude and intentions. When a person performs good works without faith, he attempts to justify himself with his own righteousness. But when a believer performs good works out of faith, he is simply obeying God from his heart, with no intention of trusting in his own merits.
9. Abraham's faith manifests itself through obedience to God's commands and trust in God's promise.
10. She believed that the Lord God is the God of heaven and earth, and that He has given the land of Canaan to the Israelites (Josh 2:9-11).

11. Rahab's faith in God was not just mental agreement but was demonstrated through her works. Because she had genuine faith, she was justified by God and her life was spared. Therefore, the faith that brings justification and salvation is one that is accompanied by works.
12. Faith cannot be living and active without works in the same way that the body cannot be living and active without the spirit. Just as the spirit gives life to the body, works give life to faith.

Lesson 6

Observation

Outline

The Tongue and the Person (3:1-2)

The Tongue's Influence (3:3-5a)

The Tongue Is A Fire (3:5b-6)

The Tongue Has Not Been Tamed (3:7-8)

The Tongue Needs to Be Consistent (3:9-12)

Key Words/Phrases

Teachers, judgment, stumble, tongue, perfect, bridle.

Segment Analysis

- 1a. The ability to teach is a divine gift that the Holy Spirit distributes to individuals in the church according to His will (Rom 12:6-8; 1Cor 12:28-30; Eph 4:11). James' command has to do with those who have not been given the spiritual gift to teach but presume to be teachers.
- 1b. Teachers were in a position to educate the congregation and speak out against the wrongdoings of individuals. Those who presumed to be teachers probably desired the prestige associated with this responsibility or the opportunity to judge others.
- 1c. Teachers must teach with humility, gentleness, patience, and love (2Tim 2:24,25; 1Cor 4:14,15; 8:1; 16:14)
- 1d. Teachers are supposedly more knowledgeable of God's word. Having more knowledge, more will be required of them (Lk 12:47,48). Their own teaching will also judge them (Rom 2:1). Furthermore, if they are not careful with their tongues but mislead others with wrong teachings, they will be judged all the more severely.
2. Since we all stumble in many things, especially in our speech, no one should take the role of a teacher upon themselves. But if we have been

given the divine gift to teach, we should teach with humility because we ourselves have many shortcomings.

3. Since the tongue is the most difficult to control, anyone who is able to control his tongue and not sin in his speech would be able to also keep himself from committing other sins.
4. For references on various kinds of evil speech, see Ex 22:28; Ps 12:3; 106:33; Prov 6:16-19; 10:11; 15:1; 16:28; 25:23; Rom 1:29,30; 3:13,14; Eph 4:31; 5:4; Tit 1:10,11; 3:2; 1Pet 2:1; Jude 8-10.
- 5a. Bits that bridle horses; rudders that turn ships; fire that kindles a forest.
- 5b. Although it's small, the tongue can have a great influence. With the tongue, a person can mislead multitudes or turn the course of events by "boasting great things" (5).
6. The tongue itself, in the sense of a physical organ, cannot defile the body. Rather, this verse refers to the wicked mind that causes the tongue to sin that is able to defile the person (Mt 15:10,11,16-20).
7. "Course of nature" is also translated as "course of life." The tongue can have a life-long destructive influence. Another translation renders the phrase as "whole round of existence" (The New Berkeley Version). This existence may include the entire human existence. In other words, the tongue is able to impact the whole human race.
8. The source of the tongue's destructive power is hell (6). In other words, this power comes from the evil one (cf. Mt 5:37).
10. Man's inability to tame his tongue shows that no one has power over his sinful nature (See verse 2, which states the universality of sin: "We all stumble in many things").
12. A person who curses his fellow human beings, who are created in the likeness of God, despises God Himself. Praising God while cursing others constitutes hypocrisy and false worship.
13. We will love everyone equally with the love that God deserves from us.
14. James wants us to learn the consistency in nature. We cannot have double standards in our speech and actions.
15. Since evil speech comes from evil thoughts, controlling our tongues starts with having a pure heart (Prov 4:23). If our hearts are filled with God's love, and if our mind always meditates on the word of God, we will naturally speak words of edification.
16. Gideon (Judg 8:1-3); Abigail (1Sam 25:26-34); the wise woman of Sheba (2Sam 20:15-22); Naaman's servant girl and servant (2Kgs 5:1-3,13,14); Philip (Jn 1:43-46); Gamaliel (Acts 5:33-40). Besides these examples, the prophets and apostles have left us good examples where the tongue was

used for God's glory. The greatest example of all is the Lord Jesus Christ, who spoke with authority and grace (Lk 4:22, 32).

Lesson 7

Observation

Outline

Two Kinds of Wisdom (3:13-18)

Lusting and Fighting in Vain (4:1-3)

Submit to God (4:4-10)

Do Not Judge (4:11-12)

Key Words/Phrases

Wisdom, good conduct, meekness, above, wars and fights, pleasure, adulterers and adulteresses, friendship with the world, enemy of God, yearns jealousy, humble, submit, resist, draw near, cleanse your hands, purify your hearts, lament, mourn, weep, speak evil, law, judge.

General Analysis

1. 3:13-4:3 mostly points out the problem. 4:4-12 is mainly about the solution to the problem.
2. Bitter envy, self-seeking, boasting, lies, confusion, wars, fights, lust, murder, covet, enmity with God, speaking evil of one another, judging others.

Segment Analysis

1. It reinforces the themes of being a doer of the word as well as faith and works. Anyone who thinks he is wise ought to conduct himself in meekness.
2. Meekness means having a humble and gentle spirit, a quality that Christians must possess in order to eliminate envy and strife. Not only should Christians be meek with one another, they should all the more be meek before God by submitting to God. See comments on 4:7 to understand why meekness before God is key to solving the problem of envy and strife.
- 3a. In this world of competition and selfish ambition, wisdom means gaining an edge over others. Therefore, many people seek to outsmart and outdo their competitors. Consequently, there is envy, strife, and other forms of evil. Unfortunately, some believers embrace this worldly mentality and thus bring evil practices into the community of believers.

- 3b. It is earthly because it views things only from the perspective of this world and the present life. It is sensual because it comes from sinful desires. It is demonic because it is Satan who is at work behind such "wisdom."
4. Bitter envy and self-seeking (14,16). Selfish motive naturally leads to strife.
6. The purity here refers to a sinless motive, which serves as the basis for the virtues and attitudes that follow in 17 and 18. Godly character comes from a pure heart.
7. The fruit of righteousness cannot grow in an environment of envy and strife. In order for believers to bear fruit that reflects God's righteousness, there must be peace in the spiritual community. This kind of healthy spiritual growth is cultivated by those who actively make peace a reality.
- 8a. Perhaps "interest groups" existed in the church, where believers fought openly for personal gains and prestige. Sharp divisions resulted in speech and actions that did great harm to one another.
- 8c. The desire for pleasure—the pleasure of gaining praise and respect as well as the pleasure of defeating rivals.
9. Impure motive is a cause of unanswered prayer. Our prayers should not be motivated by our desires for pleasure. Instead, we need to seek to know and carry out God's will.
- 10a. Friendship with the world means agreeing with and embracing the sinful desires of the flesh (cf. 1Jn 2:15-17).
- 10b. The desires of the sinful nature stand opposed to the mind of the Holy Spirit. Not only so, if we choose to obey our sinful desires, these desires can disable us from submitting to God (Rom 8:5-8). Since it is impossible to be friends with both the world and God, we have to make a choice to love one and despise the other (cf. Mt 6:24).
- 10c. James considers these people to be spiritually unfaithful to God.
11. As a lover jealously longs for his unfaithful spouse, God yearns jealously when our hearts are with the world.
12. While God yearns jealously when we lust after the world, His grace for us far surpasses His jealousy. He generously provides us with forgiveness and strength to overcome the world when we choose to humbly submit to God (see the second part of verse 6).
13. Envy and strife are of the devil; resisting the devil involves removing all selfish ambitions. Meekness and peace are of God; if we humbly yield to God's will, God's grace will enable us to bring unity to the fellowship of believers.

- 14a. The answer is found in the passage. Drawing near to God means submitting to God and becoming a friend of God. In the process of drawing near to God, we need to cleanse our hands, and purify our hearts. We need to “lament and mourn and weep.”
- 14b. “Hands” represents conduct, and “hearts” represents motive. Our conduct should be right with God and they should come from a sinless motive.
- 14c. A double-minded believer is one who wavers between serving God and enjoying the pleasures of the world.
15. In order to restore our friendship with God, we must forsake worldly pleasures and repent of our sins. Such renouncement and repentance call for sorrow and contrition over our iniquity.
16. Speaking evil of and judging our brother is a violation of the law because the law requires us to love one another (2:8). It is also a judgment on the law because through our conduct, we are challenging the authority of God’s command.
17. We should not be a judge but a doer of the law (11). God is the only Judge, and He alone can reward or punish (“save or destroy”). Let Him make the judgment. Our responsibility is to submit to His law, not to pass judgment on others. Besides, who are we to judge when we ourselves fail to keep the law perfectly?

Lesson 8

Observation

Outline

Arrogant Boasting about Tomorrow (4:13-17)

Denunciation of Rich Oppressors (5:1-6)

Waiting Patiently for the Coming of the Lord (5:7-12)

Key Words/Phrases

“You do not know what will happen tomorrow,” vapor, if the Lord wills, boast, arrogance, knows...and does not do, rich, weep and howl, last days, fraud, pleasure and luxury, condemned/murdered the just, patient, coming of the Lord, establish your hearts, do not grumble, suffering, Judge/judgment, swear.

General Analysis

1. The first paragraph has to do with the correct attitude about the immediate future. The second paragraph warns of the judgment in the

near future. The last paragraph calls for patience until the coming of the Lord, which is also in the near future.

2. Whereas the tone of the second paragraph is denunciatory, the tone of the third paragraph is one of encouragement.

Segment Analysis

1. James is not warning against planning or profit-making, but against arrogance and boasting (16). Such arrogance and boasting come from the presumption that we are in command of our own lives.
- 2a. 1. Our future is uncertain. 2. Our lives are short.
3. Behind the words “if the Lord wills” is a heart of dependence on God’s sustenance and respect for His will.
- 4a. In the preceding verses, James has just explained why arrogant boasting is evil and taught us what is right and good (i.e. to honor God’s sovereign will). In this verse, James extends the teaching on good and evil to include a broader principle—failing to do the good is in itself evil.
- 4b. God’s law not only forbids us to do evil but also commands us to do good. When we fail to do what is good, we become a transgressor of God’s law. Furthermore, withholding good deeds can become a harm to others (e.g. Lk 6:6-10).
- 5a. Accumulation of wealth (2,3), withholding wages by fraud (4), living in pleasure and luxury (5), condemning and murdering the just (6).
- 5b. They have no fear of God and love pleasure rather than God.
6. They will be in misery because God will soon judge them.
7. According to verses 2 and 3, the rich keep accumulating wealth that is never put to good use. That is why their valuables were corrupted, garments moth-eaten, and gold and silver corroded. The hoarding of wealth contributes to economic injustice in society. This sin is especially evil because it is done in the last days. In other words, these rich people disregard the impending judgment of God and indulge in wanton living.
8. The day of slaughter is the time when the owner slaughters his fattened cattle. James uses this language to depict how the rich are satisfying their hearts with pleasure and completely unaware of their impending destruction.
9. We may infer from this verse that the believers were probably victims of social oppression. Even if they were not suffering from oppression per se, the exhortation may be an encouragement for believers to wait patiently for the Lord’s coming, knowing that God’s judgment will soon take place.

10. Establishing our hearts means strengthening our faith in the Lord and not letting our conviction be shaken by any circumstance (cf. 1Cor 15:58). This inner strength comes from the sure hope of the Lord's coming.
11. "Grumbling," which literally means "groaning," refers to words or expressions that show the inner bitterness over the offenses of others. Thus when James admonishes us not to grumble against each other, he is teaching us to stop complaining and bear with one another until the coming of the Judge.
12. 1. The perseverance of Job. 2. The Lord is very compassionate and merciful (cf. Job 42:10-17).
13. Perhaps some people used oaths as an expedient way to gain credibility. Therefore, the point of the command is to speak the truth to one another without invoking the name of God or relying on other forms of oath.

Lesson 9

Observation

Outline

- Prayer in Suffering and Psalms in Cheerfulness (5:13)
- Prayer for the Sick (5:14-15)
- Confession of Sins and Prayer of the Righteous (5:16-18)
- Turning Back A Sinner from Error (5:19-20)

Key Words/Phrases

Suffering, pray, cheerful, sing psalms, sick, anointing, in the name of the Lord, sins, confess, effective, fervent, avails much, turn back, save a soul from death, cover over a multitude of sins.

Segment Analysis

1. Our hearts should always be on the Lord in both adversity and prosperity. We need to constantly be in communion with Him, whether it is in the form of prayer or singing psalms.
2. Through prayer, the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus (Php 4:6-7). Prayer in the Holy Spirit also gives us joy and the strength to face our sufferings (cf. Eph 3:13-16; Rom 14:17).
- 3a. Elders are appointed by the Holy Spirit to be overseers of the church (Acts 20:28). Since the ministers in the church are appointed by the Holy

Spirit to serve the congregation, we should come to them whenever we need prayers. As members of the body of Christ, we have the blessing to request the church to help us in our sickness. When the whole church prays with one heart, the effect of the prayer is great (cf. Mt 18:19-20).

- 3b. Notice that the word "pray" in verse 14 is the main verb while "anointing" is a participle that qualifies the main verb. In other words, the emphasis is on the prayer ministry, with anointing as part of this ministry. Oil was used as medicine during Biblical times (see Isa 1:6; Lk 10:34). Therefore, if we take "anointing with oil" literally, the verse teaches that the elders should pray for the sick while applying medicine on him. But if the anointing is figurative, then it is referring to God's healing power through prayer.
- 3c. This phrase reminds us that it is not the elders' prayer per se that gives healing, but the Lord Himself, for healing ultimately comes from the Lord.
4. An effective prayer is one that is offered in faith (15; Mt 17:20; 21:21,22; Lk 17:6). Without faith, it is impossible to please God, because faith is an acknowledgement of God and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him (Heb 11:6). Without faith, prayer will be only a mere outward formality. Faith is the essence of any prayer to God and anyone who wishes to receive anything from the Lord must have a genuine trust in God (Jas 1:5-8). That is why the Lord Jesus often attributed physical and spiritual healing to the faith of the person who came to him for help (Mt 8:5-13; 9:2-8, 18-22, 27-29; 15:21-28; Mk 5:34; 10:46-52; Lk 5:20; 7:9, 36-50; 8:42-48; 17:11-19; 18:35-43).
5. Sickness may sometimes be the consequence of sin (1Cor 11:30; Rev 2:22), although it is not always the case (Jn 9:1-3). Physical healing can also be a demonstration of God's forgiveness of sin (Mt 9:2-8). Therefore, James mentions spiritual and physical healing in the same breath. Prayer offered in faith will save the sick, and, more importantly, bring about the forgiveness of sins.
- 7a. Verse 16 reads, "Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much" The purpose of confessing our trespasses to one another is so that we may pray for one another. When we have sinned against God, the prayers of the righteous on our behalf will result in God's forgiveness and spiritual healing. Of course, confessing our sins to one another also gives us the opportunity to forgive our trespasses against one another.
- 7b. We do not necessarily need to announce our sins to the whole congregation. Since the purpose of such confession is so that those who

are righteous may pray for us, we may seek those in the Lord who are prayerful and upright and request for their prayers.

- 8a. Mutual intercession and sharing one another's burdens help unite members of Christ's body (1Cor 12:21-26; Gal 6:2). Through loving prayers, the wounded will be healed and the weak strengthened.
9. 1. We need to pray for one another, asking the Lord to forgive our sins.
2. When our sins are forgiven and we become righteous, our prayer is powerful and effective.
10. James uses Elijah to illustrate the power of fervent prayers. The miracle of drought and rain did not come from Elijah's superhuman power but from the effect of prayer. If the prayer of Elijah, whose nature is like ours, can have such great power, our earnest prayers can be just as effective.
- 11a. According to verse 20, the one who wanders from the truth is a brother who has sinned. The word "wander" seems to suggest a gradual process. When a person wanders from the truth, his attitude and lifestyle gradually stray from the way of God. Slowly, God's place in his heart diminishes and his heart may be hardened. Often, the person who slides into such sinful and ungodly lifestyle is unaware of his error. That is why it becomes necessary for his brethren to turn him back.
- 11b. Verses 15 and 16 teach us that prayer has the effect of healing, both physical and spiritual. Therefore, an important means of restoring a brother is to pray earnestly for him, asking the Lord to forgive him and to move him to repentance. In addition, we should also point out his mistake and guide him to the truth (Mt 18:15). But all these should be done in gentleness and humility (2Tim 2:25,26; Gal 6:1).
- 11c. 1. Saving of their souls from death. 2. Covering a multitude of sins.
12. Through our earnest intercession for the brother who has sinned, God will no longer remember the sins committed against Him, even if these sins are numerous. The "covering" of sins may also relate to the attitude of the intercessors. Just as Shem and Japheth covered their father's nakedness and did not broadcast his shame, we should not publicly expose the sins of our brothers or humiliate them with harsh rebukes. Such "covering" requires compassion and sensitivity. Therefore, when we turn back a brother who has sinned, we must be sure that we are motivated by genuine love for this brother.
13. This paragraph continues the theme of healing through intercession. When a member of Christ's body is in suffering or has wandered from the truth, the other members ought to pray earnestly for him and turn him back from his error. When members of this spiritual community care for one another, the healing effect is great. Not only will the sick be

healed and sins forgiven, souls are spared from death and multitudes of sins are covered.

Lesson 10

Survey

2. See 2:5, 9, 10, 11; 4:16, 18; 5:2.

Lesson 11

Observation

Outline

- Salutation (1:1-2)
- Praise to God for Salvation (1:3-5)
- Joy and Hope in Trials (1:6-9)
- Prophecy of Salvation (1:10-12)

Key Words/Phrases

Pilgrims, elect, living hope, inheritance, reserved in heaven for you, kept by the power of God through faith for salvation, rejoice, trials, genuineness of your faith, precious, revelation of Jesus Christ, glory, prophets/prophesied, gospel.

Segment Analysis

1. See verse 2.
- 2a. We are chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father. By His sovereign will God has chosen us and prepared for our salvation even before the foundation of the world (1:20; Rom 8:29; 2Thess 2:13).
- 2b. We are chosen in sanctification of the Spirit. The word "sanctify" means "separate and dedicate to God" or "purify". The Holy Spirit sets us apart by testifying that we are children of God (Rom 8:15-16; Gal 4:6), sealing us for the heavenly inheritance (Eph 1:13-14; 2Cor 1:21-22; 5:1-5), making us the temple of God (1Cor 6:19; Eph 2:22), and dedicating us to God as an acceptable offering (Rom 15:16). He also works in our lives for our salvation, transforming us to conform to the will of God (1Cor 6:11; 2Thess 2:13; Eze 36:25-27; Rom 8:9-11).
- 2c. We are chosen for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. God has called us to obey the Lord Jesus Christ (Mt 28:18-20; cf. Rom

- 1:5; 2Cor 10:5; Heb 5:9). He has also given us His Son, Jesus Christ, to atone for our sins with His blood (Rom 3:25; Rom 5:9; Eph 1:7; Col 1:13-14; Heb 9:14; Rev 5:9).
- 3a. The new birth that God has given us is the spiritual rebirth through the water and the Spirit (Jn 3:5; Tit 3:5-7). We were once dead in our transgressions, but God made us alive through the forgiveness of our sins (Eph 1:7; 2:5). Having been saved by grace, we now possess the hope of eternal life (Tit 1:2; 3:7).
 - 3b. The new birth to a living hope is made possible through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead (3). The Lord Jesus declared that He had the power to lay down His life and the power to take it again (Jn 10:17-18). Indeed, after He was crucified and buried for our sins, He was raised to life on the third day. Because Christ has overcome sin and death through the resurrection, we who are in Christ can be justified and born again (Rom 4:25; Col 2:12). Through Christ's resurrection, we also have the hope of being raised from the dead (1Cor 15:20-22).
 - 4a. We hope for the heavenly inheritance reserved for us and the salvation that is to be revealed in the last time.
 - 4b. Peter wants to remind the believers of the hope they have in Christ. Faith is not affected by the present, but believes what is in the future (Rom 8:24). Despite their present sufferings, a glorious future is in store for them. Although they have not received the promise, God is reserving an inheritance for them and is keeping them by His power.
 - 4c. Glorification, resurrection, transformation, eternal life with God (Rom 8:18-25; Php 3:21-22; 1Thess 4:16-17; 1Jn 3:2; Rev 21:3-4).
 - 5a. Since we still live in this world, Satan constantly tries to harm our soul. But God's power is able to keep us from the hand of the evil one and from falling away (Jn 17:11-15; Rom 8:33-39; Jude 24).
 - 5b. We need to depend on God's shielding power through faith (1Pet 1:5). As long as we always seek spiritual growth in the Lord and look to Him for mercy, Satan will not be able to harm us (cf. Jude 20-21).
 6.
 1. Looking forward to the heavenly inheritance reminds us that, as pilgrims in this world, we should not focus our minds on the material pursuits of this temporary life.
 2. Looking forward to the heavenly inheritance enables us to rejoice in our sufferings.
 7. Trials allow us to assess our own faith in God at a deeper level and learn to depend on God. They also help our faith to develop perseverance so our reliance on the Lord may be steadfast. Furthermore, as we experience God's love and power in our trials, our faith is strengthened through a greater knowledge of God.
 - 8a. Faith in Jesus Christ and His salvation, believing Him whom we have not seen (3-6, 8-9).
 - 9a. Faith in Christ expresses itself in loving Christ (8). This love is manifest when we obey His commands (Jn 14:15).
 - 9b. The salvation of our souls (9).
 10. We have the gospel of salvation (12). Whereas the prophets of the past lived under the law and eagerly expected the coming of the Savior, we are now freely justified by God's grace through the sacrifice of Christ.
 11. The salvation we have received is so great, that all the prophets in the past inquired about and searched for it carefully. Even the angels desire to look into it. This salvation is the greatest news for the world, and we are truly blessed to have received such a wonderful grace of God.

Lesson 12

Observation

Outline

- Be Holy (1:13-16)
- Fear God (1:17-21)
- Love One Another (1:22-25)

Key Words/Phrases

Gird up the loins of your mind, sober, hope, revelation of Jesus Christ, obedient, holy, conduct, judges, fear, redeemed, precious blood of Christ, foreordained, manifest, for you, purified, truth, love, born again, incorruptible, word of God, abides forever.

General Analysis

- 2a. Verse 13 makes a reference to the revelation of Jesus Christ. Verse 17 mentions our present stay in this world and future judgment. Verse 23 to 25 contrast the temporal existence and the eternal word of God.
- 2b. The commands in this passage are for believers, who are sojourners in this world with a hope in the glorious future. A right perspective about the present and the future motivates us to godly living.

Segment Analysis

1. The reason is the preciousness of salvation, as stated in the previous passage (1-12).

- 2a. Just as a man gathered the folds of his long garment to facilitate movement and work, we should remove the hindrances in our spiritual progress (Heb 12:1). Instead of living in pleasure, vain pursuits, and anxieties (cf. Lk 21:34), we need to be watchful and diligently seek spiritual growth.
- 2b. Self-control (Rom 13:13-14; 1Thess 5:6; 1Pet 4:7; 5:8), prayerfulness (Mt 26:41; 1Pet 4:7), diligence in service and godly living (Lk 12:42; 2Tim 2:22; 2Pet 1:5-9).
- 2c. If we rest our hope fully on the grace of our Lord, we will give our undivided attention to live a life to please the Lord, knowing that we will receive the Lord's grace in its fullness when He comes. Our hope must be sure and unwavering. We cannot possibly live a holy life while indulging in our desires.
3. A holy living involves obeying God's word and conforming to God's likeness rather than to our lusts.
4. The purpose of God's calling is that we should live holy lives (2Tim 1:9; Eph 2:10). Thus, the way to respond to the calling is to turn from evil and follow God's will.
- 5a. Our time in this world is only a temporary stay. Therefore, we are but pilgrims passing through this life.
- 6a. God has redeemed us from the power of sin and death (Ps 49:15; 103:4; 130:8; Lk 1:68-75; Gal 3:13; Eph 1:7; Heb 2:14-15).
- 6b. The precious blood of Christ (19).
- 6c. Since we have been bought with such a great price, we do not belong to ourselves but to the Lord. So we must conduct ourselves to please our Master (1Cor 6:19-20; 2Cor 5:15).
7. It purifies our souls (22). It gives us rebirth (23). It lives and abides forever (23-25). It is preached to us by the gospel (25).
8. If we obey the truth, we will love one another (Jn 13:34; 15:12; 1Jn 3:23; 4:21).
9. We should love one another fervently with a pure heart (22). We need to serve one another eagerly and diligently. But such zeal must come from a pure motive (cf. Gal 4:17).
- 10a. The word of God teaches us to put our faith in Jesus Christ, through whom we can have a new life (Jn 5:24; Rom 10:17). The word of God also refers to Christ Himself, who is the living word become flesh (Jn 1:1,14; 14:6; Rom 10:6-9). Through faith in Christ, we can be born again.
- 10b. If we believe that God's word abides forever and that the desires or this world will come to an end, we will always give God's word first place in

our lives and forsake anything that is contrary to God's word. A life that conforms to God's word is the life that has meaning and eternal value.

Lesson 13

Observation

Outline

- Newborn Babes (2:1-3)
- Living Stones (2:4-8)
- Chosen People (2:9-10)

Key Words/Phrases

Desire, pure milk of the word, gracious, living stone, chosen, precious, spiritual house, holy priesthood, spiritual sacrifices, chief cornerstone, believe, chosen generation, royal priesthood, holy nation, special people, proclaim, darkness/light.

Segment Analysis

1. The previous passage calls us to a life of holiness, reverent fear, and love. Therefore, as this passage teaches us, we need to first lay aside all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, knowing that these are contrary to a Christian lifestyle. The previous passage ends with the discussion on the enduring word of God. This passage contains the imperative to desire the word of God.
- 2a. God's word lets us know God more and more so we can become spiritually mature, discerning what is best, rejecting all evil, and living to please God (2Tim 3:16-17; Ps 119:104).
- 3a. Tasting that the Lord is gracious means experiencing the goodness of the Lord through trusting in Him (Ps 34:8).
- 3b. Our experience of the Lord's goodness will spur us to know the Lord more by learning His word.
4. The stone that is used as an image of Christ is a foundation stone (6; cf. Isa 28:16)
- 5a. Christ is the foundation of our faith and the One whom we can trust. Believers are built on Christ in the same way a house is built on its foundation (1Cor 3:11; Eph 2:20).
- 5b. Through the continuing work of God in our lives and the nurturing of God's workers, we become spiritually mature and fit for service (1Cor 3:9; Eph 4:12-13). Not only does each believer become strong and fit for

service, all believers are joined together in unity to form God's temple, the place of God's dwelling (Eph 2:22; 4:16).

- 6a. The function of the community of believers is to let God dwell among them and to dedicate itself to God as a fragrant offering (cf. Eph 2:22; 5:25-27).
- 6b. God should be the center of our lives and we must offer our bodies to conform to God's will, thereby becoming a pleasing sacrifice to the Lord (Rom 12:1-2; 1Cor 6:18-20).
- 7a. The disobedient reject it but the believers accept it as precious.
- 7b. Those who reject the chief cornerstone stumble over it and will be destroyed (1Pet 2:8; Mt 21:42-44). Those who believe in Christ "will by no means be put to shame" (1Pet 2:6), for "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved" (Joel 2:32; Rom 10:13).
8. As God's elect, we are noble in God's eyes and dear to His heart.
9. Being royal priests, it is our responsibility to
 1. offer spiritual sacrifices continually, such as sacrifices of praise, thanksgiving, contrition, leading others to Christ, and a life pleasing to the Lord (Ps 27:6; 50:14, 23; 51:17; Rom 12:1; 15:16; Php 2:17; 2Tim 4:6; Heb 13:15)
 2. intercede for all people (1Tim 2:1).
 3. proclaim the praises of God and His salvation (1Pet 2:9; Rom 10:15).
 4. teach others the commands of Christ (Mt 28:20).
10. We need to separate ourselves from the sinful and godless patterns of this world. Our conduct must reflect the nature of God (2Cor 6:14-18; Eph 4:21-24; 2Pet 1:4)
- 11a. cf. Deut 32:9-10; Jer 31:3; Jn 15:13-16; Rom 8:28-39; Eph 1:3-14.
12. God has chosen us so we may "proclaim the praises of Him who called [us] out of darkness into His marvelous light" (9). As God's elect, our goal in life is to make God's salvation grace known to the world and to glorify Him with our lives.
13. This verse, which recalls Hosea 1:6-9 and 2:23, reminds us of the "before and after" of our calling. Although we are undeserving of God's mercy, He has chosen us and given us the special privilege to be His children. This is the central message of Peter's teachings in this passage: God is gracious to us and we are special to Him. Now that we have become the people of God, we must forsake our former life of sin and unbelief. Now that we have received mercy, let us walk in the light, offering ourselves as a pleasing sacrifice to God.

Lesson 14

Observation

Outline

- Conduct as Sojourners and Pilgrims (2:11-12)
- Conduct of Citizens (2:13-17)
- Conduct of Servants (2:18-25)
- Conduct of Wives (3:1-6)
- Conduct of Husbands (3:7)
- Conduct towards One Another (3:8-12)

Key Words/Phrases

Sojourners and pilgrims, conduct, honorable, good works, glorify God, submit, for the Lord's sake, free, servants of God, honor, love, fear God, servants, conscience toward God, endures grief, suffering wrongfully, commendable before God, Christ, example, wives, adornment, beauty, husbands, understanding, be of one mind, compassion, love, tenderhearted, courteous, blessing, righteous.

General Analysis

1. 2:12: "...that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation."
2:15: "For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men."
2:21: "For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps."
3:1: "...that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives."
3:7: "...that your prayers may not be hindered."
3:10, 12: "...He who would love life And see good days...For the eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, And His ears are open to their prayers."

Segment Analysis

- 1a. Fleshly lusts lead to sin, which results in the death of the soul (Rom 8:13; Jas 1:14-15).
- 1b. As sojourners and pilgrims, we are not here to stay forever. Our flesh will soon fail, but our soul will live on. Therefore, we should care for our souls and abstain from fleshly lusts.

2. Slander (12).
- 3a. The Gentiles.
- 3b. The two common explanations for “the day of visitation” are the return of Christ and the day when unbelievers are converted. The second explanation is more likely for two reasons. First, the word “visit” is used in Lk 1:68 to refer to God’s redemption of His people. Second, it is the good works of the believers in the present rather than the judgment of Christ when He returns that moves these Gentiles to glorify God.
4. If we submit to governing authorities, others will see our good deeds and give glory to God.
- 5a. God’s will is that by doing good we may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.
- 5b. The slanders of unbelievers against the faith (cf. 12).
6. Through the atoning death of Christ we have been set free from sin and have become the slave of righteousness and of God (Rom 6:11-23). God has redeemed us, and we rightfully belong to Him. But being a slave of God does not suggest bondage, but an obligation to live holy lives that result in eternal life. While unbelievers mistakenly think that obedience to God is lack of freedom, being a bondservant of God is actually true freedom because we are no longer bound by sin.
- 7a. Suffering for doing good is commendable before God.
- 7b. In our suffering, we must have a clear conscience toward God (19). In other words, we need to be sure that our suffering should not be the result of doing evil.
8. We have been called to imitate Christ.
- 9a. The example of Christ is His suffering for righteousness’ sake. Just as Christ did not retaliate or threaten His enemies, but committed Himself to the righteous Judge, we should also endure suffering patiently while waiting for God’s just judgment and not take vengeance into our own hands.
- 9b. He bore our sins and healed our stripes that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness (24). By His death, Christ has delivered us from sin and enabled us to live righteous lives. Thus, through the power of Christ, we should endure suffering for righteousness’ sake.
10. Like a shepherd, the Lord nourishes us, heals our wounds, brings us back to the path of righteousness, and laid down His own life to save us from death (Ps 23; Isa 40:11; Ezek 34:11-16; Jn 10:10-11). He is the Guardian of our souls, keeping us from the harm of the evil one (1Pet 1:5).
11. They can win over their husbands who do not obey the word, not with eloquent preaching, but with their chaste conduct (1-2).
- 12a. True beauty is found in the inner person, with an incorruptible gentleness and quiet spirit. In other words, the beauty of a woman resides in her submission, which is not a helpless subjection to force but a voluntary choice to yield to her husband’s leadership.
- 12b. Gentleness and quiet spirit give beauty to a woman because these traits are the very qualities that God intended for women, whom He created to be helpers for men (Gen 2:18-24). If a woman respects her God-given role, acknowledges her husband as the head of the house, and loves him with tenderness and respect, she will bring warmth, harmony, and joy to the family. Unlike physical beauty that fades, this “incorruptible beauty” (4) remains permanently attractive.
13. While verse 2 speaks of the fear of God, verse 6 is a reference to the fear of men. A woman should fear God by exhibiting chaste conduct without fearing that her submission to her husband would encourage him to treat her harshly.
14. The word “understanding” may mean “knowledge” or “consideration” The husband ought to be considerate of the needs of his wife and know how to love her as Christ loves the church.
15. He must give honor to his wife (7). Since she is the weaker vessel, he should all the more respect and esteem her, knowing that they are one body (cf. 1Cor 12:21-26). Not only so, the wife is a joint heir with her husband of the grace of life. She is also a member of Christ’s body whom Christ has bought with His blood; she too is the temple of the Holy Spirit; and she is also a child of the King who will inherit God’s Kingdom together with her husband. Thus, the husband must honor his wife because she is also precious in the eyes of God.
16. Let Christian love govern how we deal with one another, bearing in mind that the Lord loves those who obey Him.
- 17a. The word “finally” indicates that this paragraph is a conclusion to the preceding paragraphs. “All of you” suggests that while the exhortations thus far were for specific groups of believers, what follows applies to all believers. The principle of unity, compassion, love, tenderness, and courtesy underlies any harmonious relationship. Non-retaliation and patience enable us to submit even when we are suffering unjustly.
- 17b. The righteous, who practice love and submission, are pleasing to God (12). Aiming to please God, therefore, motivates us to obey His will.

Lesson 15

Observation

Outline

- Suffering for Doing Good (3:13-17)
- Christ's Suffering (3:18-22)
- Living for God's Will (4:1-6)
- Watchfulness, Love, and Service (4:7-11)

Key Words/Phrases

Good, suffer, sanctify the Lord God, conscience, the will of God, being put to death in the flesh, made alive by the Spirit, Christ, saves, the end of all things is at hand, serious, watchful in your prayers, love, minister, glory.

Segment Analysis

- 1a. The fear of punishment for wrongdoing (13). The fear of suffering for righteousness' sake (14).
- 1b. If we do what is good, we do not need to fear punishment. But even if we are persecuted for doing good, we have a clear conscience towards God and know that He will judge everyone justly. If we commit ourselves to God, we will not be afraid of the persecution of men (cf. 2:23).
2. To sanctify the Lord God in our hearts means acknowledging and honoring Christ as Lord in our hearts. Even though unbelievers may refuse to listen to our witnessing or persecute us, we should not become discouraged and lose the hope within us. Instead, we need to always hold fast to our faith in the Lord in our hearts.
- 3a. "We must always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks us a reason for the hope that is in us, with meekness and fear" (15).
- 3b. 1. We must always be ready to give a defense when others question our beliefs. This requires thorough knowledge and conviction of our own beliefs. 2. When we defend the faith, we should do so with meekness and fear. Rather than disputing with unbelievers about our differences in view, we should present our beliefs with gentleness and reverence so that God's name can be glorified through our behavior.
4. Through His suffering in the flesh, Christ accomplished the work of salvation. Although He was put to death in the flesh, He was made alive by the Spirit and received power and authority. In the same way, it is good for us to suffer for righteousness' sake, for through our suffering God's will is accomplished. We will also be "made alive by the Spirit" to live a life that pleases God (cf 4:1-2).
5. If we understand the spirits to be unbelievers who were alive when they heard the preaching, then "the spirits in prison" would refer to unbelievers who were in spiritual bondage. If the spirits were those who had already died when Christ "preached" to them, then the preaching of Christ may be interpreted as Christ's proclamation of condemnation on the unbelievers.
6. Through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, baptism allows us to have a clear conscience towards God (21). Baptism in Jesus' name washes away our sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16). God, who raised Jesus from the dead for our justification, also raises us up to life through baptism (Col 2:12; Rom 6:4; Tit 3:5).
7. "He who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin." (1). The lusts of the flesh can cripple us and make us unable to submit to God's will (Rom 8:7). But suffering trains us to depend on the Spirit to put to death the deeds of the body. Consequently, we will no longer be controlled by sinful desires but have the strength to carry out God's will.
- 8a. When unbelievers see that we do not indulge in fleshly desires with them, they will think it strange and slander or ridicule us (4).
- 8b. We know that we all have to give an account to God at the judgment (5). Regardless of how others may insult us, whether God is pleased with us is ultimately what matters.
9. For the salvation of the soul from divine judgment, the gospel was preached to those believers who are now dead. These believers were condemned to physical death by the world but are alive to God spiritually.
10. The word "but" tells us that even though we may suffer for our faith in the present (the theme of the previous paragraph), the end of all things is at hand and the just Judge will soon come with punishment and reward.
- 11a. We must be serious and watchful in our prayers. This means that we must be spiritually alert and not be deceived by the pleasures and anxieties of life (Lk 21:34-36; Rom 13:11-14; 1Thess 5:4-8). With our mind focused on God, we need to devote ourselves to constant prayer, repenting of our sins and seeking spiritual growth so we may be ready to meet the Lord.
- 11b. Love will cover a multitude of sins. This does not mean that love condones or conceals sins, but that love enables Christians to forgive one another and bear with one another. Such attitude, which removes grumblings and arguments, is most important in light of the coming judgment (cf. Jas 5:9).

11c. The evidence of loving our brethren deeply is to show hospitality to one another (9). It is easy to love our brethren when we share common interests or opinions. The test occurs when there are misunderstandings and grievances. Yet love, covering a multitude of sins, should unite brethren together in this situation. If both parties remember the love of Christ, who laid down His life for us and loved us to the end (Jn 13:1), we will embrace our brethren with the same love.

Further evidence of deep love for one another is in serving one another (10). Christ “did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many” (Mk 10:45). He devoted His life to meeting the needs of others and bringing the lost back to God. If we love our brethren, we will likewise dedicate our lives to serving them.

13b. The goal of our ministry is that “in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ” (11).

13c. Be guided by the Spirit of God to speak the words of God (Jn 16:13). We must minister for the Lord in the power of the Holy Spirit (Lk 4:14), which is what Jesus did during His ministry.

Do not make ourselves stand out in reputation, but imitate Christ’s example of humility (Phil 2:7).

Remind ourselves that God has supplied us with a measure of faith, and as a result should not think ourselves too highly than we ought to think (Rom 12:3).

Be determined to obey the will of the Father (Phil 2:8).

Lesson 16

Observation

Outline

Joy in Suffering (4:12-19)

Service of Elders (5:1-4)

Submission and Humility (5:5-7)

Sobriety and Endurance (5:8-11)

Final Greetings (5:12-14)

Key Words/Phrases

Trial, rejoice, partake, glory, revealed, Christ/Christian, judgment, righteous/ungodly, will of God, faithful Creator, elders, shepherd, flock, serving, Chief Shepherd, younger people, submit, humble/humility, “He cares

for you,” sober, vigilant, resist, steadfast in the faith, grace, perfect, establish, strengthen, settle.

Segment Analysis

1. If we think that Christians do not have to suffer, we will be caught by surprise when fiery trials come upon us. The Bible clearly teaches that Christians will go through trials and must be ready for them at all times (Mt 16:24-25; Acts 14:22; 1Thess 3:3; 1Pet 5:9)
- 2a. The Scripture considers suffering for the name of Christ a participation in Christ’s sufferings (cf. Rom 8:17; 2Cor 1:5-7; Phil 3:10). The Lord Himself suffered for righteousness’ sake when He was in the world, and His name continues to be hated by the world. Thus, when the world persecutes or insults us because we are Christians, it is in fact persecuting and insulting Christ, and we are partakers of His suffering (Jn 15:18; Acts 9:1-4).
- 2b. If we remember that we are partakers of Christ’s sufferings, we will consider suffering for His name an honor and a privilege (cf. Acts 5:41).
3. We are blessed because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon us. We may suffer in the flesh, but we have God’s glory in the spirit.
- 4a. The judgment that begins at the house of God refers to the sufferings that believers undergo. Unlike the judgment that will come to sinners and brings condemnation, God’s judgment on His house comes in the form of fatherly discipline, which results in righteousness and peace (Heb 12:4-11).
- 4b. Peter wants the believers to realize the terrible judgment that will come to those who persecute them now. Believers in suffering may question why they have to suffer while the ungodly live in prosperity. But they should know that their temporary sufferings, which is God’s judgment on His house, set them apart from the world and will spare them from the condemnation in the future. With this in mind, believers should persevere and commit themselves to God (cf. 19).
- 5a. The term “faithful Creator” reminds us of two things about God. First, He is our Creator, and thus He cares about us. Second, He is a faithful God. In our sufferings, it is a great assurance to remember that God cares about us and that He will faithfully carry us through and give us His glory.
- 5b. To commit our souls to God means continuing in good deeds (19). In other words, we should wait patiently for God’s vindication rather than repay evil with evil (cf. 2:23).
6. Verse 1 speaks of the sufferings of Christ. As a witness of the sufferings of Christ, who laid down His life for His sheep, Peter encourages elders to likewise serve God’s flock with a willing and sacrificial spirit. In verse

4, Peter calls Christ the Chief Shepherd. Being shepherds of God's flock, elders are accountable to the Chief Shepherd, for the believers have been "entrusted" to them (3). Not only so, they are serving the Chief Shepherd, who will reward them with the crown of glory when He appears (4).

- 7a. Shepherds of the flock must be willing to serve, with no intention of dishonest gain. Instead of exalting themselves or ruling over others, they must lead the flock by their good examples.
- 8a. If a person thinks too highly of himself and considers himself better than others, he would not be able to submit to others.
- 8b. Submission to one another is in essence submission to God because it is God who has placed us in His flock and commanded us to submit to one another in humility. This is why Peter follows up the command to submit to one another with the exhortation to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God (6).
- 8c. The assurance is in knowing that He will exalt us in due time (6). Furthermore, the assurance is in knowing that while we endure sufferings now, we can cast our care upon God because He cares for us (7).

When we endeavor to obey God's will, we often have to suffer. But we should remind ourselves that submission to God's will is an expression of trust in God, who cares deeply about us. Even though submission may involve suffering, we can rest assured and be patient, knowing that if we surrender ourselves to His sovereign will, He will take up our cares and troubles, and will lift us up in due time. With this in mind, our Christian life and humble service will be a joy rather than a burden.

- 9a. He is our adversary. Like a roaring lion, he walks about to seek whom he may devour.
The devil is our spiritual enemy who takes every opportunity to make us his prey. He does so through temptations, persecutions, or false teachings.
- 9b. We need to be sober and vigilant (8), and we should resist him with steadfast faith (9). Rather than setting our minds on pleasure and secular commitments, we must put on the whole armor of God by equipping ourselves daily with spiritual qualities and discipline (Eph 6:10-18). When we face temptations, we must not succumb to our environment but fight our evil desires by depending on the Lord's power.
- 10a. He is the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus. God, who has given us all good things, has predestined us for glory in Christ. If God loves us so much to even give us His own Son and

has called us to His glory, He will surely keep us during our painful trials (cf. Rom 8:28-39).

- 10b. He will perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle us (10). After our temporary trials, God Himself will make us spiritually complete, not lacking anything (cf. Jas 1:4), and He will also enable us to stand firm in our faith.

Lesson 18

Observation

Outline

Blessing of Knowing God (1:1-4)

Diligence in the Knowledge of Christ (1:5-11)

Careful Reminder (1:12-15)

Truthful Testimony (1:16-21)

Key Words/Phrases

Precious faith, knowledge, divine power, life and goodness, exceedingly great and precious promises, partakers of the divine nature, diligence, abound, abundantly, remind, eyewitnesses, prophetic word, light, prophecy.

Segment Analysis

- The righteousness of God refers to the divine nature of justice and mercy, which He demonstrated by imparting righteousness to (justifying) believers (Rom 3:21-22). Therefore, it is by the righteousness of God and Jesus Christ, not our goodness, that we have obtained our precious faith.
- God's grace and peace, and all things that pertain to life and godliness, come to us through the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ (2-3). Through the gospel of Jesus Christ, we come to know God and receive His gift of eternal life.
- God has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness (3). This means that the purpose of salvation is to give us a new life that reflects God's likeness. Verse 4 further elaborates that the effect of salvation is deliverance from the corruption of sinful desires, and the goal of salvation is that we may conform to God's nature.
- The first type of believer diligently seeks spiritual growth, leads an active godly life, and will enter God's kingdom with abundance. The second type of believer is barren, unfruitful, shortsighted, has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins, and even stumbles.

5. To be fruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, we must be active in our spiritual life. Verses 5 to 7 exhort us to be diligent in adding one spiritual quality after another. On the other hand, according to verse 9, those who are lacking in these qualities have forgotten that they ought to lead godly lives. Verse 10 once again urges us to be diligent in doing what is commanded earlier in 5-7. Thus, the way to build up our knowledge of the Lord is by practicing His word diligently and constantly aiming for a life of holiness. It is in doing that we appreciate and understand God's divine nature as found in Jesus Christ.
- 7a. If we diligently seek spiritual growth by abounding in spiritual qualities, we will never stumble. A Christian stumbles when he slumbers and gives the enemy a foothold. When we do not equip ourselves with the full armor of God and strengthen our relationship with the Lord, we are naturally vulnerable. Therefore, the best defense against the temptations of the evil one is to be active in doing God's word.
- 7b. This verse does not suggest that we can secure God's call and election with good deeds, for God's call and election do not depend on our efforts. Rather, it teaches us that our spiritual growth is an evidence of God's calling, and our diligence in good works will be a testimony that God's saving grace has indeed taken its effect in our lives (cf. Eph 2:10).
8. He will shortly put off his tent. By this he refers to his departure from this world (cf. 2Cor 5:1-2).
- 9a. He will continue to remind the believers what they already know.
- 9b. The purpose of the reminder is to "stir up" the believers (13). Without constant reminders, it is easy to forget the necessity of spiritual growth, fall into slumber, and even stumble in the faith. Furthermore, the reminder is all the more necessary in light of the threat of false teachings that threatens to undermine the believers' faith in the Lord.
- 10a. The power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (16), i.e. the Lord's return.
- 10b. Testimony by eyewitnesses of the Lord's majesty (16-18) and the prophecy of Scripture (19-21).
- 11a. The Transfiguration (cf. Mt 17:1-8; Mk 9:2-8; Lk 9:28-36).
- 11b. On the mountain where Jesus transfigured, He displayed His glory and majesty, and God spoke about Him in a voice from heaven. The disciples witnessed the glorified Son of Man, who will come again to the world in like manner. Thus, Peter confirms the truthfulness of the Lord's glorious coming with His personal testimony.
- 12a. God's prophetic word gives us hope in despair and shows us the path of righteousness. It will guide us until the return of our Lord Jesus Christ

(the dawn and the rising of the morning star refer to Christ's coming; cf. Rom 13:11-12; Rev 22:16).

- 12b. Prophecy does not come by the will of man but by the movement of the Holy Spirit (20-21). The prophetic word is the very word of God, spoken through the prophets of God. Because prophecies are inspired by God, who is truthful and knows all things, we can safely trust their guidance.
- 12c. We must heed them (19). This means paying close attention to them and obeying them carefully.

Lesson 19

Observation

Outline

- Rise of False Prophets and Teachers (2:1-3)
- Law of Recompense (2:4-10a)
 - Punishment of rebellious angels (4)
 - Destruction of Noah's generation (5)
 - Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (6-8)
 - Delivering the godly and reserving punishment for the unjust (9-10a)
- Wickedness of the False Teachers (2:10b-16)
- Empty Promises and Apostasy of the False Teachers (2:17-22)

Key Words/Phrases

False prophets, false teachers, secretly, destructive heresies, destruction, covetousness, delivered, judgment, lust, speak evil, wages of unrighteousness, carouse, enticing, overcome, bondage.

Segment Analysis

1. They are among God's people (1).
- 2a. They preach destructive heresies using deceptive words, and they go as far as to deny the Lord Jesus (1, 3).
- 2b. False teachers can mislead believers and ruin their faith in the Lord, bringing them to destruction (1; cf Mt 23:15). Consequently, when others see the corrupt ways of these false teachers and believers who have been misled, they will blaspheme the way of truth (2Pet 2:2; cf. Rom 1:23-24).
- 2c. The false teachers "secretly bring in destructive heresies," and they use deceptive words. They pretend to be preachers of the truth, but they

- subtly convey misleading messages (cf. 2Cor 11:12-15). Believers who are not careful will easily fall into their trap.
- 2d. In the first chapter, Peter has already prepared his readers for the threat of heresies. He urged us to be diligent in equipping ourselves with spiritual qualities so that we will not stumble (1:5-8,10). Only when we become mature in our spiritual growth can we guard against the deception of false teachings (Eph 4:13-14). Furthermore, we must devote ourselves to watchful prayers (1Pet 4:7; 5:8) and ask the Lord to give us wisdom and discernment.
 3. They are driven by covetousness and aims to exploit the believers (3).
 4. Just as God delivered the righteous but brought judgment upon the wicked in history, He is now also reserving the false teachers and their followers under punishment for the day of judgment.
 5. They sin (4). They behave with filthy conduct and lawless deeds (7-8). They walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise authority (10).
 - 6a. Because the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptation, we should not give up in our struggle against sin or become envious of evildoers. Instead, we ought to rely on the Lord with a steadfast faith and resist sin while trusting that the Lord will deliver us from evil.
 7. They are presumptuous and self-willed. They are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries (10). They speak evil of things they do not understand (12). They carouse in the daytime in their own deceptions while they feast with the believers (13; “feast” refers to the love feast among believers; cf. Jude 12). While they join the fellowship of believers, they have eyes that are full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin, enticing unstable souls (14). They practice covetousness (14). They follow the way of Balaam, who loved the wages of unrighteousness (15).
 8. The reference to angels shows how presumptuous these false teachers are. If even angels, who are not greater in power and might, do not bring a reviling accusation against the “dignitaries” (probably referring to the servants of God, cf 2Cor 3:5-11, or certain celestial beings), how arrogant are these men who speak evil of those in authority!
 9. Their wickedness make them blemishes in the holy fellowship of believers (1Cor 5:6-8). Such people will not be able to stand in the assembly of the righteous (Ps 1:5).
 10. Based on verse 18, we understand that the analogy of the wells without water and cloud carried by tempest illustrate the futility of the false teachers, who can only make empty claims.
 - 11a. The liberty that they promote is the liberty to sin against God’s law.

- 11b. Those who think that they are free from God’s law are in fact the slaves of sin (19; Jn 8:34).
12. Apostasy means becoming entangled and overcome by the pollutions of the world after having escaped them (20). It means turning from the holy commandment delivered to us (21). It would have been better for such to not have known the Lord in the first place because their judgment will be more serious than that for unbelievers (20-21).
13. **Teachings and conduct of false teachers**
Deny the Lord, covetous, deceptive, indulge in fleshly desires, presumptuous, slanderous, full of adulterous intent, make empty promises, turn from the holy commandments.
Teachings and conduct of teachers of righteousness
Acknowledge and honor the Lord, not greedy for unjust gain, truthful, self-controlled, humble, gentle in speech, pure, preach faithfully from God’s word and acting accordingly.

Lesson 20

Observation

Outline

- Certainty of the Lord’s Coming (3:1-10)
 - Stirring up the pure mind by way of reminder (1-2)
 - Rise of scoffers (3-4)
 - Preservation of creation by God’s word (5-7)
 - The Lord’s patience and coming (8-10)
- Living in Expectation of the Lord’s Coming (3:11-18a)
 - Looking forward to the Lord’s Coming (3:12-13)
 - Exhortations to be diligent (14-18a)
- Benediction (3:18b)

Key Words/Phrases

Reminder, words spoken by the holy prophets, commandment of the apostles, scoffers, promise of His coming, willfully forget, word of God, reserved for fire, longsuffering towards us, the day of the Lord, holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening, new heavens and a new earth, righteousness, grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Segment Analysis

- 1a. He wants us to be mindful of the words of the holy prophets and of the apostles of the Lord (2). Of these, what we need to know first of all is the coming of scoffers in the last days (3).
- 1b. We should always remind ourselves to live a life as a sojourner with a clear conscience in the presence of God throughout our lives (cf. Acts 23:1). To do so, we must keep every word of God and examine our lives with the words of God. That is why Peter encourages us to be mindful of the words and of the apostles. If God's word is always in our hearts, we will be sanctified in the process (Jn 17:6,17; Deut 8:3). Practicing God's word actively also keeps our hearts and ways pure before the Lord (2Tim 2:22; Ps 119:9).
- 2a. They will question the validity of the promise concerning the Lord's coming (4).
- 2b. They walk according to their own lusts (4).
- 2c. Because of their sinful living, they surely resent the thought of the Lord's coming. Thinking that the promise of the Lord's coming has failed, they arrogantly challenge the Lord's words and hope to win others to their way of living.
- 2d. The scoffers think that since all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation, the Lord's coming and the destruction of the world is impossible. They make the false assumption that things will always remain the same as they have been until now.
- 3a. These scoffers willfully forget that God once destroyed the world with flood. They do not naturally forget but *willfully forget*. In other words, their problem is not ignorance but a deliberate refusal to accept the fact that the Lord will surely come again.
- 3b. As believers, we know that the Lord is coming. But sometimes, our shortcomings and weaknesses make us reluctant to look forward to His return. Consequently, we may deliberately put the matter off our mind without making changes to our lives.
- 4a. Just as God kept the water from the earth by His word until the day of the flood, He now sustains the heavens and the earth by His word until the day of judgment. Just because all things have continued since creation does not mean that God's word has failed. In fact, it confirms the power of God's word. Scoffers should not mock the word of the Creator, knowing that the present existence hangs on the very word of God.
- 5a. He wants us not to forget that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day (8).
- 5b. Verse 8 addresses the apparent delay of the Lord's return. God's view of time is different from ours. While from man's perspective, the Lord's coming seems long in coming, from God's eternal perspective, it is not long at all.
6. Since the Lord is longsuffering towards us to allow us the chance to repent and be saved (9,15), we should change our ways now and return to God before the door of grace is shut. Unfortunately, some people take the Lord's longsuffering as an opportunity to continue in sin or a sign that God will not bring judgment upon sinners.
- The Lord's longsuffering and His will for us to repent also reminds us of our urgent duty to preach the gospel so that others may also repent and turn to God.
7. If the Lord seems to have been delayed in His coming, it is only because He wants all people to come to repentance. But we should know that the Lord will not delay in fulfilling His promise but will bring it to pass in such a way that many will be caught totally unprepared.
8. See verses 10-12.
- 9b. We need to conduct ourselves in holiness and godliness (11) while looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God (12).
10. The expression "look for" is also translated as "looking forward to." In other words, we should long for the Lord's return. To "hasten" the coming of the day of God means to wait eagerly for the Lord's coming through more diligent preparation, preaching, and prayer (cf. Lk 18:7-8).
11. The new heavens and new earth is the dwelling place of righteousness (13).
12. To be found by Him in peace means to have confidence at the coming of the Lord (1Jn 2:28; 4:17). We can have this confidence if we are "without spot and blameless." Thus, Peter is encouraging us to live a life free from sin so that we may always maintain a clear conscience before the Lord.
13. The reference to Paul's epistles, which Peter considered to be part of the Scripture (16), reinforces the repeated emphasis on paying careful attention to the words of the prophets and of the apostles in the Scripture (cf. 1:19-21; 3:2). All the prophets and apostles, including both Peter and Paul, agree in their proclamation of the gospel and of the Lord's coming.
- 14a. He tells us to be careful of being led away with the error of the wicked and fall from our own steadfastness. In other words, we must guard ourselves against false teachings, which can bring destruction upon us.
- 14b. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ refers to His saving grace in our lives. Christ does not leave us alone after He cleanses our sins during baptism. He continues to work on us until we enter the heavenly kingdom (Eph 2:10; Php 2:12,13). We need to depend on His mercy and

forgiveness when we have done wrong. We need to be transformed by the renewing power of the Holy Spirit. By keeping ourselves in His love, we can grow and become mature (Jude 20).

To grow in the knowledge of our Lord means to know Him more and more. Not only should we become familiar with the Scriptures, we must learn to know the Lord more intimately. We need to know what pleases Him and what grieves Him. This knowledge comes from experience. It comes from the continual practicing of His words and the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit (Col 1:10; Eph 1:10-21).

In sum, we can grow spiritually only if we remain in Christ and center our lives on Christ. The Lord tells us, “Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me” (Jn 15:4). A spiritual life that grows is one that is always connected to the life of Christ.

- 14c. It is by the Lord’s grace through faith, not by our own efforts, that we can stand firm to the end. Whenever we turn our eyes away from the Lord, we make ourselves vulnerable to sin. Therefore, we have to walk closer with the Lord and aim to know Him more and more. A strong and growing relationship with the Lord is the best prevention against the forces of evil.

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