

# James - Chapter 1, Part 3

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] Good morning. Delighted to have you all here. Thank you for coming out on a cold snowy morning. We appreciate your presence a great deal. So thank you for joining with us. I noticed when some of you came in, some were wearing masks and some were not. And at the last elders meeting, we spent, I'm sure, two solid hours talking about masks, no masks, distancing, distancing, social distancing, all the rest of it. And I think we covered all the bases. We discussed this thing up and down, back and forward. And we came to the conclusion that we were, there's a new notice on the bulletin, not on the door, out front and out back as well, that we are, we are making masks optional. And we're still maintaining the social distancing and avoiding the handshakes and the hugs and all of that. But it's curious because ever since this pandemic thing has been going on, we've got people who don't come on Sunday because not everyone is wearing masks.

And we've got people that don't come on Sunday because people are wearing masks. And we got people that are somewhere in between or what. So I tried to apply the Romans 14 principle of doubtful things. Let everyone be fully persuaded in his own mind. And there are so many ups and downs, ins and outs, and different opinions from the experts regarding these masks and all the rest of it.

So all I can say is, let everyone be fully persuaded in his own mind. And we tell people, if you're not comfortable being here, don't come, stay home. And you can do so without guilt.

Because we're living in times that are really confusing and troubled. And I'm not about to try to impose some kind of legalistic demand on people that they do this or do that or do the other thing.

So anyhow, that's where we are with the mask situation. And we're still optional. He cannot issue any executive orders. Yeah, right. Yeah. And I got something I want to share with you. Roger gave me this this morning. And I think it's very fitting. Remember the guy? Remember the guy who wouldn't take the flagpole down on his Virginia property a while back? You might remember the news story several months ago about a crotchety old man in Virginia who defied his local homeowners association and refused to take down the flagpole on his property along with the large American flag he flew on it. Now we learn who that old man was.

[ 3 : 1 0 ] And he was. On June 15, 1919, Van T. Barfoot was born in Edinburgh, Texas. That probably didn't make news back then.

But 25 years later, on May 23, 1944, near Serrano, Italy, that same Van T. Barfoot, who had in 1940 enlisted in the U.S. Army, set out alone to flank a German machine gun.

Positions that were held from which gunfire was raining down on his fellow soldiers. His advance took him through a minefield. But having done so, he proceeded to single-handedly take out three enemy machine gun positions, returning with 17 prisoners of war. And if that weren't enough for a day's work, he later took on and destroyed three German tanks sent to retake the machine gun positions.

That probably didn't make much news either, given the scope of the war. But it did earn Van T. Barfoot, who retired as a colonel after also serving in Korea and Vietnam, and a well-deserved Congressional Medal of Honor.

What did make news was his neighborhood association's quibble with how the 90-year-old veteran chose to fly the American flag outside a flag on a house mounted bracket? But for decorum, items such as Barfoot's 21-foot flagpole were unsuitable. Now, you could put a flag, attach it to the house, and a flagpole, a little flag, but Barfoot wasn't satisfied with that. He had a 21-foot flagpole and flew old glory up it. And that was deemed by the association as unsuitable.

[ 5 : 19 ] Van Barfoot had been denied a permit for the poll, but erected it anyway, and was facing court action unless he agreed to take it down. Then, the whole story made national TV and the neighborhood association rethought its position.

And agreed to indulge this aging hero who dwelt among them. In the time I have left, he said to the Associated Press, I plan to continue to fly the American flag without interference.

He said to the American flag, he said to the American flag, and he said to the American flag, and if any of his neighbors had taken a notion to contest him further, they might have done well to read his Medal of Honor citation first. Seems it indicates Mr. Van Barfoot wasn't particularly good at backing down. But I'll tell you what, that's the kind of stuff that this country was made of.

And that's one of the reasons that we still have a country. And sometimes that appears to be in doubt. So, thank you again for being here, and a special thanks to Tad for being here.

We're anxious to hear what the Lord has got through you, so come right ahead brother. And we're in the book of James continuing. Thank you for being here, Tad. Good to be with you here this morning. You guys must be pretty hearty.

[ 6 : 57 ] I noticed that you got here, and you're all parked within the white lines. Yeah, good. The Lord's been teaching me some things. I have known for a long time that prayer is something that's important, but something of late that has helped me was something that maybe you saw on my Facebook page, I don't know.

But, or maybe you heard about it otherwise. The 12 Stone Church did 21 days of prayer. And I participated in that, and it was something very beneficial for me.

And stretching experience. I need some stretching experience as I'm shrinking. And I want to grow spiritually. And prayer is one of those things that we know is important, right?

The important thing is to step into it every day, throughout the day, and do it. And something else that they kind of concluded with, and I want to challenge you with, I've talked to you about before that the book of James talks about wisdom, and how we're to walk in wisdom, and the Proverbs have wisdom.

The last two months, in December and January, I read through the book of Proverbs. Continue in that. They gave us a challenge for the Psalm 150 challenge.

[ 8 : 26 ] 150 Psalms, 150 days. Take one Psalm a day. Read the Psalm. So I started yesterday, and I read, on the first, and I read Psalm 1.

Ask yourself the question, what does it say about God? What does it say to me, about me, about life? What should I then do?

And I believe, if you'll take 10 minutes, or a half an hour, or however long it takes you, to read through a Psalm a day, for the next 50 days, you're going to step into prayer, and you're going to step into meeting God, and it'll be a growing experience.

If you want to do that, let me know about it. I encourage, I am thankful for those of you who said, I read through the Proverbs of the day. That was good.

Another little challenge that will help us for the next 150 days. Whoo! Unless the Lord comes first. And then it'll be face to face. Won't that be grand?

[ 9 : 37 ] Amen. I maybe should also say, I've been trying to learn some other disciplines. When I got on the scale yesterday, doggone it, I was about three, four pounds heavier than what I was.

And I thought, how'd this happen? So yesterday I didn't eat as much, and I did as much exercise as I normally have done. Exercise?

Who likes to do that? Who wants to eat carrots and celery? Don't get on the scale! I'd rather eat cheesecake from Cheesecake Factory.

But we don't do that very often either. But I see some of you were indulging in some good donuts. Maybe I'll have whatever, and I'll have some later maybe. I appreciated Joe coming by on his bicycle twice, just to kind of check on me.

I enjoyed talking with Marv a couple times on the phone as well. And it's good to be together. Let's pray. Father, oh, you're so good.

[ 10 : 46 ] You are holy. And you've given to us your holy word, and we thank you for it. Illuminate our minds as we open up our Bibles.

May we open up our lives. And it's probably not so much important how much we get through the Bible, but how the Bible gets through us. Speak to us.

Revive us. Revive us. Refresh us. And help us, Lord, to become more like your son. We appreciate him so much. He's the Lamb of God who was slain, and yet he lives.

He's victorious. And he wants us to be victorious. Over the tests and the trials. Even the temptations of life.

So use this time together in Jesus' name for your glory. Amen. Amen. Amen. Today, again, we're looking at chapter 1 of the book of James.

[ 11 : 48 ] And he's been reminding us of how we go through trials, tests from the outside that come to us.

And those come to us from God. We also are reminded by James that then there are also tests or trials. He uses the word temptations that come to us from within.

And they do not come to us from God. We may be tempted to think that since, okay, the tests, the trials come from without, that the temptations come from God too.

But they do not. Temptations do not come from God. They come from another sort. Where do they come from? From the devil.

I heard the devil. From where? The adversary. The adversary. From where else? The world. The world. The sinful, the world, the flesh, the devil.

[ 12 : 53 ] Okay. So that's where they can come from. And so we're in a spiritual battle and we've got to learn to stand strong, don't we?

There's an important distinction we saw, I think, in the book of Hebrews chapter 4. It says, So in James, he's emphasizing the reality that Jesus, even though he was tempted, he did not succumb to that temptation.

He did not yield to that temptation. He is our perfect example in the time of temptation. And he was victorious by using the word of God. And the temptation account of the 40 days, etc.

Is a reminder of that, using the word of God and being victorious. Jesus has no evil connected with him. There's no evil in him and it's not going to come from him.

Temptations do not come from God. We are tempted when we are, as James says, drawn away from, by our own lusts.

[ 14 : 07 ] And the desire to be drawn away is the idea of to entice. Entice. Okay.

That comes, the enticement comes from the outside. It comes from something you can hear, you can see, you can taste.

It comes from the outside. It's like bait. Now, some of you have told me you like going fishing. And when you go fishing, you use bait.

It's a lure, isn't it? Yeah. And the fish, okay, if the fish thinks, the fish thinks, okay, this is going to strengthen me. This is going to be good. And so it'll bite on that bait.

It looks good. It looks attractive. James's message is that the lure, the bait, it looks good. It maybe smells good.

[ 15 : 11 ] It maybe feels good. But it's dangerous. And it's going to get us into trouble. So the lure is really a lie. Wow.

So there are some steps that go through here. So wait a minute. When you go fishing, are you lying to the fish? And are you sinning when you go fishing?

Oh, I don't think so either. Actually, there were some fishermen in the Bible, right? When Peter went fishing, he didn't use that kind of bait, but he used a net. You're playing the devil.

You're a fisherman. You're playing the devil. No, I'm not going there. Okay. But the fish does think that that bait is something that is good.

Thinks that that morsel of food is going to strengthen it. But in reality, it's a danger to the fish. All right. The fish thinks it's desirable, but it's dangerous.

[ 16 : 11 ] And so the lure that is pulling us in the wrong direction, pulling us downward, it's going to be hurtful to us. It's a lie. I think I may have mentioned Constable's definition of lust.

It is to do or to have or be something that is outside of the will of God. To do or to have or to be something outside of the will of God.

That is what lust is, what desire is that's evil. And James here, when he's talking about this in James 1, he talks about it as being like a birth process.

James 1. James 1. And verse number 12. I'm just going to read some of these verses to refresh ourselves a little bit.

Blessed is the man who endures. Verse 12, James 1. Blessed is the man who endures temptation. For when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised to those who love him.

[ 17 : 28 ] Let no one say, when he is tempted, I am tempted by God. For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he himself tempt anyone.

But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin.

And sin, when it is full grown, brings forth death. Okay. James is saying that when you yield to desire, it brings forth sin.

It births sin. Wow. That's quite an analogy that he makes here. I can be tempted to think thoughts concerning a woman that would not be healthy, would not be good.

If I dwell on that, that temptation, that desire leads to sin in my mind and could lead to sin outwardly.

[ 18 : 46 ] I must choose to follow the Spirit's guiding, the Word's guiding, and saying, no, there are boundaries that God has set.

I want to be a man who is mature and resist that bait and say no to that. So, giving in to lust is saying yes to the righteous and no to the evil.

So, if a woman has caught my eye... Yeah? I'm sitting here and listening to you, but... We're in... I don't know how to say this.

There's no set rules of what's good and what's bad. This is good, that's bad. This is good, that's bad. A man... It sets his mind on being the richest man in the city. Now, he starts gaining wealth and so forth.

Everybody looks at him and says, boy, he's smart. He's getting it done. And yet, is this evil? I don't know. You know, what do we declare is evil, not evil? Now, adultery and things like that, I understand.

[ 19 : 49 ] But some things are gray areas, aren't they? Well, is money evil? No. No? What is the evil? It's the love of money, the lust of money.

It's the greed. Yeah, that's where there's a problem. But we don't recognize that as evil. As people. We don't recognize that man as evil. So, coveting is evil.

That's one of the commandments, right? The love of money, that is evil. For me to say, somebody who's rich, well, he's coveting in his. Well, that's up to God.

But we can discern, I think, somewhat by way of looking. Maybe by way of how that person may use their resources. And make some evaluations. Yeah, Joe.

Well, that love of money takes you away from doing things that God wants you to do. The example is, somebody loves money. He works all the time, makes a bunch of money. But he also neglects his children in bringing up them in the way that God wants them to do.

[ 20 : 52 ] He doesn't spend time with them, raising them up. He's not doing things God wants him to do. So, he's making money his God. And not God his God. If God's his God, he'll be doing what God wants him to do.

And God wants him to spend time with his family more. And not be out there working three or four jobs making men. Or back in his office making men. You want to do what God wants you to do, not what the love of money wants you to do.

Yeah. Hold on a second here. Every single one of us, every waking moment of every day in our life, we are funding the devil's workshop.

Knowingly, willingly, willfully, intentionally, deliberately funding the devil's workshop. Let me define devil's workshop.

That's the media, all inclusive, internet, print, broadcast. And the godless devilcrats that have taken over our government.

[ 22 : 02 ] We are funding them every day, knowingly. We know that we are paying for this socialism to take over our country. We know we are.

And yet we do it anyway. So, how do we try to claim that we are trying to live a sinless life by doing the right things with money when we are funding the people that are destroying God's creation?

God gave us capitalism for a reason. God gave us Donald Trump back in 2016 for a reason. God did not create the fraud that took place in 2020.

God doesn't tempt us. God didn't do that. That's the devil's workshop. And we are funding it. Knowingly, intentionally, deliberately. We are funding it.

So, how to our brother's question, how do we see what's black and white or what's gray?

[ 23 : 13 ] That's clearly black and white. Brother John's son is going to tell us that's clearly black and white. There is no doubt in our military mind who funded the fraud that took place on this election.

And we are all supporting it and we are all funding it. And yet, here we are. Okay, I think there's a point where we have to realize as believers in Jesus Christ, we're first of all citizens of heaven.

And in the first century, even when Jesus was here, it was a corrupt government. And Jesus did not make the government his God or what he was going to primarily focus upon.

I believe we need to be good, godly citizens. And we are within a governmental system that, yep, there's a lot of corruption.

And I don't like it either. But did Jesus pay taxes? Did Jesus stand up for righteousness? Somehow, he learned to do that.

[ 24 : 26 ] And I think we do too. And yes, God has set boundaries as far as money. He's set boundaries as far as our other areas of lust.

And I'll just go back to this one dealing with, if I have lust in my mind for a woman, what can I do? I can turn that around and I can pray for that woman.

Oh, maybe she doesn't know Jesus. Maybe she is a believer and she doesn't even realize how she's dressing and it's causing, you know, whatever. But it's a hard thing if you're praying for someone to let that lust continue.

Same thing can happen with money. It can happen with your time, with our attention. I think all of us as men, we wish, oh, I wish I would have spent more time with my kids when they were younger, you know.

But we can learn, I believe, to turn a lure into a learning experience by turning it around.

[ 25 : 42 ] For instance, if I am tempted to gossip, rather than gossip and say something negative about someone else, I can pray for that person and turn that gossip into a blessing and seek to love that person and bring some joy into that person's life rather than succumbing to the temptation to gossip.

He says as well in the text here, when sin is accomplished, when it's birthed, it brings forth what? Death. Oh. Okay.

So once a child is conceived and born, it grows. It's a course of nature. Sin in its end brings forth death.

Oh, we don't like to think about that, but we all know life is short. It's even as a vapor. It appears for a while and then it's gone. Now, what is the death that James is talking about here?

First of all, let me just lay some parameters as far as what James is talking about here. He's talking to us as believers who are wanting to become more godly.

[ 27 : 01 ] This letter is a letter to build us up in sanctification that we be set apart from sin to God. It is not a letter to talk about salvation. So the death here is not a consequence for a believer in losing their salvation.

It cannot be speaking about eternal death. It's just not within the parameters of the Gospel of James. So we need to interpret a verse in light of the context of the chapter, the book, the whole Bible, and be Bereans of the study to show ourselves approved and that God work and the needs not to be ashamed.

So there are different kinds of death that are possible here. Okay? What is the possible kind of death that could refer to?

Separation from God. Spiritual death. That's the point I was trying to make just a moment ago. I do not believe it's talking about spiritual death.

I believe that the Bible, when it talks about salvation, that's something that's eternal, that God does not take away eternal life. He gives eternal life. It's yours.

[ 28 : 20 ] It's a free gift. I believe that's within the parameters of what the book of James is talking about here. But in James, he's talking to Jews here under the law.

I think he's still under the dispensation of the law and they were still practicing it. And James is talking to Jews and keeping the law, doing the law.

If you don't do the law, you've got to, in other words, you've got to do works. He's saying basically you've got to do good things right along with your faith in Jesus as a son. He only believed that Jesus was the son of God.

That's all they believed, that Jesus was the son of God. That was their gospel. That was their good news. They didn't have to believe in the death of their own resurrection for salvation at this time. And that's what their gospel is.

As James is talking, all these little, Peter and those ones are written strictly to Jews. Not to us. Not the church gospel. See, this is not the church gospel. Okay.

[ 29 : 24 ] Let me just say, I don't believe that anyone can, by keeping the law, gain salvation. We agree by that?

Okay. All right. So, you cannot be saved by our good works. And so, there isn't any bad work then that can take away our salvation.

Because God is the one who gives it. Somebody else had a comment here. Yeah. That death, in verse 15, bringing forth death, could that be destruction?

Sin destroys the believer. Okay. And that destruction could be physical death. Yeah. Okay. It could be some destruction that may come in some other ways too.

Let's ponder that just a little bit. For instance, I believe that when, in the early church, when Ananias and Sapphira, they lied to God, they lied to the Holy Spirit, they were put to death.

[ 30 : 36 ] That God said, I am holy, you're not. And he dealt with it in a way. In 1 John chapter 5 and verses 16, someone has that passage.

I think John is going to bring that idea out. Yeah, I'll hear you. Okay. 1 John 5, 16 through 17. If you see any brother or sister commit a sin that does not, that does not lead to death, a sin that does not lead to death, you should pray and God will give them life.

I refer to those whose sin does not lead to death. There is a sin that leads to death. I am not saying that you should pray about that.

All wrongdoing is sin and there is sin that does not lead to death. So there is a sin that leads to death and there are sins that don't lead to death.

I get from that. Uh-huh. So I think John is saying in his letter, there is light and there is darkness.

[ 31 : 49 ] Contrast. There is a lie, there is truth. Contrast. No middle ground. One or the other. God is the one who decides when a person is going in unrepentant sin so long and God says, I've had it.

Physical death. I don't know what the sin unto death is or even if it is a sin. It may be more of the attitude of the heart that God judges and says, that person as a believer, his time is up.

And I think so what God is saying is here, don't test God. Don't go down that road of yielding to the lure, to the lies, to the temptation.

salvation. In verse number 12, he talked about the crown of life. Oh, and the responsible submissive believer receives a crown of life.

It's not eternal life. You can't work for that. But there are rewards that God gives to those who are faithful.

[ 33 : 02 ] A life that is full. But here he's talking about a believer that the consequence of continued sin that is willful, he brings about a premature physical death.

Hmm. In verse number 12, when he talks about the crown of life, I think there's a contrast between the life and the death.

Hmm. The crown is a reward not for salvation, but for godly living. So there's a test in the trials and there's reward for that.

Did you have a comment or are you stretching? No. Both. Okay. The crown is for death. Could that be, could you, could you influence somebody so bad by your sin you could cause them to truly die?

Okay. not a spiritual death because you didn't reach them with the gospel or you see what I'm trying to get at? So we gotta be really careful, don't we? Yeah.

[ 34 : 14 ] And if we put a stumbling block before somebody else, if we're cause a little child to stumble, to go the wrong way, to make the wrong decisions, it's better to have a millstone cast around your neck and you drown, wow, yeah.

Paul's words as well to the Corinthian church in 1 Corinthians chapter 5, I think, relate to this when he talks about a man who is living in sin by taking his father's wife and being involved with her sexually.

1 Corinthians chapter 5, verses 3 to 5, listen to what that one says. Who has that one? I got it. Okay. For my part, even though I am not physically present, I am with you in spirit.

As one who is present with you in this way, I have already passed judgment in the name of our Lord Jesus on the one who has been doing this. So when you are assembled and I am with you in spirit, the power of our Lord Jesus is present.

Hand this man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh so that his spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord. Wow. That's talking about some pretty serious stuff in the church.

[ 35 : 44 ] I don't know if you've ever been involved in a process of church discipline, but that's tough. And that's to be done these days.

But Paul is saying here that this believer's place in heaven is secure. But his life certainly is not reflecting that.

So good works don't earn salvation, but good works are a flowing forth from that salvation that is necessary.

And if that is not there, if there's the evil fruit, God can bring about the consequence even of a premature death. Paul says the destruction of the flesh, some kind of untimely death.

Maybe we could liken the church for a moment in a little different way here. Liken the church to an athletic contest, a football game.

[ 36 : 54 ] This coming Sunday is going to be the Super Bowl. Okay, the Broncos and the Chiefs are going to go head to head. I'm not really a professional football advocate, but let's take the analogy just for a few moments.

Super Bowl 55 is a big event. Sunday evening. 630. 630. What? Who did I say? He just sinned.

Who did I say? The Tampa? You called them the Broncos. The Broncos. The Buccaneers. The Buccaneers. I'm sorry. Okay. That shows you how much I know about all this jazz.

All right. I just wanted to see if you were listening. There you go. Okay. So we're all as believers. We're, in the analogy, we are players in the team for God.

And Jesus Christ is the one who is the coach. He is the one who leads us. He trains us. He disciplines us. He can bench us.

[ 37 : 59 ] Whoa. He's evaluating our performance. And all the team, the church, is striving together for a common goal.

Now, what is the goal of the church? More teammates. More teammates. Okay. More teammates. So we are, I'll just spew out some generals.



We are to love God with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength. We're to love one another as Christ loved the church. We are to be ones who know Christ and make him known.

So then how in the church are we specifically with goals seeking to reach those, that whole thing? So Christ is the coach.

He directs. He leads. He disciplines. He's the one who calls the plays. And if somebody out on the field is not doing what the coach says, he can be benched.

[ 39 : 08 ] Sitting on the sideline. Christ can do that. If someone stubbornly is refusing to do what the coach, what Christ says that we are to be involved in doing, it not only hurts that individual, but it hurts the team.

And so eventually the Lord can bench. Basically what we're talking about is an individual. Yep. We're not talking about the team per se. We're talking about an individual. An individual on the team.

How he pulls together with the other group. That's right. That's right. So within the body, on the team, there's to be teamwork. Everybody working together.

It can't be one guy over here. Oh, I don't like that. I'm going to do it this way. And he go grumbles and gruff, you know, all that kind of stuff. No, no. It's got to be working together. There are members on the team.

And if they're not doing what they're supposed to be doing, they can be benched. They can be taken off the team. Why? So that the team is successful. And so that, but that, that believer does not lose their salvation, but they're taken out of the game.

[ 40 : 28 ] You know what, what you're saying on that. Do you think you said about the individual? It's the practice. The practice. This individual says a left tackle.

He practices in a left tackle. We practice our religion to carry on to somebody else, to bring it together. So as an individual, you don't still walk into a game without any kind of scheme or anything planned.

You walk in with the Bible. Amen. As your guidance. Good. All right. Uh-huh. Joe. And like the scripture here, and like your example, sit on the bench.

They took action against this man. And because of the action they take, he came back into the fellowship. He was again accepted back into the fellowship. And the guy on the bench there, he might learn the lesson that, okay, I got to, I got to change my ways.

So he gets back in the game then. That's right. Both cases. That's the design of the discipline. That's what God intends. intends. But if the person doesn't cooperate, then God is saying, I reserve the right as the coach.

[ 41 : 35 ] I'm going to bring about here physical death, premature death. That is really an act of mercy for that individual, so they don't go headlong into further stuff.

And it's an act of mercy for the church as well, so that the church can move forward in a, in a, what do I want to say? More successful, fruitful ministry moving forward.

Moving forward. That's what we want to do. We've got a, we've got a task to accomplish, even as a football team does, we do as a church. You want to use that analogy, and again, anytime, you just call the Bible our playbook.

There you go. Okay. Uh-huh. Pretty sophisticated. Fill our playbook. So James' emphasis here is that when sin is accomplished, when it's brought to its accomplishment, it brought to its end, it leads to death of various sorts.

But then James, he gets into something maybe a little bit more positive here and encouraging when he says in verse 16, but do not be deceived, my beloved brethren, every good gift and every perfect gift is from above and every, and comes down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.

[ 43 : 08 ] Of his own will, he brought us forth by the word of truth that we might be a kind of first fruits of his creatures.

He transitions and he says, don't be deceived. Don't take the lure of the bait, the lie.

Don't go along with that. Rather, go by the playbook, the truth. It's the word of God. That's where we find it. The world is full of all kinds of bait.

But the good gifts, where do they come from? From God. They come from above. And he uses the word gift here in a couple of different ways.

The first emphasis upon the act of giving and the second is the gift itself, the result, the gift itself. Maybe a way of translating this would be this way.

[ 44 : 16 ] The giving of good things always originates in heaven and the good things you receive have all come down from heaven. Simply put, all good gifts come from heaven, come from God.

They do not come from the world. They do not come from any other source but from him. And so we are to have our eyes upon things that are eternal, things that are heavenly, things that are from above, right?

Seek first the kingdom of God's heaven and his righteousness. Oh, the good things come from God. James refers to God as the father of lights.

You see it there? I think this is the only place in the Bible where it's referred to God as the father of lights. It's also used in some Jewish writings like in the Dead Sea Scrolls.

But the lights refer to the heavenly things that God has created. The sun, the moon, the stars. Now with the sun, the moon, the stars, there is some shadows that can be cast.

[ 45 : 32 ] Right? But with God there are no shadows. There is no darkness. He is totally light.

He is totally good. You sometimes hear the saying, God is good all the time.

There is no variation. No shadow. He is God. He is light. He is good all the time.

No shadow or darkness. He is always true. He is always light. 1 John 1 and verse number 5. This is a message which we have heard from him and now I announce to you that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all.

Thank you. We can trust God to be our source of light.

[ 46 : 39 ] We can trust God to always be good. So how do we put this together? When we are tempted are we tempted of God?

No. God knows it. It can come from the world, the flesh, the devil. It can come from within us. So how do we respond when we are facing temptation?

I think the same answer to that question is the answer that James gave when he said how do you face testing or trial?

he says pray. Pray. Seek God and seek his wisdom.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, knowledge, understanding. Pray. pray. How many of you have heard that before?

[ 47 : 53 ] How many of us are stepping into that and doing that for ourselves, for our wives, for our family, for our neighbors, for our church, for our country?

temptation? How many of us are really stepping into that and stepping up and say, God, we've got a problem. It's a big problem. We don't know what to do, but our eyes, oh God, are on you.

You've got the answer. We don't know what all is going to happen in the days to come, but we know what we should do, right? It begins with praying.

And when we are faced with temptation, the lures come. Ooh, it's a lie. What do we do? We pray.

We've got to recognize. Maybe it's saying to us, God, I know I've stepped out of what your will is, and what I'm thinking, what I'm doing, what I want, and we've got to confess.

[ 49 : 01 ] I've been wrong. And so that's wisdom. It's God correcting us, helping us.

Ask God for wisdom. That's always a good place to start. Does that mean we just pray? Pray without ceasing.

Pray without ceasing. And needs action. Yeah, there's got to be some responsible living that comes as a result of our knowledge and our praying.

And what are we going to do about all this? Wait a minute. You just told me I had to do what my government tells me to do. Your answer to my question was the Bible tells us to follow the government.

Well, we... The government is forcing me to sin. We're all sinning. By paying taxes? Is that what you mean? No. Oh, okay. Our daily life, we are funding the devil's workshop.

[ 50 : 11 ] How are you funding the devil's workshop? Don't you have a retirement account? Yeah. Everybody does. Your 401k has invested heavily in Facebook. What has Facebook just done?

So did you go cash in your retirement account? Because Zuckerberg funded the fraud? Yeah. Okay. We can't do that.

Okay. We can't give up our retirement. Okay. Some of this... Some of this guys, I've got to leave up to somebody wiser than me. And they're in a position whereby they can do something, but we can do something, we can pray.

I don't know. We've got that in our society. We've got to have some revenue. We've got to have some money. Like what Ron said, we've got to take action. Yeah. All right.

If my grandson, is chasing his ball into the street, I'm not going to tell him to stop even though I see a car coming down the street. I'm going to drop to my knees and pray.

[ 51 : 10 ] No. I better take action, shouldn't I? Sure. I'm going to knock the kid down as he runs by me. Okay. No, you're saying to pray. No.

All right, I'm going to let him run by, and I'm going to pray. You see, we can take action. We can take action. Okay. And I'm not sure what you're referring to by way of the action, but I...

I'm going to do. Okay. I am closing. Because I just learned this, by the way. You know, if I may.

If you want me to shut up, say something. Back in March, when everything went to hell, was the first time in my life, my entire life, I have ever touched the stock market.

I refuse to invest my money in someone else's labor. I invest in my own labor. I build this or whatever. For the first time in my life, I took \$3,000 and I bought an aggressive growth mutual fund.

[ 52 : 22 ] first time in my life, it was back in the spring. Now, that \$3,000 I just learned has turned into \$4,800.

I'm going, woohoo! Okay, I'm nothing. I'm peanuts compared to what you guys have got invested in your retirement accounts.

So, I said, okay, how did this happen? And I started doing some research. And my little aggressive growth mutual fund is invested in Facebook, is invested in Twitter, is invested in Google, is invested in myriad of the devil's workshop.

At 3.31 this morning, this conversation took place yesterday, at 3.31 this morning, I woke up and said, I'm out of this.

Today, when I go home, I'm selling it all. I don't want anything to do with it. I will not fund, excuse my French, the bastard that stole the election from our country.

[ 53 : 48 ] The whole gang of them. They are all in collusion. The tech giants, Zuckerberg, who's Jack the Ripper guy?

Dorsey. Uh-huh? Dorsey. Dorsey, Jack Dorsey, the Google guy, Bozo, Bezos, whatever it is. Amazon, they are all in collusion with the media and the godless dumbassocrats who have stolen our country from us and handed it over to the communists.

and if you haven't read or listened to the specter of communism, you ought to.

Because we've been sold down the river. Now, like Brother Ron said, we should take action. If my grandson is chasing his balls into the street, I'm going to stop him.

I'm not going to drop to my knees and pray. Now, if I miss him, or if he doesn't hear me screaming at him, I'll drop to my knees and pray. But if I didn't take action, that was a willful attempt to watch my own grandson be killed.

[ 55 : 15 ] If I don't take action to close this account, take my money out of that, that is a willful decision to destroy my own country.

Now, how do we do that? We depend on our retirements, and they are heavily invested in the devil's workshop.

Now, what do you do? Do you pray for that? Thank you for expressing what you have. It takes courage and conviction to do what you have done.

I know that there are those who do investing in stocks, etc., that are better.

They have socially responsible funds, they call them. There's no alcohol, there's no this, there's no, you know, you can see what companies are in.

[ 56 : 17 ] It's called socially responsible funds. They're available. They sell a ton of them. What do they consider socially responsible? For example, no alcohol, no cigarettes, things like that.

You can look at it and see. Facebook would be okay, okay. I don't know. I haven't sold them in a long time. People don't know, like Brother Mark said, it is our responsibility as God's children to be informed.

Who have you heard say more than Brother Mark, we had best be politically informed? If we are deliberately ignoring that responsibility, we're dead right from Joe.

I'd like you all to pick up a copy of Al Moler's article in the last issue of Decision.

There's a stack of them over there on the counter. Make sure you get one. It really sets out about the coming storm and what everything looks like now that we're in for.

[ 57 : 37 ] So avail yourself of it before you leave. Make sure you get a copy. Okay. Yeah. The phrase in the Bible, don't know where it's at, but it's stuck in my brain. It says, work with your hands the thing that is good, so that you may be able to give to those in need.

And that's why I stay away from stuff like you're talking about. I've never been on Facebook, Twitter, none of it. I don't need them. I don't need them.

And you know, I talk to my friends and I've sent them emails and I've asked them point blank, why are you supporting this platform that is trying to undermine our country and has already fraudulent and stolen an election?

Why are you in here? Why are you in here? May I go on? I go. I struggle with what you're saying. I have a pastor friend in Michigan.

He's an ex-Marine. He wants to kick butt and take names, just like you do. But he catches himself almost every conversation we hear. He says, I need to get the word of God out and get people saved.

[ 58 : 50 ] That's his job. That's our job. I understand what you're saying. Unless we go up there with our guns and blow them all to you know where.

And if you don't, you're right. Mark never answered the question. Were they right in rebelling against the king? He says, I don't know. You're supposed to, Romans says, we obey those.

Peace. But Francis Schaeffer says, when your government no longer represents your God, you don't have to obey him. So, I mean, I'm back and forth and back and forth and back right here.

That's where I end up every time, right here. Well, in Acts 4 and 5, I think we find that kind of thing being demonstrated where Peter said, we must obey God rather than man.

Let me just share this little illustration. Maybe this will help us as we wrap up and then have some prayer. Life can be likened to a highway.

[ 59 : 52 ] You're on a freeway. And life for most people, it's going down the freeway the wrong way. And sometimes that happens for us.

And yet, God has provided many off-ramps where we can get right. And that means we have a change of mind, a change of heart, and it's going to be different for different people.

And I think we have to respect that. But we've got to keep the main thing, the main thing, right? What has God called us to do?

Anybody else want to pray? I will. Okay, I will too. Anybody else who wants to, let's do.

Gracious Heavenly Father, we thank you for this time together. Amen. Thank you for the words that we learned today, your words.

[ 61 : 03 ] We thank you for your presence. Lord, we ask your blessings on our country. We know that we are very concerned about it. We ask for guidance on how we proceed in a manner that is pleasing to you.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Father, thank you that you have made us in your image and your likeness.

You've given to us minds. You've given to us a will. You've given to us emotions. We're all different, but we all, as men here, I believe we want to be ones who are being renewed and refreshed in your will and your plan for our lives.

I heard a song this morning comes to mind again. We praise thee, O God, for the song of thy love, for Jesus who died and is now gone above.

Hallelujah, thine the glory. Hallelujah, amen. Hallelujah, thine the glory. Revive us again.

[ 62 : 37 ] We praise thee, O God, for thy spirit of light, who has shown us our Savior and scattered our night.

glory and praise to the Lamb that was slain, who has borne our sin and has cleansed every stain.

Revive us again. Fill each heart with thy love. May each soul be rekindled with fire from above.

Hallelujah, thine the glory. Hallelujah, amen. Hallelujah, thine the glory. Revive us again.

I heard that song being sung this morning and I thank you for it, Lord. And I thank you for a nephew who's got a birthday today.

[ 63 : 43 ] he's a lieutenant in the fire department in Washington, D.C. I thank you that he knows you as a Savior.

I pray, Lord, that you will help him to choose right. I pray, Lord, that you will help him as you will help me to be revived, to have a fire within my heart and a fire within his heart for righteousness, for Jesus.

To thine be the glory, great things you have done. Lord, there are some of us here as men who have wives, who have kids, who have grandkids, with deep needs, right now.

God, we bring them to you. we have problems that we face.

We have trials that we're enduring. We pray, Lord, for your wisdom, for your help, for your grace, for your strength.

[ 65 : 07 ] show us the right path. You're the good shepherd. Lead us.

Feed us. Help us, oh God, in our witness to our neighbors, to the clerk at the store, to those we pass.

Help us, God, to be men of prayer. Thank you for the interaction we were able to have with you and one another this morning.

And we pray, Lord, that you will, as the great and eternal God, keep us from stumbling and help us to know that one day, we're going to be with you and like you.

May it be the desire of our hearts today to make a difference for you. In Jesus' name we pray.

[ 66 : 18 ] Amen.