

# **The Epistle of James**

## **Meeting 4**

### **Being Perfected Through Trials**

The epistle of James is very important. Everything God has shown us in His word must be lived out in us in Christ Jesus. Some might say that James does not speak so much about Christ. But actually, James gives us a wonderful, practical way to reach the goal to be perfected in Christ Jesus. He shows us that without trials we cannot reach the goal. In our human life we must go through many trials, beginning with small tests in our childhood that turn into bigger exams and even final exams. The trials prove to us whether we have learned something and whether we are ready to go on to a higher level. If we don't pass the tests, we cannot progress. If we pass the trials, it shows that we have grown. Unfortunately, we have the strange concept that in our spiritual life and church life we don't need trials. We think that believing in God's word, receiving Jesus Christ as our Savior and having our sins are forgiven is enough, and that we don't need anything else. But the spiritual life is not that simple. God's word shows us that we must grow in our spiritual life and must gain much more reality and substance (not just knowledge). That is why the definition of faith and all the examples in Hebrews 11 are so important. We must get the reality by substantiating everything that we have heard and read, and there must be evidence in our daily life! But how will we know if we have the reality unless we are tested, and our progress is proven through trials? Without trials, we will just read the Bible, walk away, and immediately

forget what we read (Jam. 1:23-24) – we read the Bible and pray in the morning, but by lunch time we have already forgotten what we've read; and we especially forget everything when we are confronted with trials and difficult situations. Unfortunately, that is the story of our spiritual life.

James warns us that if you are hearer but not a doer of the word, you are deceiving yourself (Jam. 1:22). I have seen many Christians who read and believed and knew so much about the Bible, but it was of no use to them because they did not apply what they read. They were not doers of the word but hearers only. Isn't that sad? That is why there are so many problems in the church life. When a problem arises or trial comes, we immediately fail and fall into a ditch, even though we know so much about the Bible. What we have read and heard did not work because we threw away the epistle of James! An older brother once said, "The epistle of James doesn't belong in the Bible." Even Martin Luther did not want James in his Bible! Do you think that our Lord, the great living God, made a mistake? Did Paul make a mistake when he said that all Scripture is God breathed (2 Tim. 3:16)? All Scripture is the breath of God, and it is very useful! We would miss so much if we were to toss out the epistle of James or skip it in reading the Bible. We need this epistle because this word is very practical for us. All the other apostles spoke much about Christ and had many wonderful revelations about Christ, but now we come to the practical book of James.

At the very beginning of the epistle, James does not talk about other things but gets right to the important point: "*My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials*" (Jam. 1:2). If in our human life we need tests to show us what level we have achieved and if we can progress to a higher level, how much more we need trials for our spiritual life! If we do not have these trials in our spiritual life, we will not know we stand. We have the desire to

come to full maturity and to be raptured, yet we do not want to face any trials! If someone were to ask you how far have you grown in your Christian life, how would you answer?

Paul told the Corinthians that they were still children in Christ, so he fed them with milk (1 Cor. 3:1-3). That does not mean that they did not know anything since Paul fed them and wrote them epistles, but they still had not grown. They had remained as babes, fighting amongst themselves, being fleshly, self-seeking and proud. And when the trials came, they thought they were better than others; this resulted in more problems and more divisions. Paul wrote the same thing in Hebrews, that after such a long time, they should have been teachers, yet they still required milk, still taking the elementary things of Christ as food (Heb. 5:12-14). They could not handle solid food. How can we tell if this is the case with us? Through the trials in our daily life, church life, and problems. The trials are so important! Can you be an engineer without taking any tests? Can just knowing your ABC's or reading a newspaper make you an engineer? If you know how to count and know basic arithmetic, does that make you an accountant in a big firm? No, it is not that simple! If in our human life nothing is easy, how can we think that in our spiritual life everything is so simple? No, it is much more difficult! And the challenges are more difficult to face if we are not exercised in the faith, if we have not been tested and have not learned.

The life of faith that Abraham led went through much growth, many experiences and mistakes. Surely, he learned much from his mistakes. His faith was not that strong at the start. In the beginning, when God told Abraham to leave his native country, his father's house, his parents and relatives, did he move out and leave everything behind immediately? No, he needed time. God led him step by step. On the way, Abraham underwent many trials

and failed often. Therefore, dear saints, let us learn from James, to count it all joy when we fall into various trials.

James Chapter 1 is about the basic principles that we need for the testing of our faith and to pass the trials. The testing of our faith is very important. Peter also said that our faith must be tested by fire (1 Pet. 1:6-7). Our concept is, "Lord, why must our faith be tested by fire? Isn't faith simply believing in God?" Isn't that enough? James's response is that even the demons believe in God and tremble (Jam. 2:19). Thus, James says that faith by itself does not suffice. Our faith must be tested and must be made manifest by our works and in our life; otherwise, faith is dead (Jam. 2:17, 22). People don't like to hear that or teach that. That is why Martin Luther, who emphasized justification by faith and not by works, was even offended by James because James said that faith without works is dead. He must have caused headaches for Martin Luther! So, who is right? Both! We are justified by faith and not by works (Rom. 3:28). Faith is the first step. And Hebrews tells us that faith must be substantiated, and there must be evidence (Heb. 11:1). So then, once we have received this like precious faith (2 Pet. 1:1, 5-7), it must be tested in our daily living; and we must be diligent to add to our faith virtue, to virtue knowledge (not just the teaching itself, but the real knowledge from God by faith). Then we need to continue to grow and add self-control. Do you have self-control if there is a problem at home and your spouse says something to you, or does a small volcanic explosion immediately come out of your mouth? Don't think having self-control is simple, especially in the various trials. After we have self-control, we must add patience, godliness, and brotherly love. Faith must take us there. We love the words "brotherly love," and we believe in the teaching of brotherly love, but it doesn't happen immediately. We must grow into it! Finally, to brotherly love we must add the love of God. All these things do not appear overnight but are gained through many trials. These

things must be proven and refined. So, without trials we have nothing.

That is why Paul said, *“For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake”* (Phil. 1:29). Many times, we just want to believe, but we don’t want to suffer. To believe is simple, but no one likes to suffer. I hope that after going through the epistle of James, we will change our minds about suffering and even count it all joy when we fall into various trials. That requires practice! In the past, if something happened to me, I would be up in arms and then defeated or even six feet under. But I have learned a little bit; and now when I must suffer, I count it all joy because I can gain Christ in the trial because I know that it is good for me! I have been cast out repeatedly, but after each time, I became more joyful; and when it occurred most recently, I praised the Lord! Hallelujah! The Lord was not only cast out but also crucified by His people. Peter told the Lord that he would follow Him to the cross, but he ran away! He had good intentions and the desire to do it, but he could not fulfill it. He had not yet grown enough to reach the point to be able to suffer for the Lord’s sake.

We need to grow and learn!

The epistle of James shows us how we must learn to pass through all these trials with honors and distinction, with an A+, not just barely making it with C or an F for failing. The testing of your faith is very important! You could know the whole Bible, memorize and recite it, but it would all be useless without the epistle of James, because if your faith is not tested, as soon as you fall into trials, you will forget everything, like someone who might forget everything during the exam because he was too nervous. James is very practical! *“...knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience”* (Jam. 1:3). There is no other way to learn patience except through trials. Learning to play the piano is a good

example of patience. Even when children want to give up practicing, the parents still tell them to practice! Practice makes perfect! *“But let patience have its perfect work”* (Jam. 1:4a). Praise the Lord! These are words of wisdom.

### Understanding God’s Will in the Trials, Not Being Tempted by Satan

Trials are important. You cannot have a human life without trials. And we must see that there is a battle between God and Satan in this universe. For this reason, God gave human beings a free will to choose. God allows us to fall into trials; James says, *“...God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone”* (Jam. 1:13b). But the devil uses the trial and turns it into a temptation for us. So, immediately after God wonderfully created Adam and Eve, they had to be tested (and they failed that important test). If they had not been tested, Satan would have told God, “Of course they follow You. You created them that way.” This is what Satan did when God pointed out Job who was “blameless and upright, and one who feared God and shunned evil” (Job 1:1-12). Satan blasphemed God, “Of course, Job loves You because You blessed him richly with so many gifts.” God said, “Fine, do what you want with Job, Satan.” God accepted the challenge and allowed the trial. So, in all trials we must choose, practice, and learn to know God.

We must know God’s plan, understand God, and not misunderstand Him in the trials. Otherwise, we will complain to God when we fall into the trials, “Why did You let that happen to me!” Rather than counting it all joy in the trial, we even blame God and compare ourselves to others, “I thought You loved me! Why did You create me in such a way? Why did you make that brother so healthy, but I am so sick?” Then you will start doubting God’s love, just as Eve doubted God’s good intentions and

purpose that she should not eat from the wrong tree. It is important then to see the trials in the light of the epistle of James.

Satan is also hard at work in these trials. His goal is to use the trial as a temptation to arouse the lust of your flesh so that sin will be conceived. And when sin is full grown, it brings forth death (Jam. 1:14-15). In the end you will be spiritually dead. God allows trials so that when we pass the test, we can go on to be perfected in the trial, *“to be perfect and blameless, lacking nothing”* (Jam. 1:4b). If we do not realize God’s plan and purpose with the trial, then instead of gaining Christ, our lust will be provoked, and we will blame God and will sin against God acting according to our flesh. This will result in death. He who does not pass the test will have to repeat it until he has learned it. But God will not force us if we are not ready yet; He will wait until we are ready.

The trials we go through are important if we want to reach perfection. As Hebrews 6:1 says we must leave the elementary teachings of Christ and go on to perfection; yet many believers are stuck at this initial stage of basic teachings – their faith remains at that level. How are we able to leave the elementary principles behind? By going through trials and maturing, having our senses exercised to discern both good and evil (Heb. 5:14). Paul says that a spiritual man discerns and judges all things (1 Cor. 2:15). (Now we can see that the epistle of James is a supplement and complement to the book of Hebrews. God’s sequence and progression of the Scripture in the new covenant and also the old covenant leads us to the goal step by step.) Young children are easily deceived because of their simplicity and inability to discern. Unfortunately, for that very reason the enemy is already corrupting them at a young age. But we, dear brothers and sisters, should be those who can discern all things. We may think that we do not need to know about the world situation and politics because they don’t concern us. Why would we think that? Does a

spiritual man only discern spiritual matters? No, Paul says that a spiritual man judges all things; this is because Satan uses all things to destroy and distract us.

### The Need of Wisdom from Above to Achieve the Goal

For this reason, James, who was a very wise brother, said, *“If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God...”* (Jam. 1:5a). He emphasized wisdom; and the Lord also emphasized it – that we should be the wise virgins not the foolish virgins (Matt. 25:1-13) and be not only faithful servants (Matt. 25:14-29) but also wise servants (Matt. 24:45). The wisdom James refers to is not the human, natural wisdom, but the wisdom from God. Paul said, *“For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God”* (1 Cor. 3:19) and *“the foolishness of God is wiser than men”* (1 Cor. 1:25). Especially when it comes to trials, whether they are temptations from Satan or world events like the pandemic, a virus, or war, we need God’s wisdom from above to know why it is happening, what it has to do with us, and what we should learn from it. Our own wisdom is not sufficient to fight against the enemy; then we may as well not fight him at all. We need God’s wisdom and His word. If you are not a doer of God’s word but a hearer only, you will not be able to pass the test. If you only have Bible knowledge in your head, and the lusts of the flesh are aroused, you will fail and fall flat on your face. You will not have the strength to overcome or to resist the temptation because you are only a hearer of the word and not a doer of the word. Then you are not practiced in substantiating the word that you have read and heard and are not applying it in reality in your daily life – you don’t have the faith as described in Hebrews 11. But if you are eating the word in a wonderful way, and it is effective in you, then you will hear the word and apply it in small things, such as speaking to your spouse or family members or doing your chores. Then we will not do things independently of the Lord because we think we already know how



to handle them (which will end in chaos), but will ask the Lord in all practical matters for wisdom, “Lord, how should I do this?”

In Zechariah 4:1-6, when the angel asked Zechariah what he saw, Zechariah said he saw a golden lampstand. Then the angel asked him if he knew what it was. If I were Zechariah, I would have surely said, “Yes, of course. That is a golden lampstand to give light.” That is my wisdom. But Zechariah answered, “I don’t know.” He had the proper attitude. Of course, everybody knows it is a golden lampstand – but that is only according to human wisdom. But the Lord answered according to spiritual wisdom, “*Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit*” (v. 6b). What an explanation! I never would have come up with such an explanation by myself! We need the wisdom from above, especially in the many situations when we are confronted with trials. On the one hand, the trials are from God; on the other hand, the enemy immediately is at work to turn this trial into a temptation so that we will fall and fail. You need wisdom from God! Therefore, do not be so quick to criticize and to judge as if you know everything. Whether you are a brother or sister, you do not know everything. Eve was too quick to judge, that is why sisters should not speak so quickly. Paul also said the sisters should be silent. If you have a question, go home and ask your husband. And if you are not married, then go ask the Lord! He is our husband! Don’t be so quick to judge and speak out your opinion. That will aggravate the situation and cause fighting and even divisions in the church. We need the wisdom from above!

I have often told the Lord, “Your church is the heavenly Jerusalem; it is not of man, man’s hands, and is not of this creation. But I am earthly, and I just have man’s hands. How can I build Your church unless You show me? I am not capable of building it.” You call yourself “the heavenly Jerusalem” – a wonderful name. But are you also heavenly or are you earthly? And with which wisdom

should the heavenly Jerusalem be built up? Our human earthly wisdom is not sufficient and cannot build it. So, we must all learn to ask for the wisdom from above. Fifty years ago, when I was a student, I thought building the church was simple and that I was wise and understood what to do. But today, I must say that I am foolish: “Lord, You know. I don’t know unless You show me.” Otherwise, we will use our own strength and power, our own understanding and our own interpretations to solve problems in the church. This will not work!

*“But let him ask [for wisdom] in faith, with no doubting...”* (Jam. 1:6). When something happens, are you a believer or a doubter, an unbelieving believer? Among the twelve disciples of Jesus, Thomas was a known doubter. Peter spoke much and thought he could do things but couldn’t. We are all like these disciples. James says that if a man doubts, *“he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways”* (Jam. 1:8). He described a doubter so clearly likening him to a wave of the sea going up and down, depending on how the wind blows, depending on his mood. When something happens, you believe that the Lord will take care of it. But half an hour later you think, “Will the Lord really help me?” Then two days later when nothing happens, you think that the Lord does not listen to your prayer. But at night you repent to the Lord, “Lord, I’m sorry. I believe in You.” To be double-minded is to be double-souled. That does not mean that you have two souls, but because you are in the process of transformation you have two sides to your soul – the old side that has not yet been transformed and the new side which has been and is being transformed. That’s why sometimes you believe and other times you don’t. It is a battle! When you are first saved, it is normal to be double-minded – like toddlers who are moody, up and down, and double-minded. But we cannot remain that way! Paul said we all have the same spirit of faith (2 Cor. 4:13). We must learn to exercise our spirit of faith in trials; only then will we not be

double-minded or unstable. The more we grow in our faith through the trials, the more we will be steadfast in the faith. Praise the Lord, He is the author and the perfecter of our faith (Heb. 12:2)! It is important that we should not trust in ourselves or in any man but hold fast to Christ in all our trials.

*Having This Mind in Us, which Is Also in Christ Jesus (Phil. 2:5-10)*

After James speaks about trials in Chapter 1:2-8, for many it is a mystery why he then writes, **“Let the lowly brother glory in his exaltation and the rich in his humiliation...”** (Jam. 1:9-10a). It is difficult to understand – what do a lowly brother and a rich person have to do with trials? A lot! We need the mind of Christ to see it! Christ, who was and is God, left His status as God, His throne and His glory to become a Man like you and me. He even became lower than us, taking the form of a bondservant (Phil. 2:5-8). This is the mind that we must have. When Jesus lived on this earth, He was not a pompous king tested by his lowly subjects. He did not have a superior attitude: “What are you doing here? Who do you think I am? I am the Son of God! I know what you are thinking and what you want. Get lost!” That might be our attitude when a new brother wants to have fellowship with us to tell us that we are wrong; and we think, “What? Who are you to tell me that I am wrong? You don’t know anything.” If we are full of our self and have such a prideful attitude, we cannot pass any trial because a proud man cannot pass any trials. But the Lord came to be tested through so many various trials. He had the wisdom of God – He lowered Himself as a slave. Only with this mind was He able to pass the test.

“A lowly brother” does not necessarily mean that he is poor. Matthew 5:3a says, *“Blessed are the poor in spirit.”* We must all be poor in spirit. But Luke 6:20a says, *“Blessed are you poor...”* Whether a brother is poor in material things or poor in spirit, the

word says he is blessed. But if a brother thinks, “I don’t have anything. I don’t understand what everyone is saying. Look at them, they have five talents. I don’t even have one (which is not true, because the Lord says that you have at least one).” Like the servant who buried his one talent, this brother is giving up right away and will not receive the reward with such an attitude. Such a brother must see that he, being saved and born again, is a son of God; and he has a heavenly standing! He is not lower than the elder who has five talents. We are all the same. He is a brother! When the Father sees him, He does not see think, “Why did I save such a poor guy?!” The Father sees us all equally in the same way! So, a lowly brother should not have an inferiority complex because in God’s eyes, no one is lower than the other; all are the same. Woe if someone thinks he is higher than the others. If a “lowly” brother has such an inferiority complex, he also cannot pass any tests. He will already have failed with such a mind. Therefore, James emphasizes the lowly brother to tell him, “You are a brother, a son of God. God has regenerated you; His Spirit dwells in you. Your status is just as high as that of all the other brothers. You also have a royal status, being seated in the heavenlies together with Christ. You belong to the royal family!” This is the proper attitude that a lowly brother must have! It is not a proud attitude but having the knowledge of the grace of God (so that he would not have an inferiority complex)!

*“Let the lowly brother glory in his exaltation **and the rich in his humiliation...**”* (Jam. 1:9-10a). Some who have read James say that because the rich must not be brothers because James did not call him a brother. The rich James wrote to surely are brothers, whether they are rich materially or those who think they are spiritually rich. Recall the young rich man, who claimed that he fulfilled all the laws (Matt. 19:16-20). The Lord showed him one thing he was lacking, *“If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor...”* (Matt. 19:21a). The young man went

away sadly because he could not give away his material riches. The Lord did not try to convince him to stay, nor did He send him away. That is why the Lord said, *“It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God”* (Matt. 19:24). That does not mean that it is impossible for the rich man to make it into the kingdom, it is just more difficult, not that simple. The danger for one who is materially rich or one who thinks he is rich spiritually (thinking he knows more than all the others and is proud), is that they forget that every good gift does not come from themselves and their clever minds but from the Father of lights. With that attitude you cannot pass the trials. Instead, the rich must humble themselves and thank and praise God! And the Lord also said, *“With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible”* (Matt. 19:26) even if you are rich. Praise the Lord! I have seen many rich who entered into the kingdom of heavens and gave everything for God’s work and for His kingdom. So, the poor, the lowly, and the rich all have much to learn through trials.

Every Good and Perfect Gift Is from the Father of Lights, with Whom There Is No Variation

*“Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren”* (Jam. 1:16), especially when you fall into trials. As was already mentioned above, if we do not recognize God’s will in the trial, we will think, “This couldn’t be from God. Why doesn’t this happen to others, just to me?” Then Satan will agree and tempt you, “Yes, you’re right. God dealt badly with you. Come on, I’ll give you something else.” Unfortunately, this is how it usually goes if we are not exercised. We must learn from what happened to Adam and Eve! So, it is very important to see that every good gift and every perfect gift is from God (Jam. 1:17). God will not give you something that is not good. In Matthew 7:11, the Lord tells us that our heavenly Father will give good gifts to those who ask him. And the verse in Luke

11:13 says, *“If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!”* I appreciate this verse! That means all the good gifts come to us from God through the Holy Spirit who now dwells in us. Romans 8:32 also says, *“He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with him also freely give us all things?”* Our God surely will not and cannot give you something bad so that you will fall! Every good and perfect gift comes from Him in the Holy Spirit.

And our God never changes. As Hebrews says, *“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever”* (Heb. 13:8). We are always changing – there is no exception; we are double-minded and very moody, always changing like the weather. But our God is not so. He is *“the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning”* (James 1:17b). All the lights in creation are always turning and moving – in the morning you have the sun, at noon it is hot, and in the evening, it is dark again. But God Himself is the light! He does not change; with Him, there is no night. In the heavenly New Jerusalem, there is no night, because God Himself gives the light (Rev. 22:5).

Wherefore, Knowing This, We Must Exercise to Cooperate

After all the previous verses concerning trials, James gives this counsel to us: *“So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath”* (Jam. 1:19). This is a word of wisdom. In the marriage life, we must be slow to speak. It is much better to be swift to hear. Also in the church, if someone is saying something, learn to hear him, and not answer so quickly; especially if it is regarding a problem. Do not be so quick to speak your opinion. Our opinions cannot help problems. *“For the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God”* (Jam. 1:20). We must learn to apply these verses!

*“Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness...”* (Jam. 1:21a). James used the word “overflow” of wickedness because our corrupt heart does not just have a little bit of wickedness but is overflowing it. Therefore, we must keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread – not only to eat the unleavened bread, but to purge out all the leaven. The problem with our hearts is that even if we purge out the leaven today, tomorrow new leaven enters in; we purge out a thought, and two more enter in. We are not super holy people. As long as we live on this earth and carry this evil flesh around (which we cannot get rid of unless we die), we will always have leaven and problems. Hence, we can never cease to purge out the leaven. The Lord must sanctify us bit by bit, save us to the uttermost, and grant us transformation. Transformation takes time.

*“...and receive with meekness the implanted word which is able to save your souls”* (Jam. 1:21b). This is an important word. If you search in books and on the internet about the word, that is curiosity not meekness; that may give you knowledge, but you will not receive with meekness the implanted word. The Word is like a living seed, full of life; it desires to bring forth life and fulfill God’s plan to bear fruit in us. A proud man will not receive the word. Only a man who comes to God in meekness will receive the implanted word and bear that fruit.

Therefore, James says, *“But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves”* (Jam. 1:22a). If you are just curious about the word, you might learn something and might teach it to others, but you will not have the reality of it and apply it in your life. That is why in Chapter 3:1a, James says, *“...let not many of you become teachers...”* We must be doers of the word! This word is so important! If we come to the word as doers and not hearers only, we will not forget it in our daily life. If we are hearers only,

we might be able to quote the word, but when confronted with a situation we forget it!

*“But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does”* (Jam. 1:25). The word in the new covenant is the law of liberty, not the law of the letter. The letter tells us what to do, but it does not give us life; it kills us. In the end, we are condemned because we cannot fulfill it. That is why the law of the letter cannot save us. But in the new covenant, the word is a law of liberty. It not only teaches us what we should do, but it also gives us the bountiful supply of the Spirit of life through Jesus Christ so that we are able to fulfill the word through Jesus Christ. It sets us free! Galatians 4:21-31 shows us that we are not in the old covenant of the law of the letter, the earthly Jerusalem; we are not born as slaves by the bondwoman, Hagar. In the new covenant, we have the law of liberty. We are of the heavenly Jerusalem, born of Sarah, children of the free! Don’t think, “Oh, this is so hard! I can’t do it.” If you think that way, then you have not understood the reason why the word is there for us. It is not there to enslave you, but to set you free so that through Christ you can enjoy the word and have the reality and substance of it. This is why it is a word of liberty. Romans 8:2 says, *“For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.”*

To conclude, if we are only hearers and not doers of the word, then our *“religion is useless”* (Jam. 1:26b). Here “religion” refers to the practices – such as keeping the feasts and offering our sacrifices to the Father. In Isaiah 1, the Father said that He did not want to hear our prayers; He had had enough of their sacrifices, because though they had the outward practices, in their daily living, they were against God and did not know God. So, their outward practices were useless. Likewise, in our Christian faith,



we can also do many works for God, but they will be useless if we fail every test and trial in our daily life. However, if we are the doers of the word, then everything we do, including keeping the feasts and offering sacrifices to the Father, our fellowship, prayer and service will not be useless. *“Pure and undefiled religion [the practice of faith in God and our Lord Jesus, the Lord of glory] is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world”* (Jam. 1:27). This word shows us that faith is very practical. Faith is not about just giving messages and good teachings; it must also be worked out practically in the real care for the saints. Some emphasize great Christian works in different countries or building bigger churches – they seek glory; but there is a danger of loving the world and desiring for riches and becoming like the rich, and not caring for the real need of the saints. Praise the Lord for James Chapter 1!

*Note: The above content has not been reviewed by the speaker.*