

# The General Epistle Of James

## The Argument

*James the Apostle and son of Alphaeus wrote this Epistle to the Jews which were converted to Christ, but dispersed throughout divers countries, and therefore he exhorteth them to patience and prayer, to embrace the true word of God, and not to be partial, neither to boast of an idle faith, but to declare a true faith by lively fruits, to avoid ambition, to bridle the tongue, to rule the affections, to be humble and love their neighbors, to beware of swearing, to utter their faults when they have offended, to pray one for another, and to bring him which is out of the way, to the knowledge of Christ.*

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# James 1

*4 He entreateth of patience, 6 of faith, 10 and of lowliness of mind in rich men. 13 That temptations come not of God for our evil, 17 because he is the author of all goodness. 21 In what manner the word of life must be received.*

1 James a servant of God, and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the (a) twelve Tribes, which are (b) scattered abroad, salutation.

(a) That is, written to no one man, city, or country, but to all the Jews generally, being now dispersed.

(b) To all the believing Jews, of what Tribe soever they be, and are dispersed through the whole world.

2 (1) My brethren, (c) count it exceeding joy, (2) when ye fall into divers (\*) temptations,

(1) The first place or part touching comfort in afflictions, wherein we ought not to be cast down and be faint hearted, but rather rejoice and be glad.

(c) Seeing their condition was miserable in that scattering abroad, he doeth well to begin as he doeth.

(2) The first argument, because our faith is tried through afflictions; which ought to be most pure, for so it is behoovable for us.

(\*) Or, afflictions.

3 (\*) (3) Knowing that the (d) (♣) trying of your faith bringeth forth patience,

(\*) Romans 5:3 .

(3) The second, because patience, a far passing and most excellent virtue, by this means engendered in us.

(d) That wherewith your faith is tried, to wit, those manifold temptations.

(♣) Afflictions try our faith and engender patience.

4 (4) And let patience have *her* (\*) perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, lacking nothing.

(4) The third argument, propounded in manner of an exhortation, that true and continual patience may be discerned from feigned and for a time. The cross is as the instrument wherewith God doeth polish and refine us. Therefore the work and effect of afflictions, is the perfecting of us in Christ.

(\*) Our patience ought to continue to the end till by working, it hath polished us, and made us perfect in Christ.

5 (5) If any of you lack (e) (\*) wisdom, let him ask of God, which giveth to all men liberally, and reproacheth no man, and it shall be given him.

(5) An answer to a privy objection; It is easily said, but it is not so easily done. He answereth that we need in this case a far other manner of wisdom, than the wisdom of man, to judge those things best for us, which are most contrary to the flesh; but yet we shall easily obtain this gift of wisdom, if we ask it rightly, that is, with a sure confidence in God, who is most bountiful and liberal.

(e) By wisdom he meaneth the knowledge of that doctrine whereof mention was made before, to wit, wherefore we are afflicted of God, and what fruit we have to reap of affliction.

(\*) To endure patiently whatsoever God layeth upon him.

6 (\*) But let him ask in faith, and (f) waver not; (6) for he that wavereth, is like a wave of the sea, tossed of the wind, and carried away.

(\*) Matthew 7:7; Mark 11:24; Luke 11:9; John 14:13; John 16:23 .

(f) Why then, what need other Mediator?

(6) A digression or going aside from his matter, against prayers which are conceived with a doubting mind, whereas we have a certain promise of God, and this is that second part of the Epistle.

7 Neither let that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord.

8 A (\*) (♣) double minded man *is* unstable in (g) all his ways.

(\*) Doubting in doctrine, or of God's will.

(♣) Or, wavering.

(g) In all his thoughts and his deeds.

9 (7) Let the brother of (h) low degree rejoice in that he is (\*) exalted;

(7) He returneth to his purpose, repeating the proposition, which is, that we must rejoice in the cross, for it doeth not press us down, but exalt us.

(h) Who is afflicted with poverty, or contempt, or with any kind of calamity.

(\*) That he is called to the company of Christ and his Angels.

10 (8) Again, he that is (i) rich, in that he is made (♣) low, (9) for as the flower of the grass, shall he (\*) vanish away.

(8) Before he concludeth, he giveth a doctrine contrary to the former; to wit, how we ought to use prosperity, which is plenty of all things; to wit, so that no man therefore please himself, but be so much the more void of pride.

(i) Who hath all things at his will.

(♣) Or contemptible to the world.

(9) An argument taken of the very nature of the things themselves, for that they are most vain and uncertain.

(\*) Isaiah 40:6; 1 Peter 2:24 .

11 For *as when* the sun riseth with heat, then the grass withereth, and his flower falleth away, and the beauty of the fashion of it perisheth; even so shall the rich man fade away in *all* his (k) (\*) ways.

(k) Whatsoever he either purposeth in his mind or doeth.

(\*) Or, in all his thoughts and deeds.

12 (10) (\*) Blessed *is* the man, that endureth (l) temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

(10) The conclusion: Therefore we must patiently bear the cross; and he addeth a fourth argument, which comprehendeth the sum of all the former, to wit, because we come by this way to the crown of life, but yet of grace according to the promise.

(\*) Job 5:17 .

(l) Affliction whereby the Lord trieth him.

13 (11) Let no man say when he is (m) (\*) (♣) tempted, I am tempted of God; (12) for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man.

(11) The third part of this Epistle, wherein he descendeth from outward tentations, that is, from afflictions, whereby God trieth us; to inward, that is, to those lusts whereby we are stirred up to do evil. The sum is this: Every man is the author of these temptations by himself, and not God; for we bear about in our bosoms that wicked corruption, which taketh occasions by what means forever, to stir up evil motions in us, whence out at length proceed wicked doing, and in conclusion followeth death the just reward of them.

(m) When he is provoked to do evil.

(\*) Or, moved to evil.

(♣) He meaneth now of the inward temptations as of our disordered appetites, which cause us to sin.

(12) Here is a reason shewed, why God cannot be the author of evil doing in us, because he desireth not evil.

14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away by his own concupiscence, and is enticed.

15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth (n) sin, and sin when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

(n) By sin is meant in this place actual sin.

16 (13) Err not, my dear brethren.

(13) Another reason taken of contraries; God is the author of all goodness, and so, since he is always like himself; how then can he be thought to be the author of evil?

17 Every good (\*) giving and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the (o) Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, (♣) neither (p) shadow of turning.

(\*) Seeing all good things come of God, we ought not to make him the author of evil.

(o) From him who is the fountain and author of all goodness.

(♣) He alludeth unto the sun which in his course and turning sometimes is clear and bright, sometimes dark and cloudy; but God's liberality is ever like itself, bright and continually shining.

(p) He goeth on in the metaphor: for the sun by his manifold and sundry kinds of turning, maketh hours, days, months, years, light and darkness.

18 (14) Of his own (q) will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be as the (r) firstfruits of his creatures.

(14) The fourth part concerning the excellency and fruit of the word of God, The sum is this: we must hear the word of God most carefully and diligently, seeing it is the seed, wherewith God by his free favor and love hath begotten us unto himself, picking us out of the number of his creatures. And the Apostle condemneth two faults, which do greatly trouble us in this matter, to wit, for that we so please ourselves, that we had rather speak ourselves than hear God speaking; yea, we are angry when we are reproached; against which faults he setteth a peaceable and quiet mind, and such a one as is desirous of purity.

(q) This is it which Paul calleth gracious favor, a good will, which is the fountain of our salvation.

(r) As it were a holy kind of offering, taken out of the residue of man.

19 Wherefore my dear brethren, (\*) let every man be (♣) swift to hear, slow to speak, and (♣) slow to wrath.

(\*) Proverbs 17:27 .

(♣) That is, prompt to learn.

(♣) For we cannot hear God except we be peaceable, and modest.

20 For the wrath of man doeth not accomplish the (s) (\*) righteousness of God.

(s) That which God appointeth.

(\*) But hindereth God's work in us.

21 Wherefore lay apart all filthiness, and superfluity of maliciousness, and receive with (t) meekness the word that is (\*) grafted in you, which is able to save your souls.

(t) By meekness he meaneth modesty, and whatsoever is contrary to a haughty and proud stomach.

(\*) By hearing the word preached.

22 (\*) (15) And be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, (16) deceiving your own selves.

(\*) Matthew 7:21; Romans 2:13 .

(15) Another admonition: Therefore is God's word is heard, that we may frame our lives according to the prescript thereof.

(16) He addeth reasons, and those most weighty; first, because they that do otherwise, do very much hurt themselves.

23 (17) For if any hear the word, and do it not, he is like unto a man, that beholdeth his (u) natural face in a (\*) glass.

(17) Secondly: because they lose the chiefest use of God's word, which correct not by it the faults that they know.

(u) He alludeth to that natural spot, to which is contrary that purity whereunto we are born again, the lively image whereof we behold in the Law.

(\*) So God's word is a glass wherein we must behold ourselves and become like unto him.

24 For when he hath considered himself, he goeth his way, and forgetteth immediately what manner of one he was.

25 But who so looketh in the perfect Law of liberty, and continueth *therein*, he not being a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, shall be blessed in his (x) deed.

(x) Behaving himself so for works do shew faith.

26 (18) If any man among you seem religious, and refraineth not his tongue, but deceiveth his (y) own heart, this man's religion *is* vain.

- (18) The third admonition: The word of God prescribeth a rule not only do well, but also to speak well.  
(y) The fountain of all babbling, cursed speaking, and sauciness, is this, that men know not themselves.

27 (19) Pure religion and undefiled before God, even the Father, is this, to (z) visit the fatherless, and widows in their adversity, *and* to keep himself unspotted of the world.

- (19) The fourth: the true service of God standeth in charity towards our neighbors, (especially such as need other's help; as the fatherless and widows) and purity of life.  
(z) To have a care for them, and to help them as much as we can.

## James 2

*1 He saith, that to have respect of persons is not agreeable to Christ's faith, 14 which to profess the words is not enough, unless 15 we shew it also in deeds of mercy and charity, 21 after the example of Abraham.*

1 My (1) brethren, have not the faith of our (a) glorious Lord Jesus Christ (\*) (♣) in (♠) respect of persons.

- (1) The first: Charity which proceedeth from a true faith, cannot stand with the accepting of persons; which he proveth plainly by setting forth their example, who, with the reproach or disdain of the poor, honor the rich.  
(a) For if we knew what Christ's glory is, and esteemed it as we ought to do, there would not be such respect of persons as there is.  
(\*) Deuteronomy 1:17; Deuteronomy 16:19; Proverbs 24:23 .  
(♣) As esteeming faith and religion by the outward appearance of men.  
(♠) Or, acceptation.

2 For if there come into your company a man with a gold ring, and in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment,

3 And ye have a respect to him that weareth the (\*) gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a (b) good place, and say unto the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool,

- (\*) Brilliant in colors; splendid; fine; richly dressed.  
(b) In a worshipful and honorable place.

4 Are ye not partial in (c) yourselves, and are become judges of (\*) evil thoughts?

- (c) Have ye not (which you ought not to do) by this means with yourselves judged one man to be preferred before another?  
(\*) That is, are ye not evil affectioned?

5 (2) Hearken my beloved brethren, hath not (\*) God chosen the (d) poor of this world, *that they should be rich in faith*, and heirs of the kingdom which he promised to them that love him?

(2) He sheweth that they are perverse and naughty judges, which prefer the rich before the poor, by that which God on the contrary side preferreth the poor, whom he hath enriched with true riches, before the rich.

(\*) Seeing God esteemeth them, we may not contemn them.

(d) The needy and wretched, and (if we measure it after the opinion of the world) the veriest objects of all men.

6 But ye have despised the poor. (3) Do not the rich oppress you by tyranny, and do they not draw you before the judgment seats?

(3) Secondly, he proveth them to be mad men; for that the rich men are rather to be holden execrable and cursed, considering that they persecute the Church, and blaspheme Christ; for he speaketh of wicked and profane rich men, such as the most part of them have been always, against whom he setteth the poor and abject.

7 Do not they blaspheme the (\*) worthy Name after which ye be (e) named?

(\*) The Name of God and Christ, whereof you make profession; and in that they dishonor God, it is not mete that you his children should honor them.

(e) Word for word, which is called upon of you.

8 (4) But if ye fulfill the (f) (♣) royal Law according to the Scripture, *which saith*, (\*) Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well.

(4) The conclusion: Charity which God prescribeth cannot agree with the accepting of persons, seeing that we must walk in the king's highway.

(f) The Law is said to be royal and like the king's highway, for that it is plain and without turnings, and that the Law calleth everyone our neighbor, without respect, whom we may help by any kind of duty.

(♣) Which is here taken proverbially, for the high and broad way, wherein there is no turnings, and every man can go it; so every man is our neighbor, as well the poor, as the rich.

(\*) Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 22:39; Mark 12:31; Romans 13:9; Galatians 5:14 .

9 (\*) But if ye regard the persons, ye commit sin, and are rebuked of the Law, as transgressors.

(\*) Leviticus 19:15; Deuteronomy 1:17; Deuteronomy 16:19 .

10 (5) For (\*) whosoever shall keep the whole Law, *and yet faileth in one point*, he is guilty of (g) all.

(5) A new argument to prove the same conclusion: They do not love their neighbors, which neglect some, and ambitiously honor others; for they do not obey God he doeth not obey God, which cutteth off from the commandments of God that which is not so commodious for him, nay, he is rather guilty generally for the breach of the whole Law, although he observe the residue.

(\*) Matthew 5:19 .

(g) Not that all sins are equal, but because he that breaketh one tittle of the Law, offendeth the majesty of the Law giver.

11 (6) For he that said, (\*) Thou shalt not commit adultery, said also, Thou shalt not kill. Now though thou doest none adultery, yet if thou killest, thou art a transgressor of the Law.

(6) A proof: because the Lawmaker is always one and the selfsame, and the body of the Law cannot be divided.

(\*) Exodus 20:14; Deuteronomy 5:18 .

12 (7) So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the Law of (\*) liberty.

(7) The conclusion of the whole treatise: we are upon this condition delivered from the curse of the Law by the mercy of God, that in like sort we should maintain and cherish charity and good will one towards another, and whosoever doeth not so, shall not taste of the grace of God.

(\*) By the mercy of God which delivereth us from the curse of the Law.

13 For there shall be judgment merciless to him that sheweth no (h) mercy, and mercy (\*) rejoiceth against judgment.

(h) He that is hard and curish against his neighbor, or else helpeth him not, he shall find God a hard and rough Judge towards himself.

(\*) And feareth it not.

14 (8) What availeth it, my brethren, though a man saith he hath (\*) faith, when he hath no works? Can that faith save him?

(8) The fifth place which hangeth very well with the former treatise, touching a true and living faith. And the proposition of the place is this: Faith which bringeth not forth works, is not that faith whereby we are justified, but an image of faith, or else this; they are not justified by faith, which shew not the effects of faith.

(\*) Paul to the Romans and Galatians disputeth against them, which attributed justification to the works; and here James reasoneth against them which utterly condemn works; therefore Paul sheweth the causes of our justification, and James the effects; there it is declared how we are justified; here how we are known to be justified; there works are excluded as not the cause of our justification; here they are approved as effects proceeding thereof; there they are denied to go before them that shall be justified and here they are said to follow them that are justified.

15 (9) For if a brother or a sister be (\*) naked and destitute of daily food,

(9) The first reason taken of a similitude: If a man says to one that is hungry, Fill thy belly, and yet giveth him nothing, this shall not be true charity; so if a man says he believeth, and bringeth forth no works of his faith, this shall not be a true faith, but a certain dead thing set out with the name of faith, whereof no man hath to brag, unless he will openly incur reprehension, seeing that the cause is understood by the effects.

(\*) 1 John 3:17 .

16 And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, warm yourselves, and fill your bellies, notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body, what helpeth it?

17 Even so the faith, if it have no works, is dead in itself.



18 But (i) some man might say, Thou hast (♣) the faith, and I have works; shew me thy faith out of thy (\*) (♣) works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.

- (i) Nay, thus may every man beat down the pride.
- (♣) In thine own opinion.
- (\*) Here deeds are considered as joined with truth faith.
- (♣) Or without works.

19 (10) Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well, the devils also believe it, and tremble.

- (10) Another reason taken of an absurdity: If such a faith were the true faith whereby we are justified, the devils should be justified, for they have that, but yet notwithstanding they tremble, and are not justified, therefore neither is that faith a true faith.

20 (11) But wilt thou understand, O thou vain man, that the faith *which is* without works, is dead?

- (11) The third reason from the example of Abraham, who no doubt had a true faith; but he in offering his son, shewed himself to have that faith which was not void of works, and therefore he received a true testimony when it was said, that faith was imputed to him for righteousness.

21 Was not Abraham our father (k) justified through works, (\*) when he offered Isaac his son upon the altar?

- (k) Was he not by his works known and found to be justified? For he speaketh not here of the causes of justification, but by what effects we may know that a man is justified.
- (\*) Genesis 22:10 .

22 Seest thou not that the faith (l) (\*) wrought with his works? And through the works was the faith made (m) (♣) perfect.

- (l) Was effectual and fruitful with good works.
- (\*) So that faith was not idle.
- (m) That the faith was declared to be a true faith, and that by works.
- (♣) The more his faith was declared by his obedience and good works, the more was it known to men to be perfect, as the goodness of a tree is known by her good fruit, otherwise no man can have perfection in this world; for every man must pray for remission of his sins, and increase of faith.

23 And the Scripture was (n) fulfilled which saith, (\*) Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness, and he was called the friend of God.

- (n) Then was the Scripture was fulfilled, when it appeared plainly, how truly it was written of Abraham.
- (\*) Genesis 15:6; Romans 4:3; Galatians 3:6 .

24 (12) Ye see then how that of works a man is (o) (\*) justified, and not (♣) of (p) faith only.

- (12) The conclusion: He is only justified that hath that faith which hath works following it.
- (o) Is proved to be just.

- (\*) Is known and declared to man.
- (♣) Of that barren and dead faith whereof ye boast.
- (p) Of that dead and fruitless faith which you boast of.

25 (13) Likewise also was not (\*) (♣) Rahab the harlot justified through works, when she had received the messengers, and sent them out another way?

- (13) A forth reason taken from a like example of Rahab the harlot, who also proved by her works that she was justified by a true faith.
- (\*) Joshua 2:1 .
- (♣) Meaning hereby all them that were not Jews and were received to grace.

26 (14) For as the body without the spirit is dead, even (\*) so the faith without works is dead.

- (14) The conclusion repeated again: faith which bringeth not forth fruits and works, is not faith, but a dead carcass.
- (\*) Wherefore we are justified only by that lively faith, which doeth apprehend the mercy of God towards us in Jesus Christ.

### *James 3*

*3 To shew that a Christian man must govern his tongue with the bridle of faith and charity, 6 he declareth the commodities and mischiefs that ensue thereof; 15 and how much man's wisdom 17 differeth from heavenly.*

1 My (1) brethren, be not (\*) many masters, (2) knowing that we (a) shall receive the greater condemnation.

- (1) The sixth part or place: Let no man usurp (as most men ambitiously do) authority to judge and censure others righteously.
- (\*) Usurp not through ambition, authority over your brethren.
- (2) A reason: Because they provoke God's severity against themselves, which do so curiously and rigorously condemn others, being themselves guilty and faulty.
- (a) Unless we surcease from this masterlike and proud finding fault with others.

2 For in many things we (\*) (♣) sin all. (3) If any man sin not in (♣) word, he is a perfect man, and able to bridle all the body.

- (\*) Or, stumble.
- (♣) He that well considereth himself, shall not be rigorous toward his brethren.
- (3) The seventh place, touching the bridling of the tongue, joined with the former, so that it is manifest that there is no man which may not justly be found fault withal, seeing it is a rare virtue to bridle the tongue.
- (♣) He that is able to moderate his tongue hath attained to an excellent virtue.

3 (4) Behold, we put bits into the horses' mouths, that they should obey us, and we turn about all their body.

(4) He sheweth by two similitudes the one taken from the bridles of horses, the other from the rudders of ships, how great matters may be brought to pass by the good moderation of the tongue.

4 Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small rudder, whithersoever the governor listeth.

5 Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth of great things; (5) behold, how great a (\*) thing a little fire kindleth.

(5) On the contrary part he sheweth how great discommodities arise by the intemperancy of the tongue, throughout the whole world, to the end that men may so much the more diligently give themselves to moderate it.

(\*) Or, matter.

6 And the tongue is fire, *yea*, a (b) (\*) world of wickedness; so is the tongue set among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and (c) (♣) setteth on fire the course of nature, and it is set on fire of hell.

(b) A heap of all mischiefs.

(\*) A heap and full measure of all iniquity.

(c) It is able to set the whole world on fire.

(♣) The intemperancy of the tongue is as a shame of hell fire.

7 For the whole nature of beasts, and of birds, and of creeping things, and things of the sea is tamed, and hath been tamed of the nature of man.

8 But the tongue can no man tame. *It is* an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.

9 (6) Therewith bless we God even the Father, and therewith curse we men, which are made after the (7) similitude of God.

(6) Amongst other faults of the tongue, the Apostle chiefly reproveth backbiting and speaking evil of our neighbors, even in them especially which otherwise will seem godly and religious.

(7) He denieth by two reasons, that God can be praised by that man, that useth cursed speaking, or to backbite; first because man is the image of God, which whosoever reverenceth not doth not honor God himself.

10 (8) Out of one mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.

(8) Secondly, because the order of nature which God hath set in things, will not suffer things that are so contrary the one to the other, to stand the one with the other.

11 Doeth a fountain send forth at one place sweet *water* and bitter?

12 Can the fig tree, my brethren, bring forth olives, either a vine, figs? So can no fountain make both salt water and sweet.

13 (9) Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? Let him shew by good conversation his works in meekness of wisdom.

(9) The eighth part, which hangeth with the former, touching meekness of mind, against which he setteth envy and a contentious mind. And in the beginning he stoppeth the mouth of the chief fountain of all these mischiefs, to wit, a false persuasion of wisdom, whereas notwithstanding there is no true wisdom, but that is heavenly, and frameth our minds to all kind of true moderation and simplicity.

14 But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, rejoice not, neither be liars against the truth.

15 This wisdom descendeth not from above, but *is* earthly, sensual, and devilish.

16 For where envying and strife *is*, there *is* sedition, and all manner of evil works.

17 But the wisdom that *is* from above, is first (\*) pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of (d) mercy and good fruits, without (♣) judging, and without hypocrisy.

(\*) Without mixture and dissimulation.

(d) He setteth mercy against the fierce and cruel nature of man, and sheweth that heavenly wisdom bringeth forth good fruits, for he that is heavenly wise, referreth all things to God's glory, and the profit of his neighbor.

(♣) And examining things with extreme rigor as hypocrites, who only justify themselves, and condemn all others.

18 (10) And the (\*) fruit of righteousness is sown in peace, of them that make peace.

(10) Because the world persuadeth itself that they are miserable which live peaceably and simply, on the contrary side the Apostle pronounceth at the length reap the harvest of peaceable righteousness.

(\*) So that their life is according to their profession.

## James 4

1 He reckoneth up the mischiefs that proceed of the works of the flesh. 7 He exhorteth to humility, 8 and to purge the heart from pride, 10 backbiting, 14 and the forgetfulness of our own infirmity.

1 From (1) whence *are* wars and contentions among you? Are they not hence, *even* of your pleasures, that (\*) fight in your members?

(1) He goeth on forward in the same argument, condemning certain other causes of wars and contentions, to wit, unbridled pleasures, and immoderate lusts, by their effects, by their effects, for so much as the Lord doth worthily make them void, so that they bring nothing else to them in whom they are but incurable torments.

(\*) For the Law of the members continually fighteth against the Law of the mind.

2 Ye lust, and have not; ye envy, and desire immoderately, and cannot obtain; ye fight and war, and get nothing, (2) because ye ask not.

(2) He reprehendeth them by name, which are not ashamed to make go about to make God the minister and helper of their lusts and pleasures, in asking things which either are of themselves unlawful, or being lawful, ask them to wicked purposes and uses.

3 Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye might lay the same out on your pleasures.

4 (3) Ye adulterers and (\*) adulteresses, know ye not that the amity of the world is the enmity of God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world, maketh himself the enemy of God.

(3) Another reason why such unbridled lusts and pleasures are utterly to be condemned, to wit, because that he who giveth himself to the world, divorceth himself from God, and breaketh the band of that holy and spiritual marriage.

(\*) He calleth adulterers here after the manner of the Scriptures, them which prefer the pleasures of the world to the love of God.

5 (4) Do ye think that the Scripture saith in vain, The (\*) spirit that dwelleth in us, lusteth after envy?

(4) The taking away of an objection: In deed our minds run headlong into these vices, but we ought so much the more diligently take heed of them; which care and study shall not be in vain, seeing that God resisteth the stubborn, and giveth the grace to the modest and humble that surmounteth all those vices.

(\*) The imagination of man's heart is wicked, Genesis 6:5; Genesis 8:21 .

6 But *the Scripture* offereth more grace, *and* therefore saith, (\*) God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

(\*) Proverbs 3:34; 1 Peter 5:5 .

7 (\*) (5) Submit yourselves to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

(\*) Ephesians 4:27 .

(5) The conclusion: We must set the contrary virtues against those vices, and therefore whereas we obeyed the suggestions of the devil, we must submit our minds to God, and resist the devil, with a certain and assured hope of victory. To be short, we must employ ourselves to come near unto God by purity and sincerity of life.

8 Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purge your hearts, ye double minded.

9 (6) Suffer afflictions, and (\*) sorrow ye, and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning, and *your* joy into (a) heaviness.

(6) He goeth on in the same comparison of contraries, and setteth against those profane joys with an earnest sorrow of mind, and against pride and arrogancy with holy modesty.

(\*) The Greek word signifieth that heaviness, which is joined with a certain shamefastness, as appeareth in the countenance.

(a) By this word the Grecians mean a heaviness joined with shamefastness, which is to be seen in a cast down countenance, and settled as it were upon the ground.

10 (\*) Cast down yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

(\*) 1 Peter 5:6 .

11 (7) Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, or he that condemneth his brother, speaketh evil of the Law, and (\*) condemneth the Law, and if thou condemnest the Law, thou art not an observer of the Law, but a judge.

(7) He reprehended most sharply another double mischief of pride. The one is, in that the proud and arrogant will have other men to live according to their will and pleasure; and therefore they do most arrogantly condemn whatsoever pleaseth them not; which thing cannot be done without great injury to our only Lawmaker; for by this means his Laws are found fault withal, as not circumspectly enough written, and men challenge that unto themselves which properly belongeth to God alone, in that they lay a Law upon men's consciences.

(\*) In usurping the authority of judging, which is due to the Law.

12 There is one (\*) Lawgiver, which is able to save, and to destroy. (♣) Who art thou that judgest another man?

(\*) He sheweth that this severe judging of others is to deprive God of his authority.

(♣) Romans 14:4 .

13 (8) Go to now, ye that say, (\*) Today or tomorrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain,

(8) The other fault is this: That men do so confidently determine upon these and those matters and businesses, as though that every moment of their life did not depend of God.

(\*) We ought to submit ourselves to the providence of God.

14 (And yet ye cannot tell what *shall be* tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appeareth for a little time, and afterward vanisheth away.)

15 For that ye ought to say, (\*) If the Lord will, and, if we live, we will do this or that.

(\*) 1 Corinthians 4:19 .

16 But now ye rejoyce in your boastings; all such rejoicing is evil.

17 (9) Therefore, (\*) to him that knoweth how to do well, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

(9) The conclusion of all the former treatise: The knowledge of the will of God doeth not only nothing at all profit, unless the life be answerable unto it, but also maketh the sins far more grievous.

(\*) He answereth to them, which said they knew what was good, but they would not do it.

## *James 5*

*2 He threateneth the rich with God's severe judgment, for their pride, 7 that the poor hearing the miserable end of the rich, 8 may patiently bear afflictions, 11 as Job did, 14 even in their distresses.*

1 Go (1) to now, ye rich men, weep, and (\*) howl for your miseries that shall come upon you.

(1) He denounceth utter destruction to the wicked and profane rich men, and such as are drowned in their riotousness, mocking their foolish confidence when as there is nothing indeed more vain than such things.

(\*) He meaneth them with the vengeance of God, which shall not only make them to weep, but to howl and despair.

2 Your riches are corrupt, and your garments are moth eaten.

3 Your gold and silver is cankered, and the rust of them shall be a (\*) witness against you, and shall eat your flesh, as *it were* fire. Ye have heaped up treasure for the (♣) last days.

(\*) And kindle the wrath of God against you.

(♣) To suffice till the end of the world.

4 Behold, the hire of the laborers, which have reaped your fields (which is of you kept back by fraud) crieth, and the cries of them which have reaped, are entered into the (a) ears of the Lord of hosts.

(a) The Lord who is more mighty than ye are, hath heard them.

5 Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and in wantonness. Ye have (b) nourished your hearts, as in a (c) day of (\*) slaughter.

(b) You have pampered yourselves.

(c) The Hebrews call a day that is appointed to solemn banqueting, a day of slaughter or feasting.

(\*) Which were the days of the sacrifices, or feasts when they used to banquet and feed more abundantly than other days.

6 Ye have condemned *and* have killed the just, and he hath not resisted you.

7 (2) Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. (3) Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the (\*) former, and the latter rain.

(2) He applieth that to the poor, which he spake against the rich, warning them to wait for the Lord's coming patiently, who will revenge the injuries which the rich men do them.

(3) The taking away of an objection: Although his coming serve to linger, yet at the least we must follow the husbandmen, who do patiently wait for the times that are proper for the fruits of the earth. And again, God will not defer the least iota of the time that he hath appointed.

(\*) Which is when the corn is sown, and a little before it is mowed.

8 Be ye also patient therefore, and settle your hearts, for the coming of the Lord draweth near.

9 (4) (d) (\*) Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned; (5) behold, the judge standeth before the door.

(4) He commendeth Christian patience, so that whereas others through impatience use to accuse one another, the faithful on the contrary side complain not, though they receive injury.

(d) By grudging he meaneth a certain inward complaining which betokeneth impatience.

(\*) Be not grieved nor ask vengeance.

(5) The conclusion: The Lord is at the door, who will defend his own, and revenge his enemies, and therefore we need not to trouble ourselves.

10 (6) Take, my brethren, the Prophets for an example of suffering adversity, and of long patience, which have spoken in the Name of the Lord.

(6) Because most men are wont to object, that it is good to repel injuries by what means soever, he setteth against that, the examples of the Fathers whose patience had a most happy end, because God as a most bountiful Father, never forsaketh his.

11 Behold, we count them blessed which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have known what (e) end the Lord *made*. For the Lord is very pitiful and merciful.



(e) What end the Lord gave.

12 (7) But before all things, my brethren, (\*) swear not, neither by heaven, nor by earth, nor by any other oath; but let (f) your (♣) yea, be yea, and *your* nay, nay, lest ye fall into (♣) condemnation.

(7) Because even the best men sometimes through impatience break out into oaths sometimes lesser, sometimes greater, the Apostle warneth us to detest such wickedness, and to accustom our tongues to simple and true talk.

(\*) Matthew 5:34 .

(f) That which you have to say or affirm, speak or affirm it simply, and without an oath; and that which you will deny, deny it simply and flatly.

(♣) That which must be affirmed, affirm it simply and without oath; likewise that which must be denied: by this he taketh not from the magistrate his authority who may require an oath for the maintenance of justice judgment, and truth.

(♣) Or, hypocrisy.

13 (8) Is any among you afflicted? Let him pray. Is any merry? Let him sing.

(8) He sheweth the best remedy against all afflictions, to wit, prayers which have their place both in sorrow and joy.

14 (9) Is any sick among you? Let him call for the (♣) Elders of the Church, and let them pray for him, and anoint him with (\*) (g) oil in the (h) Name of the Lord.

(9) He sheweth peculiarly, to what physicians especially we must go, when we are diseased, to wit, to the prayers of the Elders, which then also could cure the body, (for so much as the gift of healing was then in force) and take away the chiefest cause of sickness and diseases, by obtaining for the sick through their prayers and exhortations, remissions of sins.

(♣) The gift of healing was then in the Church.

(\*) Mark 6:13 .

(g) This was a sign of the gift of healing; and now seeing we have the gift no more, the sign is no longer necessary.

(h) By calling on the Name of the Lord.

15 And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up, and if he have committed (i) sins, they shall be forgiven him.

(i) He hath reason in making mention of sins, for diseases are for the most part sent because of sins.

16 (10) Acknowledge (\*) your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. (11) For the prayer of a righteous man availeth much, if it be fervent.

(10) Because God pardoneth their sins which confess and acknowledge them, and not theirs which justify themselves, therefore the Apostle addeth, that we ought to freely confer with another touching those inward diseases, that we may help one another with our prayers.

(\*) Open that which grieveth you, that a remedy may be found; and this is commanded both for him that complaineth and for him that heareth, that the one should shew his grief to the other.

(11) He commendeth prayers by the effects that come of them, that all men may understand that there is nothing more effectual than they are, so that they proceed from a pure mind.

17 (\*) Elijah was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain, and it rained not on the earth for three years and six months.

(\*) 1 Kings 17:1; 1 Kings 18:45; Luke 4:25 .

18 And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.

19 (12) Brethren, (\*) if any of you hath erred from the truth, and some man hath (k) converted him,

(12) The taking away of an objection: All reprehensions are not condemned, seeing that on the contrary part there is nothing more acceptable to God, than to call into the way a brother that was wandering out of the way.

(\*) Matthew 8:15 .

(k) Hath called him back from his way.

20 Let him know that he which hath converted the sinner from going astray out of his way, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.