

Commentary - James 1.7-11

08/29/2000

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Scripture

⁷For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; ⁸he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways. ⁹ Let the lowly brother glory in his exaltation, ¹⁰but the rich in his humiliation, because as a flower of the field he will pass away. ¹¹For no sooner has the sun risen with a burning heat than it withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beautiful appearance perishes. So the rich man also will fade away in his pursuits.

Commentary

The doubting man will receive nothing from the Lord - He requires faith in Him. A double-minded man has competing allegiances - a house divided cannot stand. Being double minded, how can he enter the House of the Lord and ask of Him, if he in fact is a stranger there? His asking is out of selfish convenience, the opposite of a serving love in action; how can the Lord but despise this? (**Ps 51:17**)

This doubting man has no relationship with God for he has no faith; and by faith alone may we be saved in Christ Jesus; and by Christ Jesus alone may we approach God as His child (**1Jn 5:20, Gal 3:26, Jn3:16**); and as His child alone might we petition the Throne in the House of God for the gift on our behalf (**Jn 15:7-8**).

And who may hope to be before God as His child? A man proud of his collection of wealth? But is it too not belonging to God? The riches are not the problem, but the steward's elevation of self (**Ps 10:4**), as false as this may be but yet so in his mind, which in the end is an exaltation of self in an attempt to place one's self first. The casualty is the Lord's place in this man's life, for there is only one first place (**Ex 34:14**). And as the riches will pass away, so will this man's basis for his exaltation. But the Lord will remain as the True King and Sovereign Head. Found not to be in first place in this man's life, he will be judged and punished accordingly (**Rev 20:12**).

It is the lowly brother who may look forward to his approval as one with a realistic perspective of his standing before the Most High. With no illusions of his inability to stand before a Holy God, he rightly sees himself (**Rom 12:3**) as a lowly vessel. But, in his redemption, as a broken man, in the atoning Blood of our Lord, he, in this lowest state, is of highest standing before God on the account of His Son (**1 Cor 1:30**).

The rich man, in his false sense of a righteous self, must come to confess (**Phil 2:9-11**) in his humiliation for his false stand before God. As a broken man in Christ will stand before God in pure white linens, all sins washed away, so too will the self-righteous find themselves naked in shame for all their sins upon them. A person trying to clothe himself in his false righteousness will be shown as a prostitute in filthy rags, the stench of the filth overcoming him, but all the while she thought she was beautiful. Considering Joshua the High Priest (Ezek 3) in his filthy rags: is any man on his own able to achieve a higher standing before God than His High Priest? Yet this man was openly accused, and rightfully so, by Satan of his filth in sin.

Only the removal of his inequity by the Lamb of God would suffice; only the humble and broken of self will ever bear the blood of the Lamb (**Mt 18:3**).

This false righteousness of the proud man will quickly wither as the grass in the scorching heat of the Last Day. How is it that this man, claiming to be so secure in his position, has tried to cover himself in mere, flimsy grass? Is the petal of the flower not tender? How then can one hope to cover himself in it? Adam and Eve covered themselves with leaves of the fig tree. In their sin they chose to try to cover it from each other and from God. Our attempts will be just as much folly lest we are covered in True garments.

Key Summary

As a child of God we may approach the Throne of Grace in faith in Him and His goodness.

Without faith, it is impossible to please God. Sure faith cannot coexist with double mindedness.

We must be sure to seek out our true standing in the eyes of God, as at first under judgment and then after in redemption. True realization of God's grace bears upon everything in our concern to God and our relationship with Him.

Beware false righteousness and false humility. All that is not true and sure will pass away in the end, leaving the truth to be seen and judged.

Study Questions

Why is a double-minded man considered unstable?

Is this same man considered unstable in all of his ways as well?

What is the remedy for our double mindedness?

Is there any subtle self righteousness in your life today?

Ps
51:17

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart- These, O God, You will not despise.

1
Jn 5:20

And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.

Gal
3:26

For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

Jn
3:16

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Jn
15:7

If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you

will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.

Ps
10:4

The wicked in his proud countenance does not seek God; God is in none of his thoughts.

Ex
34:14

for you shall worship no other god, for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God,

Rev
20:12

And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.

Rom
12:3

For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.

1
Cor 1:30

But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption—

Phil

2:9-11

Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Mt**18:3**

“Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.”