

QUESTIONS TO PONDER AND PERSONAL APPLICATION—What was your most interesting discovery this week?

1. Sunday, Jan. 1; Intro to James + James 1: 1-4 + 12; Joy in Trials. Intro: Find out some info about the author of James. Who was James' audience (1:1)? Why did he write to them? What is the main theme of James? **James 1:** What trials do you or I currently face? What attitude do you or I normally have in our trials? What attitude are we to appropriate (2)? What are two purposes of a trial (3)? What does it mean to "persevere"? What result does our perseverance bring to our lives (4)? Why is the building up of our inner persons more important to Jesus than fixing our trials (12)? **Personal Application (PA):** Write a few sentences in a journal about your current or past trials. How does (did) joy and perseverance play an important role in them? How may your trials affect others for good?

2. Monday, Jan. 2; James 1: 5-8 + 16-18; Godly Wisdom + Good Gifts. In what area(s) of your life or mine is wisdom needed right now? What must we do to receive wisdom (5-6)? Does this seem simple or difficult and why? Evaluate honestly: Do you or I tend to "believe" or "doubt"? What two characteristics does James give to doubters (8)? How may double-mindedness and instability be eradicated from our lives (5-6a)? From where do the good gifts in our lives come (17)? How does the world detract us from this Truth (16)? How were you and I born through the Word of Truth (18)? What is a firstfruit? (*Deuteronomy 26:9-11* ⁹"He brought us to this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey;¹⁰ and now I bring the firstfruits of the soil that you, Lord, have given me." Place the basket before the Lord your God and bow down before him.¹¹ Then you and the Levites and the foreigners residing among you shall rejoice in all the good things the Lord your God has given to you and your household.) How/why were these new Jewish Christians to consider themselves to be firstfruits, and how was this an appropriate analogy? May you and I consider ourselves to be a "tithe" to the Lord as well? What honor, responsibility, and confidence is in this picture? **PA:** Write a few sentences to Jesus about wisdom, doubt, God's good gifts, and/or being God's firstfruit. How will you or I change, grow, or move forward in this?

3. Tuesday, Jan. 3; James 1:9-11 + 13-15; Humble vs. Rich + Temptation. Summarize verses 9-11 in your own words. Why does James have such negativity regarding wealth? How can a person of wealth please the Lord? Why do you or I suppose a person of humble circumstances has a high position? How does being humble of heart regardless of our financial position make a difference? How has temptation taken you or me down a wrong road? Who is to blame in these situations? Reflect on God versus temptation. Explain how verse 13 is completely true? How may you or I say "goodbye" to temptation's wiles? (*1 Corin. 10:13* "No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it." + *Phil. 4:8* "Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.") **PA:** Write a few sentences on personal humility and standing against temptation. How will God help you or me to be victorious in these areas?

4. Wednesday, Jan. 4; James 1:19-25; Talk less, Listen More + Live Out the Gospel. List the three things of which we are to take note (19)? How would obeying this instruction help your life or mine right now? Why are we to put a cap on anger (20)? How may you or I personally attest to the truth of verse 20? Rewrite verse 21 in your own words. When we put aside sin and take on righteousness, how do our lives change? With what famous Nike slogan could we replace verse 22? Use your own analogy to use in place of verse 22-23 (example: What must you do to get a dirty car clean? If you don't what happens?). With what other words could you use to define the phrase "the perfect law that gives freedom"? (The Good News of Jesus Christ, is my choice.) What happens when you or I apply the "Good News of Jesus Christ" to our lives and then live it out (25a)? What happens to that person (25b)? Do you or I feel blessed? How may we receive more blessings? **PA:** Write a few sentences about verses 19-21—listening more, talking less, or ridding selves of anger. Write a few more sentences on living out the Gospel in your life.

5. Thursday, Jan. 5; James 1:26-27; Religion or Relationship? Vs 26: What is the definition of the word "religious"? How does that word make you or me feel and why? How does that word make non-believers feel and why? How/why did the religious people of James' day seem superior? What was the clue that those who practiced religion were shams? Why/how is the tongue an indicator of the heart? **Vs.27:** What kind of relationship does God want for us? What

assignments has He given to you or me to show love and kindness to others lately? How does being relational with others show we have a relationship with God? How does “keeping oneself from being polluted by the world” show that we have a relationship with God? How is “examining your own heart or mine with Christ” true relationship? **PA:** Write a few sentences about religion versus relationship.

6.Friday, Jan. 6; James 2: 1-7; Discrimination. How were the Jews showing discrimination? Make a list of the various forms of discrimination we see today. (race, age, handicap, etc.) How have you or I been discriminated against? How have you or I discriminated against another? What is the Truth about those on the losing side of discrimination (5)? What could be the Truth about those we favor (wealthy, famous, etc. vs. 6-7) **PA:** Write a few sentences about discrimination as it affects your life or mine. What solution does God give you in addressing it boldly.

7.Saturday, Jan. 7; James 2: 8-13; Love your Neighbor and Be Merciful. What is the result of loving your neighbor as yourself (8)? What is the result of discrimination and sine (9-11)? Are any of us ever worthy to judge (10)? How have you and I been shown Merciful judgment (13)? How should we show mercy too (12-13b)? **PA:** Write a few sentences on loving your neighbor and/or on giving or receiving mercy.

Cindy Oury. December 28, 2016.