

**James 1:1-11: Explain (VI-8):**

Last Sunday: Let me see your faith in Christ when you're encompassed with trials and adversities? How will I see your faith? You will count it all joy when trials come. If you don't rejoice when God is actively doing His work in you, conforming you to the image of Christ? Ask God for wisdom!

But if you would have WISDOM for the trying of your faith, you must first possess wisdom in its beginning! Psalm 111:10

If you don't fear God (revere, respect, and highly esteem) God, and if you don't believe God, you can't and won't have His wisdom. Fear and reverence for God is the first necessary requirement for having all other wisdoms!

We can KNOW & BELIEVE a lot of truth theologically from the Word, (and that's good), but wisdom is PRACTICING & APPLYING what we believe & know to be true from the Word, but more than practice and application of the truth is this... wisdom from God MUST BE given by God!

Now James presents us with (2) reasons to rejoice, which, to the natural mind, make no sense. James 1:9-11.

**We read of a poor brother who rejoices/boasts in his exaltation, and by contrast, a rich brother, who rejoices/boasts in his humiliation. This makes no sense to the natural mind, it seems absurd! 1 Corinthians 2:14**

Richard Sibbs wrote: Faith is sometimes called sight. As the natural eye cannot see the invisible, so the natural man cannot see the things of God. This needs supernatural sight!

James did not write to the lost, who are only able to see and think naturally. What he wrote might not make any earthly sense, but for us as Christians there is spiritual food in James' words for us to eat.

What James has set before us as Christians are (2) trials! Trials that we need wisdom and grace for, depending on our own personal circumstances, whether we're rich or poor, or somewhere in the middle.

SHOW ME YOUR FAITH, you who are poor, and you who are rich!

Don't forget that James was writing to Jewish Christians who had been "scattered abroad" because of the persecution of that day. Many of whom were very poor, who had very little in this world. This is where we begin, with the poor brethren...

NOTE: "Let the brother of low degree REJOICE in that he is exalted, but the rich (brother) in that he is made low." Don't miss that they are BOTH CALLED "TO REJOICE"!

The brother of low degree, meaning, not monetarily rich, not noble or part of what might be called, high society or high social status in the world.

Think about it: Poor people in the world don't naturally rejoice in that fact that they are poor, or that they have very little in the world. By contrast, the rich don't rejoice when they are brought low and humiliated, and they don't rejoice at the thought of losing everything and becoming poor!

Let's start with the brother of low degree, who should rejoice to be exalted! Lord, give me wisdom to understand!

**Again, to the lost and natural mind, this makes no sense! It's absurd.... How can a poor man think he is exalted, and what is he rejoicing in?**

But the poor brother in Christ CAN, and does have reason to REJOICE, because he possesses greater riches than the richest earthbound millionaire.

IF YOU ARE A CHRISTIAN, and poor in this world; you're not an earthly elite, you don't have a lot of money, you're not part of the world's high society, but you don't REJOICE, and you're not CONTENT in the circumstances in which God has placed you in your life, you lack wisdom!

What does wisdom teach you, child of God? If you're poor, lowly, and you don't have much in this life, even "poor in spirit", you are in a good place, you are "actually" one of God's preferred ones. Matthew 5:3, Luke 6:20-22

It's not that God doesn't save the rich, but the poor in this world live on the fertile ground of need, oftentimes they have no place else to look but to God. James 2:1-5, 1 Corinthians 1:26-29

Therefore... "Let the brother (or sister) of low degree, who is in a low place, poor in spirit, REJOICE in that he is exalted"!

Give ME WISDOM heavenly Father that I might SEE through eyes of faith that you have greatly favored me right where I am!

1 Samuel 2:6-9, Luke 1:52, 18:14, 2 Corinthians 6:10, Matthew 6:19-21. James 4:10, 1 Peter 5:6-7.

"Hath not God chosen the poor in this world, (to be) rich in faith, and heirs of the Kingdom which He hath promised to them that love Him?"

To the poor Christian, REJOICE, for in Christ, you are exalted! If you don't see this, you lack wisdom, ask God to help you see His grace and goodness to you in your circumstances.

**Now to "the rich brother" who is to REJOICE to be "made low" or humbled:**

Again, this makes no earthly sense to the lost rich man, but for the Christian who has riches, this should make perfect sense! If you're a rich believer, this is the trial of your faith! Show me your faith!

Christians who have riches need God's wisdom to help them to constantly realize that their earthly riches, their nobility, and their high earthly status have no eternal value, but they are temporary and passing away!

Proverbs 11:4: "Riches profit not in the day of wrath!".

Luke 12:15: "A man's life consists NOT in the abundance of the things which he possesses."

The great danger of being a rich Christian is, you don't realize that God is trying your faith, because you're not using your faith, instead you make things happen on your own by using your money and your status.

The trying of your faith if you are a rich believer is the danger of depending on your riches rather than on your faith in Christ. It's hard to live by faith in Christ, when you don't know what it is to be poor and needy before God!

Once again, the great danger to the rich Christian's faith is, "money answering all things", but the wisdom of God will teach you that, although your money might fix your problems, it can do nothing for your soul!

Another temptation to "rich believers" is looking away from Christ and setting your heart upon your earthly riches... rather than upon true and eternal riches of heaven. Mark 10:17-27

Remember that "The Poor and Lowly Christian's heart" is rich and fertile ground for his faith and dependence upon God; but not so much for the Christian who is rich. He must constantly be plucking up the weeds of faithlessness, high-mindedness, covetousness, and the love of money!

He must ask God for wisdom so that (even with his earthly riches) he would REJOICE to be "MADE LOW", and that he would SEE that he is as POOR and NEEDY as the poor man who has no high nobility, social status, or earthly riches!

This is the wisdom that the rich Christian NEEDS for him to possess true riches! When he finds it in his God, he will become this rich man, who James wrote of, who rejoices in being made low!

When he has FOUND THIS WISDOM, which only God can give, he becomes this wise and spiritual rich man, whom James wrote of, who NOW rejoices to be MADE LOW. Jeremiah 9:23-24

Paul wrote Timothy to warn the rich to whom he ministered...

1 Timothy 6:6-12, 17-19, Philippians 4:11-13

James 1:9-11, James tells us of the rich man, who's ways shall perish!

**In closing, in whatever circumstance that God has appointed you in your life, Christian, REJOICE! This is the trial of your faith.**

If you are poor and you don't have much in this world, you really do have the advantage, God has placed you in fertile

ground to look to Him and to NOT depend on your earthly riches and resources.

To the rich: "If riches increase, set not your heart upon them", "Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? For riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven".

2 Corinthians 8:9

Richard Sibbs again: For a man to rule the course of his life upon reasons the world cannot see, because of a happiness to come, and because of an unseen God whom he believes in; it is the mighty power of God that plants such grace (and wisdom) in the heart.

James 1:9-11