

Case Studies of What Wisdom Looks Like

Spiritual Maturity

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We turn in God's holy and infallible word to James chapter 1. We continue in our series in the book of James. We read the first 12 verses again this evening, and the text will be verses 9 through 12, and because that's the last part of the scripture reading, I won't reread that. James chapter 1.

1 James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting. 2 My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; 3 Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. 4 But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. 5 If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. 6 But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. 7 For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. 8 A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.

Now the words of the text.

9 Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted: 10 But the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away. 11 For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace [the beauty] of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways. 12 Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

So far we read God's holy and infallible word. The text is verses 9 through 12.

Beloved congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ, in the last two weeks we have been able to do an in-depth study, first of James 1 verses 2 through 4, and then second of James 1 verses 5 through 8. When we looked at that first cluster of verses, verses 2 through 4, we saw that we have the calling to count it all joy when we fall into various trials, and we are

to count it all joy because we know the purpose of those trials. The purpose of God in these trials of life is to bring us to spiritual maturity. The purpose of the trial is to work patience in us and spiritual strength so that our Christian character is developed and we are more and more conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. And that is certainly a reason for rejoicing. That's verses 2 through 4. Then when we looked at verses 5 through 8, we saw that wisdom is needed for the proper handling of our various trials of life and in order to rejoice in the trials of life, we need wisdom. And what is wisdom? Well, hopefully you remember what wisdom is. Wisdom is very practical. Wisdom is not just knowing a lot of things, knowing a lot of facts, but wisdom is applying what you know to your life so that you are actually living in harmony with what you know to be true, living in harmony with the reality. Particularly there are the realities of who God is as God, who we are as his creatures, and then the reality of who we are as his children and who he is as our heavenly Father through Jesus Christ, and then wisdom is not just knowing all these things, but then responding to everything in life, knowing these things accordingly, living in harmony with what we know to be true, and as we saw last week, this directly applies to the calling to count it all joy. We know that the trials of life are going to work spiritual maturity in us. We know this is God's purpose, and so we must have that perspective and live accordingly and part of living accordingly is this, being patient in the trial, enduring through the trial, and living according to the truth, the reality, that God is going to use this trial for my good spiritually. That's wisdom. That's the right way of thinking in the midst of a trial.

Well now here as we get to verses 9 through 12, tonight, what James does is give us a case study, as it were. He gives us a concrete example of everything that he's talking about. He looks at everything he's written so far in this letter, and then he applies it very specifically to some of the trials that he knows God's people are going through. He doesn't want his readers to be wavering in the faith. He doesn't want his readers to be double-minded, to have their loyalties divided over the things below and the things above so he's going to give them concrete examples of what wisdom looks like in a few particular situations, and this is going to help these saints in their struggles, and it's also going to help us in our circumstances of life today. James, again, is a very practical letter. We'll see that. Then in verse 12, James gives a nice summary of the whole section. Verse 12 is somewhat hard to place. Does verse 12 go with everything that goes before it, starting with verse 2, or does verse 12 fit with what comes after, because James is going to keep writing about trials and being tempted. Well, verse 12 really goes with both. It's kind of a transition verse. We're going to look at it this evening, and then maybe next time as well, we'll have to revisit verse 12 but we're going to look at verse 12 tonight.

We take as our theme, then, "Case Studies of What Wisdom Looks Like." Case studies of what wisdom looks like. First, wisdom for the poor; second, wisdom for the rich; and then verse 12, encouragement for poor and rich to keep enduring. As we begin looking at these verses, we have to be very clear, because these verses can be a little confusing. James speaks here in, we might say, paradoxical language. For example, the question is, in verses 9 and 10 and 11, is James writing exclusively to believers, or is he also writing about unbelievers and is he making a contrast between believers and unbelievers? Maybe James is writing here about poor believers and rich unbelievers. After all, remember

James is writing to Christians who by and large are suffering from persecution. They are scattered throughout the world because of persecution. Many of them are poor. So maybe he's making that contrast. Who are these men of low degree in verse 9? And who are the rich men in verses 10 and 11? Are they the physically and economically rich or the spiritually rich? Well, let's put these things clearly before us so we understand what James is referring to.

First of all, James is writing about believers; both the man of low degree and the rich man are believers. James is writing and giving instruction to believers, poor believers and rich believers. Second, James is writing here to those who are financially poor and those who are financially rich. That's the man of low degree in verse 9; he's the man who is physically, financially poor. And the rich man in verse 10 and 11 is the one who is financially, economically rich. And they are both believers. Third, we should notice that James is not concerned in this passage about how the poor man became poor or how the rich man became rich. That's all beside the point. Whether you're poor because of persecution or you're rich because of diligent work, all that is beside the point. James simply is giving instruction to those who find themselves in poverty and those who find themselves in riches. And then fourth, we should be aware that the word rejoice in verse 9 literally means to boast, okay, to rejoice, to exalt, to boast, to glory. The poor man should boast in that he has been exalted and the rich man should boast in that he has been made low.

That's what James is talking about and now I hope you can understand what I said already in the introduction that James is giving a case study. He's giving an example of how God's people, believers, are to exercise wisdom in the trials that God gives them, and the idea then is this: poverty is a real trial for the child of God; to be financially poor is a trial, and the poor believer in his poverty needs wisdom. And riches are also another trial for the child of God; to be financially rich is a serious spiritual trial, and the rich believer also needs wisdom. What James is doing in this passage is showing both the poor believer and the rich believer what wisdom looks like for them in the respective trials that God has given them.

So first, verse 9, James mentions the believer who is financially and economically poor and who is the one who is financially and economically poor? Well, in James's day, these poor Christians were probably slaves or house servants. That's what the word of low degree is referring to in verse 9. These are people who have low social status. They have no independent means. They are bound to a life of service. And in James's day, that was simply their lot in life so that realistically, they didn't really have any hope of getting out of that position of being of low degree. That was simply their lifelong social status. And I think for us today in America, in 2023, we can sometimes be a little out of touch with how life is for many other people because for many, and especially throughout history, there is no American dream. There is no idea that if you work hard, you can maybe get ahead in life. For many, the reality is, you are stuck in poverty, and you will be stuck in this situation for life. Once poor, always poor. "As hard as I work, I'm not working for myself. I'm a servant, I'm a slave, and I always will be a servant, and this is just my lot in life. This is just something that I must accept." That was the reality for many in James's

day. To bring this closer to home, to make this real for us today, think of those in church who are working minimum wage at the gas station and that is simply their lot in life. They know that for the rest of their life, they will always be working for minimum wage. Think of those in church who are working at the fast food place or at Dollar General, working minimum wage, living literally paycheck to paycheck and there's no way to advance because quite literally there's no way to get ahead financially. And it shows, right? You can see who the poor is in the church. They don't have the nice clothes that others have. They don't have the new cars that others are driving. They can't talk about golfing or boating because the reality is they're legitimately concerned just about paying the next grocery bill or electricity bill. They can't participate in discussion about vacation or holidays because, quite honestly, that's just not reality for them. Their living situation maybe is this, they are renting an apartment and they are renting not just because they're trying to save up for something better to get ahead, no, but because quite literally they can't afford anything else. And they wish they could do something more financially savvy with their money, but the fact is they just need to deal with the reality of this week's expenses. And the point is, for them, poverty is a trial. They experience very really, very concretely that they are in a different social class than others. They are men of low degree. They feel others to be judging them because they're poor. Maybe they themselves are self-conscious about being poor. They're tempted to look down on themselves and maybe they're tempted to wish that they had more of this world's goods and possessions. Maybe they see others in church with many possessions, and there's a real social gap between the two, that they're simply different interests, and they're tempted to feel looked down upon, as if maybe they failed at the one thing that you should really be pursuing in life, earthly riches. And as poor, they're tempted to become covetous, and they're tempted to think that they would have the good life if only they had more money.

These are the kinds of people James has in mind, believers struggling with these things, and in this passage, James doesn't give advice to the poor. He doesn't write and tell them, "Maybe try to work a little harder, maybe get a second job." James doesn't say, "Maybe go back to college and get some more training or education so you can get a better paying job." James doesn't go in that direction. James doesn't tell the rich in church to help out the poor brother either, so that their trials are easier. Now, in other passages of scripture, we have that instruction, but that's not what James is focused on here. What James writes here in this passage is this, "Rejoice. You who are of low degree, you who have a low social standing and are poor, and this is your reality in life, rejoice. Not rejoice in that you are poor, as if there's something inherently spiritually advantageous to being poor. No, but rejoice in that you are exalted. Rejoice, boast, glory in this, that you, poor man of low degree, you are exalted."

Well, what does that mean? Well, it means this: the believer who is poor needs to remember who he is in Jesus Christ, and he needs to remember to rejoice and glory in how he has been exalted in Jesus Christ because that's the reality of the poor believer. As a believer, the poor believer has been exalted. He's been united to Christ through the bond of faith. And look where Christ is. He's one flesh with Christ and look where Christ is. He's been exalted in the highest heavens to sit at God's right hand, ruling with all power and glory. Christ has been highly exalted. He's risen from the dead with victory in his

hands. Having conquered death in the grave, he's taken his seat at God's right hand, vested with all honor and power. He's even going to be the one who's going to judge all flesh on the last day and you, poverty-stricken believer, you who have so little in the way of this earth of earthly possessions, for whom groceries is a weekly concern, you who are working at the gas station the rest of your life, or working as a Walmart cashier the rest of your life, you have been exalted in Jesus Christ through the bond of faith by the work of the Holy Spirit. You are an elect, redeemed, regenerated child of God. You're a daughter of the King. You're a son of the King. You're a prince. You're a princess. God has quickened you together and has raised you up with Christ to sit in heavenly places, thrones of glory, that's your reality already now in Christ as a member of the bride and body of Christ and in the midst of your earthly circumstances this is what you are called to do, rejoice, boast in how you have been exalted in Jesus.

You may boast in this if we want to say this, spiritually you are a brother to the rich believer. Spiritually you are equals in Christ. You have a rich place and a rich calling in this life. You have an inheritance in heaven that won't fade away worth more than what any earthly money can buy, and already now you have an exalted position in the midst of the church living and being active in the midst of the church. Rejoice in that you have been exalted. That's what James is saying and here's where we need to see what James is doing. James is teaching the poverty-stricken believer how to think in the midst of his trials. James is teaching the poverty-stricken believer what wisdom looks like. This is wisdom for you. You know the reality of who God is. You know the reality of who Jesus is as your Lord and Savior, who died for your sins, not with gold or silver, but with his precious blood, the blood of God in the flesh. You know who you are as a member of Christ by faith. Wisdom is this, living in harmony with these realities. Not murmuring. Not being covetous. Not grumbling over your earthly poverty, maybe even judging and being critical of those who've been given more than you, being envious. No, but boast, you may boast, boast in this, you belong to Jesus Christ. So that though physically you're renting an apartment, spiritually you have a home in heaven. Your citizenship is there. Physically you have old clothes that that maybe don't fit you like they really should and you know that. You see that. No, remember spiritually you have a white robe of righteousness, a garment that will never dim in its glory. Though physically you have no fancy jewels, consider this, you are considered God's jewel. Though you don't have much of this world's goods, consider this, your name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life. Oh, you might not have any investments, you might not even know about the stock market because you're just not financially in that position, you might not have any shares in Google or Apple or whatever else, but you, believer, have a share in Jesus Christ.

Think of that today. Jesus Christ who though he was rich, yet became poor that you through him might be made rich. You have a lowly earthly status, yes, but you are a prophet, priest and king in Jesus Christ and you are more than a conqueror through Christ who loves you and who gave himself for you. And now I want you to ask yourself, poor believer, are you boasting yet? Can't you feel that? "Yeah. This is who I am in Christ. This is my reality. And this is wisdom for me in the midst of my trials, remembering this." That's what James is getting at in this passage. This trial of poverty, God's going to use it for your spiritual maturity to mold you and shape you for your exalted position in

the kingdom of God in the new heavens and new earth, and as I already said, already now you have an exalted position in the church. Just being in the kingdom of God, already now as a regenerated child of God, you have an exalted position. You enjoy spiritual honors and privileges that none of us deserve and that have only been given to us graciously through Christ. That's what James is getting at in this passage.

You know congregation, we can extend this and make this very broad and see that this is true for us whatever trial that the Lord has given us as his people. Maybe it's not financial poverty for you, but maybe it's something else. Maybe it's loneliness, lack of companionship, and that's a trial. Or maybe it's sickness, a physical debility, or whatever else. This is what wisdom looks like, don't murmur and complain about your physical sickness, but bless the Lord who has healed all your diseases, who has forgiven all your iniquities, who's redeemed your life from destruction, and who crowns you with loving kindness and tender mercies. Rejoice in that, sick and decrepit believer. Don't murmur about being single but rejoice in who you are as part of the bride of Jesus Christ. That's wisdom and that's real. That's real. I, to share my own experience, I distinctly remember a time when I was not married, and I was really struggling with not having a girlfriend. I know this is maybe elementary for some of us, but this is the reality, isn't it? And I was in seminary, and I felt like the pressure was on, right? It's good that a minister be married. I felt like people were judging me, whether they were or not they weren't but that's just my own self-consciousness. And I was struggling with this and I distinctly remember, this is God's grace. I distinctly remember I need to be secure in who I am in Jesus Christ and I need to recognize that Jesus is using this trial in my life to bring me further along the road of spiritual maturity in him. My happiness, my completeness is not found in another human being, it's found in my relationship with the Lord. My Christian morale is not determined by my marital status or by my economic situation or any other earthly circumstance. I live according to the truth of who I am in Jesus Christ and that's how I can count it all joy when I fall into the various trials of life because I belong to Christ, and God is going to use this trial for my good. He's going to do a good thing and this is what wisdom looks like, having that perspective so that I don't lose heart, so that I don't fall into self-pity but I remember who I am as a child of God, and I remember his love for me in Jesus Christ and I press on and I exercise patience in the midst of the trial. That's what James is talking about. Having this approach is living by faith. This is faith living itself out. That's what James is all about. It's having a perspective on life that is defined by faith in Christ Jesus.

Well, if we understand what James is writing here in verse 9 regarding the Christian who is poor, then it becomes also easy to understand what he goes on to write about, about the rich man in verses 10 and 11, "But the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away." Well, who are the rich in verses 10 and 11? Well, in James's day, the rich were those who had a high position in life. In the Bible, there are some believers who were rich. Abraham was rich. Job was rich. Joseph of Arimathea was rich. Barnabas was rich. As for James, we're going to see this as we proceed through the rest of the letter, James doesn't seem to have a very high opinion of the rich in his day. The rich were those who dragged the poor into a court of law. The rich were those who were taking advantage of the poor. They were driven by selfish ambition. They bragged

about their business trips. They hoarded money, and they kept back wages that their servants earned. This is what the rich are very often like, they take advantage of the poor, and throughout the New Testament, there are serious warnings given regarding the rich and riches. We just read 1 Timothy 6 this morning; that's part of why we read that chapter this morning. Think already Jesus' instruction after Jesus interacts with the rich young ruler. Remember what he says to his disciples, how hardly, how difficult shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God. And the disciples are astonished at what Jesus just says, as if they thought it was a good thing to be rich and Jesus says, "Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God? It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."

And here in James chapter 1, what James is implying is this: riches are just as much a spiritual trial as poverty. It's a hard thing for a Christian to be rich because the temptation is this, to trust in my riches rather than in Jesus, to think that it's riches that are going to make me happy and it's riches that will keep me safe and secure. And you see, then you don't need Jesus and then you become proud and you become high-minded. Riches are a serious trial. We said it this morning, how many people have coveted after money and subsequently have strayed from the truth of God's word and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. Think of families, you could probably even think of entire churches, church families that have experienced financial prosperity or families in their generations that have come to a place of financial prosperity and they drift away from the Lord. Think of Solomon. Started off so good, praying for wisdom, "Lord, I don't pray for riches. I don't pray for honor. I pray for wisdom." And look at how foolishly he's acting near the end of his life. Think of Lot, who wanted the prosperity of Sodom and Gomorrah and he was a child of God and it vexed his righteous soul at the end of it all. And what did he have to show for it at the end of it all? A wife turned to pillar and two daughters that committed a shameful deed with him. Think of Judas Iscariot. That was his struggle. He wanted riches. Riches are a trial. Young man, young woman, I exhort you, as we heard this morning, don't pray for riches.

And so in James 1 verse 10, what does James tell the rich Christians of his day to do? There were rich Christians in the church, in the early New Testament church and what does James tell these rich Christians to do? He says, "But the rich in that he is made low." The rich believer is called to rejoice in that he has been made low and what does that mean? Notice, by the way, that James doesn't say, doesn't tell the rich to get rid of all their money, that it's evil to be rich. That's not the approach at all. We know that's not the perspective. But what James does say is this, "Rejoice in that you have been humbled," and again, what does that mean? Well, it means this: rejoice, you rich, that you have been brought to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Rejoice in the fact that God has graciously opened your eyes and your hearts and has caused you to see the poverty that you are in in your sins and your need for a Savior. Rejoice in the fact that God has humbled you and directed your eyes towards Jesus and worked in your heart so that you cry out to Jesus as your Lord and Savior. Rejoice that God has dealt this mercifully with you, that he's turned your heart away from a life of covetousness and a life of idolatry and self-indulgence, and he has caused you to know Jesus Christ and the eternal riches that are

found in him. And rejoice, you rich, as you see that by nature you would be behaving no differently than the rich unbeliever, pursuing that life of luxury and indulgence, and instead what God has done is this, he has made you very low. He's made you very low so that you see your spiritual poverty and then you also say with the Apostle Paul, "I count all things but loss and dung that I may know the excellency of Jesus Christ."

And then in the end of verse 10 we read, "because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away," and the rich Christian says, "Yes, that's me. I know who I am. I am just as the flower of the field, the grass that grows today and is cut down tomorrow." Yes, we all know the poor are grass too, all flesh is grass, the Bible says, but the point here that James is making is this: the rich man is more apt, he's more inclined to think that because of his riches, he is more exceptional grass, you might say, than the poor. And that's the point of verse 11, the rich is no different than the poor. He will fade and die just like the poor man will fade and die and he needs to remember that. His portfolio, his business, his bank account will not secure any eternal advantage for him. He can't take it with him when he dies. So the posture of the rich Christian is this, he says to himself, "I am but a sinner saved by grace. I have seen my sins. I've seen my sinful nature. I've even seen within me that desire to be carnally secure in my riches and boast in my money, at least I see that in my heart, and there is that temptation to not put my trust in the Lord. Oh, how I need to stay here at the foot of the cross of Jesus Christ as a sinner constantly in need of mercy and wisdom and grace. That's where I need to stay because when I stand up and walk away, there's all kinds of dangers and temptations."

And you see, congregation, the point is, for the rich Christian, that's wisdom. Stay there. Stay in that posture of humility. Stay in that lowly position. Don't get puffed up. Don't trust in uncertain riches. But remember your sins and remember your need for a Savior, and then remember also that when you, if and when you have done great things in your life with the opportunities God has given you, and maybe you've even done notable things in the church with all your riches, remember this, that in the end, you too must confess along with every other child of God, "I am still an unprofitable servant. I've only done that which is my duty to do." And when you see that humility, when you see that in your heart, boast in that. As Jeremiah puts it, Jeremiah 9 verse 23, "Don't glory in your riches. Let not the rich man glory in his riches. Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, but let him that glory, glory in this, that he understands and he knows God, that God is the Lord who exercises loving kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth, and that God is the God who delights in these things." Rejoice in that you know God and you know just how glorious and merciful and just and good this God is and that he also wants that in your life and that this is what he delights in, in the earth.

And then boast in this, that you are the brother or you are the sister of the poor and the needy and afflicted in the earth who also trust in Jesus. Boast in that, who maybe are those who are dwelling in dens and caves of the earth, and they are wearing maybe camel's hair for their clothing, and they're eating grasshoppers for food, and these are such people of whom the world is not worthy and there you are, coming together at the foot of the cross of Jesus Christ, and you all trust in Jesus as your Lord and Savior, and you're calling on him, and you're worshiping him together. Boast in that. You see here

there's a sense of equality then, isn't there, a sense of balance among all of us as Christians. The poor Christian, he boasts in that he is exalted in Jesus Christ. He knows the riches of salvation in Jesus Christ. And the rich Christian, he boasts in that he's been humbled to see his sin and his poverty in himself, and he knows his salvation is only in Christ. And together, they boast in the grace of God shown to them in the gift of his Son, Jesus Christ.

What James writes here is very similar to what the Apostle Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 7 when he's talking about being single, being married, being a servant, or being a free man. Paul writes this, "he that is called in the Lord, being a servant," being a slave, he "is the Lord's freeman." You're free in the Lord. 1 Corinthians 7 verse 22. And then he says, "likewise also he that is called, being free," if you are called to be a Christian, called out of darkness into the kingdom of Christ being a free man, you remember that you are Christ's servant. So the slave who is a Christian, he is Christ's free man, he's free in Christ, and the free man who is in Christ, he needs to think of himself as Christ's servant. The point is, don't glory in the circumstances of your life and don't be overtaken in self-pity over the circumstances of your life, but glory in who you are in Jesus Christ and then take by faith the circumstances God has given you and interact with those circumstances faithfully as those who belong to Christ. That is wisdom, wisdom for the poor and wisdom for the rich. This is spiritual maturity and this is where James wants to see his readers, his audience come to, to have that spiritual maturity. This is faith being exercised and tried and being brought to maturity.

Well then, moving on to verse 12. We've looked at the wisdom of the poor. We've looked at the wisdom for the poor, wisdom for the rich. Now James brings the poor and rich together, all of God's people together, who are in whatever trials God gives them, and he writes, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried," and he endures, "he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." There's a few things that could be said here, but the main point is this: keep enduring. That's what James is trying to get at. Keep exercising patience through your trials. Going back to verse 4, let patience have her perfect work. Let patience continue to perfect you, that you might be furnished unto all good works. Complete. Spiritually mature. You lowly and afflicted, keep boasting in the exalted Christ, the King of glory, who has secured eternal riches for you. Keep boasting in that. Keep your eyes on that. You rich and honored, keep boasting in the suffering Savior who died on the shameful and bitter cross, who died a shameful death to blot out your sins. Keep enduring. Keep praying for wisdom. And whatever trials you are going through, recognize this: the man that endures, and this is where we're all equal, you might say, the man that endures shall receive the crown of life.

We're all hoping for the same thing. You love Jesus. That's what motivates you to endure your temptations. That's the end of verse 12, you love God, you love Jesus. You love the name of Jesus in your day-to-day life. You want the name of Jesus to be glorified in your day-to-day life. Know this, you who love the name of Jesus, God will give you the crown of life and what that simply means is this, God will give you the crown that is life. The crown of life is the crown that is life and God will give you victory. That's really the idea

of this crown. That word crown in this context, in this verse, is talking about a victor's crown. It's a crown of eternal life and it's a crown of victory. That's what's in store for God's people, victory. Keep enduring. Keep fighting that good fight of faith. Put on the armor of God and fight against sin and the devil and his wiles because there's glory that awaits you after the trial is done, there is eternal rest, and there is honor and victory.

And that's encouragement. In this life, as Christians, whether we are poor, whether we are rich, we as Christians are so often losers at least in the eyes of the world. We are losers. The rich Christian is a loser because he's not indulging in his fleshly lusts like the world thinks would be the wise thing to do, eat and drink and be merry because tomorrow we're going to die anyway. But the rich Christian doesn't have that perspective and so he's a loser in the eyes of the world. And the poor Christian is a loser too because, well, he's poor. This life is a continual life of dying to self for the rich Christian and for the poor Christian and James says, keep enduring, keep persevering, keep living and walking by faith. You know the promises of God. There is victory awaiting you, a crown of eternal life. The man who doesn't live by faith, but who's unstable in all his ways, don't let that man think he will receive anything of the Lord, but he who lives by faith, he believes, he perseveres, believing to the saving of his soul. Keep living by faith. Amen.

Let us pray.

Our Father, give us this wisdom, give us this spiritual maturity, that we might know how to think regarding all the trials of life and that we might ever keep in view the victory that Christ has accomplished for us through his death and resurrection and the victory that we will enjoy in glory above. Write this word upon our hearts and shape our lives by it to thy name's glory and honor. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.