

TO BE COMPLETE

A LESSON FROM JAMES 1

¹ James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ! To the twelve tribes scattered among the nations: Greetings; ² Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever

- You face trials of many kinds (*we will and must be tested*),
- ³ Because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance (*we must grow*)
- ⁴ Perseverance must finish its work (*we must become Christ like. Paul describes this with the analogy of finishing a race in order to receive the reward in 2 Timothy 4: 7 - 8*) so that you;
 - 1) May be mature (*achieved a thorough understanding of every purpose and function- not lack anything advocated by scripture*) and
 - 2) Complete (*every effort exhausted, every life mission achieved*) and
 - 3) Not lacking anything (*be a whole, perfect and flawless life according to our commission*).

NB!! There is a goal to maturity: *that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing* (4b); implies that there is a pathway to maturity, this being a pathway of *testing which produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect* because there is a terrain of testing and temptation through which that pathway must go

If a believer endures a trial, he or she will be **perfect**, meaning “they have reached the end,” and **complete**, meaning “they will be whole.” In other words, we are presented whole to the Father when we overcome and reach the end by completing the life task assigned to all men

Endurance is the virtue which very few people experience fully. Too often we grasp relief from trouble so eagerly that we fail to receive the entire lesson that God intended for us. This may be as a result of the fact that endurance is a fruit of the Spirit and most people are not baptized into the Spirit as an act of faith

To let patience have its perfect work cautions us to observe our attitudes more than our circumstances. If we do this, we will realize the road to Christian maturity.

Perfection in the absolute sense, however, will be reserved for the life to come. All we must do now is to strive for it through perseverance

In 1 John 1 we read

¹ *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen (noticed) with our eyes, which we have looked (inspected and perceived) at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life.*

Here is a stark admission by James of the Creator who became man, just like you and me. He talks to the commencement of life and its linked association to God, The Word and the Holy Spirit. Knowing and believing in the present confirms in your heart, the truth and reality of creation, the beginning of all things

Now when we see (observe and notice), hear (audibly from the Creator’s mouth – not by word of mouth), look (perceive) and touch (make physical contact with), through believing by faith then;

- a) We can attest to the roots and foundation of our existence as we read in Genesis 1 – 3 (Knowledge)
- b) We can believe and overcome in the present (Discernment)
- c) Furthermore, we can testify of the future, as to the fulfillment of all prophesy and scripture (Wisdom)

This revelation is reserved for those who believe by faith, are filled with the Spirit of God and who serve in His commission. These are 3 of the manifested workings of the Holy Spirit in a believer's life as we read in 1 Corinthians 12: 1 – 11

These spiritual workings are 3 of 9 manifestations reserved for the believers ministry to the nations and is essential for a) edification (restoration), b) exhortation (solving), c) comforting (counselling) and d) reproof (rebuking/correcting)

Everyone else who does not believe, and/or rejects this truth and/or denies this truth and follows after worldly truths, is lost to the world and will not be redeemed at the coming of Jesus Christ, either at the rapture (gentile and Messianic Jew believers) or at the second coming (The Jews)

Now we must proclaim this message of truth to all the nations of the earth;

- 1) As to eternal life through Jesus the Christ who was, who is and who is to come

² The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us.

- 2) As to the fellowship of the saints (Believers) as the body of Christ with God and His Son Jesus Christ

³ We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. ⁴ We write this to make our joy complete

So what is the proclamation/message to the nations of the earth?

. ⁵ This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you:

- a) *God is light; in him there is no (eliminates) darkness at all. ⁶ If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. ⁷ But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and*
- b) *The blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. ⁸ If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.*
- c) *⁹ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰ If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives.*

How do we achieve this completion as believers in Christ according to James?

- 1) Through Wisdom (Supernatural insight into the future according to the Will of God – with conditions)

⁵ If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. ⁶ But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the

sea, blown and tossed by the wind. ⁷ That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; ⁸ he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does.

2) Through Humility (*A child-like boldness which is pure and innocent yet confrontational and solid*)

⁹ The brother in humble circumstances ought to take pride in his high position. ¹⁰ But the one who is rich should take pride in his low position, because he will pass away like a wild flower. ¹¹ For the sun rises with scorching heat and withers the plant; its blossom falls and its beauty is destroyed. In the same way, the rich man will fade away even while he goes about his business.

3) Through Perseverance (*Sticking it out to the end without doubt or fear nor contradiction*)

¹² Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.

4) Through Spiritual Maturity (*Communicate through your relationship in the Holy Spirit*)

¹³ When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; ¹⁴ but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. ¹⁵ Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

5) Through a Steadfast lifestyle (*Stick to your knitting – that which you know is true and trustworthy*)

¹⁶ Don't be deceived, my dear brothers. ¹⁷ Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.

6) Through Election (*Know and confess your ancestry – understand your birthright and your roots*)

¹⁸ He chose to give us birth through the word of truth that we might be a kind of first-fruits of all he created.

7) Through Active listening (*Faith comes through hearing the Word – practice your sensory skills – Romans 10: 17*)

¹⁹ My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, ²⁰ for man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires.

8) Through Purification (*Die to your humanity – put your old self to death*)

²¹ Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.

9) Through Remembrance (*Practice, meditate, strengthen, fast, pray, study and then again and again*)

²² Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. ²³ Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror ²⁴ and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. ²⁵ But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does.

10) Through Belief and completed works (*Faith without real works is dead – but first control the tongue*)

²⁶ If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless! ²⁷ Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

May God richly bless you as you read and engage His Word

Pastor Stuart Farquhar

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