

THE GENERAL EPISTLE OF JAMES

Contents

THE GENERAL EPISTLE OF JAMES

1 James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting. ² Count it all joy, my brethren, when ye fall into various temptations; ³ knowing that the trying of your faith worketh endurance. ⁴ But let endurance have a perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting in nothing. ⁵ But if any one of you is wanting in wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all liberally, and upbraideth not; and it will be given him. ⁶ But let him ask in faith, nothing doubting; for he that doubteth is like a wave of the sea driven by the wind and tossed. ⁷ For let not that man think that he shall receive anything from the Lord, ⁸ a double-minded man as he is, unstable in all his ways. ⁹ Let the brother of low degree glory in that he is exalted; ¹⁰ but the rich, in that he is made low; because as the flower of the grass he will pass away. ¹¹ For the sun rose with its burning heat, and withered the grass, and its flower fell off, and the beauty of its appearance perished; so also will the rich man fade away in his ways. ¹² Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is approved, he will receive the crown of life, which He promised to them that love him. ¹³ Let no one when he is tempted, say, I am tempted by God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he tempteth no one. ¹⁴ But each one is tempted when by his own lust he is led away and enticed; ¹⁵ then lust, having conceived, bringeth forth sin, and sin, when completed, bringeth forth death. ¹⁶ Do not err, my beloved brethren. ¹⁷ Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the lights, with whom is no change, nor shadow from turning. ¹⁸ Of his own will he begot us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures. ¹⁹ Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath. ²⁰ For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. ²¹ Wherefore put off all filthiness, and excess of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. ²² But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. ²³ For if any one is a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like a man beholding his natural face in a glass; ²⁴ for he beholds himself, and goes away, and immediately forgets what manner of man he was. ²⁵ But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty, and remains there, being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man will be blessed in his deed. ²⁶ If any one thinks that he is religious, and bridles not his tongue, but deceives his own heart, this man's religion is vain. ²⁷ Pure religion and undefiled before God, the Father, is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep one's self unspotted from the world.

2 My brethren, hold not the faith of our Lord of glory, Jesus Christ, with respect of persons. ² For if there come into your assembly a man with a gold

ring, in splendid apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment,³ and ye have respect to him that weareth the splendid apparel, and say, Sit thou here in a good place, and say to the poor man, Stand thou there, or, Sit under my footstool,⁴ have ye not been partial among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?⁵ Hearken, my beloved brethren. Did not God choose the poor as to the world to be rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he promised to them that love him?⁶ but ye have despised the poor man. Do not the rich oppress you, and do not they drag you before the judgment-seats?⁷ Do not they blaspheme the worthy name by which ye are called?⁸ If indeed ye fulfill the royal law, according to the scripture, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," ye do well.⁹ But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors.¹⁰ For whoever hath kept the whole law, and yet hath offended in one point, hath become guilty of all.¹¹ For he who said, "Do not commit adultery," said also, "Do not kill." Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou hast become a transgressor of the law.¹² So speak, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.¹³ For the judgment shall be without mercy to him that showed no mercy. Mercy glorieth against judgment.¹⁴ What doth it profit, my brethren, if any one say that he hath faith, and have not works? Can his faith save him?¹⁵ If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food,¹⁶ and one of you say to them, Depart in peace, be warmed and be filled, notwithstanding ye give them not the things needful for the body, what doth it profit?¹⁷ So also faith, if it hath not works, is dead in itself.¹⁸ But some one will say, Thou hast faith, and I have works; show me thy faith without works, and I will show thee my faith by my works.¹⁹ Thou believest that God is one; thou doest well; the demons also believe, and tremble.²⁰ But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is idle?²¹ Was not Abraham our father accepted as righteous through works, when he offered Isaac his son upon the altar?²² Thou seest that faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect.²³ And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, "Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him for righteousness;" and he was called the friend of God.²⁴ Ye see that by works a man is accounted as righteous, and not by faith only.²⁵ And in like manner was not also Rahab the harlot accounted as righteous through works, when she received the messengers, and sent them out another way?²⁶ For as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.

3My brethren, be not many teachers, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation.² For in many things we all offend. If any one offend not in speech, the same is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body also.³ For when we put the bits into the horses' mouths, that they may obey us, we turn about also their whole body.⁴ Behold also the ships, which, though they are so great, and driven by fierce winds, are yet turned about with a very small rudder, whithersoever the steersman chooseth.⁵ So also the tongue is

a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a forest a little fire kindleth! ⁶ And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity! The tongue among our members is that which defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the wheel of life, and is itself set on fire by hell. ⁷ For every kind of beasts and of birds, of creeping things and things in the sea, is tamed and hath been tamed by mankind; ⁸ but the tongue can no man tame; it is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. ⁹ Therewith bless we the Lord and Father, and therewith curse we men, who have been made after the likeness of God; ¹⁰ out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. ¹¹ Doth a fountain from the same opening send forth sweet water and bitter? ¹² Can a fig-tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a vine, figs? Neither can salt water yield fresh. ¹³ Who is wise and endued with knowledge among you P let him show out of a good course of conduct his works in meekness of wisdom. ¹⁴ But if ye have bitter rivalry and strife in your hearts, do not glory and lie against the truth. ¹⁵ This wisdom is not that which descendeth from above, but earthly, sensual, devilish. ¹⁶ For where there is rivalry and strife, there is confusion and every evil work. ¹⁷ But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, without hypocrisy. ¹⁸ And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

4Whence are wars and whence are fightings among you? Are they not hence, from your lusts that war in your members? ² Ye lust, and have not; ye kill, and earnestly covet, and cannot obtain; ye fight and war. Ye have not, because ye ask not; ³ ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. ⁴ Ye adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore chooseth to be a friend of the world, becometh an enemy of God. ⁵ Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, "Zealously doth the Spirit, which made its abode in us, long for us"? ⁶ but he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble." ⁷ Submit yourselves therefore to God; resist the Devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸ Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purify your hearts, ye double-minded. ⁹ Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning, and your joy into heaviness. ¹⁰ Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he will exalt you. ¹¹ Speak not against one another, brethren; he that speaketh against his brother, or judgeth his brother, speaketh against the law, and judgeth the law; but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge. ¹² One is the Lawgiver and Judge, he who is able to save, and to destroy; but who art thou, that judgest thy neighbor? ¹³ Come now, ye that say, To-day and to-morrow we will go into such a city, and spend a year there and traffic, and get gain, ¹⁴ (whereas ye know not what will be on the morrow; for what is your life? Ye are even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away;) ¹⁵ instead of saying, If the Lord will, we shall both live and do this or that; ¹⁶ but now