LESSON SIX: James 4

**REVIEW**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 30 CE | Crucifixion/Resurrection/Day of Pentecost | | | Gospel is Preached Only to the Jews | **Jesus Appears to JAMES** (1 Cor. 15:7) | | | |
| 31 | Stephen Martyred | | | PAUL Persecutes the Church | | | |
| 32 |  | | |
| 33 |  | | |
| 34 | PAUL’S Conversion | Churches of Judea don’t know Paul | | Paul is in Arabia & Damascus 3 yrs. then meets with Peter for 15 days in Jerusalem & **meets James** (Gal. 1:18-20) | | | |
| 35 |  |
| 36 |
| 37 | Gospel to the Gentiles | | | | | | | PAUL in Syria and Cilicia Ministering to the Gentiles |
| 38 |  | | | | | | |
| 39 |
| 40 |
| 41 |
| 42 | Barnabas sent to Antioch | Paul Receives the Revelation of Grace | | | | | |
| 43 |  |  | | | | |  |
| 44 | **James Mentioned as Leadership** |  | | | | |  |
| 45 |  |  | | | | |  |
| 46 | **BOOK OF JAMES** to the Twelve Tribes (Jews) | | | | | | |
| 47 |  |  | Paul rebukes Peter (Gal.2) | | | **PAUL’S** 1st Missionary Journey | | |
| 48 |
| 49 |  | | | | | | | |
| 50 | **JERUSALEM COUNCIL ACTS 15: GENTILES NOT UNDER LAW, James Writes Letter to the Gentile Believers** | | | | | **PAUL’S** 2nd Missionary Journey | | |
| 51 |  | | | | |
| 52 | **GALATIANS: Righteousness by Faith Not Law** | | | | |
| 53 |  | | | | | **PAUL’S** 3rd Missionary Journey | | |
| 54 | Paul in Ephesus | | | | |
| 55 |
| 56 | **2 CORINTHIANS 12 “14 years ago” (42CE)** | | | | |
| 57 | **ROMANS: Righteous by Faith Not Law, Paul’s Great Love for Israel** | | | | | | | |
| 58 | **ACTS 21: Paul Submits to James to Appease Jews** | | | | | Paul Arrested in Jerusalem | | |
| 59 |  | | | | | | | |
| 60 |  | **PAUL IMPRISONED** in Rome; Writes Philippians, Philemon Colossians,  **Ephesians** | | | | | | |
| 61 |
| 62 | **JAMES EXECUTED by priestly authorities in Jerusalem** | **HEBREWS** is thought to have been written by Paul shortly before CE 64. | | | | | | |
| 63 |  |
| 64 | Nero’s Persecution | | | | | | | |
| 65 |  | | | | | | | |
| 66 |  | | | | | | | |
| 67 | **Peter and Paul Executed** by Nero | | | | | | | |
| 68 |  | | | | | | | |
| 69 |  | | | | | | | |
| 70 | Destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem ☼ Church is Scattered | | | | | | | |

1. The revelation of the gospel of grace came to the church gradually.
2. They understood that salvation came by faith in Jesus Messiah and belief in His resurrection, but only preached to the Jews.
3. Paul was converted four years after the resurrection but initially only preached to Jews (3 years).
4. Seven years after the resurrection (three years after Paul’s conversion), the gospel was preached to the Gentiles via Peter due to a divine revelation.
5. Paul most likely began to preach salvation to the Gentiles at about this time.
6. There was a rift in the church for many years. Many Jews believed that in order to be saved, the Gentiles had to be circumcised and keep the Law of Moses.
7. About 7 years after Paul’s conversion, he had a vision and was taken up into heaven and we believe that is when he received the full revelation of the gospel of grace (that both Jew and Gentile were equal and free from all of the law).
8. For 20 years Jewish believers were likely taught to continue keeping the law.
9. Most Jews were still living under the law until the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem, but the book of Hebrews was written 7-8 years before that, so it is thought that the believers were being delivered from the law via Paul’s letters.
10. Notice the many writings of Paul could have come to James’ attention after the scene in Acts 21. All of them spoke clearly of the gospel of God’s grace and freedom from the Law of Moses (Phil., Eph., Col., Heb.)
11. The early Church understood the facts of the Gospel, 1 Cor. 15, but until Paul’s revelation no one understood the full implication of the Gospel, i.e complete freedom from sin and the sin nature, and that we are to not look inward to perfect ourselves, but walk in His perfection.

*1 Corinthians 15:1-3   
Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, 2 by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. 3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.*

**This Gospel was known and believed and preached, and turned the world upside down. In A.D. 42 Paul received the Revelation of the Gospel. The facts of the Gospel were already known, but what Paul received was the implication of what the facts mean. Paul was given the fullness of what the facts of the Gospel mean.**

James Chapter Four

**Verses 1 -3**

What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members? 2 You lust and do not have: so you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask. 3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures.

1. **What James writes here is true. Even in the beloved body of Christ, there will be those with selfish ambitions and wrong motives who gossip to defame and manipulate to exalt themselves. It is fair for teachers in the body to correct poor behavior.** Yet, some have generalized that what James is writing is a universal truth of all believers. This is not the case. He is speaking to a specific group AND he likely knows who is causing problems. Paul argued with the Corinthians based on the fact that they had changed. The normal behavior of a believer is to love his fellow believers. As James previously wrote, “Out of the same mouth proceeds blessing and cursing…it should not be like that,” but he never told them WHY, ONLY THAT IT SHOULDN’T BE. Here we see Paul correcting the Corinthians, but it is based on the fact that they were not behaving spiritually, but “as mere men”. Christians are not “mere men”. We have been changed.

***1 Corinthians 3:1-4***

*And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ.****2****I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able;****3****for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you,* ***are you not carnal and behaving like mere men****?****4****For when one says, “I am of Paul,” and another, “I am of Apollos,” are you not carnal?*

1. **James is clearly correcting poor behavior among the people. In fact, the bulk of this letter is correction. Chapter Four of James is much like many of the sermons one might hear on a Sunday morning: solid correction devoid of good news.** Consider the methods of correction Paul usually employed. He either first taught the good news of God’s grace and then proceeded with “therefore” as the basis of correction as in Ephesians and Colossians, or he corrected and backed that up with a clear explanation of the good news to motivate accepting correction as in Galatians and Hebrews, or he intermingled instruction with grace as in Corinthians.
2. **“What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you…” The real source of “sin” among us is the Law.** Paul said the “power of sin is the law” 1 Corinthians 15:56. What James and most churches teach is “lawism” i.e.do good get good, do bad get bad, or be good get good, be bad get bad. Being motivated to change by looking inside ourselves at our motives and deepest “lusts” is the essence of self-religion or self-improvement. This is what most churches teach. When we look away from ourselves to Jesus and all that He has accomplished in and for us, we will then supernaturally change into His image.

***2 Corinthians 3:7-18***

*But if the ministry of death, written and engraved on stones (THE LAW), was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of the glory of his countenance, which glory was passing away, 8how will the ministry of the Spirit (OF GRACE) not be more glorious? 9For if the ministry of condemnation (THE LAW) had glory, the ministry of righteousness (OF GRACE) exceeds much more in glory. 10For even what was made glorious had no glory in this respect, because of the glory that excels. 11For if what is passing away was glorious, what remains is much more glorious.*

*12Therefore, since we have such hope, we use great boldness of speech— 13****unlike Moses****, who put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the end of what was passing away. 14But their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, because the veil is taken away in Christ. 15But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart. 16Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord,* ***the veil is taken away****. 17****Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. 18But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.***

1. **In discussing James, the topic of verbal plenary inspiration must be discussed.** Verbal plenary inspiration is the belief that every word in the original Greek of the canonized Bible was divinely inspired by God and thus profitable to us as instruction for living. VPI is based primarily on these verses.

***2 Timothy 3:15-17***

*15 and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*

*16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God (is God-breathed), and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

* 1. Some have interpreted “Scripture” to mean all the writings that were included in the Canon. Of course the Canon of the Bible was **decided by men** in the 1500’s and 1600’s. They didn’t randomly select which books would be included. The more solid Canons were based on the message of grace and faith. (Yes, there are different Cannons.) The idea of the Cannon is that once decided, the case is closed. No other book is included, and all included books were God breathed. There is no room to consider the author’s perhaps incomplete perspective of the gospel of grace.
  2. It IS a dangerous slope for us to disregard any book of the Bible we now have. This makes room for careless people to eliminate passages with which they do not agree based on their false theology.
  3. It is also dangerous to open the door to the idea that modern day teachings and prophecies are also Scripture. All teachings and prophecies, in fact, MUST BE in agreement with Scripture.
  4. Another problem is when some say that God is “progressive”—that His standards have changed based on our ability to accept them. This is used by those who want to make certain sins socially/spiritual acceptable.
  5. This is why, even though had we been on the committee as to whether or not James should be included as being verbally inspired by God, we would have argued against it, still it is now considered as such. Our only recourse then, is to point out James’ incomplete understanding of the gospel of grace at the time he wrote his letter, draw from his teachings that which is in agreement with the apostle Paul and determine not to use James as a manual for the Christian life today.
  6. If one does insist that James’ teachings were “God-breathed”, this would mean that God directed James to write each and every word and leaves no room for us to point out the FACT that James wrote this letter with only a partial understanding of the gospel of God’s grace. Yet how can we understand his teachings without acknowledging the total context which would include his incomplete knowledge of the implications of the grace of God?

1. **Verses 1 and 2 are true of all of mankind, Christian and non-Christian. The source of quarrels, conflicts, and wars is that of wanting more in order to feed one’s desires/lusts.**
   1. ***Yet, should this describe a Christian fellowship attended by those who understand God’s love for them and extend this love to others? No, it should not. Jesus clearly said that by our love for each other we would be known to the world.***
2. **Yes, it is true. Many ask God for things with wrong motives, then get ticked off because He doesn’t answer their prayers the way THEY want.** The reason is their motives are impure. On the other hand, God DOES answer prayers that are according to His will.

***1 John 5:14-15***

*Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. 15 And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.*

**Verse 4**

You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

1. **This is absolutely true. We are in this world, but we are not of this world, but again, it does not include teaching about the fact that we are not of this world.**

***John 17:14-19***

*This I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 15 I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one.****16 They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.****17 Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. 18 As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.19 And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.*

**Verses 5-6a**

Or do you think that the Scripture speaks to no purpose: “He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us”?

1. **Verse five is difficult to navigate. Even the Amplified Version which so amply translates other verse says in the footnote, “This verse is difficult to translate, and it seems that James is paraphrasing or generalizing a scriptural concept rather than quoting directly from the Old Testament.”**
2. **The Holman Christian Standard Bible offers up these possible translations: “**The Spirit who lives in us yearns jealously, or He who caused the Spirit to live in us yearns jealously, or the spirit He caused to live in us yearns jealously, or He jealously yearns for the Spirit He made to live in us.”
3. **Motyer offers this possible explanation.**

*Arising from this discussion, there are two ways in which we can now present verse 5b. The first is this: ‘Or do you consider that Scripture speaks in this meaningless way: “The Spirit he made dwell in us yearns with sinful jealousy”?’ The second is this: ‘Or do you think scripture speaks meaninglessly, Does the Spirit he made to indwell us yearn with sinful jealousy?’ Motyer, J. A. (1985). The message of James: the tests of faith (p. 149). Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press.*

1. **This we know. God has placed His Spirit in our hearts. We are therefore the temple of the Holy Spirit, both corporately and individually (1 Cor. 3:16-17, 1 Cor. 6). His Holy Spirit yearns in us to not be of the world even though we live in it. His Spirit works in us to do God’s will which includes a life of holiness.**

***1 Corinthians 6:13b-20***

*Now the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.****14****And God both raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by His power.*

***15****Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? Certainly not!****16****Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? For “the two,” He says, “shall become one flesh.”****17****But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him.*

***18****Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body.****19****Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?****20****For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.*

**Verses 6-7**

But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, “God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble.” 7 Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

1. **Verse six gives us a window into understanding James perception of grace which is quite a bit like the manner in which the church sees His grace today—as a means by which we do not sin and that which keeps us humble before God (along with the ability to endure difficulties). Please note that none of the supporting scripture here was available to James at the time of writing his letter. His understanding of the implications of the gospel of grace were thus greatly limited. He apparently did not understand the following:**
   1. **Grace is why CHRISTIANS ARE NO LONGER SINNERS; instead, we are the righteousness of God.**

***Romans 3:2-262***

*But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets,****22****even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference;****23****for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,****24being justified (being made righteous) freely by His grace*** *through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,****25****whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed,****26****to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.*

* 1. **Grace is why sin has no power over believers in Jesus.**

***Romans 6:14***

*For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.*

* 1. **Grace is why ALL of our sins are forgiven and He remembers them no more. We are already purged of our sins. We are already cleansed.**

***1 John 2:12***

*I write to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name’s sake.*

***Colossians 2:13-14***

*And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him,* ***having forgiven you all trespasses****,****14****having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.*

* 1. **The New Covenant of grace causes us to know God.**

***Hebrews 8:11-12***

*None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,****’ for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them****. 12For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.”*

* 1. **Grace is why we LIVE in the Holiest place in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. We “draw near” to God when we believe in Him, and that is where we stay.**

***Hebrews 10:19-22***

*Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20by a new and living way which He consecrated for us,* ***through the veil, that is, His flesh****, 21and having a High Priest over the house of God, 22****let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.***

*This entering into the Holy of Holies which the Messiah inaugurated for sinners was by way of a freshly-slain and living road, and this road went "through the veil, that is to say, His flesh." The inner veil of the tabernacle separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies. It barred man's access to God. When the high priest in Israel went into the Holy of Holies, he brushed aside that veil. The writer speaks of Messiah's humanity, as the veil through which the entrance into the heavenly Holy of Holies was made. As the veil in the tabernacle of Israel while it was not rent, barred man's access to God, so Messiah's humanity, before it was rent on the Cross, barred man's access to God. An uncrucified Saviour is no Saviour. When the Messiah died on the Cross, the veil of the temple was rent by the unseen hand of God, showing Israel two things, that the Messiah had now provided the actual entrance for the sinner into the presence of God, and that the symbolic sacrifices were to be discontinued, for the Reality to whom they pointed had come (9:7-10). The unsaved Jew of the first century who had made a profession of Messiah but had not placed a heart faith in Him for salvation, is now exhorted to do the latter, the writer using Jewish terminology and typology in his exhortation. -Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament – Volume 2.*

* 1. **His grace, the Spirit, and faith are entirely opposed to law, the flesh, and works. These do NOT BALANCE each other. The first group speaks of the New Covenant, the latter of the Old which is obsolete due to the New.**

[***Hebrews 8:13***](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Hebrews+8:13&version=NKJV)

*In that He says, “A new covenant,” He has made the first obsolete.*

1. **God IS opposed to the proud; however, God is for us not against us. He is working in us to will and to do what pleases him.**

***Romans 5:1-2***

*Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand.*

***Romans 8:31-34***

*What then shall we say to these things? If* ***God is for us****, who can be against us? 32He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? 33Who shall bring a charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. 34Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.*

***Philippians 2:12-14***

*Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; 13for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.*

1. **God DOES give grace to the humble. Humility should be evident in the life of a believer.**
2. **When we submit to God and resist the devil, he WILL flee from us. There is a reason for this, though. Satan has been defeated.**

***Hebrews 2:14-15***

*Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, 15and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.*

***Colossians 2:14-15***

*He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, 14 having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. 15 Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.*

1. ***Grace is not earned by being humble or submissive. Grace is freely given and is undeserved and unearned.***

***Romans 11:6* AMP**

*But if it is by grace [God’s unmerited favor], it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace [it would not be a gift but a reward for works].*

**Verses 8-10**

Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. 9 Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy to gloom. 10 Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.

1. **The ONLY way that these verses can be in harmony with the gospel of grace that Paul taught is if James is now focusing in on unbelievers, and it is not apparent that he is. The church today largely has no problem with James’ letter or these verses because their perception of the gospel is similar to James’. Again, James’ understanding of the gospel of grace (along with the whole church at the time he wrote his letter), was incomplete.**
2. **Do we need to “draw near to God”? The implication is that He is far off, Usually, they say, because of our sin or un holiness, and if we confess our sin and “get right” with God, He will draw near to us again. THIS IS FALSE. He has already drawn near to you if you believe in Jesus, and He has promised to NEVER leave us.**

***Hebrews 5:13 AMP***

*For He has said, “I will never [under any circumstances] desert you [nor give you up nor leave you without support, nor will I in any degree leave you helpless], nor will I forsake or let you down or relax My hold on you [assuredly not]!” 6 So we take comfort and are encouraged and confidently say,*

**“The Lord is my Helper [in time of need], I will not be afraid.**

1. **How do we “humble” ourselves? It is by believing in Jesus and His finished work. It is the truest humility to know that there is nothing we can do to make ourselves “right” with God, and that Only believing in what Jesus has done makes us righteous.**

**Verses 11-12**

Do not speak against one another, brethren. He who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks against the law and judges the law; but if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge of it. 12 There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the One who is able to save and to destroy; but who are you who judge your neighbor?

1. **James is arguing for good behavior and love for the brethren based on the law. James, along with most of the Jews of that time argued based on the law. Paul argued for our good behavior based on God’s completed work of grace. We don’t love because of the Law, but because we have been changed by His grace and this causes us to love each other. It is imperative that we understand this historic context. WE ARE NOT UNDER LAW—NOT EVEN PARTIALLY. WE ARE UNDER GRACE AND ONLY GRACE.**

***Romans 5:5***

*Now hope does not disappoint, because the* ***love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.***

***1 John 3:14***

*We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren.*

***1 John 4:7-11***

*Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8****He who does not love does not know God****, for God is love. 9In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. 10In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. 11Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.*

**Verses 13-17**

Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit.” 14 Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. 15 Instead, you ought to say, “If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that.” 16 But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil. 17 Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin.

1. **James is addressing “you who say”, not all believers.**
2. **There is wisdom within these verses, but consider the type of person he addresses: quarrelsome, greedy, pleasure-seekers, adulterers, hostile toward God, friends of this world, proud, far from God, unclean hands, sinners, unpurified hearts, double-minded, speaking against each other, and judging each other. First of all, this should NOT describe any believer’s existence. In fact, some have reasoned that this chapter is written to the non-saved among the twelve tribes. We wish this was more apparent as it seems more likely that he is addressing believers.**
3. **ALL of the believers of those days made plans and took steps forward to reach goals. Even those who teach James intensely today make plans and take steps toward their goals. Jesus had a mission and goal and He reached it. Paul was determined to go to Jerusalem. He planned trips and decided who would go along with him. He reached his goal of fully teaching the gospel of God grace. He finished his race.**
4. **Yes, without God’s love we are nothing. Yet, certainly Paul argued that our lives ARE significant. Wasn’t his? While our lives are relatively short, they are valuable in God’s eyes. Certainly boasting is vanity, but it is not sinful to make plans if we understand and accept that God’s will might alter them along the way. Of course not doing what is right and doing what is wrong is sin, but Paul said that whatever is not of faith is sin. It looks the same on paper, but there is a big difference. We walk by faith, and not by law.**
5. **Any Christian teacher who says that making plans for the future is evil needs to cancel his next church business meeting. Almost every Christians organization makes plans.**

**How do we process James 4?**

1. **We must take into consideration James’ imperfect understanding of the implications of the gospel of grace. James had never read anything Paul wrote at the time he wrote James.**
2. **We need to consider the people to whom he was speaking. (See point 22 above.)**
3. **If these terms do describe us, we should**
4. Examine ourselves to see if we are really in the faith (2 Cor. 13:5), OR
5. Get out from under law (1 Cor. 15:56, Rom. 6:14)!
6. **If James was teaching the gospel on the basis of law, it was why he had to write these things. Law strengthens sin.** James did not know that in his efforts to control behavior by using Law as a motivator, he was actually strengthening sin.
7. **We are instructed to look to Jesus, not the Law, as our reason for and power to be transformed.**
8. **The book of James can give us insight into the limited understanding of the gospel of grace that is predominantly evident in the church today.** James was a godly man. His motives were pure, but his understanding was incomplete. Thus it is with many ministers today. With all of their hearts, they want to please God and teach truth, but often fall short because their own understanding is limited. May the Lord give us grace to patiently teach those who will listen and to pray for the eyes of their understanding to be opened.
9. **One pastor said to us, “If we don’t teach law, how will the people know what is right and wrong?”** The answer is that His grace, not law now teaches us to live godly (Titus 2:11-14), and it is because we are not under law, but under grace that sin has no dominion over us (Rom. 6:14). Another person asked, “If both law and grace lead to holy living, what difference does it make which we teach if the outcome is the same?” The answer is that Jesus DIED to set us free from law and give us grace. Law *can* make some people conform, but it can’t bring about a heart change to the point where someone wants to do what is right and does not want to do what is immoral. As Paul wrote in Galatians 3,

***“What purpose then does the law serve?*** *It was added because of transgressions,* ***till the Seed should come*** *to whom the promise was made; and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator. 20Now a mediator does not mediate for one only, but God is one. 21Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For* ***if*** *there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law. 22****But*** *the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise* ***by faith in Jesus Christ*** *might be given to those who* ***believe****. 23But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. 24****Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.”***