

# THE BOOK OF JAMES

## *“By the Word of Truth”*

Scripture Reading: JAMES 1:13-18

- ) **SLIDES 1-6**. Bible Jeopardy!
- ) **SLIDES 7-8**. Read today’s Scripture text.
- ) **SLIDE 9**. We continue today in our expository study in the Book of JAMES. This is week #6. I have titled today’s message *“By the Word of Truth”* (1:18).
- ) Last week we covered v13-15 and concluded that God cannot tempt us or cause us to sin. It is not in His nature to do so. I purposely included those three verses in our Scripture reading for today because I believe James wants to contrast what some people may have thought about God (that He can in fact tempt us), with the true nature of God (no He can’t).
- ) **SLIDE 10**. And in v16 James does not want us to be deceived in believing so—that the true God cannot possibly be the same God who can tempt us unto evil. May it never be. So, what is the true nature of God? Today let’s look at just two attributes of God that James writes for us here in today’s text.
- ) **SLIDE 11**. God does not and cannot **CHANGE**.
- ) **SLIDE 12**. JAMES 1:17. Two things James is saying in v17. One is that there is no variation with God. He remains the same.
- ) **SLIDE 13**. JAMES 1:17. And the second thing is that God is the Father of lights. What lights? The sun, the moon, and the stars. And what do the sun, the moon, and the stars do? They change. The sun, the moon, and the stars have different phases of movement and rotation, they vary in intensity, and they vary in the shadows they cast. They are always changing.

- ) But what James wants us to know is that God does not and cannot change. Here are several other Scripture verses that attest to God's never-changing nature.
- ) **SLIDE 14.** 1 SAMUEL 15:29.
- ) **SLIDE 15.** PSALM 102:26-27.
- ) **SLIDE 16.** MALACHI 3:6.
- ) **SLIDE 17.** HEBREWS 13:8. God will never change. He will not begin to tempt you or cause you to sin. He cannot do that. His nature will never change. Same God OT and NT.
- ) So the first attribute of God that James wants us to know in these verses today is that He will never change, He remains the same. Now, let's look at a second attribute of God.
- ) **SLIDE 18.** JAMES 1:17. God gives His children good things. And there is one perfect gift He has given us. Let's go to the gospels and look at the words of Jesus where Jesus says the same thing. Remember, James is Jesus' half-brother. Almost makes you think James was there when Jesus said this.
- ) **SLIDE 19.** LUKE 11:9-13. Again, what Jesus is saying here, and what James is saying in v17, are the same thing. God has a perfect gift for those who ask with a penitent and contrite heart. And what is that gift? Eternal life. Salvation.
- ) **SLIDE 20.** But a person cannot get eternal life any way they want. There is only one source of truth which can give us eternal life. And James tells us what that is. JAMES 1:18. "*By the Word of Truth.*" Bringing us forth means He brought us out of darkness into the light.
- ) **SLIDE 21.** Every believer is transformed from darkness to light by the same source of truth. What is that source? The Word of Truth. The Word of God. The gospel. ROMANS 1:16.

- ) **SLIDE 22.** James says we are saved by the Word of Truth (gospel). Paul says we are saved by the gospel. Jesus says we must believe that He is who He says He is. JOHN 8:24.
- ) Where is the only place a person can hear and learn about Jesus? In the Word of God—the Bible. And if Jesus says we must believe that He is who He says He is, we must read or hear to know about Him from the gospels.
- ) But there is a belief floating around out there which says a person can be saved without ever hearing the gospel or hearing and knowing about Jesus. This belief is called “Natural Theology.”
- ) Natural Theology is when a person believes that a person can be saved naturally (IOW strictly by their own reason, wisdom, emotions, and resources) without any kind of divine revelation. They can, by their own means, ascend to God (religion). Billy Graham was an advocate of natural theology.
- ) So, can a person who has never heard of Jesus or the gospel message be saved? A Natural Theologist believes they can. But the Bible teaches otherwise.
- ) **SLIDE 23.** Now, I want you to know that I preached a 4-week sermon series on this back in 2015. If you care to know more about this topic, I suggest you listen to these four messages. Today you get the condensed version.
- ) Allow me to use this as an example. In July of 1975, I drove my 1974 Dodge Charger SE from Waynesboro, Virginia to the Grand Canyon near Flagstaff, Arizona (and back again). A trip of about 5300 miles. The only way I could ever make that trip successfully was to read a map and follow road signs. Without a map and signs in the road, I would be lost and never get to my destination.
- ) In other words for my travel plans to work, there must be a source of some sort that would reveal to me what I needed to

know to make my trip a success. And what was that revelation? A map and road signs.

- ) So, if a traveler needs a map and road signs or a GPS to make it to their destination, what does a person need to be saved?
- ) **SLIDE 24.** The knowledge of God's plan of salvation does not come through natural means. It comes through a **SUPERNATURAL** means.
- ) God has chosen to reveal His plan of salvation through a supernatural means. And that my friends is called the Bible—the Scriptures—which contains the gospel.
- ) Listen. The only way I got from Waynesboro, Virginia to the Grand Canyon in Arizona (and back again) in 1975 was to read a map and follow road signs. Without a map I have no idea where I am or where I am going. And without divine revelation (the Bible) we would never know or understand God's plan of salvation.
- ) Let's keep this simple. If you are saved you heard the gospel. Either you read it here in the Bible and it was revealed to you or someone who had Bible knowledge of God's plan of salvation revealed it and explained it to you. Your conversion may have been instantaneous or maybe it had to soak in over a period of years or even decades.
- ) But the bottom line is this: without this (divine revelation) you and I have no hope of salvation. You can't get there on your own. Why? Because we are brought forth by the Word of Truth (JAMES 1:18) and the Word of Truth is found in the gospel message (ROMANS 1:16) and the gospel message is found in God's Word, the Bible—His divine revelation to us.
- ) **SLIDE 25.** The apostle Paul does a wonderful job of making this point. ROMANS 10:12-13.
- ) **SLIDE 26.** ROMANS 10:14-15. But then he takes that point and makes a backwards argument.

- ) In order for me to call on the name of the Lord, I have to believe in Him. In order to believe in Him, I have to hear about Him. In order to hear about Him, someone has to preach (or tell me). In order to tell me, someone who knows this gospel message has to be sent to me.
- ) Conclusion: Blessed are the feet of those who bring this good news! Praise God for this divine revelation and the people He placed in our lives who brought us the good news.
- ) **SLIDE 27.** ROMANS 10:17. And then the best verse, verse #17. So faith (that's what saves us) coming by hearing, and hearing by the words of Christ.
- ) Allow me to use the map analogy. I want to drive from Verona, Virginia to Dallas, Texas to visit my son. In order to get to Dallas, I have to believe the map. In order to believe the map, I have to have a map. In order to get a map, someone has to create a map. In order to create a map, someone has to know all the states and roads and then print the map.
- ) Conclusion: Blessed are the mapmakers and GPS inventors so I know the way to where I am going. Without their revelation, I'm stuck in Augusta County or lost somewhere. And that's just it, isn't it? With divine revelation, people are lost somewhere.
- ) Many people who buy into Natural Theology believe that Jesus just appears to some people and explains everything to them. No Bible. Just special, individual, divine revelation right from Christ Himself. Let me just say this. That is a can of worms you do not want to open. Joseph Smith had a revelation and him and his corrupt Mormon theology are leading millions of people straight into the pits of hell.
- ) Believing in Natural Theology means that there are sources of divine truth outside of this Bible. If that's true, that means everyone has their own gospel and everyone is their own source of truth. That's called relativism.

) It's also called the Oprah Winfrey school of theology and it doesn't work. It's only a path of destruction.

) **SLIDE 28**. How does one come forth from darkness into light? What does James tell us? By the Word of Truth. And only by the Word of Truth.

2/13/2022 at Beech Grove Christian Church