

*The Letter to the
12 Tribes*

James

Jas. 3:13-17



Jas. 3:13 Who *is* a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.

14 But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.

15 This wisdom descendeth not from above, but *is* earthly, sensual, devilish.

16 For where envying and strife *is*, there *is* confusion and every evil work.

17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, *and* easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

18 And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.



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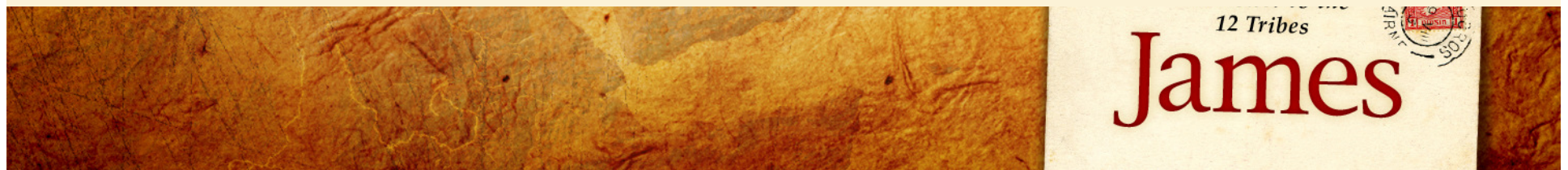
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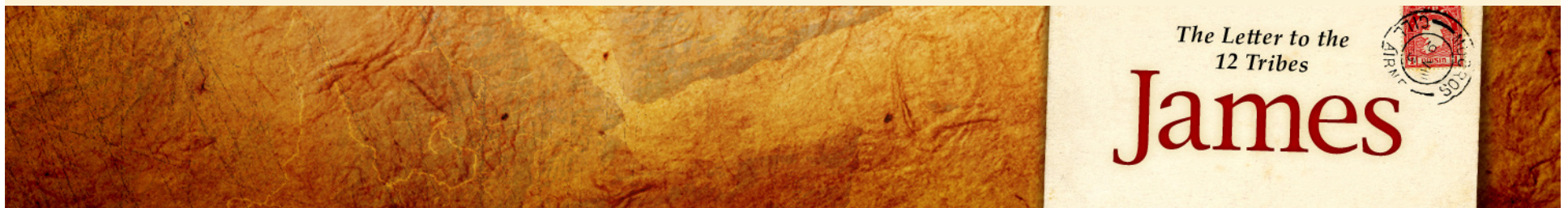
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Jas. 3:13 Who *is* a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.

2 Cor. 1:12 For our rejoicing is this, **the testimony of our conscience**, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, **not with fleshly wisdom**, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward.



1 Pet. 2:12 Having your **conversation** honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, **they may by your good works, which they shall behold**, glorify God in the day of visitation.

1 Pet. 3:1 Likewise, ye wives, *be* in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives;
2 While **they behold your chaste conversation** *coupled* with fear.

Original Word: πραΰτης

Transliteration: prautés

Short Definition: mildness, gentleness, meekness

Meekness ("gentle strength") expresses *power with reserve and gentleness*.

For the believer, meekness (4240 /*praýtēs*, "gentle-force") *begins* with the Lord's inspiration and *finishes* by His direction and empowerment. It is a *divinely-balanced* virtue that can only operate through faith (cf. 1 Tim 6:11; 2 Tim 2:22-25). <http://biblehub.com/greek/4240.htm>

Jas. 1:21 Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with **meekness** the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.

1 Pet. 3:15 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and *be* ready always to *give* an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with **meekness** and fear:

"The problem seems to be that some self-styled chief people, thinking they were endowed with superior wisdom and understanding, had divided the church because of their teaching, which betrayed a misuse of the tongue."

Martin, Ralph P. *James*. Word Biblical Commentary series. Waco: Word Books, 1988, p. 128.

"The pride of knowledge has always been the besetting sin of professional teachers."

Wessel, Walter W. "The Epistle of James." In *The Wycliffe Bible Commentary*, pp. 1436. Edited by Charles F. Pfeiffer and Everett F. Harrison. Chicago: Moody Press, 1962.

"It is very difficult to be a teacher or a preacher and to remain humble; but however difficult it is, it is absolutely necessary."
Barclay, William. *The Letters of James and Peter*. Daily Study Bible series. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1960. P. 107

(2) The muddy stream of wicked behavior, 3:14

(a) A bitter spirit, 3:14a – “But if ye have bitter envying...”

Original Word: ζῆλος

Transliteration: zelos

Definition: (a) eagerness, zeal, enthusiasm, (b) jealousy, rivalry.

Properly, burning emotion (inner feeling boiling over, "boiling from heat," J. Thayer); (figuratively) something very *fervent* ("red-hot") as with Spirit-fueled zeal to *serve the Lord*. This root (zē-) is used both negatively ("jealousy") and positively ("zeal") depending on *the context*.



(b) A belligerent spirit, 3:14b –
“...and strife in your hearts...”

Original Word: ἐριθεία

Transliteration: eritheia

Definition: (the seeking of followers and adherents by means of gifts, the seeking of followers, hence) ambition, rivalry, self-seeking; a feud, faction, strife.

2052 *eritheía* (from *eritheuō*, "work for hire") – properly, work done *merely for hire* (as a *mercenary*), referring therefore to *carnal ambition* (*selfish rivalry*).

Ancient Greek uses 2052 /*eritheía* ("mercenary self-seeking") of acting for one's *own gain*, regardless of the discord (strife) it causes. 2052 /*eritheía* ("selfish ambition") **places self-interest ahead of what *the Lord* declares right, or what is good for others.** <http://biblehub.com/greek/2052.htm>

2 Cor. 12:19 Again, think ye that we excuse ourselves unto you? we speak before God in Christ: but *we do* all things, dearly beloved, for your edifying.

20 For I fear, lest, when I come, **I shall not find you such as I would**, and *that* I shall be found unto you such as ye would not: lest *there be* debates, envyings, wraths, **strifes**, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults:

21 *And* lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and **that I shall bewail many which have sinned already**, and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed.

(c) A boastful spirit, 3:14c –
“...glory not...”



Original Word: κατακαυχάομαι

Transliteration: katakauchaomai

Definition: I boast against, exult over.

Properly, boast *down*, over-exalting one thing *at the expense* of another which results in *wrong conclusions* – i.e. that unjustifiably *downgrade* by boasting with a sense of *false superiority* (Rom. 11:18; Jas. 3:14). <http://biblehub.com/greek/2620.htm>

Original Word: ψεύδομαι

Transliteration: pseudomai

Definition: I deceive, lie, speak falsely.

5574 *pseúdomai* (from *pseudō*, "to falsify, lie") – properly, lie (falsify), willfully misrepresent (mislead).

<http://biblehub.com/greek/5574.htm>



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(d) A blind spirit, 3:14d –
“...and lie not against the truth.”

b. Wisdom and its source, 3:15-17

(1) The source of human wisdom, 3:15-16

(a) Its outflow, 3:15

i. Its secular source,
3:15a – “This wisdom
descendeth not from
above...”

ii. Its sensual source,
3:15b – “...but *is* earthly,
sensual...”

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Original Word: ἐπίγειος

Transliteration: epigeios

Definition: (a) on the earth, belonging to the earth (as opposed to the sky), (b) in a spiritual sense, belonging to the earthly sphere, earthly (as opposed to heavenly).

Properly, upon the earth, referring to earthly (physical) life – i.e. the physical realities that naturally go with daily life.

<http://biblehub.com/greek/1919.htm>

Original Word: ψυχικός

Transliteration: psuchikos

Definition: animal, natural, sensuous.

5591 /*psyxikós* ("natural") typically describes the *natural* ("lower") aspect of humanity, i.e. behavior that is "more of *earth* (carnality) than heaven." 5591 (*psyxikós*) then sometimes stands in contrast to 4152 /*pneumatikós* ("spiritual") – the higher, spiritual aspect of humanity that develops through *faith* (4102 /*pístis*).

<http://biblehub.com/greek/5591.htm>

iii. Its satanic source,
3:15c – “...devilish.”

(b) Its outcome, 3:16

i. Unrest, 3:16a – “For
where envying and strife
is, there *is* confusion...”

ii. Ungodliness, 3:16b –
“...and every evil work.”

"There is a kind of person who is undoubtedly clever; he has an acute brain and a skilful tongue; but his effect in any committee, in any Church, in any group, is to cause trouble, to drive people apart, to foment strife, to make trouble, to disturb personal relationships. It is a sobering thing to remember that the wisdom that that man possesses is devilish rather than divine, and that such a man is engaged on Satan's work and not on God's work."

Barclay, *The Letters . . .*, p. 110.

(2) The source of heavenly wisdom, 3:17

(a) Its basic characteristic, 3:17a
– “But the wisdom that is from above...”

(b) Its benevolent characteristics, 3:17b-d

i. Its motivation, 3:17b –
“...is **first pure**...”

Original Word: ἁγνός

Transliteration: hagnos

Definition: (originally, in a condition prepared for worship), pure (either ethically, or ritually, ceremonially), chaste.

Properly, *pure* (to the *core*); *virginal* (chaste, unadulterated); pure *inside and out*; *holy* because *uncontaminated* (undefiled from sin), i.e. without spoilation even within (even down to the center of one's being); not *mixed* with guilt or anything condemnable.

<http://biblehub.com/greek/53.htm>

ii. Its moderation, 3:17c –
“...**then** peaceable,
gentle...”

iii. Its mediation, 3:17d –
“...*and* easy to be
intreated...”

Original Word: ἐπιεικής

Transliteration: epieikés

Definition: gentle, mild, forbearing, fair, reasonable, moderate.

Properly, *equitable*; **"gentle" in the sense of truly fair by relaxing overly strict standards in order to keep the "spirit of the law."** - Hence, it is *true equity* that appropriately fulfills the *spirit* (not just the letter) of the law.

<http://biblehub.com/greek/1933.htm>

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(c) Its bountiful characteristics,
3:17e-f

i. In the thoughts it
entertains, 3:17e – “...full
of mercy...”

ii. In the things it
espouses, 3:17f – “...and
good fruits...”

Original Word: καρπός

Transliteration: karpos

Definition: (a) fruit, generally vegetable, sometimes animal, (b)

met: fruit, deed, action, result, (c) profit, gain.

By definition, fruit (2590 /*karpós*) results from *two* life-streams – the Lord living His life through ours – to yield what is eternal <http://biblehub.com/greek/2590.htm>



1 Jn. 4:17 Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because **as he is, so are we in this world.**

18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.

19 We love **him**, because he first loved us.

(d) Its balanced characteristics,
3:17g-h

i. Absolutely unbiased,
3:17g – “...without
partiality...”

ii. Absolutely
unblemished, 3:17h –
“...and without
hypocrisy.”

b. Wisdom and its force, 3:18

Jas. 3:18 And **the fruit of righteousness** is sown in peace of them that make peace.

James warns against anything that does not bear the fruit of good works:

- unfruitful religion (1:25-26),
- unfruitful faith (2:26), and
- unfruitful wisdom (3:17-18).



Conclusion

Psa. 85:10 Mercy and truth are met together; **righteousness and peace** have kissed *each other*.

Isa. 32:17 And the work of **righteousness shall be peace**; and **the effect of righteousness** quietness and assurance for ever.

Rom. 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but **righteousness, and peace**, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

2 Tim. 2:22 Flee also youthful lusts: but **follow righteousness**, faith, charity, **peace**, with them that call on the Lord out of a **pure heart**.

Heb. 7:2 To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation **King of righteousness**, and **after that** also King of Salem, which is, **King of peace**;