

**Study Guide #1**

**Virtual Study of James – James 1:1-18**  
Bellevue Church of Christ – Summer 2020

*Which James Wrote  
this Letter?*

**I. Joy in Trials  
(1-12)**

*Why should we be joyful  
in the face of trials?*

**\*Perseverance (v. 2-8)**

**-Rom 5:1-5**

*What do we do if we  
don't have the wisdom  
to see the benefit of a  
trial we are dealing  
with? What if we can't  
handle the trial we are  
facing? We should pray  
to God and ask for  
wisdom. (5)*

**\*Perspective (vv. 9-11)**

*Why do trials exalt the  
poor man but humble the  
rich man? What do  
trials teach us about  
the things of this  
world?*  
**-Ecc 2:1-11**

**\*Promise (v. 12)**

**-Rom 8:18-21**

**II. The Source of  
Temptation (13-18)**

*What is the true  
source of our  
temptation?*

Acts 8:1; 11:19

<sup>1</sup> **James**, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes in the **Dispersion**: Greetings.

<sup>2</sup> Count it all **joy**, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, *Things that put us to the test*

<sup>3</sup> for you know that the testing of your faith produces **steadfastness**.

<sup>4</sup> And let **steadfastness** have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

<sup>5</sup> If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.

<sup>6</sup> But let him **ask in faith**, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind.

<sup>7</sup> For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord;

<sup>8</sup> he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

<sup>9</sup> Let the lowly brother **boast in his exaltation**,

<sup>10</sup> and the rich **in his humiliation**, because like a flower of the grass he will pass away.

<sup>11</sup> For the sun rises with its scorching heat and withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beauty perishes. So also will the rich man fade away in the midst of his pursuits.

<sup>12</sup> Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him.

<sup>13</sup> Let no one say when he is tempted, "**I am being tempted by God**," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one.

<sup>14</sup> But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire.

<sup>15</sup> Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

<sup>16</sup> Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers.

<sup>17</sup> Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.

<sup>18</sup> Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

James, son of Zebedee  
-Matt 4:18-22; 10:2  
-Mark 3:17  
-Luke 9:51-56  
-Acts 12:1-2  
James, son of Alphaeus  
-Matt 10:3; Acts 1:13  
James, father of Judas  
-Luke 6:16  
James, brother of Jesus  
-Matt 13:55; John 7:5  
-Acts 1:14; 12:17  
-Acts 15:13-33; 21:18,19  
-I Cor 15:7  
-Gal 1:19; 2:9

**What does it mean to  
ask in faith?**  
-Matthew 14:28-33  
-Mark 11:22-24  
-Joshua 3:14-17

*(Based on what James has  
said about the benefits of  
trials, this conclusion  
might be incorrectly made  
about the source of  
temptation!)*

**Reasons why God cannot be  
the source of temptation:**  
a. **He cannot be tempted by  
Evil (v. 13; I John 1:5)**  
b. **He only gives good things  
(v. 17)**  
c. **He gave us a new birth  
(v. 18)**

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**Questions for Discussion**

***Joy in Trials***

Why should we rejoice in facing various trials? If our faith is genuine, what will this testing produce? (vv. 2-3 ; Roman 5:1-5)

What is the full effect of steadfastness or perseverance? (v. 4)

What are some ways in which we can develop a joyful attitude in situations where it seems impossible? (vv. Ecc 2:1-11; Phil 4:4-13)

If perseverance has not yet reached it's full effect, and we are lacking, what should we do? (v. 5)

If we do not receive what we ask for, does the barrier lie with God or with us? (vv. 6-8)

What does it mean to "ask in faith?" In a practical sense, how will we act if we truly believe that what we are asking for will come to pass?  
(vv. 6-8 ; Matthew 14:28-33 ; Mark 11:22-24 ; Joshua 3:14-17)

What is the "high position" or the "exaltation" that humble or lowly brother should boast in when trials come? (v. 9)

Why does the same treatment (trials) exalt the poor man but humble the rich man?  
What do trials teach us about the things of this world? (v. 10)

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If someone places their focus on the pursuit of worldly things, what do they have to look forward to? In what way is this knowledge uplifting or liberating?  
(vv. 10-11; Ecclesiastes 2:1-11)

If a believer perseveres through the trials of life, what does he or she have to look forward to? How does this help us endure the difficult times? (vv. 12 ; Matthew 5:10-12 ; Romans 8:18-21)

***The Source of Temptation***

Based on what James has said about the benefits of trials, what conclusion might one have incorrectly made about the source of temptation? (v. 13)

What is the first reason that James gives that temptation cannot come from God? Why does this explanation rule out the possibility? (v. 13)

Who or what does James blame for temptation? (v. 14)

What does temptation lead to? What is the final result? (v. 15)

What is the second reason that James gives that temptation does not come from God? Why does this explanation rule out the possibility? (vv. 16-17)

What is the third reason that James gives that temptation does not come from God? Why does this explanation rule out the possibility? What is the “word of truth?” (v. 18)

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**Introduction**

**Author:** James, who identifies himself as "a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ" (1:1). There are four men who bear this name in the New Testament:

- James, son of Zebedee and brother of John - A fisherman called by Christ (Matthew 4:17-22) who later became an apostle (Matthew 10:2). Together with John, they were nicknamed "Sons of Thunder" because of their impulsiveness (cf. Mark 3:17 with Luke 9:51-56). He was killed by Herod in 44 A.D. (Acts 12:1-2).
- James, son of Alphaeus - Another one of the apostles (Matthew 10:3; Acts 1:12), about whom very little is known.
- James, father of Judas the apostle - Even more obscure, one of the few references to him is Luke 6:16.
- James, the brother of our Lord - A half-brother of our Lord (Matthew 13:55), who did not believe in his brother at first (John 7:5). He became a disciple following the resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:7; Acts 1:14) and gained prominence in the church at Jerusalem (Galatians 2:9). As evidence of his prominence, Peter sent him a special message following his own release from prison (Acts 12:17). James also played an important role in the conference at Jerusalem (Acts 15:13-33), and Paul brought him greetings upon arriving at Jerusalem (Acts 21:18-19).

Of these four, "James, the Lord's brother" (Galatians 1:19) is the most likely the author of this epistle. According to Josephus, he was martyred in 62 A.D.

**Recipients:** The epistle is addressed to "to the twelve tribes in Dispersion:" (1:1). This naturally leads one to think of Jewish believers who had been dispersed from Jerusalem in the persecution following Stephen's death. While Jews, the epistle makes it clear that they were also brethren in the Lord, i.e., they were Jewish Christians. Nineteen times James calls them "brethren."

**Time and Place of Writing:** With no mention of the Jerusalem conference recorded in Acts 15 (A.D. 49), and the use of the word "synagogue" (assembly, 2:2), A.D. 48-50 is the date commonly given for this epistle. This would make it the first book of the New Testament written. If James, the Lord's brother, is the author, then he probably wrote it in Jerusalem.

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**James – Who Wrote the Epistle?**

**Matthew 4:18-22 (ESV)**

<sup>18</sup> While walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon (who is called Peter) and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. <sup>19</sup> And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." <sup>20</sup> Immediately they left their nets and followed him. <sup>21</sup> And going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and he called them. <sup>22</sup> Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

**Matthew 10:1-4 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every affliction. <sup>2</sup> The names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; <sup>3</sup> Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; <sup>4</sup> Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

**Matthew 13:53-58 (ESV)**

<sup>53</sup> And when Jesus had finished these parables, he went away from there, <sup>54</sup> and coming to his hometown he taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished, and said, "Where did this man get this wisdom and these mighty works? <sup>55</sup> Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? <sup>56</sup> And are not all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?" <sup>57</sup> And they took offense at him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and in his own household." <sup>58</sup> And he did not do many mighty works there, because of their unbelief.

**Mark 3:16-19 (ESV)**

<sup>16</sup> He appointed the twelve: Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter); <sup>17</sup> James the son of Zebedee and John the brother of James (to whom he gave the name Boanerges, that is, Sons of Thunder); <sup>18</sup> Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Cananaean, <sup>19</sup> and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

**Luke 6:16 (ESV)**

<sup>16</sup> and Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.

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**Luke 9:51-56 (ESV)**

<sup>51</sup> When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem. <sup>52</sup> And he sent messengers ahead of him, who went and entered a village of the Samaritans, to make preparations for him. <sup>53</sup> But the people did not receive him, because his face was set toward Jerusalem. <sup>54</sup> And when his disciples James and John saw it, they said, "Lord, do you want us to tell fire to come down from heaven and consume them?" <sup>55</sup> But he turned and rebuked them. <sup>56</sup> And they went on to another village.

**John 7:1-11 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> After this Jesus went about in Galilee. He would not go about in Judea, because the Jews were seeking to kill him. <sup>2</sup> Now the Jews' Feast of Booths was at hand. <sup>3</sup> So his brothers said to him, "Leave here and go to Judea, that your disciples also may see the works you are doing." <sup>4</sup> For no one works in secret if he seeks to be known openly. If you do these things, show yourself to the world." <sup>5</sup> For not even his brothers believed in him. <sup>6</sup> Jesus said to them, "My time has not yet come, but your time is always here. <sup>7</sup> The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify about it that its works are evil. <sup>8</sup> You go up to the feast. I am not going up to this feast, for my time has not yet fully come." <sup>9</sup> After saying this, he remained in Galilee. <sup>10</sup> But after his brothers had gone up to the feast, then he also went up, not publicly but in private. <sup>11</sup> The Jews were looking for him at the feast, and saying, "Where is he?"

**Acts 1:12-14 (ESV)**

<sup>12</sup> Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away. <sup>13</sup> And when they had entered, they went up to the upper room, where they were staying, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judas the son of James. <sup>14</sup> All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.

**Acts 12:1-5 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> About that time Herod the king laid violent hands on some who belonged to the church. <sup>2</sup> He killed James the brother of John with the sword, <sup>3</sup> and when he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also. This was during the days of Unleavened Bread. <sup>4</sup> And when he had seized him, he put him in prison, delivering him over to four squads of soldiers to guard him, intending after the Passover to bring him out to the people. <sup>5</sup> So Peter was kept in prison, but earnest prayer for him was made to God by the church.

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**Acts 12:17 (ESV)**

<sup>17</sup> But motioning to them with his hand to be silent, he described to them how the Lord had brought him out of the

**Acts 21:17-19 (ESV)**

<sup>17</sup> When we had come to Jerusalem, the brothers received us gladly. <sup>18</sup> On the following day Paul went in with us to James, and all the elders were present. <sup>19</sup> After greeting them, he related one by one the things that God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry.

**1 Corinthians 15:3-8 (ESV)**

<sup>3</sup> For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, <sup>4</sup> that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, <sup>5</sup> and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. <sup>6</sup> Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. <sup>7</sup> Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. <sup>8</sup> Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.

**Galatians 1:18-20 (ESV)**

<sup>18</sup> Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas and remained with him fifteen days. <sup>19</sup> But I saw none of the other apostles except James the Lord's brother. <sup>20</sup> (In what I am writing to you, before God, I do not lie!)

**Galatians 2:7-9 (ESV)**

<sup>7</sup> On the contrary, when they saw that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been entrusted with the gospel to the circumcised <sup>8</sup> (for he who worked through Peter for his apostolic ministry to the circumcised worked also through me for mine to the Gentiles), <sup>9</sup> and when James and Cephas and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given to me, they gave the right hand of fellowship to Barnabas and me, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised.

**Acts 15:13-33 (ESV)**

<sup>13</sup> After they finished speaking, James replied, "Brothers, listen to me. <sup>14</sup> Simeon has related how God first visited the Gentiles, to take from them a people for his name. <sup>15</sup> And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written, <sup>16</sup> " 'After this I will return, and I will rebuild the tent of David that has fallen; I will rebuild its ruins, and I will restore it, <sup>17</sup> that the remnant of mankind may seek the Lord, and all the Gentiles who are called by my name, says the Lord, who makes these things <sup>18</sup> known from of old.' <sup>19</sup> Therefore my judgment is that we should not trouble those of the Gentiles who turn to God, <sup>20</sup> but should write to them to abstain from the things polluted by idols, and from sexual immorality, and from what has been strangled, and from blood. <sup>21</sup> For from ancient generations Moses has had in every city those who proclaim him, for he is read every Sabbath in the synagogues." <sup>22</sup> Then it seemed good to the apostles and the

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elders, with the whole church, to choose men from among them and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They sent Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, leading men among the brothers,<sup>23</sup> with the following letter: "The brothers, both the apostles and the elders, to the brothers who are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, greetings.<sup>24</sup> Since we have heard that some persons have gone out from us and troubled you with words, unsettling your minds, although we gave them no instructions,<sup>25</sup> it has seemed good to us, having come to one accord, to choose men and send them to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,<sup>26</sup> men who have risked their lives for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>27</sup> We have therefore sent Judas and Silas, who themselves will tell you the same things by word of mouth.<sup>28</sup> For it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay on you no greater burden than these requirements:<sup>29</sup> that you abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from what has been strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell."<sup>30</sup> So when they were sent off, they went down to Antioch, and having gathered the congregation together, they delivered the letter.<sup>31</sup> And when they had read it, they rejoiced because of its encouragement.<sup>32</sup> And Judas and Silas, who were themselves prophets, encouraged and strengthened the brothers with many words.<sup>33</sup> And after they had spent some time, they were sent off in peace by the brothers to those who had sent them.

**Dispersion**

**Acts 8:1 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> And Saul approved of his execution. And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.

**Acts 11:19 (ESV)**

<sup>19</sup> Now those who were scattered because of the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except Jews.



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**Joy in Trials**

***Illustration** – Something that seems like it could have no possible benefit, but turns out to be a blessing. Olivia's car hit in Publix parking lot. Suffered \$3,000+ of damage. Went to body shop the next week, and we didn't have use of it for almost a month. While car was in shop, visited by FBI agent looking for owner of Silver, 2003 Honda Accord with similar license plate number. Investing bank robbery earlier that morning in Bowling Green Kentucky. Car being in the shop turned into a rock-solid alibi, when I otherwise didn't have one (was at home that morning which was unusual).*

**James 1:1–12 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes in the Dispersion: Greetings.

<sup>2</sup> **Count it all joy**, my brothers, when you meet **trials** of various kinds, <sup>3</sup> for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. <sup>4</sup> And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

<sup>5</sup> If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. <sup>6</sup> But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. <sup>7</sup> For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; <sup>8</sup> he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

<sup>9</sup> Let the lowly brother boast in his exaltation, <sup>10</sup> and the rich in his humiliation, because like a flower of the grass he will pass away. <sup>11</sup> For the sun rises with its scorching heat and withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beauty perishes. So also will the rich man fade away in the midst of his pursuits.

<sup>12</sup> Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him.

<sup>2</sup> **Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds,**

Trials = Things that put us to the test

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**I. Perseverance**

***Illustration** – Running marathons at the edge of our capabilities, pushing the envelope. Always know that I'm going to hit some type of wall during the race. At first this can bring us to a complete stop, but the more we experience it, the more we understand how to train, how to race to get through it.*

***<sup>3</sup> for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. <sup>4</sup> And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.***

**Romans 5:1-5 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>2</sup> Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. <sup>3</sup> More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, <sup>4</sup> and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, <sup>5</sup> and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

*What do we do if we don't have the wisdom to see the benefit of a trail we are dealing with? What if we can't handle the trial we are facing? We should pray to God and ask for wisdom.*

***Asking in Faith - <sup>5</sup> If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. <sup>6</sup> But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. <sup>7</sup> For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; <sup>8</sup> he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.***

**Matthew 14:28-33 (ESV)**

<sup>28</sup> And Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." <sup>29</sup> He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus. <sup>30</sup> But when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, "Lord, save me." <sup>31</sup> Jesus immediately reached out his hand and took hold of him, saying to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" <sup>32</sup> And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. <sup>33</sup> And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

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**Mark 11:22-24 (ESV)**

<sup>22</sup> And Jesus answered them, "Have faith in God. <sup>23</sup> Truly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be taken up and thrown into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will come to pass, it will be done for him. <sup>24</sup> Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.

**Joshua 3:14-17 (ESV)**

<sup>14</sup> So when the people set out from their tents to pass over the Jordan with the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people, <sup>15</sup> and as soon as those bearing the ark had come as far as the Jordan, and the feet of the priests bearing the ark were dipped in the brink of the water (now the Jordan overflows all its banks throughout the time of harvest), <sup>16</sup> the waters coming down from above stood and rose up in a heap very far away, at Adam, the city that is beside Zarethan, and those flowing down toward the Sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, were completely cut off. And the people passed over opposite Jericho. <sup>17</sup> Now the priests bearing the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firmly on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan, and all Israel was passing over on dry ground until all the nation finished passing over the Jordan.

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**II. Perspective**

***Illustration** – "I remember a mini-Paradigm Shift I experienced one Sunday morning on a subway in New York. People were sitting quietly -- some reading newspapers, some lost in thought, some resting with their eyes closed. It was a calm, peaceful scene. Then suddenly, a man and his children entered the subway car. The children were so loud and rambunctious that instantly the whole climate changed.*

*"The man sat down next to me and closed his eyes, apparently oblivious to the situation. The children were yelling back and forth, throwing things, even grabbing people's papers. It was very disturbing. And yet, the man sitting next to me did nothing.*

*"It was difficult not to feel irritated. I could not believe that he could be so insensitive to let his children run wild like that and do nothing about it, taking no responsibility at all. It was easy to see that everyone else on the subway felt irritated, too. So finally, with what I felt was unusual patience and restraint, I turned to him and said, "Sir, your children are really disturbing a lot of people. I wonder if you couldn't control them a little more?"*

*"The man lifted his gaze as if to come to a consciousness of the situation for the first time and said softly, 'Oh, you're right. I guess I should do something about it. We just came from the hospital where their mother died about an hour ago. I don't know what to think, and I guess they don't know how to handle it either.'*

*"Can you imagine what I felt at that moment? My paradigm shifted. Suddenly I saw things differently, I felt differently, I behaved differently. My irritation vanished. I didn't have to worry about controlling my attitude or my behavior; my heart was filled with the man's pain. Feelings of sympathy and compassion flowed freely. "Your wife just died? Oh, I'm so sorry. Can you tell me about it? What can I do to help?" Everything changed in an instant.*

*"Many people experience a similar fundamental shift in thinking when they face a life-threatening crisis and suddenly see their priorities in a different light, or when they suddenly step into a new role, such as that of husband or wife, parent or grandparent, manager or leader.*

*"It becomes obvious that if we want to make relatively minor changes in our lives, we can perhaps appropriately focus on our attitudes and behaviors. But if we want to make significant, quantum change, we need to work on our basic paradigms.*

*"In the words of Thoreau, 'For every thousand hacking at the leaves of evil, there is one striking at the root.' We can only achieve quantum improvements in our lives as we quit hacking at the leaves of attitude and behavior and get to work on the root, the paradigms from which our attitudes and behaviors flow."*

*(from Stephen Covey's book, **The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People**)*

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***<sup>9</sup> Let the lowly brother boast in his exaltation, <sup>10</sup> and the rich in his humiliation, because like a flower of the grass he will pass away. <sup>11</sup> For the sun rises with its scorching heat and withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beauty perishes. So also will the rich man fade away in the midst of his pursuits.***

**Ecclesiastes 2:1–11 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> I said in my heart, “Come now, I will test you with pleasure; enjoy yourself.” But behold, this also was vanity. <sup>2</sup> I said of laughter, “It is mad,” and of pleasure, “What use is it?” <sup>3</sup> I searched with my heart how to cheer my body with wine—my heart still guiding me with wisdom—and how to lay hold on folly, till I might see what was good for the children of man to do under heaven during the few days of their life. <sup>4</sup> I made great works. I built houses and planted vineyards for myself. <sup>5</sup> I made myself gardens and parks, and planted in them all kinds of fruit trees. <sup>6</sup> I made myself pools from which to water the forest of growing trees. <sup>7</sup> I bought male and female slaves, and had slaves who were born in my house. I had also great possessions of herds and flocks, more than any who had been before me in Jerusalem. <sup>8</sup> I also gathered for myself silver and gold and the treasure of kings and provinces. I got singers, both men and women, and many concubines, the delight of the sons of man.

<sup>9</sup> So I became great and surpassed all who were before me in Jerusalem. Also my wisdom remained with me. <sup>10</sup> And whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them. I kept my heart from no pleasure, for my heart found pleasure in all my toil, and this was my reward for all my toil. <sup>11</sup> Then I considered all that my hands had done and the toil I had expended in doing it, and behold, all was vanity and a striving after wind, and there was nothing to be gained under the sun.

**III. Promise**

***<sup>12</sup> Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him.***

**Romans 8:18-21 (ESV)**

<sup>18</sup> For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. <sup>19</sup> For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. <sup>20</sup> For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope <sup>21</sup> that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

**God Cannot Be Tempted**

**1 John 1:5 (ESV)**

<sup>5</sup> This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.