

No Discrimination over the Trivial: James 2:1-13

Water of Life

Dr. John Niemelä

Sept. 26, 2013

REVIEW of Introduction to James

Author, date, and readers

James (*Iakōbos*)

Date

Readers

Outline of James

Salutation 1:1

Prologue 1:2–18

Thematic Statement 1:19–20 **Swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath**

Body 1:21–5:6

Swift to hear

1:21–2:26

Slow to speak

3:1–18

Slow to wrath

4:1–5:6

Epilogue 5:7–20

REVIEW of Exposition of James

(1:1) James greets Jewish Christians dispersed (by the Acts 8:1 persecution)

(1:2–8) Bels should joyfully accept trials.

(1:9–11) Trials show God's personal interest in protecting us

(1:12–18) God blesses approved believers, so we should not say God tempts us, because (1) He Himself is untemptable & does not Himself tempt anyone and (2) because He only gives good gifts.

THEMATIC STATEMENT

(1:19–20) Bels should readily learn & apply Scripture, guard the tongue, & guard their anger, because (as one illustration) man's anger does not produce God's righteousness

FIRST PARAGRAPH OF SWIFT TO HEAR

(1:21–27) Be Doers of the Word: A Crucial Aspect of Being Swift to Hear (the Word)

(1:21) Lay aside evil & meekly receive implanted word, since it can save our life

To whom does James direct verse 21?

He neither says: *which saved us* nor *which can save unbelievers*.

James says: ***which is able to save your souls***

Save the soul refers to saving (delivering) one's physical life

What does he mean by *Lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness*?

What does he mean by *the implanted word*?

(1:22) Believers are to become hearers who do the word, because non-doers deceive Themselves [if they think that merely hearing the word will deliver them]

(1:23–24) A hearer of the word who is not a doer is like a man who sees the face of his birth in a mirror, but forgets his identity after leaving the mirror

The word for man is *anēr*, not *anthrōpos*

Anthrōpos may mean man (as male) or man as *human* (either gender)

Anēr is restricted to males (cf. the *andro-* family of words)

The phrase translated *natural face* (NKJ) is literally: *face of his birth*

To which birth would James have us focus?

(1:25) Studying the perfect liberating law & observantly doing it brings God's blessing to what we do

To which law does James refer? The Mosaic Law did not liberate:

(1:26) Seeing oneself as devoted to God is useless self-deception, w/o bridling tongue

Is the word *religion* (*thrēskeia*) a bad word to James? Let's look at context

(1:27) God regards pure & undefiled devotion to Him as including serving the

needy—which service results in us not being tainted by the world

James 2: NEW EXPOSITION

Bels must not hold their faith in the Lord Jesus who came from glory with partiality (2:1)

An example of holding one's faith with partiality would be to seat a wealthy visitor comfortably while not seating a poor visitor or seating him poorly (2:2–4)

God has chosen poor ones as rich (in faith) who will inherit great reward promised to those who love Him (2:5)

Inheriting (receiving) a kingdom: Daniel 5:31; 7:18; 1 Corinthians 15:50

(2:6–7) This dishonoring of the poor man (because he is poor) esteems the wealthy (as a class) even though the wealthy oppressed these Jews in court and who blasphemed Christ

(2:8) By contrast, the commendation for doing well would result from heeding the royal law: To love one's neighbor as oneself.

(2:9) By contrast, showing partiality is sin, so the royal law convicts those who show partiality as transgressors 4

(2:10–11) Specifically, whole law of liberty is violated if a person stumbles in one point, so adultery or murder or showing partiality violates the whole law

(2:12) Believers ought to speak and act in keeping with the fact that we will be judged by the law of liberty

(2:13) The one who does not show mercy will not experience mercy at the Bēma, but showing mercy (in this life) results in mercy at the Bēma