

## 082717 Faith and deeds....James writing to the scattered Jewish Christians points to this theme over and over..

*James 2:17* In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.

- They have been scattered and persecuted because of your faith...belief in Jesus..However you must live that faith out also...
- **Now in this verse a principle is given...When it comes to following Jesus, It is always Relationship First (Faith) than followed by change or actions...**
- **And over time ...what you believe and how you act are to be more and more similar!**
- **they are to reflect one another...and this encompasses every area of life...as we have shared in the series...faith in God and our actions when in trials... faith and action in dealing with temptations...faith and action in overcoming prejudice and favoritism...**
- **today we want to jump ahead to chapter four of his letter and look at faith and action in our call and purpose in this generation...**
- **Your faith and works are super important..but before you had faith...God called you into being..for him..**
- **God knew you and chose you before he made you...**

*Eph 1:4* For he chose us in him *before the creation* of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.

- as God is out of time and above time, his love for us is likewise eternal.

*In love*<sup>5</sup> he<sup>l</sup> predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—<sup>6</sup> to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.

- **After you were chosen.. you were formed at a particular time in History... there was a time when you did not exist....and then there was a time you did! David says it beautifully..**

***Psa 139:13*** For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. <sup>14</sup> I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. <sup>15</sup> My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth.

- You want to know how special you are? to chart your personal DNA the blueprint of you being.. would take 1000 pages at 800 words per page to make one volume...and you would need 100 volumes to fully chart you DNA...that means it would take 6 hundreds thousand pages to break you down your personal blueprint!!

*Psa 139 :16 Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. <sup>17</sup> How precious to me are your thoughts, God! How vast is the sum of them!*

- you are of great value...and you occupy the thoughts of God...
- you are here on purpose for a purpose...your days of existence in a time period of this earth were chosen, before one came to be...
- So how does this play out in your faith ? God has designed into you gifts and talents...which you are responsible to develop and use....in this time period!!

**Just as the Israelites were scattered in the old Testament , And the Jewish believers in the time of James...and you too will have to grow and develop your skills in the changing times of this generation!!**

**This word of Jeremiah is as relevant to us as it was to the Israelites who were scattered in their generation...**

***Jer 29:4*** *This is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says to all those I carried into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: 5 “Build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce. 6 Marry and have sons and daughters; find wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage, so that they too may have sons and daughters. Increase in number there; do not decrease. 7 Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.”*

**So let's jump ahead to James writing to those dispersed about the business they are involved with or ...**

*JAS 4: 13* Now listen, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.” <sup>14</sup> Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. <sup>15</sup> Instead, you ought to say, “If it is the Lord’s will, we will live and do this or that.” <sup>16</sup> As it is, you boast in your arrogant schemes. All such boasting is evil. <sup>17</sup> If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn’t do it, it is sin for them.

➤ **Imagine these people** as they are hovering over a map discussing plans...

- **We should plan humbly, remembering that God is the final sovereign determiner of every plan**
- Every plan made must allow for God's sovereign will... James portrays a group of successful, confident, self made Jewish merchants.

Notice ...James issue with these people is not their planning for business expansion, nor desire to make a profit... nor desire to succeed.

- His rebuke is against their arrogant, self confident planning which does not recognize God or his sovereignty or his plan for them...Making money was their goal...
- Their boasting that their plan is fool proof...even bragging...is evil...they are not sovereign ...God is...
- **they have limited control...never forget that...God is ultimately in charge...always include that in planning.. for example...Dads do you carry life insurance? ... that is including your mist of a life in your planning!**
- Plan but be humble about it... you do not have the final say...In all of life journeys we must be willing to bend to the plan of God and not be broken....but have the spiritual capability and capacity to follow his direction
- For God knows how to finish a walk with him...in spite of our limping...walking with your shoulders up in confidence...Our God will complete all that he has started...
- **God sometimes alters a plan using his mysterious sovereign will to redirect us...he honors the effort...**

*1KI 8:17 "My father David had it in his heart to **build a temple for the Name of the LORD**, the God of Israel. <sup>18</sup> But the LORD said to my father David, `Because it was in your heart to build a temple for my Name, **you did well to have this in your heart.** <sup>19</sup> Nevertheless, you are not the one to build the temple, but your son, who is your own flesh and blood--he is the one who will build the temple for my Name.'*

- **in other words make plans then leave it up to God's will whether it will succeed or not...God gets final say...Our job is to make a plan!! and work it...**

**\*\*\*\*\*Now the question is why is this important? because As A child of God and a citizen of His Kingdom... You are a Future Ruler!! For our destiny is to reign on earth!....Yes you!**

*Daniel 7:18* But the holy people of the Most High will receive the kingdom and will possess it forever—yes, forever and ever.’

*Rev 5:10* You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth.”

- **Reign means to be in power, rule... possess means to have power over! So we will be in power and exert power/control over the earth as Kingdom leaders operating under the King!**
- **So in order to do so effectively you must also grow in character... leadership/business skills, and people skills, and leadership skills!**
- **you can call that Character Competence and Chemistry..**
- **We practice here!!**

**So let's see this play out in a parable Jesus tells...**

*Matthew 25:14* “Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants.. and entrusted his wealth to them.

- **His servants are his children and also his future leaders and managers...**
- **He entrusts or gives charge over portions of his wealth to them the earth ...Now!!**
- **the metaphor is ...Jesus has entrusted us with gold/talents/skills ... in preparing us for this responsibility and privilege... to rule over his possessions!! Now!**
- **And we are responsible to use and develop them..**

<sup>15</sup> To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey.

- **Jesus gives gifts to his leaders according to "present" ability...or skill..**
- **And He expects them to increase their ability use the wealth and grow in their capabilities!...**
  - **He expects his kids to show a profit or increase in value what they have been given responsibility over NOW!!...**
  - **If you have been given marriage is it increasing in value!**
  - **if you have been given children ...are you increasing their lives**
  - **your Work! Your carrier!**
  - **is your life increasing in value to this world?**
  - **is your character development increasing in value to this world..**
  - **Is your spiritual development increasing in value to this world**
  - **is your earthly development increasing in value to this world...**

<sup>16</sup> The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and **gained** five bags more. <sup>17</sup> So also, the one with two bags of gold **gained** two more. <sup>18</sup> But the man who had received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground and **hid** his master's money. <sup>19</sup> "After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them.

- They are given a long time develop their skills and for their talents to be invested develop and produce...
- **God is gracious ...he gives us time to learn ...risk...fail...grow...**
- At the end of that time... two doubled their value...they gained... **Gained means increased by effort!**
- and **One hid the wealth** entrusted to him.....put away and did nothing with it!
- So they settled the accounts...with the master..

<sup>20</sup> The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five more.' <sup>21</sup> "His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!' <sup>22</sup> "The man with two bags of gold also came. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with two bags of gold; see, I have gained two more.' <sup>23</sup> "His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been **faithful with a few things**; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'

- The first two, demonstrated Faith and works... Though their capacities/abilities were not equal..they each produced an increase of twice what they were given... they double the value of what they were responsible for.. ..... the master was pleased... or delighted in them!
- The master's happiness was that they grew!! Just like any parent delights in their child's growth and prosperity!
- Then there is this one...

<sup>24</sup> "Then the man who had received one bag of gold came. 'Master,' he said, 'I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. <sup>25</sup> **So I was afraid** and went out and hid your gold in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.'

- This servant's proud boast is that He knows the heart of his master.... By calling his Master a hard man..meaning he won't help you... and greedy, and living off the backs of others, he pronounces the sentence against himself.
- **But in reality he was a liar...If the Master is cruel like this, and he truly believed it ...then he should have made an even greater effort than the other two...to increase it..**

- but instead His fear of how he perceived the master the opposite of faith...led him to decide to bury (destructive actions) with what he had been given..... to do nothing with it! added no value...and actually lost value... he returned what he received in the same quantity it was given

<sup>26</sup> “His master replied, ‘You wicked, lazy servant! **So you knew** that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? <sup>27</sup> **Well then,** you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest.

- His master called him on his reasoning...it was a lie...for if he truly believed that...he would have acted in a way to at least earn interest..
- The truth was he was wicked...wrong...in his assessment of the Master and his response to that assessment...to do nothing...
- And in reality he was lazy... **He would not put in the effort to develop what he was given making what was deposited of greater value!..**
- **The master expected him to produce...it was a given ...**

### His failure was Three-fold:

1. **He believed he would not be held accountable** for doing nothing with what was entrusted to him....so why risk anything..so bury what was entrusted to you...and do whatever it is you do...
2. **Excuses are valid..** That his blaming the master/ or someone else or something else for not doing anything with what he was given, would be an acceptable excuse to his master. he deceived himself..
3. **He thought he would still be rewarded**...he lost his position of being a servant...

### So The Master's response:

<sup>28</sup> “‘So take the bag of gold from him and give it to the one who has ten bags. <sup>29</sup> For whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them.

- **This actually was an opportunity... The more developed a man's virtues and other gifts and talents, the greater his benefit to his neighbors...AND BRINGS HIM OR HER ABUNDANCE,,**
- **The crosses one carries in life, one's difficult times and decisions, is also a talent to use, multiply and increase.** And no matter how hard those conditions, the Christian always comes out victorious **who stays faithful to God in word and deed** until the end of his sojourn here. **Increase the talents given you by God.**

- There is a leadership saying that is most important..
  - You first have to get the right people on the bus and the wrong people off the bus.
  - Then get the right people in the right seats...
  - Then get the bus going... this is what Jesus did...

<sup>30</sup> *And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'*

- the point...Faith and works...gives increase
- The worthless or **WORTH LESS AS A SERVANT AND THROWN OUTSIDE WHERE HE IS DEPRIVED OF THAT WHICH HE WAS GIVEN**
- **the crier and the complainer went with the other criers and complainers...the bitter and nashing of teeth...**

What can we learn here about this Faithless person's actions, so we don't fall into the same trap:

- **1) The Responsibility of developing your talent is more important than you might believe.** As noble as our intentions might be ...intentions are definitely not enough...as we are responsible to use and develop what God has entrusted to each one of us...
- **2. Fear keeps you Stuck...** Three servants given responsibility...two grew one was Fear... When people are no longer developing because, they start to quarrel and complain and make excuses for their failures.
- **3) Beware of Misguided Arrogance** ...the worth-less servant confidently believed and acted upon his own misguided preconceived beliefs as more important than his Master's direction. He knew his master would expect increase and did nothing about it.
- **5) He rationalized his behavior...** He rationalized or convincingly lied to himself about his behavior and also believed he could minimize any feedback from his master....He was not faithful with a few things...bag of gold...what he had was taken from him...

**Conclusion a Successful servant believes and acts... they take ownership of their Responsibilities, as one who serves a master !**

end

