



7/17/25

*I never thought I would say this, but I'm thankful for the temper tantrums of children. Yep, I said it! You see, I had a temper tantrum with the Lord the other night. I have this dumb cold and I couldn't sleep because I couldn't stop coughing, and I got mad at my Dad. I'm so thankful for the temper tantrums of toddlers because I see that their parents never abandon them when they have those tantrums. And my Heavenly Father did not abandon me. He was patient and merciful as He always is. No matter how small or severe the situation, He can handle what we go through. He understands the big picture. We can always take refuge in Him... our loving, compassionate, perfect Dad.*

*Blessings,  
Jonna*

*James 1:19-27*

*What happens when I'm living for SELF rather than God as Paul described in Romans 1 and 2? I choose self-righteousness. I justify anger. I use the word as a means to exalt myself rather than God. I create my own definition of what is pure and undefiled... as I will see in James 1:19-27. Nothing good comes from living for SELF. I need to be reminded of this daily, and I need to be intentional about fighting against it in myself, continually crying out to the Lord for His supernatural rescue from ME... because without His help my natural inclination will be to drift toward SELF.*

*Vs. 19-21 ~ This verse starts out, "Know this, my beloved brothers..." From looking at the Greek transliteration, I think James is referring to what he just said so that he can tell me how to respond in these next few verses. What did he just say? He said that God doesn't cause my sin... my selfish desires do. He warned me not to be deceived... my selfish desires are not good and perfect, but every good and perfect gift comes from the Lord. It was God's good will to give me the word of truth (His good and perfect gift) so that I could be His. Know these things... because my natural tendency is to be slow to listen, quick to speak, and quick to get angry.*

*God calls me to be quick to LISTEN... first and foremost to HIM. If I'm not listening to Him, my natural tendency is to think He is not about giving me His good and perfect gifts... I become quick to define what I think is good and perfect, rather than trust Him for what is good and perfect.*

*He wants me to be slow to SPEAK... first and foremost to Him! I think of Job's response when God spoke from His majesty, power, and authority. Job said, "Behold, I am of small account; what shall I answer You? I lay my hand on my mouth. I have spoken once, and I will not answer; twice, but I will proceed no further" (Job 40:4-5). If I really pay attention to who God is, that will be my response, too.*

*God wants me to be slow to ANGER... Yes, my anger, whether I want to admit it or not is first and foremost against God. God is sovereign. If I'm angry because of someone else's actions or attitudes toward me, I need to recognize that I am ultimately blaming God for not stopping them. My anger is often rooted in preference rather than actual sin done against me... it's about my kingdom, my rights, and my concerns rather than God's... and even when I'm angry against actual sin, I often retaliate in sin (whether in my actions or in my thoughts that no one else knows but God) ~ taken from Robert Jones' book, Uprooting Anger.*

*When I'm slow to hear and quick to speak, I become angry. Proverbs 18:13 says, "If one gives an answer before he hears, it is his folly and shame." Why? Because "the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God." Sin never begets holiness.*

*Therefore... because I DO want the righteousness of God, I need to "put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness." Let me not be deceived. Being slow to listen and quick to speak produces nothing but filthiness (rather than purity) and rampant wickedness (rather than what is abundantly undefiled and holy). Do I believe that? O Lord, please help me never to justify speaking impulsively and not listening to You.*

*What do I do instead? "Receive with meekness the implanted word which is able to save your souls." Humbly, gently receive... welcome... accept... God's word over my feelings. It is God's word, grafted into my heart, that rescues me, delivers me, heals me from the damage done by my filthiness and rampant wickedness due to choosing SELF over GOD.*

*Vs. 22-25 ~ It's not enough to receive the word... though that's the start. I have to apply the word to my life. Be a doer of the word and not a hearer only. How often have I memorized a scripture, but in the moment of need, I retaliated in sin rather than letting God's word speak. Father, please forgive me!*

*To hear the word but not apply it to my life is to deceive myself. It's like all the times I make a decision for how I'm going to handle a situation and then get into the middle of it and literally forget all my resolve. It's like I have spiritual amnesia.*

*I can't just look intently into the word like I would look intently at myself in a mirror. I need the Holy Spirit to be my constant mirror who is with me so that I can cry out to Him for help. Otherwise, no matter intentional I am about looking into the word, I will walk away and forget what it said. I need the Spirit to help me wield His sword by slowing down and listening rather than impulsively reacting!!!*

*Vs. 26-27 ~ I need to be slow to speak and quick to listen because otherwise, I won't bridle my tongue, and I'll say things I regret. James 3:6 says, "The tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and set on fire by hell." And James 3:8 says, "No human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison." How often have I proven that to be true!!! The truth is, I can say that I'm "religious" or devoted to God, but if I don't keep my words reigned in, I'm deceiving my heart and my supposed devotion is worthless. Yikes!!!*

*It really doesn't matter what I think of myself or what other people think of me. It's God's opinion that matters. God says that religion... or devotion... that is pure (rather than filthy) and undefiled (rather than rampantly wicked) before Him consists of 2 things...*

- 1. Visit, look after, care for widows and orphans in their affliction, struggles, distress. See the need, meet the need. God takes this seriously. In Psalm 82:1-4, God Himself says, "God has taken His place in the divine council; in the midst of the gods He holds judgment: 'How long will you judge unjustly and show partiality to the wicked? Give justice to the weak and the fatherless; maintain the right of the afflicted and the destitute. Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked.'" O Lord, it's so easy to do what Jesus warned us not to do... which is to wish the widows and orphans well but do nothing to help. Please help me to use the gifts You've given me to care for those in need who You place before me. Let me not ignore them or avoid them.*
- 2. Keep oneself unstained from the world. Let every day be a day that I'm devoted to the Lord as His living sacrifice, not conformed to the world... but transformed by the renewal of my mind... so that I look more like Jesus today than I did yesterday.*

*All this comes from slowing down and listening to the Lord. When I do, I become convinced that He is the provider of all that is good and perfect. My selfish desires never lead me to what's good and perfect. When I slow down and listen to the Lord I realize that His word written on my heart is salvation and rescue for my soul. When I slow down and listen to the Lord, I realize that I have more and more reasons to be devoted to Him and to care for His people regardless of who they are. O Lord, please help me to slow down and listen to You.*