

Illustration: Lorne Sanny of the navigators was ministering at the Airforce academy- so much competition and peer pressure...there was a guy there who was a success at getting a bible study going – he grew this group by pushing and motivating others to come and join. Then finally he became the formal acknowledged leader of the group. One morning Lorne called on the young man to give his testimony, and to share with the group the importance of devotion to God and intimacy – He called the young mans name and asked him, how do you keep your heart warm for Jesus? The young man blinked and through his tears , he looked around and against the pressure of the room, he said, sir I do not spend any time with God, as a matter of fact , I am a fake. He confessed that he was driven by his need to be known as a leader, when in reality there was no authenticity behind his efforts.

I. Establishing questions

- A. What does being "Authentic" mean to you?... (in terms of value) (Being real)
- B. Why is Authenticity important in relationships, business, life?
- C. What does it mean to be authentic? ä-lā-thē-no's
 - 1. Authentic something or someone that is genuine, real, and true to its nature, origin, or character. It implies a high level of integrity and sincerity, being exactly what it claims to be without any form of deception or imitation.
 - 2. Opposite to what is fictitious, counterfeit, imaginary, simulated or pretended
 - 3. It contrasts other realities with their semblances
- D. Consider the potters wheel – Ben Bates made this piece and gave it to Brenda and I 30 years ago – he also made every piece at his own wedding. Place settings, vases, etc...

Read James 5:12-20

II. What was so important about these final words of James?

- A. Be Authentic
 - 1. "Above all" – of most importance...

If an oath is required to convince someone of our honesty or intent to be faithful, it suggests we may not be known for telling the truth in other circumstances. Brenda and I will attempt to convince the other and say "As I stand before Jesus, this is true"

- 2. Let your Yes mean yes and your no mean no

a. As believers we manifest the "authentic nature of Christ" – let your life and character be the authentication of truth established

"Trials and process over time reveals authentic character"

- 3. Authentic life protects us from judgment Severe warning to have the inside match the outside –

Illustration – Owner of the Dairy Boy in Oklahoma – If you lie to me that means you will steal from me, "your fired"

III. In what areas does James call us to be Authentic? Vs. 13-16

How many people walk around every day pretending to be ok on the outside but struggling on the inside? "Above All" -How many of us in the room put on a smile and stuff pain, offense, worry – but never actually resolve the issues "Above All"

- A. In Suffering – Pray Vs. 13 Is anyone among you suffering? Then he must pray
 - 1. God sends affliction at times to draw us to Him and to draw us out .
 - 2. Often during these times our hearts are broken and humbled - the only thing we can do is cry out...

Psalms 51:17 A broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise.

B. In Joy - Rejoice *Vs. 13b Is anyone cheerful? He is to sing praises.*

1. When you are at peace and your mind is at ease - give thanks!

C. In Sickness *14 Is anyone among you sick? Then he must call for the elders of the church and they are to pray over him, 1b anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord 15 and the prayer 1 offered in faith will 2b restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up*

D. In Sin *and if he has committed sins, 3 they will be forgiven him. 16 Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective 1 prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much*

"Share your weaknesses. Share your hard moments. Share your real side. It'll either scare away every fake person in your life or it will inspire them to finally let go of that mirage called "perfection," which will open the doors to the most important relationships you'll ever be a part of." Dan Pearce - Writer

IV. How do we manifest an "authenticity in our lives?"

17 Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months. 18 Then he prayed again, and the 1 sky 2 poured rain and the earth produced its fruit.

A. Ask God to help you Live truthfully in every aspect of your life

1. If you have needs then ask for help – get ministry
2. If you have blown it - Seek forgiveness
3. If you have made the same mistake over and over and are embarrassed - ask for help anyways
4. Don't seek help from those who can't help you - get appropriate help

B. Learn to connect with the Spirit in prayer!

1. Our thoughts fixed - our desires firm - and our expectations full of faith
2. More than praying a prayer - ***but engaging a "Real God" with a "real need" with "real expectation"***

C. Expect God to use you!

19 My brethren, ^aif any among you strays from ^bthe truth and one turns him back, ²⁰let him know that ^che who turns a sinner from the error of his way will ^asave his soul from death and will ^bcover a multitude of sins.

1. God will use an authentic life -
2. Authenticity precedes the Power of the Spirit and effective influence

V. Ministry -

A. Are you willing to come up here today and **be real with God?**

B. Areas in your life you have been **hiding**

C. Would you like to live an **Authentic Christian reality?**