YOU ARE THE MOON

JAMES 1-2

OVERVIEW & SURVEY



And I am the moon
with no light of my own
Still you have made me to shine
And as I glow
in this cold dark night
I know I cannot be a light
unless I turn my face to you

EXCERPT FROM “YOU ARE THE SUN”
BY SARA GROVES

JAMES — BOOK OVERVIEW

- Author: **James, Jesus' brother**—Jerusalem church leader
  - ***Debated**. Some think the author was a later follower of James' tradition.*
- Audience: **“twelve tribes in the Dispersion” (1:1)**
  - *Probably: **Jewish Christians living outside Palestine**.*
- Focus: **practical, sincere righteousness from God**
- Strong influence from **Jewish Wisdom Literature** (e.g., Proverbs, Sirach*) and Jesus’ teachings (especially the Sermon on the Mount).

JAMES — HISTORICAL CONTEXT

- Christianity was still viewed as **a Jewish sect**
  - *This came with persecution. His growing audience had hardships.*
- Economic disparity was a problem (and solution);
- Class-driven favoritism was normal, possibly expected
- Roman (and Jewish?) society had **strict class distinctions**
  - *explains concern over favoritism toward the wealthy (2:1-7).*

TIMING: BEFORE THE JUDAIZER CONTROVERSY

- **AD 48? James to Jewish Christians: good works**
  (this is not about law-keeping)

- AD 49? Incident at Antioch (Gal. 2:11-14)
- AD 49? Paul, Peter, James agree at Jerusalem Council (Acts 15, Gal. 2:1-3)
- AD 50? Galatians epistle rebukes Judaizers in Galatia
- AD 63? Titus still dealing with Judaizers in Crete
- AD 70? Destruction of the temple

JAMES — LATER THEOLOGICAL CONTROVERSY

- Soteriology confusion suggests disagreement with Paul
- Luther called James “the epistle of straw”
  - *QR: TGC author Foord deep dives on Luther's “levels” of canon*
- James 2:14-17 was taken to mean works **earn** salvation
- James 1:10-11, 5:1-6
  - *Is this just church favoritism as the whole problem?*
  - *Or is wealth disparity a moral issue for Christian socie*



JESUS
(MT. 5:16)

“Your light must shine before people in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.”

PAUL CONSISTENTLY AGREES

- 📖 **1 Th. 1:3** *(c. 50 AD)* – works are born of (implicitly valid) faith
- 📖 **2 Th. 1:4-5, 3:13** *(c. 51 AD)* – perseverance (3:13 in works) indicates (salvation)
- 📖 **Gal. 5:19-24, 6:9** *(c. 48–55 AD)* – unsaved deeds vs. saved (6:9 “doing good”)
- 📖 **2 Cor. 9:8** *(c. 55 AD)* – God purposes us to abound in every good work.
- 📖 **Rom. 2:6-7** *(c. 56 AD)* – God repays each person according to works.
- 📖 **Phil. 2:12-13** *(c. 60 AD)* – Work out salvation; God works in you.
- 📖 **Col. 1:10** *(c. 60 AD)* – Bear fruit in every good work.
- 📖 **Eph. 2:10** *(c. 60 AD)* – Created for good works in Christ.
- 📖 **1 Tim. 6:18** *(c. 62 AD)* – Be rich in good works.
- 📖 **2 Tim. 3:16-17** *(c. 64 AD)* – Scripture equips for every good work.
- 📖 **Titus 3:8** *(c. 63 AD)* – Believers must devote themselves to good works.

JAMES — BOOK OVERVIEW — STRUCTURE

More like wisdom literature, with less running narrative.

- **True Religion and Trials (1:1-27)**
  - *Testing, wisdom, hearing vs. doing*
- **Faith and Works (2:1-26)**
  - *No favorites! Faith without works is dead!*
- **Speech and Wisdom (3:1-18)**
  - *Power of the tongue; wisdom from above*
- **Worldliness and Humility (4:1-17)**
  - *Friendship with the world vs. submission to God.*
- **Judgment and Endurance (5:1-20)**
  - *Warning to the rich, patient endurance, prayer.*

THE LETTER OF JAMES

MANY JACOBS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT:

SON OF ZEBEDEE

SON OF ALPHAEUS

BROTHER OF JESUS (SEE MARK 6:3)

†=👑

JESUS' TWELVE DISCIPLES (SEE MARK 3:16-19)

SEE ACTS 12 & 15, GALATIANS 1-2

- LEADER OF THE MESSIANIC MOTHER CHURCH IN JERUSALEM
- LIVED THROUGH FAMINE, POVERTY, & PERSECUTION

A.K.A. **JACOB**

HEBREW: YA'AKOV

GREEK: IAKOBOS

THE LEGACY OF JACOB'S WISDOM

A LETTER TO: ALL OF JESUS' FOLLOWERS

OUCH.

WHOA!

—DANG.

TWO MAIN INFLUENCES:

JESUS' TEACHING — especially the — SERMON ON THE MOUNT

SEE MATTHEW 5-7

+

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS — especially — CHAPTERS 1-9

=

SHORT WISDOM SPEECHES FULL OF METAPHORS & ONE-LINERS

REPEATED 7 TIMES!

HEBREW: TAMIM

GREEK: TELEIOS

"WHOLENESS & INTEGRITY"

vs.

FRACTURED & INCONSISTENT

SUMS UP THE BOOK'S MAIN IDEAS & KEY WORDS

1 INTRODUCTION

v.2-4 LIFE'S TRIALS PRODUCE ENDURANCE & CAN MAKE US "PERFECT"

v.5-8 GOD GIVES WISDOM TO THOSE WHO ASK IN FAITH

v.9-11 POVERTY CAN FORCE US TO TRUST GOD: WEALTH WILL PASS AWAY

v.12-18 GOD IS GENEROUS & GIVES US NEW BIRTH THROUGH JESUS

v.19-27 DON'T JUST LISTEN TO GOD'S WORD, BUT DO IT.

THE TORAH of FREEDOM

CALLS US TO:

- SPEAK WITH LOVE
- SERVE THE POOR
- TO BE WHOLLY DEVOTED TO GOD

TRUE WISDOM

JESUS' SUMMARY OF THE TORAH: LOVE GOD & LOVE NEIGHBOR

SEE MATTHEW 22:34-40

2:1-13 FAVORITISM VS. LOVE

YOU GOT THIS!

SEE MATTHEW 5:46-48

2:14-26 GENUINE FAITH

DEAD FAITH

SURE, I BELIEVE... STAY WARM, FRIEND!

SEE MATTHEW 7:21-27

3:1-12 THE TONGUE

PRAISE GOD!

YOU IDIOT!

SEE LUKE 6:43-45

3:13-18 TRUE VS. FALSE WISDOM

SEE MATTHEW 5:3-11

4:1-10 A DIVIDED HEART

SEE MATTHEW 6:24

4:11-12 CONDEMNING OTHERS

SEE MATTHEW 12:36-37

4:13-17 THE ARROGANCE OF WEALTH

ESTIMATED PROFITS

YOUR LIFE IS JUST A MIST!

SEE MATTHEW 6:28-34

5:1-6 THE DANGER OF WEALTH

YOUR WEALTH WILL ROT, JUST LIKE YOU!

SEE MATTHEW 6:19-21

5:7-11 PATIENCE & ENDURANCE

COME, LORD JESUS...

SEE MATTHEW 24:13

5:12 TELLING THE TRUTH — LET YOUR "YES" MEAN "YES"

SEE MATTHEW 5:37

5:13-18 FAITH-FILLED PRAYER

SEE MATTHEW 21:21-22

5:19-20 RESTORING OTHERS

SEE MATTHEW 18:15

2-5 12 TEACHINGS ABOUT WHOLEHEARTED DEVOTION TO JESUS

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SURVEY: JAMES 1

TRIALS ARE GOOD TESTS

SERMON ON THE MOUNT REVISITED

WHAT DO TRIALS MEAN?

JAMES

📖 **James 1:2-4**

"Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.”

PAUL

📖 **Romans 5:3-5**

"we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope. And hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us."

1:5 ASK FOR WISDOM

- **James 1:5 —** Ask God for wisdom! He'll give it
- **Proverbs 2:6 —** *“For the Lord gives wisdom;”*
- **Proverbs 8:17 —** *Seek wisdom and find it*
- **1 Kings 3:5-12 —** Solomon asked God for wisdom, not riches or power; God, pleased, granted him all three

1:6 FAITH WITHOUT DOUBT

- **James 1:6** – *"But he must ask in faith without doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind."*
- **Faith needs to be a decisive thing.**

1:6 FAITH WITHOUT DOUBT

- **Mark 6:5-6** – *"And He could do no miracle there except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them. And He was amazed at their unbelief."*
- **Mark 9:23-24** – *Jesus said to him, 'If you can? All things are possible for the one who believes!' Immediately the boy's father cried out and said, 'I do believe; help my unbelief!'*

1:7 — BE UNDOUBTING AND UNDIVIDED

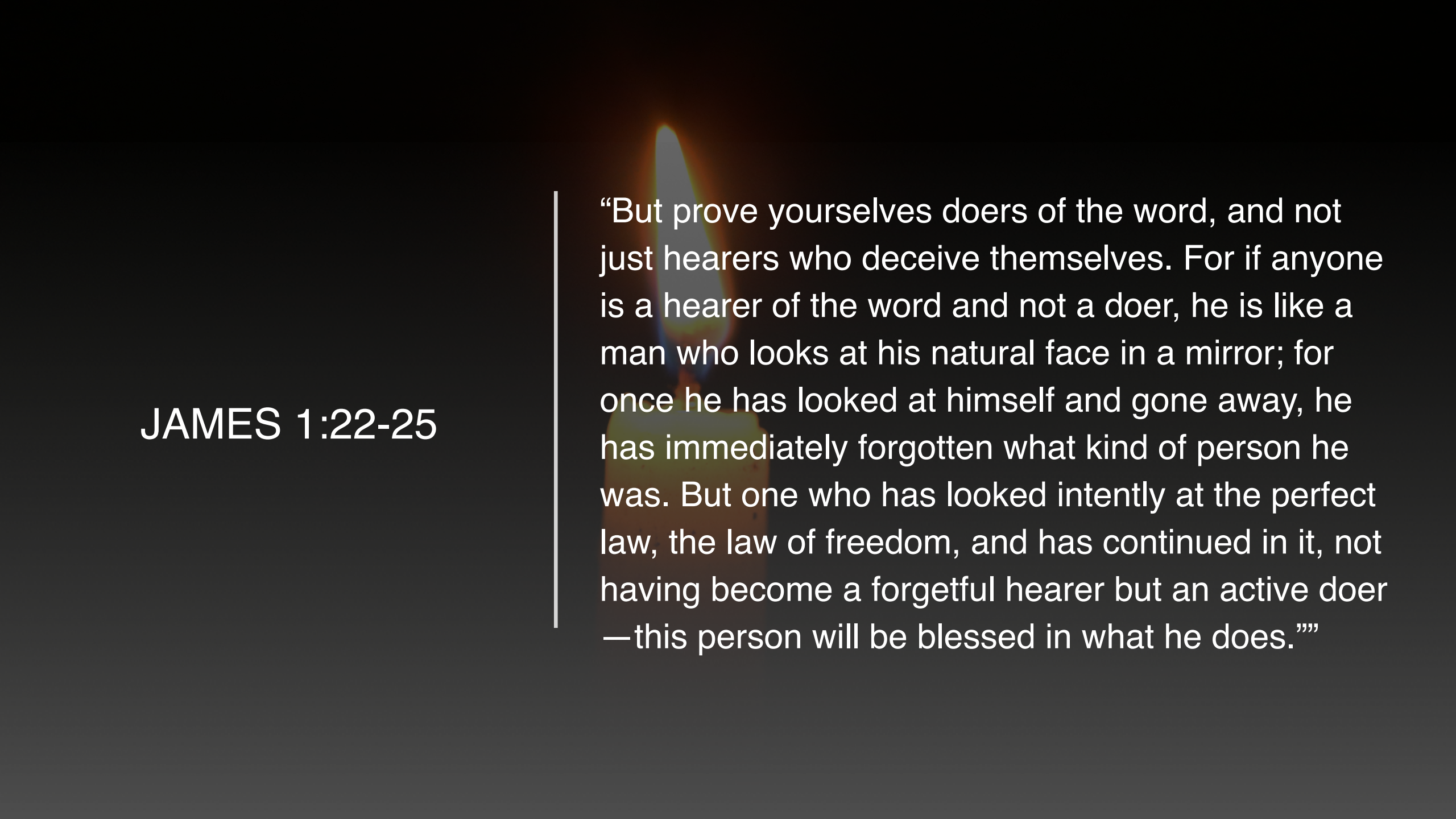
- **James 1:7** – *"For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord."*
- **Matthew 6:24** – *"No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money."*

1:8-10 — ALL MEN ARE LIKE GRASS

- Poor people elevated to equal
- Rich people:
  - “glory in your humiliation”
  - brought down to equal (“air!”)
- *See* Isaiah 40

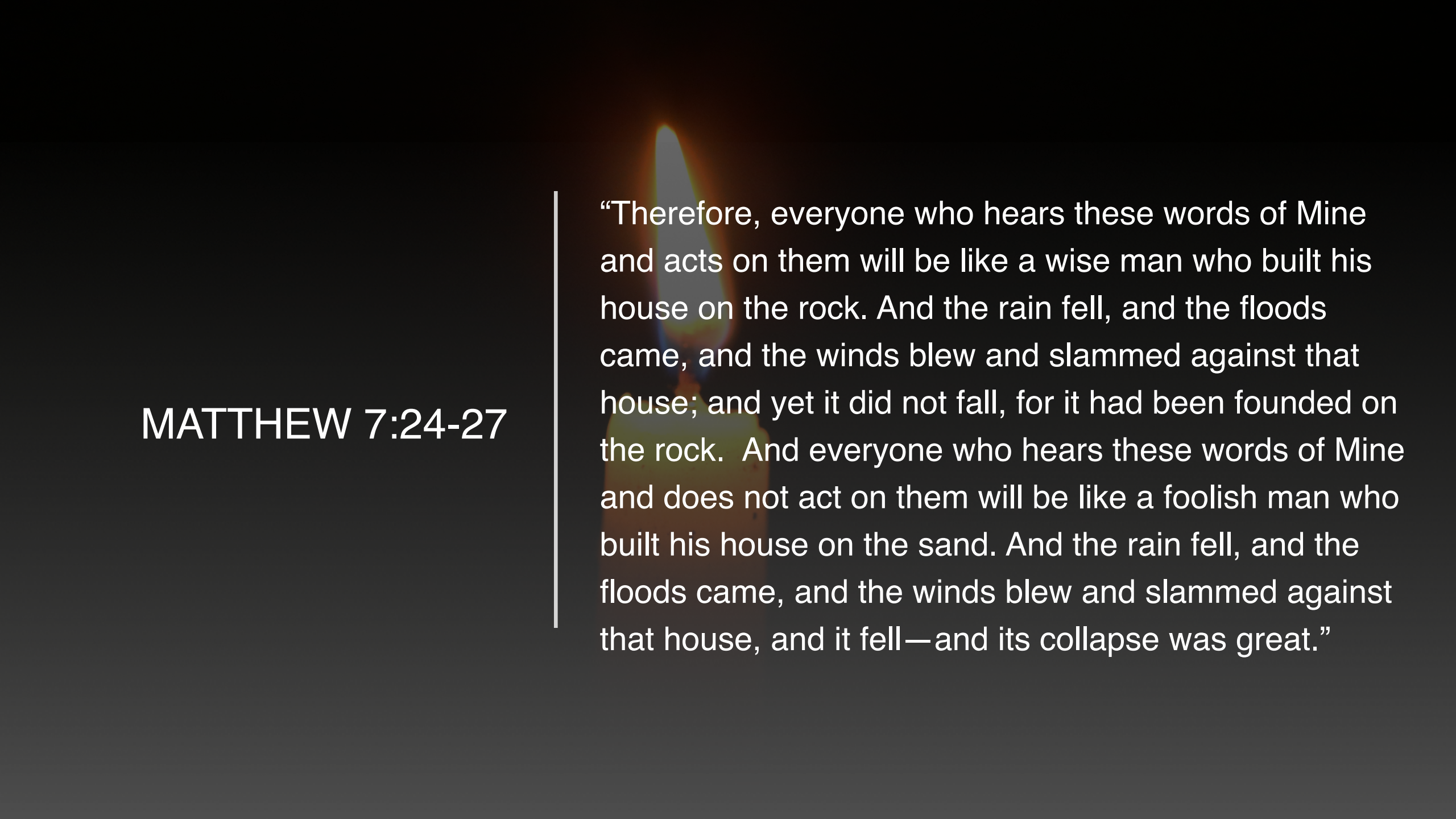
1:12-16 — TRIALS VERSUS TEMPTATIONS

- Trials are from God for his glory and yours
- God doesn't tempt people.
  - Your temptation, entertained, becomes a lust
  - Lust, once conceived, gives way to sin
  - Sin brings death into our situation
- Deception is at stake here. God gives *good to produce good.*



JAMES 1:22-25

“But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not just hearers who deceive themselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. But one who has looked intently at the perfect law, the law of freedom, and has continued in it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an active doer —this person will be blessed in what he does.””



MATTHEW 7:24-27

“Therefore, everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock. And everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house, and it fell—and its collapse was great.”

1:26-27 — RIGHTEOUSNESS

- 1:26 — Religion isn't what you think of yourself
  - If your heart is off, your tongue is loose
  - This religion has no worth (like tasteless salt!)
- 1:27 — Religion:
  - Good works
  - Sanctification

2:1-13 — FAITH WITHOUT FAVORITES

- Do not make distinctions
- 5. Key theology: God chose the poor. You should too.
- 8. “Royal law” = love neighbor as self
- 12. “Law of liberty”

THE LAW OF LIBERTY

- 📖 **Galatians 5:13** – *“For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but serve one another through love.”*
- 📖 **1 Corinthians 9:19** – *“For though I am free from all people, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I may gain more.”*
- 📖 **1 Corinthians 10:23-24** – *“All things are permitted, but not all things are of benefit. All things are permitted, but not all things build people up. No one is to seek his own advantage, but rather that of his neighbor.”*

2:14-17 — FAITH WITHOUT WORKS
DOES IT SAY WORKS CAN EARN SALVATION?

What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but he has no works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and be filled,” and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that? Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself.

2:14-17 — FAITH WITHOUT WORKS
THOUGHT EXERCISES

Do I **earn** being alive by having a pulse?

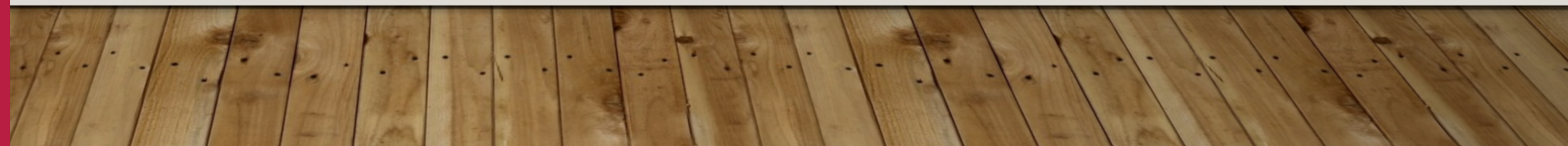
Do I become **worthy** to live by breathing?

Without vital signs, am I alive?

Is the evidence of saving faith the cause of it?

SAVING FAITH **PRODUCES** WORKS

- **James 2:24** – *"You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone."*
- **Romans 2:13** – *"For it is not the hearers of the Law who are just before God, but the doers of the Law will be justified."*
- **Matthew 7:21** – *"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter."*



YOUR LIGHT CONFIRMS YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO THE LIGHT

WITHOUT THE LIGHT YOU WOULD BE A COLD, DARK STONE