

Lessons From James

Time Management

(Ja 4:13-17)

INTRODUCTION

1. Good Morning
 - a. Greeting...
2. Series of "Lessons From James."
 - a. Keep in mind...
 - i. The context: Jewish Christians who were on the outskirts of Palestine.
 - ii. The content: They were in desperate need of spiritual maturity thus James is writing on how to spiritually mature in the areas they were lacking.
 - b. Last week we examined "The War."
 - i. The war with others, ourselves, and God.
 - c. This week we will examine how we are to manage time aka "Time Management."
3. Everyone these days especially is trying to find the best way to manage their time.
 - a. There never seems to be enough time to go around.
 - b. We live in a high octane no slowing down age where everyone and everything is vying for our time.
 - i. I saw a picture that had a baby on one side of the kitchen sink and a load of dirty dishes in the other. Both sides were full of soapy water. Under the picture it read "What are you doing to save time?" (<http://goo.gl/DgjWi>)
4. This is what James has in mind here but in a spiritual sense.
 - a. Paraphrase "don't get caught up thinking you have time to do everything, because you will live forever. You only have time to do that which is right so manage your time wisely.
 - b. James is switching concerning spiritually maturing as a teacher. He now is moving on to spiritually maturing in the area of time management.
 - i. In other words having the right perspective concerning time.
 1. A professor stood in front of his class. He pulled out a jar from under his desk and placed it on his desk. The professor then proceeded to pull out some large rocks about the size of his fist. He placed as many as he could in the jar and then asked his class, "is the jar full?" The class said "yes." He then pulled out some pebbles and started putting them in the jar until he could fit no more. He asked the class, "is the jar full now?" The class catching on said, "probably not." The professor smiled and pulled out some sand. He poured in the sand until no more would fit. He asked again, "is the jar full now?" The students replied, "no." He then brought in some water and poured it in until the jar was full. The professor asked the students, "what is the point of this illustration?" One student said, "the point is, no matter how full your schedule is, if you try really hard, you can always fit some more things into it!" The professor said, "no that is not it. The truth this illustration teaches us is: If you don't put the big rocks in first, you'll never get them in at all." (<http://goo.gl/dLKxy>)
 - ii. This is James' point inspired by God. We must make sure we have the big rocks in first before we fill the rest of the jar up.

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5. Let us now therefore look at how this is illustrated by James to the brethren and subsequently each child of God.

I. Gasconading About Time

A. Being arrogant about time

1. Some people think that time is there's and it should be used how they see fit.
 - i. "It's my time, I'll do what I please with it."
 - ii. "The weekends are my only time to do such and such."
 - iii. These are the ones that place themselves at the center of their life. The Bible calls these types of people prideful.
 - a. **Pr 8:13** "The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way And the perverse mouth I hate."¹
 - b. **Pr 21:24** "A proud and haughty man—"Scoffer" is his name; He acts with arrogant pride."
 - c. **Pr 16:18** "Pride goes before destruction, And a haughty spirit before a fall."
 - d. **Pr 29:23a** "A man's pride will bring him low..."
2. Other people think they simply have all the time in the world because they don't stop to really think about it. They don't slow down enough to realize life is short.
 - i. This isn't the one that is prideful about time but is none the less arrogant concerning it.
 - ii. This is the one that says "I promise to make time for services as soon as I can."
 - iii. This is the one that says, "I really want to work for the Lord more or study more or pray more but I just don't have time with work, school, running the kids around..."
 - iv. This seems to be the one James is talking about. Remember this was written to Jews that had been converted to Christianity. Keep that in mind when you listen to this Jewish proverb concerning those that don't think of life as short.
 - a. "Our rabbis tell us a story which happened in the days of Rabbi Simeon, the son of Chelpatha. He was present at the circumcision of a child, and stayed with its father to the entertainment. The father brought out wine for his guests that was seven years old, saying, With this wine will I continue for a long time to celebrate the birth of my new-born son. They continued supper until midnight. At that time Rabbi Simeon arose and went out, that he might return to the city in which he dwelt. On the way he saw the angel of death walking up and down. He said to him, Who art thou? He answered, I am the messenger of God. The rabbi said, Why wanderest thou about thus? He answered, I kill those persons who say, We will do this, or that, and think not how soon death may overpower

¹ All Scriptures are taken from the NKJV unless otherwise noted.

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them: that man with whom thou hast cupped, and who said to his guests, With this wine will I continue for a long time to celebrate the birth of my new-born son, behold the end of his life is at hand, for he shall die within thirty days." (from Adam Clarke's Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright © 1996, 2003, 2005, 2006 by Biblesoft, Inc. All rights reserved.)

- v. Thus we see the similarity of the Jewish parable and what James is teaching.
 - a. Side note: Using those things that are familiar to someone to teach the truth is always a good thing if done scripturally.
 1. Paul naturally the Old Law to prove the New Law to the Jews.
 - i. **Ro 7:4, 7** "Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another—to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God...7 What shall we say then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, "You shall not covet.""
 2. Paul used this with the Greeks.
 - i. **Ac 17:27-28** "...though He is not far from each one of us; 28 for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, 'For we are also His offspring.'"

B. Time is a luxury not a guaranty

1. The problem is, as Barnes put it, "they say this without any proper sense of the uncertainty of life, and of their absolute dependence on God." (from Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database Copyright © 1997, 2003, 2005, 2006 by Biblesoft, Inc. All rights reserved.)
2. We must understand that time is a luxury which is swift in nature.
 - i. **Ja 4:14** "whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away."
 - ii. **Ps 35:9** "Indeed, You have made my days as handbreadths, And my age is as nothing before You; Certainly every man at his best state is but vapor."
 - iii. **Ps 144:4** "Man is like a breath; His days are like a passing shadow."
3. With life being so fleeting and there being no certainty that one will live any definite amount of time each second should be seen as a luxury or a treat.
 - i. "We should live life to the fullest" is true, just not in the context it is usually used.
 - a. Life in the fullest can only be accomplished through righteous living.

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II. Appreciating Time Appropriately

- A. People who go through terrifying things in their life often change their perspective on life
 - 1. You hear things like, "I live one day at a time now."
 - 2. Or things like, "Everyday is now a treat I take full advantage of."
 - i. This is due to a realization that life is truly short.
- B. The truth is appreciating time can only truly be done if done correctly
 - 1. What do I mean by this?
 - i. It means life can only fully be appreciated if it is lived through Christ.
 - ii. Remember what Paul said about living this life...
 - a. **Ph 4:13** "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."
 - b. Only through Christ can "all things" be done fully.
 - 1. This includes living a full life here on earth.
 - iii. Remember what Jesus said about life through Him...
 - a. **Mt 11:28-29** "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."
 - b. Only through Christ can we find complete rest and peace.
 - 1. This life cannot but fully lived without peace and rest.
 - 2. What does this not mean?
 - i. It doesn't mean life will be filled with easy living ie free from heartaches or headaches.
 - a. **II Ti 3:12** "Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution."
 - b. **Jn 15:20** "Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also."
 - c. **Ac 14:22** "strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, 'We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.'"
 - ii. Christians will suffer persecution and tribulations but that doesn't mean they cannot have the fullest life. No matter what happens Christians are at peace and rest knowing the reward that awaits.
- C. How then are we to live through Christ so that we manage our time wisely
 - 1. By understanding it is not our will but God's that should be desired.
 - i. **Ja 4:15** "Instead you ought to say, 'If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that.'"
 - 2. This means putting God first ie the "big rocks in the jar" first.
 - i. We ask the question with every decision of my time, "is God getting the majority of it?"

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3. Practical application
 - i. Starting the day off with three things everyday...
 - a. Prayer
 1. Communication with God in the beginning get the day off in the right direction.
 - b. Studying God's Word
 1. Reading and meditation on God's Word at least some in the morning will benefit every person no matter what.
 - c. Establishing a timeline for the day
 1. This will allow each of us to see how much time we are dedicating to God.
 - ii. Making sure God has more of our time than anything else combined.
 - a. This is many times the hard one.
 1. We have work, household chores, events to go to...
 - b. This should be however our focus. I'm saying we have to be reading and studying God's Word 24/7.
 1. We can however give our time to God by doing a number of things.
 - c. For example:
 1. Wherever we are "look" for opportunities to talk with someone about Christ and His Word throughout the day.
 - i. **Mk 16:15** "And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."
 2. Make sure we are praying before every challenging decision we will have to make all day long.
 - i. **I Th 5:17** "pray without ceasing"
 3. Make sure we are opening up God's Word a lot all day long.
 - i. I used to carry a little N.T. in my back pocket will at school and then at work welding so I could read it during breaks and usually get some good opportunities from it.
 - ii. **II Ti 2:15** "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."
 4. Meditate on God and His Word all day long.
 - i. **Ph 4:8** "Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things."

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CONCLUSION

1. The parable of the rich fool should be a lesson to all of us.
 - a. **Lk 12:16-21** "Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. 17 And he thought within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?' 18 So he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. 19 And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry." ' 20 But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?' 21 "So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.'"
2. Question: Am I managing my time on earth to the benefit of my soul and glorifying of God?
 - a. If so continue to strive to mature more and more in this endeavor until you receive that crown of life.
 - b. If not, stop right now working more for Satan than God. Repent and come to Him who loves you so much.
3. Invitation
 - a. For those that are Christians but are not living for Christ repent by confessing your sins to God that He may forgive you and dedicate your life/time back to Him.
 - i. **I Jn 1:7, 9** "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin...9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
 - b. For those that are not Christians or for those that think they are Christians and want to know for sure notice what is required to become a child of God or Christian according to God and God only.
 - i. Hear/Study **Rom 10:17; II Tim 2:15**
 - ii. Believe Jesus Is The Christ **Jn 3:16; 8:24**
 - iii. Repent/Turn To God **Ac 17:30; Lk 24:47**
 - iv. Confess Jesus As Lord **Mt 10:32; Rom 10:9**
 - v. Immersed For The Forgiveness of Sins **Ac 2:38; 22:16; I Pt 3:21**
 - vi. Live A Faithful Life **I Jn 1:7; Eph 5:8**