

**September 22, 2024**

**God's Good News Story: The Church Alive & Growing**  
***The Book of James – Pt. 7 (James 4:13-5:20)***  
**FAITH TRUSTS**

Today we continue with our multi-year sermon series called 'God's Good News Story'. We are going through the Bible from Genesis all the way to Revelation and reviewing the story of how God has interacted with mankind from the very beginning to bring us and keep us in *A Right Relationship of Faith with Him through Jesus Christ*. Our focus has been to listen to words of this Good News Story and the Action-Packed adventures (both good and bad) with the hope of understanding more about God's plan and will for our lives. We are taking a story format because the Bible in a sense is God's Love Letter and Life Guidebook where God speaks to us in every generation with power and might. Words and Speech are a main way God conveys His will and plan to us, but it is through Jesus Christ, the 'True Word' that God has revealed Himself and His will for our lives.

**In the book of James, we see a portrait of**

**Authentic, Active, Loving, Obedient Mature Faith.**

James gives us these Action Attributes to this type of faith:

**FAITH PERSEVERES - FAITH OBEYS**

**FAITH LOVES - FAITH WORKS**

**FAITH SACRIFICES - FAITH RISKS**

**FAITH SPEAKS - FAITH SUBMITS**

**FAITH TRUSTS**

**Today we focus on the last attribute FAITH TRUSTS.**

(Adapted from Platt, Wiersbe & Stulac)

**Overview of What a Faith That Trusts Looks Like:**

- **Humble Acknowledgment of God's Sovereignty**
- **Faithful Obedience to God's Commands**
- **Does Not Depend on Worldly Possessions**
- **Patiently Confident in the Justice of God**
- **Patiently Resilient in Sufferings**
- **Integrity in Speech**
- **Faithful in Prayer**
- **Lovingly Restores Sinners**

Let's look at them individually...

➤ **Humble Acknowledgment of God's Sovereignty**

**James 4:13-17...**<sup>13</sup> *Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit."*<sup>14</sup> *Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. For you are just a vapor that appears for a little while, and then vanishes away.*<sup>15</sup> *Instead, you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that."*<sup>16</sup> *But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil.*

In order to be mature, authentic people of faith we must acknowledge and submit to the sovereignty of God. In this passage it appears that some of the early church members had "*become so consumed with the material realm that they became blind to spiritual realities*" (Platt, 94). We must remember that God is sovereign (has all authority) over life and death, which means HE is sovereign over our activities and accomplishments. It is vital that we recognize our tendency as humans to become arrogant and self-sufficient. You may think you are in control of your life, finances, health, future...think again,

YOU ARE NOT! Don't be arrogant, trust in God and submit to His will. It is ALWAYS BEST. We must seek GOD'S WILL, NOT OUR OWN WILL!

If we acknowledge and submit to God's sovereignty, we will naturally have the next quality...

### ➤ Faithful Obedience to God's Commands

*<sup>17</sup> So for one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, for him it is sin.*

Theologians, pastors and scholars have used two terms that seem to derive from this passage.

(1)**Sins of Commission:** Doing what God has specifically said not to do, and

(2)**Sins of Omission:** Disregarding and not obeying what God has specifically said to do.

Commission Sin example would be to show favoritism and Omission Sin would be to not care for the needy.

The bottom line here is we need to be faithfully obedient to NOT DO what God has NOT TO DO, as well as to be intentional TO DO what He has said TO DO.

Again, if we acknowledge and submit to God's sovereignty, and are Faithfully Obedient to God's Commands we will naturally have the next attribute of a ***Faith That Trusts*** as well...

### ➤ Does Not Depend on Worldly Possessions

**James 5:1-3...** *<sup>1</sup> Come now, you rich people, weep and howl for your miseries which are coming upon you. <sup>2</sup> Your riches have rotted, and your garments have become moth-eaten. <sup>3</sup> Your gold and your silver have corroded, and their corrosion will serve as a testimony against you and will consume your flesh like fire. It is in the last days that you have stored up your treasure!*

This one is an extension of the 1<sup>st</sup> point about God's sovereignty. Those who depend on worldly wealth will find themselves lacking spiritual peace and will find that their wealth will not bring peace and blessings. This worldly focus causes people to focus more on wealth than on the welfare of people. This rich, self-focused mentality leads the rich and powerful to use and abuse others for their own benefit. James gives words of judgment to the rich and at the same time words of confident justice to those that are being taken advantage of in this next point.

### ➤ Patiently Confident in the Justice of God

**James 5:4-6...** *<sup>4</sup> Behold, the pay of the laborers who mowed your fields, and which has been withheld by you, cries out against you; and the outcry of those who did the harvesting has reached the ears of the Lord of armies. <sup>5</sup> You have lived for pleasure on the earth and lived luxuriously; you have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter. <sup>6</sup> You have condemned and put to death the righteous person; he offers you no resistance.*

If we truly believe that God is sovereign and just, we can be confident that God in His time and way, will bring judgement on the offenders and they will pay for their sins. This leads to the next point...

### ➤ **Patiently Resilient in Sufferings**

**James 5:7-11...** <sup>7</sup> *Therefore be patient, brothers and sisters, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains.* <sup>8</sup> *You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near.* <sup>9</sup> *Do not complain, brothers and sisters, against one another, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door.* <sup>10</sup> *As an example, brothers and sisters, of suffering and patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.* <sup>11</sup> *We count those blessed who endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord's dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful.*

James instructs people of Trusting Faith to be patient while God is dealing with the offenders and oppressors. We may wish for God to act quickly to deal with these offenders, but God has a perfect plan and a perfect time to do all things. Our job as People with a FAITH that TRUSTS, is to patiently endure and trust that God will bring things to the proper end. *"Resilience, from a biblical standpoint, involves trusting God's overarching plan, even when the present circumstances seem insurmountable. It's about maintaining faith and integrity, allowing God to weave a beautiful tapestry from the threads of trials".* <https://www.ibelieve.com/>.

James gives the example of Job in the Old Testament who suffered terribly but was patient and submissive and God restored him double in the end. Job is an excellent example of Resilient Patience. The rich and oppressing people may live the high life for a while, but they will quickly and destructively be brought to judgment and death according to God's SOVEREIGN WILL.

**Trust is God, it pays off in the end!**

James then returns to a favorite subject of his, our words...

### ➤ **Integrity in Speech**

**James 5:12...** *But above all, my brothers and sisters, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath; but your yes is to be yes, and your no, no, so that you do not fall under judgment.*

It seems like James is interjecting this subject without regard to the flow of thought from the previous verses. This passage is almost identical to Jesus' *Sermon on the Mount...*

**Matthew 5:34-37...** <sup>34</sup> *But I tell you, do not swear an oath at all: either by heaven, for it is God's throne; <sup>35</sup> or by the earth, for it is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King. <sup>36</sup> And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black. <sup>37</sup> All you need to say is simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything beyond this comes from the evil one.*

I mentioned before that James not only uses a lot of Proverbs material, but he also incorporates a great deal of material from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. I think that James is just adding another 'FAITH TRUSTS' quality to the previous one on patient resilience and endurance. He seems to be saying while you wait for God to bring about His will, our speech (and actions) should be filled with integrity and truth in accordance with our belief in the Sovereignty and Holiness of God. We should let our words and our life be true, honest and full of integrity in the way we deal with people and circumstances that we encounter each and every day. Don't try to impress or manipulate others with cocky and prideful words, be people of simplicity, honesty and integrity. This leads right into our next to last point...

### ➤ **Faithful in Prayer**

**James 5:13-18...** <sup>13</sup> *Is anyone among you suffering? Then he must pray. Is anyone cheerful? He is to sing praises.* <sup>14</sup> *Is anyone among you sick? Then he must call for the elders of the church and they are to pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord;* <sup>15</sup> *and the prayer of faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him.* <sup>16</sup> *Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. A prayer of a righteous person, when it is brought about, can accomplish much.* <sup>17</sup> *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.* <sup>18</sup> *Then he prayed again, and the sky poured rain, and the earth produced its fruit.*

People who have an authentic trusting faith will be Faithful in Prayer and in Praise. James instructs people to trust in the sovereign power of God to heal and forgive sins. James challenges us to like Elijah in the Old Testament who was a righteous, faithful man of prayer. God heard and answered the prayer of this great man of trusting faith. The logical point is that we too can expect God to hear and answer our prayer according to His will. There is a sub-theme of healing that is evident here as well. I believe in healing and often anoint people who request it, with oil. However, the main point here is faithful; prayer and praise.

*Now, to our last quality of a Trusting Faith...*

### ➤ **Lovingly Restores Sinners**

**James 5:19,20...** <sup>19</sup> *My brothers and sisters, if anyone among you strays from the truth and someone turns him back,* <sup>20</sup> *let him know that the one who has turned a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.*

James is reinforcing one of the Key Traits of the Early Church that we discussed in Acts...that of... A Common Concern & Care for One Another. Remember our Church Motto... Loving God, Loving One Another? If we truly love our sovereign and holy God, we will show love to His children who have wandered away and fallen into sin. Now these verses can also apply to reaching lost people, but in this setting, it appears that people with an Authentic Trusting Faith will extend love, forgiveness, mercy, and correction to fellow believers when they fall into sin. A mark of True Love is to want the best for another person, the best is always to be In Right Relationship With God!

### **Let's Review & Close**

#### **What a Faith That Trusts Looks Like:**

- **Humble Acknowledgment of God's Sovereignty**
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**Commitment Challenge.** Will you Intentionally, Deliberately and Consistently seek to have a **Faith that Trusts** and seek to develop these Eight Qualities?

**The following references were utilized in preparation of this message:**

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