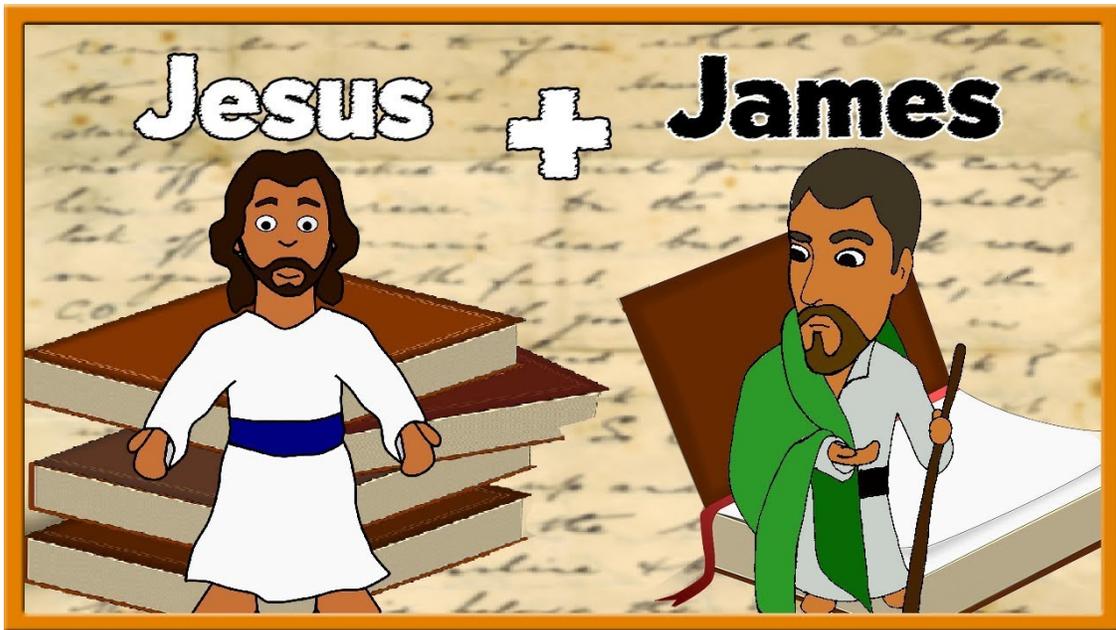


The Light - Junior Series
Lesson 130

*What the Letter of James & Many Other Passages
Teach us about
Practical Sanctification*



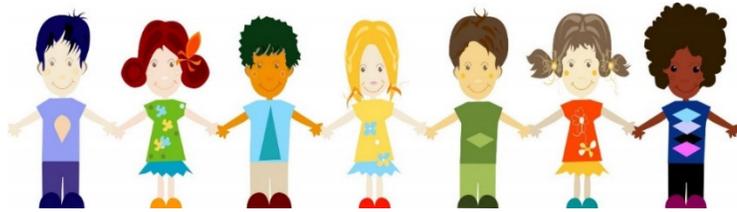
2019

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

If YOU have never personally believed in the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior; you have the opportunity to do so right NOW. Just tell God the Father that you believe in His Son, Jesus Christ, who loved us so much that He came down from heaven and became a man to take our place and pay for the penalty for all the sins of all mankind. Jesus, the Savior, died on the Cross for your sins and the sins of the whole world. Then Jesus was buried but He rose again and He is alive today seated at the right hand of the Father in heaven. When you make the decision to believe in Jesus in simple faith based on His work on the Cross, you are now a believer and will always be a child of God. When you die, you will spend eternity with Him in Heaven. *(Acts 16:31) "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved." (John 3:16) "God loved the world so much that He gave us One and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."*



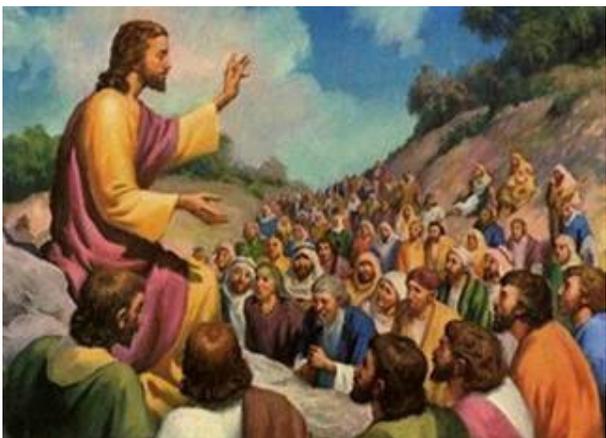
LESSON



In our lesson today, one of the places in the New Testament we will visit is the letter from **James** because his important teachings in this letter will really help us as we

continue in our study and walk through practical sanctification (our being set apart by God for a purpose to serve Jesus) or practical daily Christian living.

In James' letter he is speaking to Jewish believers about their practical sanctification...their daily Christian walk after they were saved. We will see that an excellent way to understand the message in James is to first listen to the Lord Jesus Christ when he talks to His Jewish disciples or followers (they believed in Him and want to serve Him). He's talking to them about the **Beatitudes** in the **Gospel of Matthew**. That's a BIG word **that means blessings they will receive if...**



Matt 5:1-12 "When Jesus saw the crowds, He went up on the mountain; and after He sat down, His disciples came to Him. (2) He opened His mouth and began to teach them, saying,

(3) 'Blessed are the poor in spirit (the humble), for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

- (4) Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.
- (5) Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.
- (6) Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.
- (7) Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.
- (8) Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.
- (9) Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.
- (10) Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- (11) Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me.
- (12) Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”



And so, lining up with the things that Jesus announces on the hillside, James in his letter is calling these Jewish believers, hypocrites. In other words, kids, these believers were doing the very OPPOSITE of what Jesus and James were teaching them and James is calling them out for it. He's actually scolding them.

Let's take just one of these beatitudes. Let's take "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see

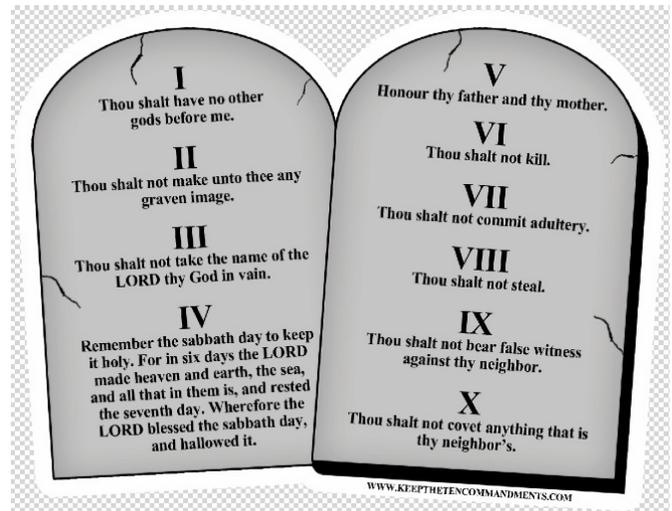
God." Being the opposite of pure in heart is called **hypocrisy**. Hypocrisy is saying one thing but doing the opposite...NOT pure in heart! **It's saying you believe something but you're acting like you don't really believe it.**

The right way is to say you love the Lord and like the pure in heart, you live the way it means to love the Lord.



Let's look at some more passages in the Bible where God is telling the Jewish believers what He expects from them. See if you recognize what this Exodus passage is talking about...

Exo 20:1-6. "Then God spoke all these words, saying, (2) I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. (3) You shall have no other gods before Me. (4) You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. (5) You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the sins of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me, (6) **but showing lovingkindness (grace) to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.**" Yes, it's one of the Ten Commandments! This is the first and second Commandments. Good going!

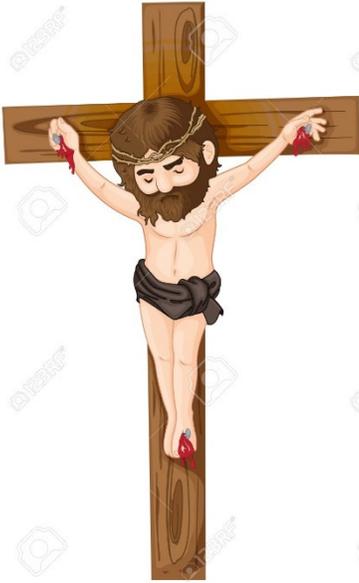


Jesus continues...

John 14:11-15 "Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; otherwise believe because of the works (miracles He did) themselves. (12) Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, **he will do also; and greater works than these he will do;** because I go to the Father (after His death on the cross, His resurrection and ascension). (13) Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. (14) If you ask Me **anything** in My name, **I will do it.** (15) **If you love Me, you will keep My commandments (your practical sanctification).**"

John 14:18-21 "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. (19) After a little while the world will no longer see Me (because He will go up into heaven), but you will see Me; because I live, you will live also. (20) In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. (21) **He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will reveal Myself to him.**"

Are you getting this, kids!!! This is AMAZING!! See how the Lord loves those who obey His commandments? "We are His brothers and sisters and He wants us to keep His commandments. When we do, we show that we love Him. And we will live in his love. What a gift!"



John 15:10-17 "If **you keep My commandments** (practical sanctification), **you will live in My love**; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and live in His love. (11) These things I have spoken to you so that **My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full.**" This happiness comes when you live your life as Jesus asks you to live it. Serving Him in practical sanctification. FANTASTIC! (12) **This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you.** (13) Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends (Jesus died for us). (14) **You are My friends if you do what I command you.** (15) No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you **friends**, for all things that I have heard from My Father **I have made known to you.** (16) You did not choose Me but I chose you, and selected you that you would go and bear fruit (serve Jesus in your new nature), and that your fruit would remain (last forever), so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you. (17) **This I command you, that you love one another."**

1 John 5:1-4 "Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and **whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him.** (2) By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments. (3) For **this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not difficult.** (4) For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world...our faith (that we believed in Jesus)."

Jesus said,
"Love one another."

John
Chapter 15 verse 12



Thank God that for us, as Paul reports, the Holy Spirit has poured the love of God into our hearts.

Time to use that love! Rom 5:1-5

"Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, (2) through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we rejoice in hope (confidence) of the glory of

God. (3) And not only this, but we also rejoice in our troubles, knowing that trouble brings about perseverance; (4) and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope (confident expectation);



(5) and hope (confident expectation) does not disappoint, because **the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.**"



So, becoming pure in heart is a BIG DEAL in the letter of James. Pure means 100% of something. No hypocrisy. Our total devotion to the Lord, mind, heart, soul, and strength! What you do lines up with loving the Lord. Acting just like what you say you believe.

For the pure in heart, how they live matches what they claim to believe.

Now let's get you some examples of this in James' letter. I bet you thought we'd never get there! James 1:5-8 "But if any of you lacks wisdom (from the Word of God), let him ask God (for Wisdom from His Word), **who gives to all generously and without scolding**, and it will be given to him. (6) **But he must ask in faith (believe it)** without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. (7) For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, (8) being a **double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.**" Being double minded is the opposite of being pure in heart or single minded toward the Lord!

James 1:22-27 "But prove yourselves doers of the word (live out what you learned from the Word), and not merely hearers who fool themselves. (23) For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer (practical sanctification...serving the Lord), he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; (24) for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. (25) But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty (freedom in Jesus), and lives by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an actual doer, **this man will be blessed in what he does.**"



If you are pure in heart, when you hear the Word of God, you will do what it says! (26) If anyone thinks himself to be religious (living your practical sanctification), and yet does not control his tongue but deceives his own heart, this man's religion is worthless. (27) Pure and spotless religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world." This means that you put others before yourself; always helping one another, especially those in need; and loving one another.

Now be careful of being deceived by the world. The heart is affected by deception and when you get deceived or tricked, it happens in your own heart, so it is not a pure heart anymore.



In the matter of religion, which in James' letter means your practical sanctification...living out of what you claim to believe! But if you become deceived, you may even think you are living the Christian way of life, but if you cannot control your tongue for instance, then you are not going to get very far with that, now are you?

Remember back in **Colossians 3**? The first step of the three steps we learned is to put away the attitudes and behaviors of the old sinful man? Let's look again: **Col 3:8-10** "But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and rude speech from your mouth. (9) Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old man (at the cross) with its evil practices, (10) and have put on the new self (when you believed) who is being renewed to a true knowledge (from God's Word...the Bible) according to the image of the One (Jesus) who created him." The old man has a wicked TONGUE! Lots of trouble there!



In **Colossians 3** we have three problems of the heart: anger, wrath, and malice, which lead to three evil practices of the tongue: insults, rude speech, and lying. Remember that this is step 1 for Paul here in **Colossians 3**.

Now the great news is that the new thing God has done for us in Jesus, is the role of the Holy Spirit in helping us to NOT do these things with our wicked tongue! Look at the following passages in the New Testament that teach us this: **Rom 8:12-13** "So then, believers, we are under duty, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh (13) for if

you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if **by the (Holy) Spirit** you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live."



Paul teaches us in Gal 5:16-24. "But I say, walk **by means of the Spirit**, and **you will not carry out the desire of the flesh**. (17) For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and **the Spirit against the flesh**; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. (18) But if you are **led by the Spirit**, you are not under the Law. (19) Now the deeds of the flesh are plain to see, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, (20) idolatry, magic, hatreds, trouble, jealousy, outbursts of anger, fights, rebellions, fights, (2) envying, drunkenness, partying (badly), and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have

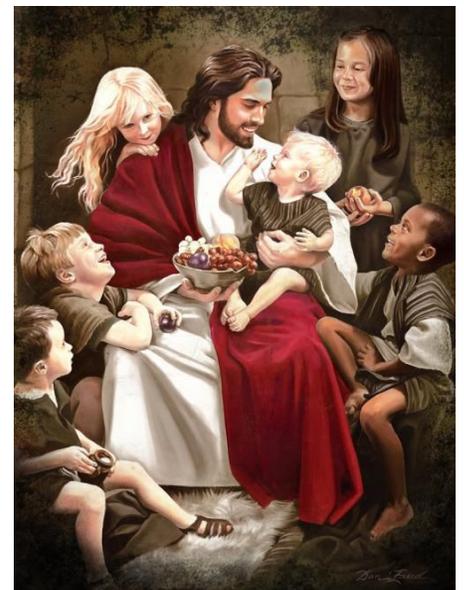
forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit (rewards) the kingdom of God. (22) But **the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, (23) gentleness, self-control**; against such things there is no law. (24) Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires."

Our becoming pure in heart with single-minded devotion to the Lord and no longer living for ourselves but for Him is our GOAL. And Jesus, James, and Paul are ALL in COMPLETE AGREEMENT about that GOAL!

Loving the Lord with all our mind, heart, soul and strength is OUR GOAL!

Loving one another as Jesus has loved us is OUR GOAL!

Visiting orphans and widows or anyone in their distress is OUR GOAL!



And controlling our tongues is OUR GOAL!



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OK, a third thing that James wants from us, that hits us right between the eyes is this matter again of hypocrisy. He does NOT want us to be hypocrites! You DO NOT want to be a hypocrite! This is NOT what Jesus, James or Paul want for us! It is NOT Jesus-like! Look at what **James 2:15-16** has to say about it. "If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, (16) 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?"

The point James is making is that there is a huge separation between what you say and what you do here. Do you see it, kids? You SAY you want the person to be warm and have a filled belly, but you do not give them the clothing or the food they need to BE warm and not hungry! This is hypocrisy!!!



A couple more passages so you get the drift here how **James** is very concerned about Christians becoming pure in heart and not hypocrites. **James 4:1-10** "What is the source of quarrels and fights among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members? (2) You lust and do not have; so, you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; so, you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask. (3) You ask and do not receive, because **you ask with wrong motives**, so that you may spend it on your pleasures." Having wrong motives is the opposite of being pure in heart.



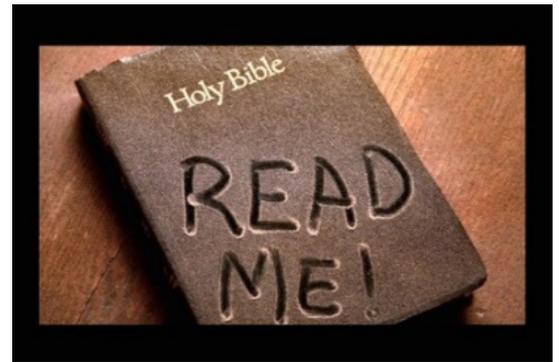
(4) **You adulteresses (cheaters)**, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore, whoever wishes to be a **friend of the world** makes himself an **enemy of God.**" An adulteress is a two-timer or cheater. **A double-minded person.** Not pure in heart. Pure in heart means my heart is pinned on one thing. Not two things. Not one and its opposite. And here again we have this back and forth between being a friend of the world and a friend of God. This is not being pure in heart. You CANNOT have both because it is not 100% for God.

(5) Or do you think that the Scripture says without reason: 'He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us'? (6) But He gives a greater grace. Therefore, it says, '**GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.**' (7) Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. (8) Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and **purify your hearts, you double-minded.** (9) Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy to gloom. (10) Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will praise you." Here in verse 8 we have the key verse that explains why James wrote this letter. He wants us to purify our hearts and get rid of the double-minded garbage.

You can do that, kids, if you become humble from God's Word. You can do that because the Holy Spirit lives inside you to help you do it...He guides and directs your EVERY move when you let Him! So, POWER up!

Until next time, stay in God's Word...

Close in prayer.



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