

Reflection Guide James 1:1-7

Adoration What do we learn about God from this passage? What attributes are stated or implied? What actions are being described?

- God gives Generously w/out making you feel bad for asking
- “simply”, “without mixed motives”
- doesn’t give to get something back in return (unlike us)
 - “I’ll give this to you, but you really don’t deserve it”
 - “I’ll loan you \$50, but what happened to \$10 I loaned yo last time?”
 - “I’ll be happy to help you pack, but you should have started 2 weeks ago.”
- God’s gifts don’t become debts
- he gives and doesn’t calculate interest
- God doesn’t play favorites here
- doesn’t go “your trial isn’t as big as her trial”
- again, how we need to cherish the way that God loves us that it may change the way we love each other

God’s children should have no hesitation in going to God and asking for wisdom...b/c He is so unlike me...He gives generously without making you feel bad for needing to ask in the first place!

What father among you, if his son asks for a fish, will instead of a fish give him a serpent; [12] or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? [13] If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”
Luke 11:11

Confession What sin is being revealed as we look at God this way? What sin does this passage identify? What sinful desire is at the root of this behavior? What am I forgetting about God or the gospel?

James is talking of someone who is literally “double-souled”

- coined his own word
- 4:8 - *“Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded”.*

There is an impurity at play in the double-souled.

- the heart of the double souled is one that wants to hedge their bets (double agent)
 - James day - do the Christian thing and the temple prostitution thing
 - do the church thing and do what the world says as well
 - Bunyan’s “Mr. Facing-both-ways” in *Pilgrim’s Progress*.
 - can see all the positives of every option, but won’t decide which one is best

THE DOUBLE-SOULED PERSON IS UNSTABLE

has no anchor for his soul

- word literally refers to the effects of a violent storm
- the literal opposite of “steadfast”
- double-mindedness can’t settle on what it knows to be true

So, they are - *like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind.*

- not a wave crashing to shore...but the ever shifting and changing set one size 1 minute another the next
- double-souled, no anchor, can’t count it joy, unstable, changing with emotions

James is saying is in your heart you are heading your bets - diversifying your portfolio - and who God is and what he has said about His eternal purposes is just one of the options, **YOU CAN'T EXPECT (presume) TO GET ANYTHING (wisdom) FROM HIM**

Thanksgiving What has God done for us in Christ? How does this passage point toward God's work for us or God's grace toward us?

Rm. 8:32 - "He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?"

He has already given you no less than His only Son.
Do you need wisdom right now, ask with no hesitation, He gives generously and you know it.
His generosity doesn't change once you become a Christian.

Ask b/c - You know that there was no "V.I.P." status required to receive from Him.
Everyone who has seen their need for a Savior - Substitute. For all who have recognized that they were bound - held captive in sin with no means of their own to gain freedom...

Ask b/c - You know, that God gives generously to all without reproach.
"While we were still dead in our sins, Christ died for us"...we were given what we did not deserve while the very sins that should disqualify us were wiped away and in Christ the righteousness we did not deserve was given to us.

Col 1:22 - And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him,

Supplication How do we want the gospel to change our desires? What change or belief can we ask God for? What would this new and exciting behavior look like?

Ask Him James says...b/c you believe He is who He says He is and He will do what he says he will do.

you may have doubts about the outcome of your trial, He may give you the wisdom you need through your holding steadfast...But He is a promise keeping God

We have the opportunity as we respond to God's Word this morning to be reminded of God who gives so generously, to all, without reproach as we receive communion this morning.

Christians - be of good cheer - Pastor James wants you to go back to what you already know to be true about who God is and what His eternal purposes are. B/c confidence in Him frees us in humility to ask for what we do not have and that's the ability to see the trials we are facing through a new lens...the lens of our Heavenly Father - refining us and cultivating in us that which we should most desperately want - maturity.