



Sermon Series Notes

Communion Message 4/27/2016

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A reluctant lesson in faithfulness...

A survey of the book of James

I. Faithfulness Dismissed

a. Mark 3:20-21

- i. 20 One time Jesus entered a house, and the crowds began to gather again. Soon he and his disciples couldn't even find time to eat. **21 When his family heard what was happening, they tried to take him away. "He's out of his mind," they said.**

b. Mark 6:3-5

- i. 3 Then they scoffed, "**He's just a carpenter, the son of Mary and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas, and Simon.** And his sisters live right here among us." They were deeply offended and refused to believe in him. 4 Then Jesus told them, "A prophet is honored everywhere except in his own hometown and among his relatives and his own family." 5 And because of their unbelief, he couldn't do any miracles among them except to place his hands on a few sick people and heal them.

c. John 7:1-5

- i. After this, Jesus traveled around Galilee. He wanted to stay out of Judea, where the Jewish leaders were plotting his death. 2 But soon it was time for the Jewish Festival of Shelters, 3 and Jesus' brothers said to him, "Leave here and go to Judea, where your followers can see your miracles! 4 You can't become famous if you hide like this! If you can do such wonderful things, show yourself to the world!" **5 For even his brothers didn't believe in him.**

II. Faithfulness Revealed

a. Acts 1:12-14

- i. 12 Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, a distance of half a mile. 13 When they arrived, they went to the upstairs room of the house where they were staying. Here are the names of those who were present: Peter, John, James, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, James (son of Alphaeus), Simon (the Zealot), and Judas (son of James). **14 They all met together and were constantly united in prayer, along with Mary the mother of Jesus, several other women, and the brothers of Jesus.**

- b. Acts 12:16-17
- i. 16 Meanwhile, Peter continued knocking. When they finally opened the door and saw him, they were amazed. **17 He motioned for them to quiet down and told them how the Lord had led him out of prison. "Tell James and the other brothers what happened," he said.** And then he went to another place.
- c. 1Corinthians 15:3-8
- i. 3 I passed on to you what was most important and what had also been passed on to me. Christ died for our sins, just as the Scriptures said. 4 He was buried, and he was raised from the dead on the third day, just as the Scriptures said. 5 He was seen by Peter and then by the Twelve. 6 After that, he was seen by more than 500 of his followers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. **7 Then he was seen by James and later by all the apostles.** 8 Last of all, as though I had been born at the wrong time, I also saw him.
- d. James 1:1
- i. **1 James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,** To the twelve tribes scattered among the nations: Greetings.
- e. Luke 16:10 NIV
- i. "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much.
- f. ***The Value of Faithfulness – it does not discriminate between large and small***
- i. It only cares about right and wrong
 - ii. Is the circle in the pupil of your eye any less of a circle than the circle around the equator of the earth, and
 - iii. the sphere that a dew drop makes as perfect as the sphere of the sun
- g. ***The Economy of Faithfulness – in small duties is even greater than faithfulness in great***
- i. It is a great deal easier to die once for Christ than to live always for Him
 - Much easier to do one mighty act of self-surrender, than to daily — unnoticed and patiently — to "crucify the flesh with its passions and desires."
 - a. Galatians 5:24
 - i. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.
 - ii. Small things are greater because they amass in numbers
 - Every choice we make throughout the day
 - a. Think of the breakdown of air in our lungs to supply oxygen in the blood and nurture our all parts of our body
 - b. Small acts of obedience, through the power of the Gospel, by millions of faithful Christians aggregates to an evangelistic message no preacher can ever deliver

- h. ***The Profit of Faithfulness*** – *in small things prepares us for bigger assignments in God's economy*
 - i. Just like a little time exercising strengthens the body to handle greater strain
 - No one, that I know, starts training for a marathon by running twice the final distance
 - a. Or even the same distance

III. Faithfulness Expressed

- a. Look at this book a plea, not an admonition
 - i. From a man who learned the lesson late in his life
 - A lifetime spent despising righteousness through faithfulness
 - Only to see the glory of God revealed on the cross
- b. ***The Test of Faith (James 1:1-18)***
 - i. 1:2-3
 - 2 Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. 3 For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow.
 - ii. 1: 5-6
 - 5 If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking. 6 But when you ask him, be sure that your faith is in God alone. Do not waver, for a person with divided loyalty is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is blown and tossed by the wind.
- c. ***The Characteristics of Faith (James 1:19-5:6)***
 - i. 1:19
 - 19 Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry.
 - ii. 1:26
 - 26 If you claim to be religious/pious (*thrēskos*) but don't control your tongue, you are fooling yourself, and your religion/piety is worthless.
 - iii. 2:1
 - 1 My dear brothers and sisters, how can you claim to have faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ if you favor some people over others?
 - iv. 2:14
 - 14 What good is it, dear brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but don't show it by your actions? Can that kind of faith save anyone?
 - v. 3:13

- 13 If you are wise and understand God's ways, prove it by living an honorable life, doing good works with the humility that comes from wisdom.

vi. 4:2b-3

- 2b Yet you don't have what you want because you don't ask God for it. 3 And even when you ask, you don't get it because your motives are all wrong--you want only what will give you pleasure.

vii. 4:11

- 11 Don't speak evil against each other, dear brothers and sisters. If you criticize and judge each other, then you are criticizing and judging God's law. But your job is to obey the law, not to judge whether it applies to you.

viii. 5:1

- 1 Look here, you rich people: Weep and groan with anguish because of all the terrible troubles ahead of you.

a. rich - plü'-sē-os

i. abounding in material resources, abundantly supplied

ii. **root:** pē'm-plā-mē = to fill, to be fulfilled (accomplish)

b. The context is not just having wealth, but putting your trust in your material possessions

i. Scripture is always consistent on this point

d. *The Triumph of Faith (James 5:7-20)*

i. 5:8

- 8 You, too, must be patient. Take courage, for the coming of the Lord is near.

ii. 5:13

- 13 Are any of you suffering hardships? You should pray. Are any of you happy? You should sing praises.

iii. 5:19-20

- 19 My dear brothers and sisters, if someone among you wanders away from the truth and is brought back, 20 you can be sure that whoever brings the sinner back will save that person from death and bring about the forgiveness of many sins.

IV. Faithfulness Glorified

a. The Glory of the Cross

i. John 13:31-32

- 31 As soon as Judas left the room, Jesus said, "**The time has come for the Son of Man to enter into his glory**, and God will be glorified because of him. 32 And since God receives glory because of the Son, he will soon give glory to the Son.

a. Glory – high honor, great beauty, magnificence...

- b. John 13:30 So Judas left at once, going out into the night.
 - i. Worth pointing out that His glory was revealed subsequent to the a man entering his darkest hour
 - 1. Literally and figuratively
- ii. How did the Cross glorify Christ?
 - By revealing the magnitude of His love and power
 - a. All his life long He had been trying to tell the world how much He loved it.
 - i. Like little drops of love through His words, His deeds, His demeanor and His character;
 - ii. But in His death it love comes in a flood, and pours itself upon the world.
 - b. In His death a much greater and diviner power was revealed than was manifested by the works of his life
 - i. Salvation for all humanity
- iii. How did the Cross glorify God?
 - If Christ reflected the character of God in life, willingly going to the cross is the climax that revealed God's character during His earthly ministry and therefore glorifies Him
 - If Christ, pure and perfect, only suffered on the cross to teach us how the world treats the righteous, then it is impossible to understand how God dispenses justice and how all He does is good.
 - a. The cross is the bridge between a senseless act of evil and the perfect outworking's of God's love and therefore glorifies Him
 - If Christ is the Son of God whom he gave to die for us, then the cross teaches us that the glory of God's character is his divine love for us