

James 1-5

Sunday 9/4/2005

If you remember, we started last week in the Book of Hebrews. I told you how the Book of Hebrews has always been portrayed as one of the hardest books in the Bible. Now that we have been through that, I would hope you have a better understanding of how it is not the hardest book in the Bible. If you just follow the basic, systematic way that God lays the Bible out, it becomes a very understandable book of the Bible. It becomes a book that is easy to put together.

We began to show you how, when we entered Hebrews, we entered into another section in our Bible. Usually, the books from Hebrews to the end of the Bible are called the General Epistles. They are called the General Epistles because they are not aimed at anybody directly. First Corinthians, Second Corinthians, First Thessalonians, and those places are aimed at churches. Then you have First and Second Timothy, Philemon, and Titus, which are aimed at people. The Book of Hebrews is specifically addressed, but the rest of them have the names of the apostles that wrote them. So, they are given the designation as the General Epistles. There is nothing general about them when you study them because they are incredible books, and you are going to see that.

Last week, when we saw the Book of Hebrews, we talked about Hebrews as a transitional book. I am going to tell you again what transitional deals with: it deals with the aspect of coming from one place to another in time through your Bible, where God is changing and doing things differently. These books—James, First and Second Peter, First, Second, and Third John, and the Book of Jude—deal directly with the nation of Israel. I told you that when we studied the Book of Hebrews. They deal with Israel going through the coming suffering and enduring of the Tribulation Period as they go through that great time called Daniel's 70th Week, which is laid out in the Bible in so many different places.

I. Contextual Bible Study: Audience and Application

Part of the process here, and I talked about this last week, is I want to show you how to use these books of the Bible. Remember, I told you last week that you have to have a context where you are going to read the Bible. One of the things that you have to remember is you have to establish a context of subject matter: Who is He writing this to? I told you last week that there are three groups of people addressed in the Bible: you have the Gentiles, you have the nation of Israel, and then you have you and I, the Body of Christ.

It is absolutely crucial. That is why all of my teaching, one-on-one or however we do it, will always come back. I do not know how many times I am working with somebody, and they will ask me a question about the Bible, or it will be on a Thursday night, and my question back to them will be, "What is the context?" Stop and look at what the context is because that is how you learn. The first thing you have to train yourself to do when you open up a book of the Bible, when you go to a passage in the Bible, in a particular book, the first thing you have to train yourself to do is to ask yourself the question, "Who is this book written to?"

Of course, that is why, as we have come through every book of the Bible, I have told you at the beginning of each book, and if you are following this along, you should be writing these in somewhere, that I am giving you an understandable little paragraph that basically says, "This is what this book is about." So, when you come through your own reading and you start to read Matthew, Mark, Isaiah, Jeremiah, you should have up there, before you start to read it, rephrase that little paragraph in your mind and say, "Okay, this is what this is about, so this is what I am going to look for." That is how you learn to use the book by context.

Look at James 1. Last week, I told you that the Book of Hebrews is written to Hebrews, and you cannot take that book directly and apply it to you and I, and I showed you how that is.

James 1:1

James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting.

James is not written directly to you and I either. James is written to the twelve tribes that are scattered abroad. Those twelve tribes are the twelve tribes of the nation of Israel. Israel is scattered two times in your Bible and two times through history. The first time they are scattered is 606 BC. We studied it when we came through the Times of the Gentiles, and we saw that Israel is scattered and dispersed from Jerusalem in 606 BC. She is scattered by a man by the name of Nebuchadnezzar, who was the king of Babylon. You remember I told you that Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, is one of the men in the Old Testament that is a type of the Antichrist. He is a picture historically of what is going to happen in the future. The next time that Israel is going to get scattered will be any time in the next few years when the Lord comes back. The Antichrist himself is going to go after them and scatter them. We saw that when we studied the Book of Revelation in Revelation 12 and Revelation 13. The definitive chapter on that, if you remember from our Thursday night Bible study, was Matthew 24, but there are many places in the Bible that deal with it: Isaiah 22, Daniel 11, Daniel 8, and many of those kinds of places.

II. The Book of James: Theme and Outline

When you come to the Book of James, here is the definitive of this book. You want to get this someplace in your Bible. You want to remember this about the Book of James. The theme of the Book of James is very simple. I am telling you something else: when you learn what the themes are of these books of the Bible, I give them to you very basically so anybody can understand them because that is the way I am. I have to break things down for me so that I understand them, and it helps other people do it the same way. The theme of the Book of James is simple: it is the trying of your faith through tribulation worketh patience. That is all that is about. If you get that concept down somewhere in the front of your Bible, in front of James, every time you read it, that is what you want to remember because everything in that book is going to be built around that one simple theme: the trying of your faith through tribulation will work patience.

I told you last week that not all of the Bible is written to you directly as a Christian. Much of the Bible is written to somebody else, but there are things that we can learn about it. Remember that. Then I told you the key to understanding where you can apply things directly and where you

cannot. I am going to go over it again because there are a lot of new people here, and the price of learning is repetition, and I am going to keep re-emphasizing this in everything that we talk about.

I told you that in the New Testament, you have Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, which bring you from the Old Testament to the New Testament. Then you have a book called the Book of Acts, the next book, which brings you from the nation of Israel into the Church Age. Then you have a series of books where Paul writes to seven churches and three individuals. It will be from Romans to Philemon. In those books, Paul, who is the Apostle to the Gentile Church, gives us everything directly that we need to know about our faith, our life with Christ, how we are to function, everything a New Testament child of God needs. Those books, Romans to Philemon, are written directly to you. Anything in there, you can grab that and put it right between your eyes because it is written directly to you.

In Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, you have to be careful. It is not written directly to you; it is written to the nation of Israel, but it is for you, and you learn things about history, God, the nation of Israel—all important things you need to know. But you do not find out how to go to heaven in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. If you try to take Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John and find a way to go to heaven, you are going to wind up going to hell because this plan of salvation is not in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

Right now, as we are speaking this morning, there are a bunch of churches out there where guys are getting up and saying, "You have to be baptized to go to heaven," and "You have to be baptized in this to go to heaven," and they teach salvation by baptism. This is because they take their salvation plan not from Romans to Philemon; they take their salvation plan out of Matthew and Acts. Those were not written directly to you. They are transitional books. You need to know that there is stuff in there that is for you, but it is not directly to you. Of course, when you get into Romans to Philemon, then you are on safe ground.

When you get into Hebrews to the end of the Book of Jude, again, you are in a transition that is going out of the Church Age into the Tribulation Period. So, you are going to find those books have a Jewish slant, written to the nation of Israel, hence the first book, Hebrews, and the second book, James, and the twelve tribes that are scattered. This is written directly to the nation of Israel.

How do I find a book in the Bible and find what it is saying, and it looks like some of this applies to me directly and some of it does not? I have told you this before: the key is the books that Paul writes. There are lots of things in James, First and Second Peter, Matthew, and some things in Hebrews that line up with what Paul says. It is simple: when it lines up with what Paul says, then it applies to you. When it does not line up with what Paul says, then look to apply it someplace else. It is not hard. The definitive books for you and for me as a New Testament Christian are what Paul writes. So, when I come into the Book of Hebrews and I see somebody being told contrary to what Paul told me, I know it is not to me; it is to the nation of Israel. When I read in the Book of James something that he says to the twelve tribes that lines up with me, then I know that I can apply it.

I know that sounds complicated, but let me assure you of this: I will do all within my power to help you understand this because it is paramount to getting the Bible down. I do not care where you are at. I told you Thursday night that a good, healthy church has all kinds of people in it, all kinds of people at different levels of spiritual growth. Some do not know anything, some just got saved, some are well on their way, some are really into the Bible, some are intermediate where they are learning. That is what you want in a healthy church because it is all a family, and everybody is at different spiritual levels. That is what makes it so exciting because I am telling you, I will do whatever it takes in your life, if you are willing, to help you get all these things down. You are going to see throughout the morning how it all works.

Let me give you an example. I told you that the theme of the Book of James is the trying of your faith through tribulation worketh patience. Turn over to Romans 5 for just a moment. I am not going to have you turn a lot of places today because I want you to listen, but here is one I want you to look at. Romans 5. If there is somebody new Christian around you, help them find Romans 5. I still have a tough time finding some of the books in the Bible. I am still looking for Hezekiah.

Romans 5:3-4

And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope:

There it is. In other words, the concept of going through tough times of tribulations, the principles fit to Israel going through the Tribulation Period and learning patience, and what you and I have to go through in life every day. We may not go through the Great Tribulation that Israel is going to go through, but you and I know as well as anybody that if you are going to stand for God and you are going to pay the price to serve God, there are going to be some tough times in your life. The devil is not going to make it easy for you. Just as you go through your tribulation period on a smaller scale, and Israel goes through the Great Tribulation on a global scale, the principles are the same. That is why a great example of how something written to the twelve tribes, patience through tribulation, also applies directly to us. Why? Because you will find it in the first book that Paul writes, the Book of Romans, and other books too. So, I want you to keep that in mind this morning as we start to come through because you are going to begin to see that much of James does line up with the Pauline writings. Some of it does not, and I will show you as best I can today and in the time we have what does and what does not. But the Book of James teaches one of the basic concepts that the Book of Romans teaches, and that is that you and I get stronger through adversity. You and I get stronger through adversity. God allows trials and tribulations to come into our lives to build us, and you are going to see that as we come through. He uses it to build the nation of Israel as a nation. He will use it in your life and my life on an individual scale to build it. That is why there are tough times for all of us as a child of God, and that is why God wants to teach you the Bible, that you learn how to deal with adversity, that you grow through the adversity. The problems in life will help you turn to God or turn from God, one or the other. That is just the way it is.

Let me give you another thing you will want to get about this book. Let me give you the outline of the Book of James. It is very important. It is easy.

- Chapter 1 through Chapter 3: Faith shown outwardly as you face tribulation.
- Chapter 4 and Chapter 5: Faith shown inwardly as we face tribulation.

It is easy. Chapter 1 through Chapter 3 is your faith and my faith when I go through a tribulation period outwardly being shown by what I do and what I say. Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 is the faith that I have in Christ shown inwardly as I go through the struggles of life, and the emphasis there is going to be on my humility and my prayer. That is basically how the book breaks down.

Again, before we go any farther in this little book, remember first and foremost, this is written to the twelve Jewish tribes of the nation of Israel that are scattered. Here is the background: Israel is in the Tribulation Period, and they are scattered. They are trying to survive the pursuit of the Antichrist, and they are trying to find God in the process. Last week, we saw the Book of Hebrews that really defines to the nation of Israel who Christ is and all the things between the Old Testament and the New Testament, and how the things in the New Testament are better than the things in the Old Testament. We saw that. Now, in this book, it shows them, as they are struggling to survive, how to have patience to wait through this Tribulation Period for God to come and save them.

God has to get them to understand that God has a timetable, and that God says that while you are going through this tribulation on planet Earth—and all this is detailed out for you in Matthew 24, I am taking you the easy route, and of course, we have been through Matthew 24 on our studies on Thursday night—all this takes place as Israel is going through the Tribulation Period, and God is showing them how to be patient, that God has a timetable, and that God is doing something, and in time, God will fulfill those promises that God gave to the nation of Israel.

You want to remember that at the same time, He is saying directly or indirectly to me, "Bob, in life on planet Earth, there are going to be trials and tribulations. There are going to be things that you are going to have to go through. There are going to be things that you are going to have to deal with. Bob, you need to understand that there are some things that I want you to learn from that. Bob, I also understand this: I have a timetable. I am doing something in your life, and you are going to see it when we get into Chapter 1." He is saying the bottom line is, "Bob, I gave you some promises, and those promises will come to pass because they are true. Do not get discouraged because of what you are going through. The promises of God will get you through your own personal tribulation, whatever you are going through, just like it will get Israel through theirs." See how it works? It is simple, easy.

So, chapter by chapter, let us come through and look at this, and let us see some great concepts and make the applications as best we can.

Let us pray. Father, we thank You and praise You for the Lord Jesus. I love You today. Thank You for all that You have done for us. Thank You for those that You have brought here today. Lord, I pray that You just give us wisdom and insight into all this said and done. Lord, we just love You,

and we thank You, Father, for the Word of God that You have given us, for its power, for its strength, for its truth. We pray now, Lord, that in everything that is said and done, You will have the honor and glory. Help us to leave today understanding Your Word a little better. Thank You for all the new host of people that You have had saved over the last couple of weeks. Pray, Father, that as we look at our own time of baptism in a couple of weeks, that they will see the need, Lord, to follow You in obedience to baptism, that we may be able to work into their life and to show them the principles of the Word of God and to disciple them, to work with them, to help them any way that we can. Let them know this church cares for them. We love them, and all we care about from them is the fact that they learn Your Word, that they may in these last days have a little piece of Your mission that we may accomplish together through this church. We will thank You and praise You in Jesus' name, for His sake, we ask it. Amen.

III. James Chapter 1: Core Concepts

Chapter 1 teaches three great concepts, and we want to come through these. Look at James 1:1.

James 1:1-4

James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting. My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

Chapter 1 lays out two types of temptation that are talked about in the Bible. This is one of your great so-called contradictions in your Bible. Many times I have heard men that had an axe to grind against God and hated the Bible always threw this. What they are saying is, here in James 1:13, it says:

James 1:13

Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:

But when you go back to Genesis 22:1, the Bible says, "And God did tempt Abraham." See the contradiction? One place says God did not tempt a man; the other place said God did tempt Abraham. Somebody that wants to discredit the Bible and find mistakes in the Bible, that does not want to study to show themselves approved, there you are. If you want to prove the Bible is wrong, help yourself. If you study to come through the Scriptures, you will find there is a great teaching here, and that great teaching is there are two kinds of temptations in the Bible.

In fact, when you come down through here, he says in James 1:3, "Knowing this that the trying of your faith worketh patience." When you go over to Genesis 22:1, where it says God did tempt Abraham, and then you turn back to Hebrews 11:17 and see the same account, it will say in Hebrews 11:17, "By faith Abraham, when he was tried." Two kinds of temptation.

Let me tell you something: as a child of God, God will try you with the things that you love. He will. That is a true statement. When you first get saved, obviously, God is not going to confuse

you. God is not the author of confusion. God gives you a free pass for a while. You learn that in the Old Testament. You realize when the children of Israel came out of Egypt, if you study the path that they went, they just came out of Egypt and they went around in a big circle for quite a while. They just went around in a big circle for a long time before God let them meet the first adversity that they had to face. Do you know why? Because God knew that young Christians are not ready to face a lot of adversity.

That is why God puts you in a church. You may get saved on Thursday night or Sunday morning, and the next Friday your world may fall out from underneath you. That is why God gave you church. God did not expect you to deal with it all by yourself. That is why God gave you a pastor. That is why God gave you Christian friends. There are people at this point in your life who know more about the Bible than you do. That will not be that way forever. You will move right along. You will grow up and you will learn how to figure it out too. But right now, if you just got saved or whatever, there are people around you who know more about it than you do. They are not going to hold it over you and say, "Wow, look how smart I am." No, they are going to use that to help you deal through your struggles and problems, and as you grow up, you will learn how to handle them yourself.

God is not going to throw you a monkey wrench the day after you get saved. The devil may, but God is not. God let the children of Israel wander around there for a while before they met their first adversary. He was giving them some time to get their feet on the ground. When you get saved, God puts you in a church. Maybe you do not recognize that, but I am telling you, that is what you have got to recognize. We are here for your survival. This old world out here is like a raging sea, and this little church is like a lifeboat, and we are all in the same boat, and we are all trying to survive. I am not the captain of that boat; the Lord Jesus Christ is the captain of that boat. We are all in the same mess, and that is why we all have to help each other.

Do not ever look at me as somebody that you think I am way up here, that I cannot be down here where you are at. I will say this because you need to understand it. I am not saying that to say anything great about me because I put my pants on just like everybody else, but I am saying it to say this: I am not any better than you. I will never ask you to do anything that I am not willing to do myself. That does not make me great; that makes me just an old rotten, filthy sinner just like you are. But we are in this boat together, and when you have a need, it has to be my need, and when you hurt, it has to be my hurt. We are in this thing together. I am not any better than you.

We are in this sea of life trying to survive. You do not need a pastor that cannot be there when you are drowning. I would expect you to pull me out of the sea if I was drowning, just like I am supposed to pull you up. We are in it together. How are we ever going to accomplish anything without that mindset? We have got to help each other. We have got to be there for each other.

We work together as a team to move somebody because down the line, we are going to work together as a team to win somebody. I do not know any other way for a leader to lead than by example. If I want you to be a servant, then I have to have my heart as a servant. It does not work any other way. It just does not. It does not take long to see the men and women in our church,

and that is true about just about all of you, that have a servant's heart, that would do anything for anybody when the time comes up, and that is just the way that it is.

You have to understand that God will tempt you and try you with what you love. God did not tempt Abraham in the sense that He tempted him with evil because that is what the verse says in James 1:13.

James 1:13-15

Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

The second type of temptation is from your own lust when you are drawn away. That means that your old flesh and your own nature, the one you hang out with and feed, is going to draw you away from the things of God. God will not tempt you with evil, but God will tempt you and try you with the things that you love. Why? Because tribulation has a perfect work, as James 1:4 says. That is why God is not going to tempt a man to lust, but God will tempt a man and try a man on the things that he loves. We saw it with Job. We saw it with Paul. We saw it with Abraham. We have seen it with almost every man in the Bible. But your flesh and my flesh will do a good job by itself. If you let your mind dwell on sin, that is where you will be very shortly.

That is why the Bible says in 1 Corinthians 2:16 that we have the mind of Christ. It says in Philippians 2 that this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus. That is why the Bible says in 2 Corinthians 10:5 that you and I are to cast down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. God does not tempt men with evil. Men allow their flesh, women allow their flesh, to be drawn away from God, and then it goes from there. So, we see that there is no contradiction. The first great principle sets up the crucial studies in the Bible of the two types of temptation.

Then there is a second concept, and this is found in James 1:8. This is a great one.

James 1:8

A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.

That fits Israel right now as we speak. Israel is double-minded. So, it is true of the nation of Israel. They are a long way from God. They are messed up on the things of God, and they are in deep, deep sin. But it is also true of you and I because the great concept is that no man can serve two masters. The great concept is, "How can two walk together, except they be agreed?"

The Bible, and you are going to learn this in time, the Bible is the owner's manual for the creation that God created. God created you and I, and God created you and I, and He knew that we were going to be problematic. So, God gave us an owner's manual by which we could fix ourselves. In fact, it is an owner's manual that if you run it the right way, you get a long life and long longevity out of it. Anybody knows that if you buy an appliance that runs on 110 and plug it

into 440, things are not going to go very well. Everybody knows if your car takes gas and you put diesel fuel in it, you are not going very far. Everybody knows that if you go to wash clothes and you put in a little bit of water and a lot of soap, you are not going anywhere. Everything has to have the way that it runs, and you always get some kind of owner's manual with that appliance or whatever that tells you. When you buy a car, you get a book that thick that tells you what to do and what not to do. You buy a radio, you get a manual. You get a telephone, you get a manual. It tells you how to do everything. If you do not follow it, it does not work very well.

When God made you and I, we are His creation, and the Creator gave you and I an owner's manual called your Bible. When you do what is right with the Bible, you do well. When you do not do what is right with the Bible, you do not do well. I have said it a thousand times: the Word of God is the final authority in all things in faith and practice. Faith being the spiritual things, practice being your life as you live it every day. That is why you are going to find all down through the Bible where it talks about singleness of heart. That is why the Bible says all down through the Bible it talks about being one-minded, like-minded. The key word here is unstable. We use the word in the twenty-first century, "dysfunctional," but it is the word "unstable."

Because America has rejected the Word of God, because American churches have forsaken the preaching of the Word of God and teaching the Word of God, we find that all three institutions that God designed are unstable and dysfunctional because they are double-minded: the family, the government, and the church. Three institutions that God set up and laid out to operate by His principles. What is wrong with America? You can go down there, you can list the Bill Rally, you can listen to anybody you want to listen to. You can get Rush Limbaugh, all those guys, and they all have good things to say. But if you want to make it down to a very simple idea of what is wrong with everything in America, it is the fact that America and everything in it is running by two mindsets, and it produces instability. The family is unstable, the government is unstable, and the church is unstable, and all we are producing in America at the rate of about 50 million an hour is instability. There is nothing stable in this country, and that is why you see every problem that we have.

That is why, the flood down in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, a terrible thing. But you know why nothing can get right? It does not matter what you do. Everything has a bottom line. Men never learn from history. Everybody cannot figure out what is wrong with America. Everybody is screaming, "Why did it take three days to get all the help down there? Why did they do this? Why did they do that?" Nobody can figure it out. I am going to tell you one story from history that explains every problem we have.

Back in the 1800s, the British had colonies everywhere, and in Africa, which would be today like Kenya and those places, they had colonies all through there. In fact, if you go to Africa today, you will still see the remnants of that culture. That is why they speak English over there. They call it colloquialism, colonial English. They were all through there, and there were rebellions that were going on, and one of the worst defeats that the British army ever had was up against the Zulus. The Zulus were bad dudes. They could run all day, run a hundred miles, and fight a pitched battle. They were incredible, but all they had was spears and little things to hit you in the head with.

The British army was the greatest army in the world at this time. Their weapon that they had was a Martini-Henry. It was a single-shot rifle that fired a bullet that would really knock your socks off if it hit you. They had all kinds of techniques. When the Zulus would charge them, they would put five ranks, and they would go in what they called a rolling formation, where the front rank would shoot, they kneeled down, the second rank would shoot, they kneeled down, the third rank would shoot, they kneeled down, the fourth rank would shoot, they kneeled down, the fifth rank would shoot. By the time that rank got done, the first rank was loaded again. You see how with progression, they kept up what is called in military terms a sustained rate of fire. Today, we have machine guns, gunships, and everything else, and we just fire. They did not have that, so they had to come up with something that went without going. So, they lined everybody up, put them in a rolling formation, and it kept up a constant state of fire. Those Zulus were coming in waves, and they would just first front rank, second rank, and by the time they were done, it would just keep going on and on. They had military warfare down to a science.

They were fighting people with sticks and spears, but the military lost one great battle. Do you know why they lost that great battle? They had them outgunned. They had more firepower. They had more training. They had better fortification. They were behind walls in an old fort. The Zulus were standing out in the open, and they would charge, and they would charge, and then they would stand over here, and they would charge. The British should have whipped them. They had everything to whip them, and they got killed and slaughtered. Do you know why? Because the British had rules, and one of the rules was, when you were a British soldier and you needed ammunition for your rifle, you had to come to one man who was the quartermaster of the ammunition. He had to account for every round to the commanding officer.

So, when the Zulus started coming over the wall, and they were running out of ammunition, the British soldiers all ran to this quartermaster, who had been in the army for probably 35 or 40 years, and he did everything by the book. He stood there opening up one case of ammo at a time instead of letting everybody get what they needed and get back to the wall. The bureaucracy stated, "You have to sign for every round you take," while the Zulus were coming over the wall and slaughtering the British soldiers. The bureaucracy was making them stand in line and sign for the ammunition, in spite of the fact that the guys at the end of the line working their way up were getting slaughtered.

Somebody says, "How stupid that could be!" That is exactly what the problem is in our country today. The bureaucracy has found we have the most tremendous resources in the world coming through a half-inch funnel, and at the end of that funnel is some old guy who has been around forever saying, "Oh, no, no, no, don't confuse the facts with them coming over the wall. Sign your name. One round? How many rounds would you like? All right, sign here, sign here. What happened? Who killed you? Oh, sorry." You cannot do it that way. There has to come a time when you have to throw caution to the wind, and you have to do what you have to do. The bureaucracy in this country is dysfunctional. It is double-minded, and it has destroyed everything. While people are dying and going to hell, we are worrying about signing here, getting this, "Who is going to sign this? Well, now we have to have triplicate forms on these

because we cannot do this this way. No, no, it has to be countersigned by so-and-so." While people are dying.

Churches are doing the same thing. Christians are doing the same thing. Why? Because the structure has broken down, and we are now dysfunctional and unstable. No man can serve two masters. I am telling you, a double-minded man is unstable in all his ways. That is true of Israel. It is also true of every child of God who thinks foolishly that you can play God in the world, put one foot in the world and one foot in your Bible, and live. You cannot. You are kidding yourself. You are fooling yourself, and you better come to reality, brother, that you are going to get caught by your own bureaucracy of thinking that you can do both when you cannot.

Then there is a third great principle, and this is another great one, and this is found in James 1:22-25. This is the principle of the perfect law of liberty. I also call this why men hate the Word of God and do not want to serve God.

James 1:22-25

But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

This is the great answer to why men and women, saved and unsaved, turn from the Bible. It says that the Bible is like a natural looking glass. I remember the story as a kid growing up of Snow White, when she said, "Mirror, mirror on the wall, who is the fairest of them all?" The mirror in return said, "Not you, you are all haggard. Snow White." She did not like it. Why? Because the Word of God is just like that.

I do not take this wrong because it is true of all of us. None of you ladies here today, nor none of you men, including myself, look like you looked when you got up this morning. Not a complaint, you look wonderful. But women are funny, men are funny, we are all funny. We do not want people to see us in the morning as we really are, so we spend hours presenting something that really is not there. My point is this: that is what the Bible does. No matter how much makeup we put on, no matter how much we try to present ourselves as beautiful as maybe we truly are, and you just have to help a little enhancement, that is what the Word of God does. The Word of God shows you, barring everything we put on our life to make us look better, how we really are.

That is why the Bible says man does not like it. Man looks into the Word of God, a woman looks into the Word of God. They come on Sunday morning, they hear me lay out the Word of God, they are going to have two reactions to it: they are going to take what I say and they are going to despise it or not like it, or they are going to take what I say and they are going to say, "You know what? It is, and that is the way this and that, and that is where it is going to be." I have never met too many people that say, "Well, I kind of like God," or "I kind of do not." I just find people that say, "I love Him," or "I hate Him." "I want Him in my life," or "I do not want anything to do with Him." I never found anybody quite in the middle. I know that people think they are in the

middle, but there is no middle. That is what the Word of God does. It shows you like a looking glass exactly what you really are, your natural state.

The Bible says in James 1:23-24:

For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.

He goes his way versus God's way. Why? He does not like what he sees. We like to forget what manner of man we really are. The Bible, every time we open it, every time we hear a preacher, constantly reminds us what our problems are. When you are not willing to deal with your problems, when you are not willing to admit that you need help, when you are not willing to get to the place in your life where you see yourself as you really are, then pride overwhelms you, pride swells up in you, and you like to forget who you are, and you go your way because you really do not like to understand and realize who you are.

James 1:25

But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

That is your Bible. Look at this: "And continueth therein, stay with the book. He not, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." Do you know why? Because the first step in really being used of God and building a relationship with God is simply recognizing who He is and who we are. That is what the Word of God does. The Word of God simply shows you and I who we really are. Then when we are willing to accept that, then God will change us every day to be more like Him. Great principle. That is why men read the Bible, go to church, and never go back. They get offended by what they see. A lot of times they will blame the preacher. A lot of times they will blame everybody around them, but the bottom line is, deep down inside them, they know the bottom line is they did not like what they saw when they looked in it. The first step of getting a relationship with God is understanding that none of us look good. I do not care if it is me standing up here, I do not care if it is you sitting out there, I do not care who it is, none of us look good, and you have to become comfortable with that and realize that that is why God came down and saved you. That is why He gave you the Bible. That is why He gave you church. That is why He gave you Christian friends. That is why He gave you a husband and a wife, that you can work through those things and become more like Christ every day of your life.

IV. James Chapter 2: The Royal Law and Justification

Now, Chapter 2 is a very simple one. James 2:8.

James 2:8

If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well.

This is called the royal law. The royal law, again, is found over in the Book of Galatians, a book that Paul writes. In Galatians 6, it is called the law of Christ.

Galatians 6:1-3

Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself.

That goes along so much with what Paul says in Romans 14 and 15. The royal law is that you love others just like you love yourself. You are always there to help a brother and sister in Christ. You are to bear their infirmities. We have talked about this before. We have talked about that when young Christians come in, they struggle with things. When people first get saved, they do not have it all figured out. They do not know all the things that they are supposed to be doing. We need to understand that, and we need to bear one another's burdens. Some people have a tough time getting rid of some of the things in the world. Some people do not, some people do. It does not matter. The bottom line is a church should never be dogmatic toward young baby Christians. It should take them, love them, help them, encourage them, help walk them through, show them, allow them to grow into what God wants them to be, and lovingly carry them through.

Most pastors have said this before: they stand up at the top of the stairs with the poor sinner down at the bottom, and they yell and scream and everything in the world to get up here where they are at. When the truth of the matter is, every pastor ought to descend those stairs and go down and put his arm around them and walk them up one step at a time. Sometimes it is two steps, three steps forward and two back. It does not make any difference. You just continually help people get up that spiritual walk with the Lord Jesus Christ. All that fits into what goes on in Romans when Paul writes to the church.

Then the second great concept found in James 2:21-24. Here is one we need to look at for a moment. This is where one of the great heresies comes from, and you are going to be confronted with it at some point in your life.

James 2:21-24

Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

Here is where people, as I told you, this is where you have to be careful because this is totally contradictory to what Paul says. Here is the problem, and here is what man will teach. Man will say, "You have to work your way to heaven. Works is vital for you to get saved." Where do they go? They go right here, and they will say, "See, look at verse 21, 'Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac his son upon the altar?' Look at verse 24, 'You see

then how that by works a man is justified and not by faith only." Now there are two great verses. If a man wants to prove that you have to work to do your salvation and get your salvation, that is where he goes.

Let me show you how easy it is to deal with this. That is the problem. Let me show you how this thing works. First of all, I already told you, the breakdown of this book in the first three chapters, the theme of it was faith shown outwardly by your works. But if you do not have that piece of the puzzle, then you are in trouble. Now let me show you the second thing here, how I know that he is not talking about anybody getting saved. Look at James 2:21.

James 2:21

Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?

A man pulled that on me one time, years and years ago. He said, "You have to, once you, he said, you have to get saved by faith, but you have to do works. And if you do not do works, then you lose your salvation." I said, "Where did you get that from?" He said, "James 2 down through here." He read verse 21, he said, "Doesn't the Bible say, 'Was Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac his son upon the altar?'" I said, "Yes, that is what it says, but that is not what it means." He said, "What do you mean it is not what it means?" He said, "It says right there that Abraham was justified by faith when he offered up Isaac." I said, "That is not where Abraham got saved. Abraham got saved back in Genesis 15, where God took him out and showed him the stars of heaven. The Bible clearly says that Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness." That is when he got saved. That is 41 years before he ever offered up Isaac. Abraham was saved 41 years before this event ever took place.

It is not talking about salvation. You are already shown in Chapter 1 where the Bible says the trying of your faith worketh patience, and patience has a perfect work. What he is saying here is simply this: when you are saved and you are a truly saved person, you are not only going to have an inward faith, that faith is going to be displayed outwardly by what you do. Anybody that knows the whole story of Abraham is a story of his growth and his faith with God. Right growth produces the right faith. The right faith will always produce the right works.

When I studied Abraham's life, I saw him starting out back there in Genesis 12, 13, and 14. He starts out in Genesis 16, when God comes down and says, "Abraham, I am going to make you a great nation, and someday your seed is going to be like the stars of heaven, and I am going to give you a promised seed." Abraham could not believe Him. When he did not get the seed, he got Hagar from his wife, and he had a seed through that, which produced all kinds of problems. His whole life is a picture of your life and my life getting saved and then going through the process. Forty-some years later, in Genesis 22, he believed God so much that when God said, "Put your son on the altar and offer him up to Me to sacrifice," Abraham was willing to do it. Do you know why? He had grown from point A, where he could not trust God, to point B, where he could, and his work showed it.

I do not expect you right now as a young Christian to be able to do great things for God. Maybe all you can do right now is get to church. Some of you have a tough time with that, and you have been saved a lot longer than some of the other ones. Maybe all you can do right now is just whatever you can do. But in time, that will change because as you grow and as your faith grows, you are going to do more things. Some of you maybe cannot see yourself preaching in a church someplace. I can. A year ago, two years ago, some of you would not have said you could never preach anywhere, and then I have seen you down at the City Union Mission. Do you know why? Because your faith has grown, and your works have grown. Some of you, when you first came to this church and we first started meeting together, you did not have a clue of what to do with the Bible and people. Now you are working with people at work, you are discipling people here. Why? Because the right process of growth produces the right faith, and that always produces the right works. The old concept, "faith without works is dead," is built on the aspect that if you are truly saved, as you grow, your works will grow with it. That is what he is saying. He is not talking about getting saved. He teaches one of the greatest principles in the world: there is a process of spiritual growth in your life that if you get into church, you get into the Bible, you let somebody help you, as you grow spiritually, your faith grows. As your faith grows, your works grow, and you do greater things for God. That is how it works.

V. James Chapter 3: The Problem of the Tongue

Chapter 3, the whole chapter is devoted to man's biggest problem, and that is his mouth. I was driving over here this morning, a little church back there on Nolan Road, and their marquee simply said this: "Many things are opened by mistake, but nothing more than our mouths." What a true statement.

James 3:1-8

My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation. For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body. Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body. Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet they are turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth. Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.

What a great commentary on human nature. It is so true. I remember last year out in California, Oregon, one of those places, they lost like 900,000, almost a million, if not a million acres to a forest fire. I remember it was interesting that a news broadcast was talking about it, and they said that that whole million-plus acres was destroyed by one little cigarette. Somebody just flippantly threw it out of the car. I thought to myself, how many times one thing said in the course of

discord among the brethren has had devastating effects on somebody else's life? It is an incredible thing, and he focuses on this as man's biggest problem.

Proverbs 11:13 says, "A talebearer revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter." He prays about it. Proverbs 18:8, "The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly." The worst wound you can get is a stomach wound. The Bible talks about in Proverbs 6:16 the six things that God hates and the seventh making an abomination. The seventh thing is the sowing of discord among God's people. Let me tell you something, that is the number one problem. That is the number one problem, always has been, always will be. That is the number one problem.

I have looked at this over the years, and I thought to myself, "Why is this the number one problem?" This is probably the easiest problem to stop within anybody. It really is. It is probably the easiest one of all the sins that man does, and it is the easiest one to deal with. Yet it is the most rampant and the most destructive. Do you know why? Because God's people will not deal with it. Do you know how you deal with it? When somebody comes to you and starts to tell you something about somebody else that they have no business telling you about, if you stop them dead in their tracks, right on the spot, and nail them scripturally and say, "Hey, now, we have two choices here. We can either go and talk to this person in person, or you can shut your mouth and go on your way." I promise you, you shut it down.

But we will not do that. We just will not. I do not know why we will not, but we will not. We let somebody go on and assassinate somebody else's character. We let somebody go on and say something about somebody else that is not true or whatever the case. We just go on with it. We never stop that person and never say, "Hey, look, you are telling someone who cannot really fix your problem. If you have a problem with so-and-so, why are you telling me? I cannot fix it. You need to go, the Bible says, you need to go tell that person and deal with them." They do not want to. Why? Because they are the ministers of information.

The standard joke: a lady of the church came down one time in a revival service and came down to the preacher, crying and bawling. She said to the preacher, "Preacher, I have been so confronted this week. I am a gossip, and I just want to let you know, Preacher, I am sorry. I am going to come down here, Preacher, to lay my tongue in the order of God." The preacher said, "We need a bigger altar." Terrible, terrible.

Of course, as this fits all into the nation of Israel, you will find all this stuff that is talking about here: Matthew 10:22, Luke 12:53. All of this stuff. Remember, all this is Israel doctrinally, enduring the tribulation, learning patience. For us, inspirationally, it is going through our own trials and tribulations. Everything we have looked at so far not only fits to Israel in their time of need as they go through the tribulation, but in our lives, the same things that we face: people talking about you, people double-minded, double standards, all of these things, they all fit in the parallels.

VI. James Chapter 4: Overcoming the Flesh

Chapter 4. You can say what you want to say, and you can do what you want to do, but the bottom line is Chapter 4 shows us where the real problem lies, not only with the nation of Israel, but also with us.

James 4:1-3

From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.

Every problem you and I have, every problem that Israel has, every problem that you and I have in our lives today starts with my flesh and your flesh. It simply does. Of course, the age-old question, and I have seen it. I have seen young Christians when they got saved, started to try to do what is right, their old lifestyle just welled back up and tried to overcome them. Many times they are met with their old friends, their old ways. Many times they get the illusion in their mind that they can hang out with them and change their mind, and they get swallowed up by it because they are not strong enough themselves.

Every problem that you and I experience, we cannot blame on anybody but ourselves. Your flesh and my flesh is the most dominant thing you and I are always going to have to deal with. Do you know why? Because when you and I got saved, your flesh did not get saved. Your soul got saved. Your soul got sealed and redeemed, and your soul is going to heaven to be with the Lord someday. But your flesh is going back down that grave, and that flesh is always flesh. That is why you struggle with the things you struggle with. You have two natures, an old nature and a new nature after you are saved. The new nature is saved. It is a new man. It is Christ Jesus inside you, wanting to do what is right. The old nature wants to draw you back and pull you in. There is not anybody in this room that is saved that has not experienced that. Everybody in this room has to feel the tidal pull of the old flesh in your life that sometime or the other wants to go back to the way that it used to be.

You are asked many, many times, at least I am asked many times, "How do you overcome the flesh?" I know the standard answers. The Bible says, "Crucify the flesh." The Bible says, "Reckon yourself dead." The Bible says, "Whatever nature you feed is the one that is going to grow." All those things are true. Nowhere in the Bible do you find a format to show you how to deal with your flesh better than James 4. James 4 shows you the way to do it if you want to do it. I will give it to you, and I will lay it out for you. I fully well know in my mind that most of God's people will never do it because that is just the way we are.

James 4:7-8

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.

You want to overcome the flesh? You want to get the victory in your life? Here are the things you have to do. You cannot do one of them; you have to do all of them. There is a progression here, and if you do not do it, it will not work.

1. **Submit yourselves unto God.** What does that mean? It means there has to come a time in your life, young man, young lady, there has to come a time in your life when you have to clear off a spot and say, "I am going to stake my stand right here. I have wasted enough of my life. I have wasted enough of my time. I am going to drill a hole here, and I am not going to leave until I get this thing. If I have to lose my friends, if I have to lose my girlfriend, if I have to lose my boyfriend, they can go. I am tired of it. I am going to submit myself to God first, and I am going to fight." That is what you have to do. If you do not get that kind of determination, you will never make it.
2. **Resist the devil.** How do you do that? We talked about this Thursday night. You resist the devil by replacing your thought process with the principles of the Word of God. When something comes into your life, instead of thinking of it the old way, you think of it God's way. The only way you resist the devil is the way Christ did when He came to Matthew 4 and tried to get Him to be tempted. Jesus simply said, "It is written." End of statement. You have to begin, once you submit, you have to begin to resist, and the only way you and I can resist is to get the Word of God in our lives. That means you have to come and you have to get somebody to work with you.
3. **Draw nigh to God.** What does that mean? Simple, let me translate it for you: "Get with the program." God gave you a church. God gave you a pastor. God gave you people that care. Get with the program. Get the things out of your life that keep you from being what God wants you to be, and you draw, get where God is at. You can never get with God when you keep going places God is not there. You have to submit, you have to resist, and then you have to draw nigh to God. You get with the program.
4. **Cleanse your hands.** What does that mean? You get right with God. You stay right with God. You recognize your daily sin and downfall. You keep short accounts with God.
5. **Purify your heart.** You get rid of the double standards. You get rid of the double-mindedness, and you get on that single concept. That is what you do. That is how you overcome your flesh. You submit, you resist, you draw nigh to God, you cleanse your hands, and you purify your heart.

Nobody can do that for you. I can teach you, we can teach you, I can encourage you, admonish you, but nobody can do this for you. If you just do not have the guts down deep inside of you to be a man to take a stand for God in the face of all the world doing with God, I do not know what I can do to help you. You have to just say, "I am going to be God's man. I do not care who laughs at me. I do not care who makes fun of me. I am going to be God's woman. I am going to take a stand for Him. After what He did for me, I do not care what anybody thinks." That is what it takes. There are men like that out there. There are women like that out there. Give me some men and some women that in these last days want to clear up a spot and say, "Let us get it done." That is what we are looking for.

VII. James Chapter 5: The Second Coming and Enduring Trials

Then Chapter 5, and this is it, we are done. Chapter 5 is clearly and plainly the whole chapter, the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Look at James 5:7-8. Now here is where your Thursday nights are going to begin to pay off because we come through this stuff.

James 5:7-8

Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

You need a context: "coming of the Lord." Look down there in verse 7, "receive the early and latter rain." There is that former and the latter rain. In fact, when we went through our definitive passage on Thursday night for all those months, James 5:7 was a definitive passage on the former and the latter rain. I took you through Joel 2, Job 37, 2 Chronicles 6, 2 Chronicles 7, a thousand other places, and I showed you what this former and the latter rain was.

Look at James 5:11-12.

Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy. But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation.

See that word "endure" keep popping up? That is Israel in the tribulation. "Behold, we count them happy which endure. You have heard the patience of Job." The patience of Job. "You have seen the end, the end of the tribulation of the Lord, that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy."

I have told you before, we started making our way through the Book of Job, the whole Book of Job is a picture of the Tribulation Period. The name Job means "one persecuted." He is persecuted in the land of Uz. That is where the Jew is going to be during the Tribulation Period. The whole thing, Job is on the ground being persecuted by the devil for seven days and seven nights, like the Jew for seven years. Job loses all that he has; the nation of Israel loses all that. He gets back double at the end, so does the nation of Israel. There are 42 chapters in the Book of Job; there are 42 months in the Great Tribulation Period. You cannot miss it.

Then he comes down in James 5:12 and he talks about swearing not, neither by heaven or earth. You go to Ezekiel 16, Ezekiel 17, 2 Chronicles 36, Isaiah 65, Daniel 9, Daniel 5, you will find that this is somebody told not to swear an oath to a number, and that number is 666, just like Revelation 12, Revelation 13. All this stuff is dealing with Israel.

Then he says in James 5:17, and here is the key:

Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.

You see that thing? That is a picture of that rain at the end that brings in the Second Coming of Christ. All this, we studied this on Thursday night, all this is Isaiah 55:8-13 and on down through there. All this is a picture of the Second Coming of Christ and being likened to a rainstorm, where the water comes down, a type of the Word of God, and it accomplishes the purpose that God sent it to. All of these things are pictures in the Book of James directly to the nation of Israel, struggling through the Tribulation Period, and God telling them to be patient.

VIII. Conclusion: Personal Application

In your life and my life, and we are going to close, we are going to have our own trials and tribulations. Some of us have already been through them. Some of you that just got saved, you are going to go through them. This is why God gave you a pastor. This is why God gave you men and women sitting around you that love you and care for you. This is why God gave you a church, because God's program, God's design, is together, we help each other through the tough times. That is the only thing that is going to get Israel through.

When Israel gets into the Tribulation Period, God sends them the greatest leaders they ever had in the Old Testament, Moses and Elijah, in Revelation 11, to come back and lead them. Do you know why? Because they need leadership. In that leadership, there is comfort. In that leadership, there are men standing there, reaffirming to them in the midst of their trials, that God is still their God and still loves them. Do you know why? Because it is so easy in the midst of our trials—financially, family-wise, whatever we have to go through—it is so easy to get short-sighted with all that is around us. That is why God decided to put in your life somebody, people, a church that cares to help you sort it all out. That is what we are here for today.

Every head bowed and every eye closed. We are going to be finished here in just a second. Let me just say this to you: I do not know where you are at today in your own personal relationship with the Lord. I do not need to know. You know. You know right now as you are sitting here, you know that after all we have talked about today, and I hope now you clearly see the parallels between the struggles of Israel going through what they have to go through and our struggles of what we have to go through, that the answer to both is the same: it is the Word of God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Maybe you are here sitting here this morning, and you are not a Christian. I define that as being a Christian or not being a Christian by simply this: if you were to die right now, keel over in your chair, drop dead as you got up to leave this building, where would you spend eternity? If the answer in your heart is "in heaven," and you do not know for sure, then this message was exactly for you because God wants you to be saved. He says, "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life." God died for you, and today He wants you to leave here knowing for sure that your sins have been forgiven. That is what it is all about.

I am going to pray in just a moment, and then we are going to be dismissed. Let me ask you this: Is there somebody here this morning that maybe deep down in your heart, you do not know for sure if you had died right now that you would go to heaven? With every head bowed and every eye closed, and nobody looking around, would you allow me to pray for you? Would you by your uplifted hand say, "Bob, I am not sure that if I died right now that I would go to heaven. Here is my hand. Would you please pray for me?" I will not embarrass you. If anything else is done, it is because you wanted to. Our heads are bowed.