

(Vs 8-9) Paul said he could “enjoin” him (order) him but he was going to ask him as a father figure (a good lesson in leadership)

(Vs 10-14) This is a great picture of “reconciliation” Paul was asking for grace for Onesimus, he wanted to keep him with him to help with the work, but (Vs 13) he wanted to ask Philemon’s blessing.

(Vs 15-16) Paul had a great view of God’s sovereignty, in bad things he looked for God’s hand and purpose shining through. He points out that perhaps Onesimus left for a time so Philemon could receive him for ever, not as a “servant” but a “brother” in Christ!

Our view of God will affect our view of everything that happens in our life. We can view God as a desperate old man trying His best to keep things from getting too bad and being befuddled by man at every turn. Or... We can realize that man’s fiercest rebellion will fulfill God’s plan, man can run and run and run and when he stops running he will find he was and is to God’s purpose and glory.

God is not subject or limited to variables and limitations, He knows the end from the beginning, it has already been seen and in His mind is already done. We find it out on a day-by-day basis, but let us rest in His control!

Saturday/Sunday: Vs 17-25 (Proverbs 21-22)

(Vs 17- 21) What if we forgave others as Christ forgave us? That is what Paul is doing; he is imputing his name and record unto Onesimus and taking Onesimus’ “debt on himself (Vs 18-19) Does this sound familiar? This is what Christ did for those who believe.

(Vs 22) It is a fact that God’s ministers live off the “giving” of God’s people, this is God’s intention (1 Cor 9:7- 14.) The gospel will go as far as God’s people will take it, let us give unto the work of God.

(Vs 23-25) Here are some misc people... can you pick the traitor?

The book of Philemon is a small book, but gives us a “big goal.” Let us learn to forgive others.

Daily Devotions

James Week 3

Monday: James 4:10-17 (Proverbs 11-12)

Books of the bible and esp. epistles need to be thought of as single units, they are letters. Just as a letter written by us is structured so is a book of the Bible. Having a good grasp of the theme will help us to understand different verses. So is the case here:

(Vs 10-12) Remember these people were prideful, speaking evil of one another, Judging based upon financial standing. James in this chap strikes to the heart of the matter: “Prideful hearts.” (Vs 12) is especially convicting to me. Am I God? Will I place myself as God? I am to obey the law, not be a judge over the law.

(Vs 13-17) These are strange verses aren’t they? They show us that pride, criticism and self-confidence go together, and it is a caution about becoming “self-sufficient.” Christians ought to live with an eye to the Lord and His will, ever mindful of His desire and His Lordship over our lives. (Vs 15)

James is putting his finger on the problem of “heart problems” there are many fruits, but only one root. Nobody knows our heart like we do. May we be honest before God.

Tuesday: James 5:1-11 (Proverbs 13-14)

In James’ day there was a massive gap between the “rich and the poor” It seems that like today the rich reject the gospel and the poor readily receive it (they are “rich in faith”) Furthermore the rich abused the poor, Christians are to suffer differently than the world. For us it is part of our testimony.

(Vs 1-6) This the life of the rich in James day, sounds like today.

(Vs 7) Our focus is the second coming of the Lord. Ever wonder why God waits? He is waiting for “the precious fruit of the earth” He is waiting for souls to be saved.

(Vs 8) Knowing how God is patient we should be patient too, it is the trouble and tribulation that God uses to gather the harvest.

(Vs 9) Boy! It would be embarrassing to be found fighting among ourselves while the Lord is patiently waiting for the harvest! The trouble we go through is about to be rectified!

(Vs 10-11) If you are struggling in the trials, God wants us to look to the prophets for examples of how God always brings about good through the trials.

Wednesday: James 5:12-20 (Proverbs 15-16)

These are some random closing instructions.

(Vs 12) We are to have honest speech, letting our word be enough.

(Vs 13-18) This is nothing like the phony “healers” on TV, but a pattern for God’s people to ask God for healing. The emphasis is on prayer here. Isn’t this interesting, this is where James began (James 1:5-6) Prayer is the resource of the Christian, in good times and bad times.

(Vs 19-20) James closes out with a reminder to be busy with spreading the gospel. Don’t let a trial stop you from serving the Lord!

Notice the command is to convert a sinner “from the error of their ways” Salvation is not merely “selling heaven” but the work of God in turning people from sin to righteousness! We are blessed to be a part of it, let us be diligent telling man of God’s grace!

The book of Philemon

Thursday: Vs 1-3 (Proverbs 17-18)

Setting: Paul is in prison in Rome, he leads a young runaway servant to Christ (Onesimus, in prison for stealing from his master). He finds that this new convert is actually the servant of his co-labourer “Philemon” in Colosse. (*the church to whom the book of Colossians was written*) Paul sends Onesimus back to Colosse (*in modern day Turkey*) with this letter.

It is a great example of: 1. A Christian’s life. 2. Christian brotherhood between believers 3. Christian courtesy and 4. The law of love in action

(Vs 1-3) It appears that Timothy was still working with Paul before being placed in a pastorate; he was helping Paul with this letter. In Vs 2 we see the name of a man named “Apphia” all we know is he let the church in Colosse meet in his house. What a blessing these type of Christians are! In Vs 2 we also see “Archippus” he was not a pastor there but a member who was not “fulfilling his ministry” (Col 4:17) Let us all remember we have a ministry.

What strikes me with Paul’s letters are all the “unknown” people, so often we read of a person in Paul’s letter that we know nothing about, but God does! Let us remember we serve the Lord and Him alone. Let us be faithful with a little recognition or none.

Friday: Vs 4-16 (Proverbs 19-20)

(Vs 4-7) Philemon was not a “pastor” as such, he was a Christian, and he still had a great testimony. Much harm has been done by the “clergy/laity” mentality. We should all have good testimonies regardless of our calling in life.

(Vs 6) Is a hint by Paul, he is about to ask Philemon to act in accordance to his faith. Our faith is not seen in our profession but the lifestyle the profession brings forth.