

## God's Ways Not Ours James 1:19-21

19 So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; 20 for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God. 21 Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

Every good and perfect gift come from God. His salvation that we have through word and the work of the Spirit are the greatest of all.

And since the word was instrumental in our salvation then we should be ready to listen to it.

And we should embrace the implanted word with meekness because it is able to save our soul.

Then we should in our meekness be slow to speak and slow to wrath or anger.

Because the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

And that is what we are to pursue, the righteousness of God, not the wrath of man.

I. Man's wrath or anger.

A. Where is man's anger first seen, in the things that he says.

1. James 3:5-8 (NKJV)

a. 5 Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles! 6 And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell. 7 For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. 8 But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.

B. Anger is but our refusal to accept what God is doing.

1. Often it is directed toward God

a. But James's emphasis here seems to be on those who hear the truth and resent its exposing their personal false ideas or ungodly lifestyles. Paul asked believers in Galatia, "So have I become your enemy by telling you the truth?" *John MacArthur, MacArthur New Testament Commentary – James, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1998), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 73.*

2. But most often against our fellow man.

3. *Orge* (anger) does not refer to an explosive outburst of temper but to an

inner, deep resentment that seethes and smolders, often unnoticed by others. *John MacArthur, MacArthur New Testament Commentary – James, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1998), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 72.*

4. Regardless of which kind of anger, it is always difficult for God's word to get through to an angry man. Naaman is a good illustration of a man whose quick temper hampered God's word from working in his life (2 Kings 5:11; see also Luke 4:28). *J.D. Douglas and Philip W. Comfort, ed., New Commentary on the Whole Bible – New Testament: Based on the Classic Commentary of Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown, (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1990), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, Under: "Chapter 01".*
5. From both personal experience and observation I think I know why James might have linked the two expressions "slow to speak, slow to wrath." We all are acquainted with the fact that words unfitly spoken often cause an outburst of temper. What starts out as a sincere and friendly discussion sometimes leads to an argument, with its resulting flare of anger. *Lehman Strauss, Lehman Strauss Commentaries – James, Your Brother: Studies in the Epistle of James, (Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux Brothers, 1967), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 52.*
6. Matthew 5:22 (NKJV)
  - a. 22 But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!' shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell fire.
7. Proverbs 16:32 (NKJV)
  - a. 32 He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, And he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city.

## II. God's wrath or anger.

- A. God expresses anger and we are to do the same but only at things God is angry about.
  1. The Scriptures never speak against a child of God's becoming righteously angry at sin. Contrariwise, the Bible says: "Ye that love the Lord, hate evil" (Psalm 97:10). One of the deficiencies among believers is the lack of concern and the loss of capacity to be aroused over evil. There is an anger which is not sin. It is stated by Paul where he writes: "Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Neither give place to the devil" (Eph. 4:26, 27). The indication here is that a believer can be angry apart from sinning. If I am angry at nothing but sin, I can be angry so as not to sin. *Lehman Strauss, Lehman Strauss Commentaries – James, Your*

*Brother: Studies in the Epistle of James, (Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux Brothers, 1967), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 52.*

III. Therefore we are to lay aside these.

A. A common expression for Paul

1. Ephesians 4:31 (NKJV)

a. 31 Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice.

B. Lay aside - receive

1. The main verb of this sentence is receive. And because this verb (*dechomai*), as well as the related participle (from *apotithemi*, putting aside), are in the aorist tense, the action of the participle is understood to precede that of the main verb. In other words, putting aside [more literally, "having put aside"] all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness is a condition for receiving the word implanted. *John MacArthur, MacArthur New Testament Commentary – James, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1998), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 74.*

2. If the tawdry things of life have not been put away, there is reason to question whether the Word that was heard has really brought forth new life. Not all who listen to the Word of God explained and who read the Bible get saved, and none but the truly saved clear away the foul rank growth of the old life. *Lehman Strauss, Lehman Strauss Commentaries – James, Your Brother: Studies in the Epistle of James, (Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux Brothers, 1967), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 58.*

C. Filthiness

1. Filthiness translates *rhuparia*, which refers to any sort of moral defilement or impurity. It is closely related to a term used of wax in the ear, which impairs hearing, and is therefore especially appropriate in this context. Moral filthiness is a serious barrier to our clearly hearing and comprehending the Word of God. *John MacArthur, MacArthur New Testament Commentary – James, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1998), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 74.*

2. "Get rid of all moral filth," says James. He uses the word filth figuratively to describe moral uncleanness (see Rev. 22:11). In the Old Testament the word appears in Zechariah 3:3-4 (LXX, with slight variation). The high priest Joshua stood before the angel of the Lord and was dressed in filthy clothes. The angel commanded the ones standing before him to remove Joshua's filthy clothes, for they represented sin. And Joshua received clean clothes. *Simon J. Kistemaker, Baker New Testament Commentary –*

*Exposition of James, Epistles of John, Peter, and Jude, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1986), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 58.*

a. Zechariah 3:3-4 (NKJV)

(1) 3 Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and was standing before the Angel. 4 Then He answered and spoke to those who stood before Him, saying, "Take away the filthy garments from him." And to him He said, "See, I have removed your iniquity from you, and I will clothe you with rich robes."

D. Overflow of wickedness.

1. Wickedness is from *kakia*, which denotes moral evil and corruption in general, especially in regard to intent. It pertains to sin that is deliberate and determined. It may reside in the heart for a long time before being expressed outwardly, and may, in fact, never be expressed outwardly. It therefore includes the many "hidden" sins that only the Lord and the individual are aware of. *John MacArthur, MacArthur New Testament Commentary – James, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1998), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 74.*

IV. Receive the implanted word.

A. Once you have cleaned out all the disgusting things of the flesh you need to fill in with the blessedness of the spirit.

B. Colossians 3:16 (NKJV)

1. 16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

C. MacArthur quotes Motyer, "there is little point in schemes and times if we have not got an attentive spirit. **It is possible to be unfailingly regular in Bible reading, but to achieve no more than to have moved the book-mark forward:**" John MacArthur, *MacArthur New Testament Commentary – James, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1998), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 70.*

D. The fruit of the spirit.

1. Galatians 5:22-25 (NKJV)

a. 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. 24 And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.