

Valley Bible Church – Sermon Notes

Sermon notes for November 18-19, 2000

"Saving a Soul from Death"

James 5:19-20

Dale Whitehead

James wrote this epistle to call professing believers to examine their faith and to make sure it was real.

To help people avoid being deceived, James has given a series of tests by which one's faith can be evaluated.

True saving faith is marked by a proper response to trials which we called the "response to trials test" in James 1:2-18.

True saving faith is marked by a proper response to the Word of God which we called the "response to the Word test" in James 1:19-27.

True saving faith is marked by its proper response to people of various social classes which we called "the impartiality test" in James 2:1-13.

True saving faith is marked by its manifestation in righteous deeds which we called "the works test" in James 2:14-26.

True saving faith is marked by righteous speaking which we called "the speech test" in James 3:1-12.

True saving faith is marked by wisdom from above which we called "the wisdom test" in James 3:13-18.

True saving faith is marked by not being a friend of the world which we called "the friendship with the world test" which extends from James 4:1 to 5:12.

This friendship is shown to manifest itself in four different ways in this particular section. Friendship with the world reveals itself in selfish strife in James 4:1-12, in an attitude of presumptuous self sufficiency in business planning in James 4:13-17, in wrong reactions to experiences of injustice in James 5:1-11 and in self-serving oaths in James 5:12.

Finally true saving faith is marked by prayer which we have considered in James 5:13-18.

Caring Christians can be instrumental in restoring straying brothers.

James affectionately calls these believers who have passed the various tests of living faith in the Epistle of James, "my brethren."

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We need to walk the talk. Those who are no longer walking the talk have strayed from the truth (Psalm 25:4-5; 26:3; James 2:17).

The tests that James presents to us in this epistle are absolute. These tests do not vary with the individual, time or circumstances. God will hold us accountable in respect to these tests.

What are our weapons when we enter into battle for the souls of men and women?

The first weapon to turn a so-called brother who has strayed from the truth is the Word of God.

The second weapon to turn a so-called brother who has strayed from the truth is prayer.