

MESSAGE 1: REAL FAITH VERSUS FAKE FAITH
Parts 1-2

James 2:14-20

	PAUL	JAMES
Emphasis:	How to KNOW I'm saved	How to SHOW I'm saved
Focus:	The ROOT of my salvation (internal & unseen)	The FRUIT of my salvation (external & visible)
Works:	Keeping Jewish Laws	Living like Jesus

HOW DO I KNOW MY FAITH IS REAL?

1. REAL FAITH IS MORE THAN JUST _____

“Dear brothers and sisters, what's the use of SAYING you have faith if you don't prove it by your actions? That kind of faith can't save anyone!” James 2:14

JESUS: “Not everyone who SAYS that I am their Lord is going to enter the kingdom of heaven. The only people who'll enter heaven are those who DO what my Father in heaven wants them to DO.” Matthew 7:21 (NCV)

2. REAL FAITH IS MORE THAN _____

“Suppose you see a brother or sister who needs food or clothing, and you say to them, ‘I wish you well! I FEEL FOR YOU and I hope you stay warm and eat well!’ but then you DO nothing to meet their needs. What good does your sympathy DO? It's worth nothing! In the same way, faith, if it is not accompanied by action, doesn't work. It's dead and useless!” James 2:15-17

3. REAL FAITH IS MORE THAN _____

“Now someone may argue, ‘Isn't it possible that some people have good faith while other people DO good deeds?’ But I say, ‘No! I can't see your real faith if you don't DO any real deeds to SHOW ME!’ In contrast, I CAN SHOW YOU my faith by the good things I DO!” James 2:18

4. REAL FAITH IS MORE THAN _____

“Now, you say, ‘Well, I BELIEVE there is a God,’ and I say, ‘Good for you!’ But even the demons believe THAT and are afraid! It's foolish to not realize that faith in God is useless if you don't DO what he wants you to DO.” James 2:19-20

5. REAL FAITH IS _____

“Just as a body without a spirit doesn’t breathe and is dead, so faith that doesn't DO anything is just as dead!”
James 2:26

“STAND firm in your faith. Stay brave, be strong, and do everything in love.” 1 Corinthians 16:13-14

2 EXAMPLES OF REAL (ACTIVE) FAITH

• (IN FAITH) ABRAHAM FOLLOWED GOD _____

“Isn't it obvious that faith and works are yoked partners, that faith expresses itself in works? That the works are ‘works of faith?’” James 2:22 (MSG)

“...God accepted Abraham's faith, and that faith made him right with God. So Abraham was called ‘the friend of God.’” James 2:23 (NCV)

• (IN FAITH) RAHAB RISKED HER LIFE _____

James 2:25-26 & Joshua 2

“Examine yourselves TO SEE whether you are in the faith; TEST yourselves.” 2 Corinthians 13:5

“It is BY grace you have been saved THROUGH faith... FOR a life of good works which God has already prepared for us to do.” Ephesians 2:8-10 (TEV)

MESSAGE 2: A FAITH THAT LOVES MY NEIGHBOR AS MYSELF
Parts 1-2

“Don’t fall into self-deception by merely listening to God’s Word and thinking you’ve got it. DO what it says! Be a DOER of the Word!” James 1:22

“Dear brothers and sisters, what's the use of saying you have faith if you don't prove it by your actions? That kind of faith can't save anyone.” James 2:14

“This royal law is found in the Scriptures: Love your neighbor as you love yourself! If you obey this law, you are doing right!” James 2:8

THE GREAT COMMANDMENT OF JESUS

“A man asked Jesus, ‘Of all the commandments of God, which is the most important?’ ‘The most important one,’ answered Jesus, ‘is this: Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second commandment is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these!” Mark 12:28-31

“Let us not love with words, but with actions!” 1 John 3:18

HOW CAN I LOVE MY NEIGHBORS DURING A PANDEMIC?

1. _____ INDIVIDUALLY

“To have friends, a man must show himself friendly.” Proverbs 18:24 (KJV)

“Be friendly with everyone. Don't be proud and feel that you are smarter than others. Make friends with ordinary people.” Romans 12:16 (CEV)

“Each of you will invite your neighbor to come enjoy peace and security, in the shade of your vineyards and trees.” Zechariah 3:10 (TEV)

“The neighbors went out of their way to be friendly to us. It was cold and raining so they built a fire and made us all feel welcome.” Acts 28:2

2. _____ CONTINUALLY

“Worry weighs a person down; an encouraging word cheers a person up.” Proverbs 12:25 (NLT)

“Everything written in the Scriptures was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of Scriptures we might have HOPE.” Romans 15:4 (NIV)

3. _____ CHEERFULLY

“Each of you has been blessed by God with many wonderful gifts to be used to serve those around you. So use your gifts well in serving others.” 1 Peter 4:10

“Serve the Lord cheerfully.” Psalm 100:2

“If we have what we need, and we see other people in need, but we turn a cold shoulder and do nothing about it, then the love of God is not in us!” 1 John 3:17

4. _____ WEEKLY

“Then the Master said, ‘I want you to go out to everywhere people are -- to the highways and to the hedges -- and URGE anyone you can find to come into my house, so that my house will be full!’” Luke 14:23

5. _____ PERSONALLY

“Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.” 1 Peter 3:15-16

“For Christ’s love compels us...” 2 Corinthians 5:14

“I pray that Christ will be more and more at home in your heart, living within you as you trust Him. May your roots go deep into the soil of God’s marvelous love, and may you be able to feel and understand...how long, wide, deep, and high His love really is, and experience this love for yourselves...” Ephesians 3:17-18 (LB)

MESSAGE 3: A FAITH THAT SHOWS RESPECT TO EVERYONE

Parts 1-2

SIN OF PARTIALITY = Showing FAVORITISM & bias toward some people,
and showing PREJUDICE & bias against other people.

“God never shows partiality and he cannot be corrupted.” Deuteronomy 10:17

“The Lord our God does not tolerate injustice, partiality or corruption.” 2 Chronicles 19:7

“My brothers and sisters, as believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ, never show partiality. Suppose someone comes to your church meeting wearing expensive clothes and jewelry, and a poor person also comes in wearing shabby, worn out clothes. If you show special attention to the person wearing fine clothes and say, ‘Let me give you the best seat,’ but say to the poor person, ‘You stand at the back or sit on the floor,’ then you have shown discrimination and segregated God’s children by your evil judgment. Listen to me brothers and sisters: God has chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he’s promised those who love him. Yet you disrespect low-income people! Why? Don’t you realize that people richer than you take advantage of you? They have the money to sue you in court! And they often misuse the noble name of Jesus to whom you belong! Remember and always keep the royal law of Scripture, which is ‘Love your neighbor as yourself!’ If you do that, you’ll always do the right thing. But anytime you show partiality or prejudice you sin and break God’s law.” James 2:1-9

WHY DOES GOD HATE PREJUDICE?

1. **PREJUDICE** _____

“From one man (Adam) God made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live.” Acts 17:26 (NIV)

“Who says you are better than others? And what do you have that was not given to you by God? And if it was given to you, why do you brag as if you did not receive it as a gift?” 1 Corinthians 4:7 (NCV)

2. **PREJUDICE** _____

“Whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks around in the darkness; he does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded him.” 1 John 2:11 (NIV)

“True wisdom from above is pure, peaceful, gentle, friendly, full of compassion and is free from prejudice and hypocrisy.” James 3:17 (TEV)

3. **PREJUDICE** _____

“The entire law is summed up in this one command: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself!’ But if, instead of showing love, you attack and tear each other apart, watch out! You will destroy yourselves!” Galatians 5:14-15 (NLT)

“You will be doing the right thing if you obey the law of the Kingdom, which is ‘Love your neighbor as you love yourself.’” James 2:8 (TEV)

4. PREJUDICE _____

“If you treat people according to their outward appearance, you are guilty of sin, and God’s Law condemns you as a lawbreaker.” James 2:9 (TEV)

RACISM IS A PROBLEM OF _____

“So why do you judge your brother? And why do you think that you are better than he is? We will all stand before God one day, and he will judge us all.” Romans 14:10 (ICB)

HOW DO WE ROOT OUT PREJUDICE FROM OUR LIVES?

THE FIRST STEP: _____

“The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.” 1 Samuel 16:7 (NIV)

Jesus: “Stop judging by mere appearances and make a right judgment.” John 7:24 (NIV)

“Then Peter said to Cornelius’ household, ‘You know, Jewish law forbids us from associating with people of another race. But God has shown me that no race is inferior or unclean.’” Acts 10:28

“I now realize that God does not show favoritism but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right.” Acts 10:34-35

GOD’S PLAN TO BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER IS _____

“Some of us are Jews, and some of us are Gentiles. Some of us have been slaves, and some are free. But we have all been BAPTIZED into ONE BODY through one Spirit, and we have all received the same Spirit! ...Now all of you **TOGETHER** are Christ’s Body, and each of you is a necessary part of it.” 1 Corinthians 12:13, 27

“So now you are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus. And all who have been united with Christ in BAPTISM have been made like him. So there is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male or female. For you are all Christians -- one in Christ Jesus!” Galatians 3:26-28 (NLT)

“In this new life one’s nationality or race or education or social position is unimportant; such things mean nothing. Whether a person has Christ is what matters, and he is equally available to all.” Colossians 3:11 (LB)

MESSAGE 4: A FAITH THAT LEADS TO EMOTIONAL HEALTH
Parts 1-3

“Don't burn out! KEEP YOURSELVES FUELED and aflame... Don't quit in hard times; instead pray all the harder.”
Romans 12:11-12 (MSG)

**10 COMMANDMENTS FOR EMOTIONAL HEALTH
DURING COVID-19**

1. SHOW _____

“God loves to give us more grace. He opposes the prideful but he gives grace to the humble.” James 4:6

2. START _____

“...Humbly accept God's Word planted in your heart. It is able to save your souls.” James 1:21

“Every morning thank God for his love and every evening thank him for his faithfulness.” Psalm 92:2

3. SET _____

“Carefully consider how you live. Live wisely, not foolishly. Make the most of your time because these are difficult, evil days.” Ephesians 5:15-16

4. STOP _____

Jesus: “Your eye is the lamp of your body. If your vision is good, your whole being will be full of light. But if you're focused on the bad, your life will be full of darkness!” Matthew 6:22-23

“Keep me from paying attention to what is worthless.” Psalm 119:37 (TEV)

5. SCHEDULE _____

“Speak encouraging words to each other. Build up hope so you'll all be together in this, with no one left out, and no one left behind. I know you're already doing this; just keep on doing it!” 1 Thessalonians 5:11 (MSG)

“Don't burn out! KEEP YOURSELVES FUELED and aflame... Don't quit in hard times; instead pray all the harder.”
Romans 12:11-12 (MSG)

6. SHARE _____

“Share each other's troubles and problems, and in this way obey the law of Christ.” Galatians 6:2 (NLT)

“Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, so that you may be healed.” James 5:16 (KJV)

7. SEEK _____

“Our plans often fail because we don't seek advice. But listening to good counsel will bring success.” Proverbs 15:22

“There is safety in seeking multiple counsel.” Proverbs 11:14

8. SPACE _____

“Even young people become exhausted and give up too soon. But those who wait on the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar like eagles. They'll keep running and NOT grow weary. They'll walk and not grow weak.” Isaiah 40:30-31

9. SERVE _____

“The religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to care for orphans or widows who need help in their distress and to keep yourself uncorrupted by the world.” James 1:27

“The generous prosper and are satisfied; those who refresh others will themselves be refreshed.” Proverbs 11:25 (NLT)

10. CONTROL _____

(From Abraham's example) “We see that his faith and his actions worked together. His faith was made complete by what he did.” James 2:22

MESSAGE 5: A FAITH THAT STAY CALM IN A CRISIS
Parts 1-2

HOW TO STAY CALM IN A CRISIS OR CONFLICT

1. REALIZE _____

“A hot-tempered man...gets into all kinds of trouble.” Proverbs 29:22 (LB)

“Hot tempers cause arguments.” Proverbs 15:18 (GN)

“...anger causes mistakes.” Proverbs 14:29 (LB)

“People with hot tempers do foolish things.” Proverbs 14:17 (GN)

“The fool who provokes his family to anger and resentment will finally have nothing worthwhile left.” Proverbs 11:29 (LB)

2. RESOLVE _____

“A fool gives full vent to his anger, but a wise man KEEPS himself under control.” Proverbs 29:11

Resolve = Decide in Advance

3. REFLECT _____

“My dear brothers and sisters, always be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry, because human anger will never bring about the righteous life that God desires.” James 1:19-20

- BE QUICK _____

- BE SLOW _____

“A stupid man gives free rein to his anger; a wise man waits and lets it grow cool.” Proverbs 29:11 (NEB)

- BE SLOW _____

“A man's wisdom gives him patience.” Proverbs 19:11 (NIV)

ASK 3 QUESTIONS

- WHY _____ Hurt? Frustration? Fear?

- WHAT _____

- HOW _____

PRAY:

“Lord, help me control my tongue; help me be careful about what I say.” Psalm 141:3 (NCV)

“Drinking too much makes you loud and foolish. It's stupid to get drunk.” Proverbs 20:1 (GN)

4. RELEASE _____

“If you become angry, don’t let your anger lead you into sin.” Ephesians 4:26 (TEV)

“A gentle answer quiets anger, but a harsh one stirs it up.” Proverbs 15:1 (TEV)

Don’t Suppress it . . . Repress it . . . or Express it. CONFESS it!

5. RE-PATTERN _____

“Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think.” Romans 12:2a (NLT)

“Keep away from angry, short-tempered people, or you will learn to be like them...” Proverbs 22:24 (LB)

“If you exploit or abuse your family, you’ll end up with a fistful of air.” Proverbs 11:29 (MSG)

“You husbands must love your wives and never treat them harshly.” Colossians 3:19 (NLT)

6. ASK GOD _____

“Love is not easily angered.” 1 Corinthians 13:5

“Patience and encouragement come from God. I pray God will help you all agree with each other the way Christ Jesus wants.” Romans 15:5

“The fruit of the Spirit is...patience.” Galatians 5:22

“Whatever is IN YOUR HEART determines what you say.” Matthew 12:34

MESSAGE 6: A FAITH THAT ANCHORS ME IN A STORM

Parts 1-2

(Jesus) “Everyone who pays attention to MY WORD and puts it into practice is like a wise person who built his house on a SOLID ROCK foundation. Then a STORM arose. The rain poured down, and the floodwaters rose, and the storm winds beat hard against that house; yet it did not collapse! Nothing moved it because it was ANCHORED TO THE ROCK. But everyone who hears MY WORD and does NOT practice it is like a foolish person who built his house on sand. When the storm hit, and the rain poured down, and the floodwaters rose, and the winds blew against that house, it completely collapsed with a huge crash.” Matthew 7:24-27

“We have this HOPE as an anchor for the soul. It is sure and it is strong!” Hebrews 6:19

“God, my soul is weak from waiting for you to save me. But my HOPE is based on your WORD.” Psalm 119:81 (GW)

HOW DO I ANCHOR MY LIFE TO THE ROCK OF GOD’S WORD?

1. TREAT _____

“The Lord says: ‘My people, I promise to give you my Spirit and my Word. These will be my gifts to you and your families forever.’” Isaiah 59:21 (CEV)

“Every GOOD GIFT and every PERFECT PRESENT comes from God our Father above, who created all the lights in the heavens. But unlike those lights that create shifting shadows, God NEVER CHANGES. God chose to GIVE US LIFE by giving us his WORD OF TRUTH, so that we could be his most important creation.” James 1:17-18

5 ASPECTS OF GOD’S GIFT

1. GOD’S WORD IS _____ “a GOOD gift”
2. GOD’S WORD IS _____ “a PERFECT present”
3. GOD’S WORD IS _____ “His Word of Truth”
4. GOD’S WORD IS _____ “God never changes”
5. GOD’S WORD IS _____ “God chose to GIVE US LIFE by giving us his WORD.”

“Everything written in the past was written to teach us. The Scriptures give us endurance and encouragement so that we can have HOPE.” Romans 15:4 (NCV)

2. HUMBLY _____

“So get rid of all the filth and evil in your lives, and HUMBLY ACCEPT the message God has PLANTED in your hearts, for it is strong enough to save your souls.” James 1:21 (NLT)

3. STUDY IT & _____

“Do not merely LISTEN to the Word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says! Anyone who listens to the Word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what

he looks like. But if you KEEP LOOKING INTENTLY into the perfect law that gives freedom, and you CONTINUE to do this, NOT forgetting what you have learned, but DOING IT -- then you will be BLESSED in whatever you do." James 1:22-25

5 CONDITIONS FOR GOD'S BLESSING

1. _____ "Listen"
2. _____ "Keep looking intently"
3. _____ "Continue to do this"
4. _____ "Not forgetting"
"Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. THEN you will be prosperous and successful." Joshua 1:8
5. _____ "Do what it says"
"Rock badgers are neither strong nor powerful but they are wise enough to live in the safety of solid rock." Proverbs 30:26 (NCV)

MESSAGE 7: A FAITH THAT WALKS THROUGH THE VALLEY OF THE VIRUS
Parts 1-2

“The LORD...is MY shepherd...and I shall not be in want! And even though I walk through the VALLEY of the shadow of DEATH, I WILL FEAR NO EVIL for YOU are with me!” Psalm 23:1, 4

“And our HOPE for you is FIRM, BECAUSE WE KNOW that just as you share in sufferings, you will also share in God’s comfort.” 2 Corinthians 1:7

What we KNOW is what gets us THROUGH!

1. REMEMBER _____

“The gullible believe anything they're told but the prudent sift and weigh every word.” Proverbs 14:15 (MSG)

“The prudent man always acts out of knowledge.” Proverbs 13:16 (NIV)

“What a shame -- yes, it is folly -- to decide before knowing the FACTS!” Proverbs 18:13 (LB)

“A foolish person doesn't care about the FACTS. All he wants to do is yell.” Proverbs 18:2 (LB)

“The wise man looks ahead. The foolish person attempts to fool himself and won't face the FACTS.” Proverbs 14:8 (LB)

“Get the FACTS at any price, and hold on tightly to good sense.” Proverbs 23:23 (LB)

2. REMEMBER _____

3. REMEMBER _____

“Dear friends, don't be surprised or shocked when you going through painful trials and fiery tests in life.” 1 Peter 4:12

“The earth suffers for the sins of its people, for they have twisted the instructions of God, violated his laws, and broken his covenant. Therefore...the earth has broken down and has utterly collapsed. Everything is lost, abandoned, and confused.” Isaiah 24:5, 19

“For our temporary and momentary troubles will not last But they are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we focus not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.” 2 Corinthians 4:17-18

4. REMEMBER TO FOCUS _____

- God sees everything I’m going through.
- God cares about everything I’m going through.
- God has the power to answer prayer.
- God always acts out of his goodness to me.
- God’s plan is always better than my plan.
- God will never stop loving me.
- I cannot lose my salvation once I have trusted in Jesus.

5. REMEMBER _____

“When you go through deep waters, I will be with you! When you pass through rivers of difficulty, you will not drown! When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned up; it will NOT consume you!” Isaiah 43:2

6. REMEMBER _____

“We often suffer, but we’re never crushed. Even when we don't know what to do, we never give up. In times of trouble, God is with us, and when we are knocked down, we get up again... BECAUSE WE KNOW God raised the Lord back to life. And just as he raised Jesus, he will also raise us back to life, and will bring us into his presence together.” 2 Corinthians 4:8-9, 14

“Then God will wipe every tear from their eyes. And there will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things will pass away.” Revelation 21:4

7. REMEMBER _____

“Together you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of that body.” 1 Corinthians 12:27 (NCV)

“Dear friends, we are praying that all will be well with you and that your body will be as healthy as we know your soul is!” 3 John 1:2

“Your love for each other will show to the world that you are my disciples.” John 13:35 (NLT)

MESSAGE 8: A FAITH THAT PLANTS SEEDS OF PEACE *Parts 1-2*

Jesus: “Blessed are the PEACEMAKERS, for they are the ones that God will call his children.” Matthew 5:9

“If you are truly a wise and understanding person, it will be seen in your life by the good deeds you do out of the humility that always comes from wisdom. BUT if in your heart, you are selfish, jealous, or bitter toward others, don’t think you’re wise, because it’s a lie! That’s never wisdom from God; instead it’s from the world, and your unspiritual nature, and from the Devil himself!”
James 3:13-15

“For whenever there is envy or selfish ambition, you’ll always find confusion, unrest, disharmony, rebellion, and every kind of evil.” James 3:16 (Amp)

“Real wisdom is pure, then peaceful, then considerate. It is not defensive, full of mercy and helpful, impartial and free from hypocrisy. When PEACEMAKERS plant SEEDS OF PEACE, they will harvest JUSTICE.”
James 3:17-18

SIX SEEDS TO PLANT FOR PEACEFUL RELATIONSHIPS

1. IF I'M WISE, I WON'T _____
“Real wisdom is first of all PURE.” James 3:17

“The Lord delights in pure words.” Proverbs 15:26 (NLT)

“God wants us to grow up, to know the whole truth and to tell it in love.” Ephesians 4:15 (MSG)

2. IF I'M WISE, I WON'T _____
“Real wisdom is...PEACEFUL.” James 3:17

“Any fool can start arguments: the wise thing is to stay out of them.” Proverbs 20:3 (TEV)

“A wise man controls his temper. He knows that anger causes mistakes.” Proverbs 14:29 (LB)

3. IF I'M WISE I WON'T _____
“Real wisdom is...CONSIDERATE.” James 3:17

“...courteous...” (LB)

“...gentle with people...” (TEV)

“We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves. Each of us should please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. For even Christ did not please himself but, as it’s written, ‘The insults of those who insulted you fell on me.’” Romans 15:1-3 (NIV)

“Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.” Galatians 6:2 (NIV)

4. IF I'M WISE, I WON'T _____

“Real wisdom is...NOT DEFENSIVE.” James 3:17

Greek: “eupeithes” = reasonable

“...open to reason...” (RSV)

“...it allows discussion and is willing to yield to others.” (LB)

“A fool thinks he needs no advice but a wise man listens to others.” Proverbs 12:15 (LB)

5. IF I'M WISE, I WON'T _____

“Real wisdom is FULL OF MERCY AND HELPFUL.” James 3:17

“Love forgets mistakes; nagging about them parts the best of friends.” Proverbs 17:9 (LB)

“Kind words bring life, but cruel words crush your spirit.” Proverbs 15:4

6. IF I'M WISE, I WON'T _____

“Real wisdom is FREE FROM PREJUDICE AND HYPOCRISY.” James 3:17 (TEV)

adiakritos & anypokritos = no hidden prejudice & no hypocrisy

“Show proper respect to everyone.” 1 Peter 2:17 (NIV)

“Accept each other, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.” Romans 15:7 (NIV)

“The secret is Christ himself; in him lie hidden all God's treasures of wisdom...” Colossians 2:3 (NEB)

MESSAGE 9: A FAITH THAT ISN'T TROUBLED BY TROUBLES

Parts 1-2

“James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ: To the twelve tribes scattered among the nations. Greetings!” James 1:1

“WHEN ALL KINDS of trials CROWD INTO YOUR LIVES, don't resent them AS INTRUDERS, but welcome them as friends! Realize they come TO TEST your faith, and TO PRODUCE in you the quality of endurance. But let the process go on until that endurance is fully developed, and you will become a person of mature character and integrity with no weak spots.” James 1:2-6 (Ph)

4 FACTS TO REMEMBER ABOUT DIFFICULTIES

1. PROBLEMS ARE _____

“WHEN all kinds of trials crowd into your lives...” James 1:2a

2. PROBLEMS ARE _____

“When ALL KINDS of trials crowd into your lives...” James 1:2a

3. PROBLEMS ARE _____

“When all kinds of trials CROWD INTO your lives...as INTRUDERS...” James 1:2b

4. PROBLEMS ARE _____

“Realize that they come...TO PRODUCE in you...” James 1:2c

3 PURPOSES OF DIFFICULTIES

James 1:3-4

• **PROBLEMS _____**

“Realize they come to test your faith...” James 1:3a (Ph)

• **PROBLEMS _____**

“...and to produce in you the quality of endurance.” James 1:3b (Ph)

• **PROBLEMS** _____

“But let the process go on until that endurance is fully developed and you will become a person of mature character and integrity with no weak spots!” James 1:4 (Ph)

HOW SHOULD I RESPOND TO DIFFICULTIES?

1. _____

We don't rejoice FOR the problem, but IN the problem.
We know God can bring good out of bad!

“Consider it pure joy whenever you face trials...” James 1:1 (NIV)

2. _____

“If, in the process, any of you doesn't know how to meet any particular problem, you only have to ask God -- who gives generously to all men without making them feel guilty -- and you may be sure that the necessary wisdom will be given to you.” James 1:7 (Ph)

3. _____

“But you must ask in sincere faith, without secret doubts.” James 1:8 (Ph)

4. _____

“Blessed is the PERSON who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.” James 1:12 (NIV)

MESSAGE 10: A FAITH THAT MAKES TOUCH CHOICES EASIER
Parts 1-2

7 REACTIONS TO A CRISIS

- 1 _____ "It's not my problem. It may not even be real."
- 2 _____ "It's real, but no big deal. It'll end fast & won't last!"
- 3 _____ "I refuse to let this limit my freedom! I'm healthy!"
- 4 _____ "OK, it IS a big deal & it WILL affect me."
- 5 _____ "My life just turned upside down & I must make some tough choices!"
- 6 _____ "It's going to last a long time & change everything."
- 7 _____ "With God's grace we'll get through this together!"

HOW DOES TRUSTING GOD MAKE TOUGH CHOICES EASIER?
JAMES 1:5-8

1. WHEN I TRUST GOD, _____
"If any of you lack wisdom, you should pray and ask God, because he gives it generously to anyone who asks! He never resents your asking. God loves to help you and he'll give you the wisdom you need. Just ask!" James 1:5

"Those who become wise will be happy; wisdom is the key to a blessed life." Proverbs 3:18 (TEV)

"Getting wisdom is the most important thing you can get in life." Proverbs 4:7

"Wisdom is good for the soul. If you get wisdom, you'll have a bright and secure future." Proverbs 24:14 (TEV)

HOW DO I GET THE WISDOM I NEED?

A. _____ IN MY LIFE!
"Reverence for the Lord is the foundation of all true wisdom. The REWARDS OF WISDOM are given to anyone who listens and obeys God." Psalm 111:10

"Honoring God and being humble leads to wisdom and wisdom will bring honor to you." Proverbs 15:33

B. _____ IN MY LIFE!
Jesus: "Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them." John 13:17

"God's way is always perfect, and God's word is always true." 2 Samuel 22:31

"If you look intently into God's perfect Word that gives you freedom, and you continue to do this, not forgetting what you've learned, and then you put it into practice in your life, you will be blessed in everything you do!" James 1:25

C. _____ INTO MY LIFE!

“If you keep company with wise people, you’ll become wise! But if you hang out with foolish people, you’ll suffer from making bad choices.” Proverbs 13:20

2. WHEN I TRUST GOD, _____

“Anyone with God’s wisdom will know what makes good sense, but foolish can never make up their minds.” Proverbs 17:24

“When you ask God for wisdom, you must believe and expect God to answer because anyone who starts doubting is like a wave in the sea that is blown and tossed around by the ever-changing winds. You won’t get God’s wisdom if you’re double-minded, always wavering back and forth. That only makes you unstable and insecure in everything you do.” James 1:6-8

3. WHEN I TRUST GOD, _____

Jesus said, “According to your faith it will be done to you!” Matthew 9:29

4. WHEN I TRUST GOD, _____

“We know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those of us who love Him and are called to live His purpose for us.” Romans 8:28

MESSAGE 11: A FAITH THAT COUNTERS MY BAD HABITS
Parts 1-2

“Never blame God when you are tempted because God can’t be tempted by evil, and he never tempts anyone to do the wrong thing. We are tempted by our own desires inside us. That’s what drags us in the wrong direction and traps us. Our wrong desires lead us to wrong actions, and those sinful actions eventually ends in death. So, friends, don’t be deceived by every desire you feel.” James 1:13-16

WE ARE NOT POWERLESS

“Everyone who is a child of God CAN overcome sin in this world. What wins the victory is our faith! No one can defeat the world’s ways without having faith in Jesus as the Son of God.” 1 John 5:4-5

9 COUNTER MOVES

1. KNOW _____

“We should remove from our lives anything that gets in the way (of our spiritual growth) especially those persistent sins that so easily distract us...” Hebrews 12:1

Food... Drinking... Sleep... Shopping... Binge TV... Gaming... Drugs...
Gambling... Porn... Over-controlling... Withdrawing... Angry Outbursts

2. KNOW _____ (What Makes Me Vulnerable)

“Above all else, guard your heart, for it affects everything you do.” Proverbs 4:23

Physically Exhausted. . . Discouraged & Pessimistic. . . Bored or Discontented Spiritually Dry or Empty. . . Lonely or Disconnected. . . Insecure or Unsure. . . Wounded or hurt. . . Resentful. . . Sad or Grieving a loss. . .

3. LEARN _____

“The wise man looks ahead. A fool tries to fool himself and won’t face facts.” Proverbs 14:8 (LB)

- _____ AM I MOST TEMPTED?
- _____ AM I MOST TEMPTED?
- _____ IS WITH ME WHEN I’M MOST TEMPTED?
- _____ TEMPORARY BENEFIT DO I GET IF I GIVE IN?
- _____ DO I FEEL RIGHT BEFORE I’M TEMPTED?

4. PLAN _____

“PLAN CAREFULLY what you do... Avoid evil and walk straight ahead. Don’t go one step off the right way.” Proverbs 4:26-27 (TEV)

5. ASK _____

“Call to me when trouble comes and I will save you...” Psalm 50:15 (TEV)

“(Jesus) understands our weaknesses, for he faced the same temptations we do, yet he did not sin. So let us come boldly to...our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and grace to help us when we need it.”
Hebrews 4:15-16

6. REFOCUS _____

“Don’t let evil conquer you, but conquer evil with good.” Romans 12:21 (GW)

“We capture every thought...and we make it obey Christ!” 2 Corinthians 10:5 (NCV)

7. JOIN _____

“Let us not give up the habit of meeting together, as some are doing. Instead, let us encourage each other all the more.” Hebrews 10:25 (TEV)

8. ENLIST _____

“Two are better than one, because together...if one falls down, the other can help him up. But if someone is alone and falls...there’s no one to help him.” Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 (TEV)

“By helping each other with your troubles, you truly obey the law of Christ.” Galatians 6:2 (NCV)

9. REMEMBER _____

“When temptations come into your life remember that they’re no different from what others commonly experience. And God is faithful. He will never let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. Also when you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you will be able to withstand it.” 1 Corinthians 10:13

“God blesses people who continue strong when they are tempted. They will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.” James 1:12