

Title: God Loves Backsliders

Text: James 1:13-16

Take your Bibles, please, and turn with me to the book of James. The book of James chapter 1 and beginning with Vs 13. Today, is the first Sunday in 1997. I don't know if your custom is to make New Years resolutions or not. But, our topic this morrowing from God's Wonderful Word is: GOD LOVES BACKSLIDERS. And if you have wander from the foot of the cross, maybe your NEW YEAR RESOLUTION should be to come back to Jesus and make a commitment to serve Him in 1997. Let's look at it. The book of James chapter 1 Vs 13..(READ Vs 13-1

(Read Vs 13-16)

Prayer

Our Father in heaven, we give you thanks, again, for the Word of God. It is quick and powerful and able to discern the very thoughts and intentions of our hearts. And Father, we pray that every single person attending today, might understand that God's Holy Spirit must do the work in a person's heart. Oh, Lord, how we need a fresh touch from heaven. How we need to see the power of God moving in the hearts of your people. How we need to see the cleansing power of understanding. That we must decide for Jesus. That we must decide to do what we know God wants us to do.

And Father, we know that it is never to late to come back to you. May 1997 be a year of VISION AND VICTORY HERE at MacArthus. Where your people respond to the leading of the Holy Spirit. And where decision and commitments are made by those coming to Christ, and those growing in Christ. This we pray in Jesus name.....AMEN

*Theme: The How To's of christian LIVING =====*

(1A) We are looking at 1A on your outling: HOW TO LIVE WITH FAITH AND TRAILS. Last week we looked at (1B) the trying of your faith and what God is trying to do in our lives through various trails and testings. (2B) Today, we come to the PROBLEM OF SIN.

A little poem says that it is easier to preach than it is to practice. It is easier to say than to do. Most sermons are heard by the many, but taken to heart by the few.

How true that is. And the words of James are so important: "Be ye doers of the word and not hearers only." *Vs 22 Prove yourself*

But at times it is hard to be a doer of the word. Especially when testings and trails come into our life. And the reason it is hard is because we have a little problem. It is the problem of SIN..AND this is the subject of Verses 13-16.

*Prove yourself*  
Now, James says in Vs 22 "to be doers of the Word." That is, to walk like we talk, to practice what we preach, to be in every day life what we say we are, to leave everything at the cross and not to worry about the circumstances of life...BE DOERS OF THE WORD....Demonstrate what you have in Christ. Live like you say you believe....

But what is our problem? Why don't we live like we say we believe? Why do we let our circumstances get us down?.....ANSWER:...SIN...SIN..

(10) I would like you to notice, first of all, in Verses 13-14 the REASON FOR SIN. What is the reason for sin? Why do we have sin? Who is to blame? What is the reason for sin?

(10) According to V 13, God is not the reason for sin.."Let no one say when he is tempted, I am being tempted by God; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt any one." God is not the reason for sin in a person's life.

You say, but wait a minute. God is sovereign and powerful. Surely, He could have avoided this problem....That is true...But God had to create us just like he did in order to receive from us just what He says He wants. God wants our fellowship and our love. He wants a personal relationship. And that must be voluntary on our part. We must not be forced to love Him or there is no true fellowship in that love. So, God made us with free moral will so that we would have the ability to choose.....

But, God is not the reason for sin in a persons life.....

And there are two reasons why God is not the cause of sin according to

Vs 13. Two reasons *Gover*

(1E) First, God cannot be tempted by evil. It is interesting that the word "tempted" comes from the basic root word involving "experience." In other words God cannot experience evil and sin. God cannot do that. The Bible tells us that He is apart from sin. There is no sin in Him. God cannot experience sin.

(2E) But there is a second reason why God is not the cause of sin. And that is found at the end of Vs 13: "He himself does not tempt anyone." Did you notice that? God never tempts any person to commit sin.

I don't know the sin that is bothering you today. It maybe pride or selfishness, it maybe some outward evidence that everyone knows about. It maybe hatred or jealous in your heart. It maybe countless numbers of things. But, no matter what it is, God calls sin..sin. But, God never tempts anyone to sin.

Now, please do not confuse this with the testings and trials that we learned about in Verses 1 thru 12. For God does test the believe. It is like sand paper. God uses sand paper to smooth down the rough edges of our life. And all the circumstances of our life, the trials and the burdens...YES...God is testing us. But, God never tempts a person to do evil or to sin.

(2D) O.K. If that is true, what is the cause of sin? Vs 14 tells us the cause. It says that sin lies within every person. It cannot be blamed on outward ~~on~~ ~~outward~~ circumstances. *Sin Lies Within Us*

Now, there are two things, really, that express this cause that lies within us. Two things according to Vs 14.

(1E) Number one, in Vs 14, we read that "We are tempted when we are carried away by our own lust." So, that tells me that the first cause of sin is internal. It comes from within. It is the thing that God calls LUST. Each person is tempted when he is carried away by his own lust.

What is lust? I am afraid, so often, we "limit" lust to the biological drives of the body. But, I would like to remind you that this word "LUST" is also the word "DESIRE." And if you translated it as it is, as it stands, it is the element of the soul, of the personality, of the individual to enjoy or acquire something. It is to set one's heart upon a certain thing. And to long for it. <sup>You see</sup> ~~Friends~~, the problem is within us. When a ~~man~~ <sup>Person</sup> is tempted, the Bible says, he is "drawn away" by his own lust and desires. <sup>Carried</sup>

It is interesting to note, also, the word "drawn away" in Vs 14. This is the same word Jesus used in John 3:14 when he mentioned that he was ~~lifted~~ <sup>lifted</sup> up so that all could see. Even as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness so that all could see. And later on Jesus said that if he is lifted up "he will draw all men unto me." <sup>That is an word "Carried"</sup> Jesus never forces us to come to him. God doesn't drag us to himself. God wins us with His own love. And sin is identical. Lust is identical. The Bible tells us that we are ~~BRAIN~~ <sup>Carried</sup> AWAY with our own ~~lust~~ <sup>desires</sup>. Sin wins us over. It doesn't force us. So often, we give the excuse that ~~God~~ <sup>Later</sup> is forcing me to do this or that. I was forced to sin. I was forced to commit evil. THAT IS NOT TRUE. <sup>Everyone so</sup> ~~Every~~ man when he is tempted is <sup>Carried</sup> drawn away by his own lust or desire. We are free moral agents. We are free to choose. And this is an internal problem. It comes from within the personality and heart of a person. We can choose to forsake the wrong and to accept the right.... <sup>We CAN MAKE That choice</sup>

I John 2:1 says that John was writing these things to us so that we may not sin. We can choose not to sin just as much as we choose to sin.

(2B) But, there is something else we need to see in Vs 14..When he is <sup>Carried</sup> "drawn away" by his own lust and it says "ENTICED."....Here is the external problem

"Enticement" literally means "bated." It is like that little fish who is swimming around in the water and there is that little worm jumbling on that hook. He is "enticed." We often say he is hooked. We say that about individuals when they do something wrong. Or, get themselves into a jam. We use the slang expression: "HE IS HOOKED."

Notice what it says

Every ~~man~~ <sup>person</sup> when he is ~~drawn~~ <sup>carried</sup> away by his own desire and then enticed from without, he gets hooked. He takes the bait. But, the ~~cause~~ <sup>cause</sup> lies within everyone of us.

(19) Now, in Vs 15 James tells us the results of our sin.

It is interesting that within that verse you have the illustration of pregnancy. The illustration of a woman giving birth to a child and God uses this to illustrate the results of sin.

(20)

~~Now~~, in Vs 15, I want you to notice two phrases...The first phrase is: "GIVES BIRTH"...This means "to bring into the world as when a child is in the mother's womb and ~~has to come out.~~ <sup>it is born</sup>" So, notice what James is saying: When lust has conceived, it gives ~~or brings forth~~ <sup>Birth To</sup>.....WHAT?.....SIN....

In other words, it ~~simply means~~: "when you play with fire you get burned." You can not sin and get away with it. If we have the lust and desire and it is in operation in our lives and if we are being ~~drawn~~ <sup>carried</sup> away by it and we are enticed and hooked....THE RESULT IS:...WE ARE GOING TO SIN. It will produce sin. It has too. Just like the baby at the time of birth ~~comes out off the womb~~ <sup>is born</sup>.....

(20)

The second phrase that I want you to notice ~~is the last part of~~ <sup>in Vs 15 is the</sup> ~~phrase~~ <sup>phrase</sup> and the second "BRING FORTH"...This is different from the first phrase. In the original language, it is a word used when pregnancy would cease. ~~And~~ <sup>Now</sup> what would be expected when a pregnancy ceases?.....'LIFE'..... When pregnancy is complete and a child is born, you have 'LIFE'....

But, please notice what it says in Vs 15....It says that when sin is accomplished, it brings forth (pregnancy stops)...all the processes of lust and desire stops...it comes to a completion.....

And what is the result?.....It is death....Not life.....What we expected was not what we got. I remind you that "DEATH" in the Bible means "SEPARATION." { And when a ~~man~~ <sup>person</sup> is filled with sin, when a ~~man~~ <sup>person</sup> seems so righteous, but he has never come under the cleansing power of the blood of Christ, he is not a believer in Jesus Christ, he has never established a personal relationship with Jesus....the result of ~~all~~ <sup>of</sup> ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~life~~, of all of our sin, when it is finished....IS DEATH...Separation from God forever...

But, my christian friend, may I remind you that James is talking to Christians. Those of us who know Christ as Saviour. And He is telling us that if we let sin control our lives and never get cleansing, the result is that it brings forth DEATH....SEPARATION FROM GOD in our lives right now....And the Bible clearly teaches as David said in Psalms 66:18 "If I regard wickedness in my heart, the Lord will not hear."....The prophet Isaiah crying out ~~to~~ to the Lord said: "our sins have separated us from God, so that He will not hear."

*SOFTLY!* So many christians live their lives apart from Christ. ~~Yes?~~ they may be saved. But, there is no vital relationship with Jesus. And we know it. And God knows us.

So, sin when it is finished, regardless of the form in which it appears, whether it is pride or any of the known lists of sins people give, whether it is anger in our hearts or bitterness <sup>OR AN UNFORGIVEN SINFUL</sup> for what ever it is, when it is finished it results in separation from God. And the result is that we cannot know the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives. We cannot experience the power of His blessings....WHY?....Because we are cut-off from His presence and power. Oh, the Holy Spirit is still in us. But, He is being grieved and resisted and there is no power and effectiveness in our lives . And we become a carnal believer....

*OUR Theme For 1997 is an year of Vision and Victory*

*For that to happen we need to deal with the  
issue of sin.*

Oh, my Christian friend, don't let that state go on. The longer it goes on the harder it is to amend it. *But* it is there. It is like cancer. It slowly eats you away. It is a terrible thing.

V.s 16 -- ~~read~~ = "Do Not Be deceived, My beloved brethren"

III

30 What is James saying? "Do not *be* deceived?" In the KJV it says ~~do not error!~~ Does James mean that we should not sin? Well, that idea could be *con*cluded. The word "deceived" or "~~error~~" comes from the root word meaning "wandering". Isn't that interesting. "Don't wander, my beloved brethren."

(30)

You know what that verse is saying? GOD LOVES BACKSLIDERS. God loves backsliders. That is what that verse is saying. *James* is talking to Christians. Christians who have the problem of sin in their ~~lives~~ lives. And it has become so deep seated that they can't get delievers from it. *But they want* ~~They can't get~~ *They want to* release, and come again under a personal relationship with Christ.

*So, Now* ~~He~~ says, "Brethren". *u* My beloved brethren. ~~Oh~~ The ones whom God loves. Stop wandering. Wandering away from that place of beautiful fellowship and relationship with God. Don't wander anymore. God loves you.

Do you not remember the story of prodial son.

(Tell story - emphasize point of return - and how

father went to meet him.)

( I have sinned against heaven and against father.)

My friend, if you have been wandering from God, and you know it in your heart. Maybe, no one else does. I want you to know today, that God loves you. He loves you more than you could possible know. And He is asking you, today, to come back. He loves you just like that **F**ather in the story.

omit

Have you heard the story of the boy who ran away from home. He left home because he didn't like the discipline and responsibilities ~~his~~ <sup>his Father</sup> mother required of him. He decided that he didn't want to be there anymore. And ~~he~~ <sup>and so he ran away</sup> hadn't heard from him for a couple of years. ~~he~~ didn't know where he was. One day ~~he~~ <sup>he</sup> got a letter from him. And in the letter, he said ~~that he was working for the railroad.~~ <sup>he was sorry</sup> and the railroad track came right by their home and the station was about a half a block down the road.

He said, "~~mother~~ <sup>Dad</sup>," I want to come home. I am going to be on the ~~railroad~~ <sup>Train</sup> and when I get to the station down from our house, I am going to look ~~outside~~ <sup>outside</sup>. You know that big tree that is in front of our house. ~~mother~~ <sup>Dear</sup>, if you want me to come home, I want you to tie a white handkerchief in a branch near the top of the tree."

"And so he took the train. He came down to the home where he lived. He got off at the station and he looked down the street to the big tree. And was he ever surprised to see - a white handkerchief was tied to every single branch of the tree." <sup>(Song - Tie a yellow ribbon to the old oak tree)</sup>

And tears flowing down his cheek, he ran down the street to the front door and the waiting arms of his ~~mother~~ <sup>Father</sup>. That was a wonderful home that day. That ~~mother~~ <sup>Father</sup> loved ~~that~~ <sup>his son</sup> boy.

May I remind you my friend, that God loves you that way. "Do not wander, my beloved brethren."

Are you filled today with something you can not explain. There is a tension in your heart and a ~~the~~ feeling that you have gone away from God. Maybe you are busy for Him. Maybe you are involved in a lot of service and active. But inwardly there is a deep dissatisfaction, <sup>with</sup> your relationship to Christ and you have been wandering.

~~Mr~~, God loves us and he wants us to come to him. And he wants to forgive us. ~~That is if we would come home~~

I can say with all my heart that I want you to come <sup>to Jesus</sup> today, ~~too~~. Because I have come to that Lord/ and received JOY of a restored heart. I know the JOY of forgiveness. And I love to come back to Him, <sup>because</sup> ~~don't~~ ~~you~~ He is always ready to receive us. And my friend, you may be here today with a burden of SIN. Or you may be the average <sup>person</sup> ~~church~~ member in American who sees no need of God. But, May I tell you that God is ready to forgive every sin that we have ever committed/ the moment we trust him as Saviour. And right today, if you would invite Jesus Christ into your life. <sup>make a</sup> simple decision. ~~But~~ <sup>Just</sup> ask Him. He <sup>will</sup> ~~will~~ come in. I wonder if you would do that. I wonder if you would invite Christ to come into your life, today.

And my Christian friend, James 1 is about us. It is basically not about the unbeliever. It is for the believer. The believer who <sup>is</sup> ~~can~~ <sup>finding it hard to be a doer</sup> ~~not a doer~~ of the word because of the problem of sin that he faces. I wonder if you would come to God, today. And just let him flood your life with his joy and peace. Tell him that you want a renewed fellowship and relationship with Him. <sup>Would you</sup> ~~will you~~ make that decision today. I <sup>may</sup> ~~hope~~ you will.

(Shall we pray )

~~We are all faced with sin. We all need cleansing.~~