

Pastor Dan's Answers to the DBS Questions for the Week of January 6, 2025

Monday

Instead of calling himself (in a proud and haughty way) "James, the brother of Jesus," he calls himself, **"James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ."** What a humble man of God!

James tells us to be joyful when we face trials because the **"testing of your faith"** gives us perseverance and makes us be a **"mature and complete"** Christian.

When we pray, we must never doubt that God is able to do what we're asking God to do.

Tuesday

James 2:5 reminds us that throughout history God chose to reveal his will to the poor – and this revelation from God made them **"rich in faith"**. James 2:6 tells us that, in James' day, it was the rich who abused the poor Christians and slandered the name of Jesus – resulting in the rich (sadly) remaining "poor" in their standing with God. The good news is that, in Christ, the poor and the rich can become one in Christian fellowship together. Paul said something similar when he wrote, **"There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."** (Galatians 3:28)

Wednesday

Though God **"does not tempt anyone"** (v. 13), 1 Corinthians 10:13 teaches us that the prayer **"And lead us not into temptation"** (Matt. 6:13) is the equivalent to asking God to keep us away from any temptation *that he knows we cannot resist*. Given this assurance, no Christian can honestly say, "I couldn't stop myself from sinning," or, "My situation was a special one which made me have to sin." Every imaginable temptation has already been dangled in front of humans a million times. And (for the Christian who prays the Lord's Prayer) every temptation is resistible. Isn't that fantastic news?

Thursday

In order to control our anger, James is urging us to listen to the **"word"** of God. Where do we find the word of God? Whenever we use of the means of grace: Bible reading, prayer, worship, communion, fasting and fellowship with other Christians.

Friday

"The royal law found in Scripture" is simply, **"Love your neighbor as yourself."** It's probably called the "royal" law because it's the "king" of all laws, as in all other laws come from it and (and a sense) bow down to it. James is calling all Christians to practice love equally across the board, with all people, both rich and poor alike.

Saturday

I'd have to say (remember, I'm a pastor) that people who believe in Jesus but who never do anything to help the needy do not yet have complete faith in Jesus. James put it in a nutshell: **"Faith without deeds is dead"** (v. 26). And if someone's faith is **"dead"** that means it's **"useless"** (v. 20), as in useless to do anything for their salvation. Wow, that's serious.

Sunday

I think James may have had these ways that the tongue is like fire in his mind: 1. It spreads damage quickly. 2. It doesn't care whom it hurts. 3. It causes damage that often goes out of our control. That's the bad news. Here's the good news. Just as with anger (Thursday's reading), we can find God's power (grace) to control our fiery tongue when we regularly use the means of grace: Bible reading, prayer, worship, communion, fasting and fellowship with other Christians.