



Sunday, March 14, 2010: Epistle of James - "The Crown of Life"

Scripture: James 1:9-18

Speaker: Joe Boot

Sermon Notes:

1. The warning against being double-minded meant that the Jewish church needed to choose Christ over the temple.
2. Double-mindedness in our theology leads to instability in every other area of our lives from family to employment.
3. If we seek our security in riches, we're building on the sand and we'll be a double-minded (unstable) people.
4. A true hope for stability when facing trials is not wealth, but our position in Christ.
5. Trials, persecutions, temptations affect all of us whether rich or poor – they're God's great leveler.
6. Whether wealthy or poor, we should glory in the humbling and suffering that's necessary to be a disciple of Jesus.
7. Wealth itself is not the problem, but it is trusting in your wealth and glorying in your worldly position that James warns against.
8. Accepting the humiliation involved in the gospel is hard for the rich.
9. V11: James reminds us of the brevity and tentativeness of life.
10. Rich and poor believers are one in Christ and equal before God.
11. Wealth is a blessing given by God and used in the service of God, but it's not an end in itself.
12. Our dignity is to serve and to suffer for Christ's sake.
13. V12: When we've encountered and endured difficulties and trials, we gain a deep satisfaction and joy from God.
14. To recognize and hold to the Lordship of Christ in the early church might mean to be torn by beasts and to be tortured.

15. Temptations are an urge to stray, to sin. Trials by contrast are used by God in our sanctification.
16. God is immutably and eternally good, so He cannot be the author of sin. He tempts no one.
17. The primary source of our temptations is our own evil desires.
18. Our own desires lead to sin and sin leads to death.
19. Calvin: Men gather the eternal harvest sown by their own hands.
20. When God hardens the heart of a person, it's a punishment for pre-existing rebellion (e.g. Pharaoh).
21. God is the dependable and changeless one. In Him all things consist and hold together.
22. God is bringing us forth as first fruits of His redeemed creation.
23. Our calling matches the electing Love God has for us.
24. Ephesians 1:4. Having been adopted by God's electing love, we're being refashioned for His purpose.
25. John Knox prayed: Let not the enemies of Thy truth oppress Your word and servants; glorify Your holy name by the nations.

Application Questions:

1. When you look at the day-to-day activities and attitudes of your life, do you find yourself seeking life security in wealth?
2. What perspective does Isaiah 40:6-8 bring to our lives?
3. Compare and contrast Proverbs 8:36 and James 1:15.
4. How does the changelessness of God give us comfort?
5. How might God change Toronto and Canada if we were to hold fast the Lordship of Jesus in every area of their lives?
6. How do you respond to the humbling and suffering that God puts in your life?
7. Do I treat believers from other social classes as "one in Christ"?
8. What kind of harvest am I sowing in my life?