

SHOW AND TELL

Matthew 5:14-16

James 1: 1-3 This letter of James was probably written by the Lord's half brother. It was written to the Jewish Christians that had been scattered out of Jerusalem (**Acts 8:1**) and were being greatly persecuted for their faith. James was encouraging the brethren to be patient in their trials.

James 1:4 James then told them that patience through trials and temptation has the ability to bring believers a contentment and into a more mature and complete fellowship with the Lord.

MATURE CHRISTIANS HAVE A MATURE FAITH

James 1:5-8 While prayer is important in these passages, it is our faith that is the focus of James thrust. A weak believer lives a confused, restless, unsettled life. They are constantly changing their mind and actions depending on experience, what others say, and their feelings. Strong believers trust in God's word and not on their feelings or what the crowd has to say. They stand on what Timothy wrote in (**II Tim.1:2**). Strong believers have a settled faith in God and His word and do not vacillate.

James 1:12 The word temptation has a two fold meaning. The first is that it refer to trials, difficulties, and affliction. The second meaning is that which tries to get us to commit sin. This verse is interpreted as that of trials and afflictions that come into our lives. The word tried means to approve. This verse says to us that when we endure trials we are being put into the furnace of purification by God. Strong Christians persevere through the trials and afflictions of life that come on all believers.

James 1:13-15 James makes it clear that strong believers would not blame God for enticing them to sin. Only baby believers would blame God for anything negative that comes into our lives. Strong Christians know that God is always good and only allows things into our lives for our good.

MATURE CHRISTIANS SHOW FAITH BY WORKS

James 1:21-22 We are encouraged to grab a hold of the word of God and not let go. It is not enough to know God's word, or to remember the word, or to be able to repeat God's word. The strong Christian will know God's word and conform their life to what God's word says.

James 1:23-25 These verses compare the weak believer vs. the strong believer. The weak believer looks into the mirror of God's word and sees the truths that could help him, he sees the blemishes, the smudges, the grease and dirt of his life but never gets himself cleaned up. The strong believer looks into the same mirror of the word but pays attention and has concern about what the bible says and then acts upon the truths of God and God blesses accordingly, (**II Timothy 3:16-17**).

James 1:19, 26 As James indicates there are many believers who look "religious" but cannot control their tongue. He goes on to say that whatever religion these people thought they had was "vain" or empty. The Apostle Paul said in (**Ephesians 4:29**) that if we can't say something good about someone don't say anything at all! Paul later said that our speech should always be with grace, (**Colossians 4:6**).

James 2:8 James tells us that mature believers will "fulfill the royal law...". The love that he speaks of in this verse is a love that shows itself by actions. Paul tells us the same thing in (**Galatians 6:9-10**) when he tells us that we should be busy looking for opportunities to help others especially believers.

James 1:27 The mature believer knows the word of God enough to recognize good from evil, (**Heb. 5:12-14**), and stays away from things and people that would otherwise look negative on their testimony, (**I Thessalonians 5:22**). Paul touched on this kind of lifestyle in (**Titus 2:12-13**).

Does the way we live each day show that we have grown into a true, mature believer?