

CHAPTER 26.3 FAITH DOES!

"THE HEART OF FAITH"
James 3:13 – 4:12
April 2, 2017

We do what we do because we want what we want.

I. Two Wisdoms

Two Wisdoms: Ways of Living Life

Origin	Earthy, Demonic	Above, God
Practice		PURE
	Bitter Jealousy (<u>envy</u>)	<u>Peaceable</u>
	Selfish <u>Ambition</u>	<u>Gentle</u>
	Boasting	Open to <u>Reason</u>
	Boasting (disparaging others)	Full of <u>mercy</u> and good fruits
	False to the truth	Impartial (undivided) Sincere (<u>undivided loyalty</u>)
Product	Disorder	Peace
	Vile Practices	Righteousness

II. The Heart of it all. (4:1-10)

A. The Power of Passions. (4:1-3)

1. Warring passions.
2. What drives these passions?
3. Why aren't these desires ever fulfilled?

B. Unfaithful Hearts (4:4-6)

1. Adulterers
2. He longs for you. (4:5)
3. He is ready to extend grace. (4:6)

C. Returning Hearts (4:7-10)

1. Required Heart Attitude (7a, 10a)
2. Repent (7b-9)

III. The Heart Speaks (4:11-23)

How does this apply to me?

NEXT WEEK

"BLINDED TO SEE"
Acts 9:1-31

Historical Timeline:

The year was probably 34AD. The mushrooming church of Jewish believers had been flushed out of Jerusalem under the extreme pressure of persecution. Saul was a young rabbi of the Pharisees. He had excelled in his studies under the esteemed teacher, Gamaliel. Having witnessed and supported the stoning of Stephen, Saul began to pursue Jesus' followers wherever they went. Having been informed about where they were, he went from house to house, dragging them off to cold jail cells. With the support of the religious elite, he hounded the young believers from city to city.

Passage Overview:

Reading the narrative of Paul's conversion to faith in Jesus, we are stunned by how radically different God's ways are from ours. Paul left Jerusalem breathing out threats and with murderous intentions as he barreled down the road to Damascus where an enclave of believers had found temporary solace. What he didn't know is that he had been chosen by Jesus to be His instrument, spreading the very faith he was seeking to destroy.

As he hurdled headlong down the road, he was arrested and brought to his knees before Jesus. The light of Jesus blinded him before it gave him real sight. Whereas we usually think of Jesus healing the blind, He blinded Saul, who thought he could see, so that He could remove the scales from his eyes, enabling him to truly see.

Imagine the angst Ananias must have felt when the Lord told him to go and meet with Saul. Why would he go to the man who had come to imprison him? Why would he help the individual whose sole purpose seemed to be to do harm to all believers? Yet Ananias obeyed.

The stunning reversals found in this narrative run right through to the end. As the Jews in Jerusalem turn against Saul, it is the followers of Jesus, who Saul had come to persecute, that save his life, lowering him in a basket through an opening in the city wall. Then, reaching Jerusalem, he found rest and peace in the fellowship of the very believers he had sought to destroy just weeks earlier.

God's ways are not our ways. They are much higher, much better, much wiser. We can trust Him, no matter how dark the outlook may be from our perspective.

Reading for Next Week: Acts 9:1-31