

Producing Righteousness

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[0:00] Today we're talking, we're continuing in the epistle of James and what a great, great book. We're crawling through this verse by verse and so we're getting a good handle on just the way God has designed us to deal with temptations and how he's designed trials and temptations and all those things to function in our life.

And if we're going to be wise people, then we're going to be the kind of people that are going to listen to God's word. We're going to hear what he says and how he directs us in all of these things because we want to be wise.

This is the kind of faith that actually works. It lives out. It's not just theoretical. It is active. It's living and it should show in our life.

And we see this even in the epistle of James specifically. I think we all want to be wise, but we are all at different places in that.

Amen. That's not to point at somebody else. Okay. That's, that's, we've got to recognize that we're passing at 35,000 feet.

[1:15] Give us a time check. And he, and he said it in kind of a demanding way. And the tower responds and says, well, well, what airline are you with? And the pilot snaps back.

What difference does it make? I just want the time. I'm, I'm with Skyway Airlines. When people are asking you for the time, you're to just give the time. And snapping back to the, the tower, I can only imagine the holy pause that would take place in a moment like that.

And the, the tower responds. The guy says, well, it makes a lot of difference. If you are with Transworld Airline or a big fiery ball in the sky is on its way down.

I don't know how you are when you feel insulted or embarrassed. We all react to challenges in different ways.

Amen. How do you respond to challenges is really the question that's, the point here is. What do you react when someone is a smart aleck on social media?

[2:42] Right? What about the circumstances you face? Is it a response of cynicism?

Not just dealing with people. With cynicism and negativity.

Why does this always happen to me? Right? You ever said that?

Your surface issue. It's a heart issue. Uh, and even here.

Uh, and even here. Are actually very revealing about how you see the character of God.

[3:42] how he goes back to the verses before last week before I came into this because I was dealing with the character of God that he laid out those few verses before right God we talked about it last week God is actually good and I can don't go well wisdom teaches me that God is good God knows more than I know he is the father of lights he is the father of revelation I do and in fact in describing that light he said there's no shadow behind us will be very defined and everywhere we turn there's going to be a shadow behind he sees the the normal light he sees the old there he's the father of lights and this wisdom of God when we're facing temptations when we're dealing with difficult people how we see God is going to affect the way we respond to people in circumstances and we saw the immutability of God the unchangeableness of God we saw the sovereignty of God he is in control he's on his throne he's the father of

lights who brought us forth according to his will it said so now we come to verse 19 and in this it's the reminder that great faith is the product of great fights and great testimonies are the outcome of great tests and great triumphs can only come out of great trials and God wants to see a righteous response in his people amen let's go ahead and read this verse together let's stand in honor of the reading of God's word as we look at James chapter 1 verse 19 and 20

James chapter 1 verse 19 and 20 as he continues on he says this know this my beloved brothers let every person be quick to hear slow to speak slow to anger for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God father may you bless the reading of your word today as we unpack this help us to make application to our heart and respond accordingly we love you and praise you it's in Christ's name we pray amen amen so the goal here is righteousness that is being produced this is what he says in verse 20 that the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God the goodness of God the rightness as it's being played out in our life it is being produced by something and we saw that in the first few verses that we're to count it all joy right this near impossible verse that we read on the surface it just seems so impossible count it all joy when you fall into various trials and temptations can I get a hearty amen amen and everybody's like amen yeah because it's hard to give glory to God in the middle of trials unless you know something that you know that God is producing something in you through the trials these are a work of God in your life the trials even when you're tempted and facing temptation you are in a situation that is going to bring God glory ultimately and you're learning something he's producing something in you so your response to things is really important so in order to have the right perspective about God being good and God being all wise and God being unchangeable and God being sovereign in the middle of all your trials and suffering and if you're a scattered church like he's writing to this is your life but it doesn't matter if you're scattered it's just everyday life life's hard having the right perspective is going to be important for you to live a righteous life and we follow a righteous king it is the sign of his kingdom according to revelation that his his oh I can't think of the word his staff his diadem there's a word for this that's escaping me

I can't think of scepter yes it's a scepter of righteousness thank you so much a scepter of righteousness it's the sign of his kingdom and people are going to know us by our love for one another and by our obedience to the Lord and his commands as a disciple of Jesus my whole life is wrapped up in learning to obey the commands of Christ that's what I am as a disciple Jesus saved me from my sin he rescued me from the grave brought me to life and now he's called me to live according to his standards and his commands he's called me to do this goal here is to see our trials and temptations in the light of the sovereign God so James is a book of wisdom it's written for believers who are needing instruction not just needing to know the truth but wanting to do the truth to live it out it's not just about belief it's about behavior yes I want to have right belief

I want to be orthodox in my belief I must be theology is important but orthodoxy is followed by orthopraxy my practice needs to be right also or people will not hear what I'm preaching usually I don't hear a lot of things you know kids are going crazy but I think that's one of my grandkids over there is that right what does godly look godly wisdom look like when it reacts to trials and temptations and I think of it almost like an allergy test when you go for an allergy test they're going to prick you with all kinds of things and I've only heard this I've never gone to one of these but I hear they prick you with all kinds of little things and they see how you react to it and they test the reaction so they'll poke you with I don't know like something that's got dog hair in it I don't know how they do that but they poke you with it and see how you respond and then they poke you with something with pork in it or something

I don't know and they test you and it's not when you see the skin raise up and the reaction to those things it's not being really it's not the cause of the poking in that moment but this poking and this testing is revealing something it's revealing something about your nature and your makeup and your skin and your body and how you how you respond to these things is something about your makeup and how you are test is not the cause it only reveals your condition so when we're looking at this issue of wisdom we're looking at the testing and the trials in our life revealing something about us revealing how we see the character of God and where we're at in this production of righteousness and endurance in us as one Puritan writer said he said wisdom is the right use of knowledge to know is not to be wise many men know a great deal and are all the greater fools for it

there is no fool so great as a fool as a knowing fool but to know how to use knowledge is to have wisdom and so as we look at this passage this morning really I'm just drawing out the three required rules for righteous reactions okay you say that three times fast the three required rules for righteous reactions and I'm giving this in terms of the three R's you just said well there's four R's that you just gave

[13:16] I know so number one you are to listen up the first point that he makes here is about teachability when he says this in verse 19 he said know this my beloved brothers let every person be quick to hear quick to hear the reality is this is something that you need to know it needs to be established that's why it's rules it's something that should be established in your life he uses in the original language the word oida I remember going through Greek class and memorizing that word and I would always do crazy things in my head to try to remember all of the vocabulary words and so oida is the Greek word and I said you oida know something right so yeah I know that's real technical right that's what it means it means to know something it means to know someone or something to be intimately acquainted with it to stand in close relationship to something in essence it means to really grasp something you as a follower of Jesus you as a servant of Christ

James is saying you beloved brothers you've been changed by Jesus the Holy Spirit of God lives inside of you you ought to know something you really ought to grasp these things these rules ought to be part of who you are it should be characteristic of you that you are someone who is teachable you are to be quick to listen so rule number one you are to listen up listen up when you're going through trials when you're going through temptations you are to listen to the wisdom of God that is the initial and first interpretation of the passage it's not just talking about how you speak to other people or how you respond to other people when they talk to you that's a secondary application the primary application is how do you respond to

God this is in the context of trials and just before this there was someone saying when temptation came that he said let no let none of you say temptation came from God that God for God tempts no one and God is tempted by no one this is the context here it's really you listening to God speak through wisdom in the context of your trials speaking through the trials and speaking wisdom to the trials how are you listening to God is it is it first response in you to be teachable when you are faced with a trial primary application and then secondary when you're challenged by people you can then say when I'm challenged how do I respond to that am I quick to listen because what James is getting at here is when you see yourself not quick to listen when other people are speaking to you you can know this says something about your heart in relationship to who

God is you've revealed something when he uses this phrase of this saying which is a teaching of the rabbis in his day which is reflecting Proverbs this is a direct application in common use just to people's speech and behavior but James is taking this deeper in context of responding to God so what you get from this is that you're seeing your reaction to these common responses in relation to people and it's telling you where you are with God it's telling you how you see God do you see God as the sovereign of the universe do you see God as unchanging and unchangeable is he affected by your crisis is he I mean you see what happens when I'm affected by people that way it's telling me that there's something in my heart that's just not quite right with

God am I teachable beloved brothers let every person and this follows the verses before he said let no one say when he's tempted let each one say when he's tempted this is the circumstance it's universal nobody is exempt from this no exceptions are made for especially hard circumstances you may be going through difficult circumstances something really hard may have cropped up in your life and yet he is saying all of us need to know this know this grasp this get a hold of this when things are hard that's the very moment when God is teaching you some of the greatest truths about himself and revealing some of the deepest truths about you it's the first rule be quick to hear my response my reaction to these things should be quick to hear as opposed to what follows quick to speak sometimes when you're tempted or when you're facing trials you're tempted to say things to [19:20] God that you shouldn't be saying you're tempted to respond and be quick to speak to God you see this however often in your relationship with other people because with other people you're quick to speak and

it's revealing something about the state and the condition of your heart and how you see God are you listening to hear the voice of God in your circumstances are you looking for the wisdom of God to apply to your temptation and your hardship when it's used as an adverb it means quick swift speedy the emphasis of course is on being prompt it is a quick lightning like response in hearing which of course this does speak of the faculty of hearing and I'm listening I hear someone speak and I'm listening to it but it's not just me hearing and understanding it's me hearing and receiving

I'm to be a receiver of the things that I hear and that's not to say when somebody's speaking to you you listen to lies we're not supposed to listen to lies government lies to us all the time right we get that we don't listen to that you're not encouraged to just listen to a bunch of lies I like the quote of Alexander Solzhenitsyn who said live not by lies and just talking about the stand against communism as he experienced it in Czechoslovakia just just a truth that we need in your life he knows the secrets of your mind and your heart he knows your past and he knows your future and so when he speaks and when wisdom comes through circumstances and trials like James is giving to these believers he's saying be quick to grasp these things

God's saying in your life listen to wisdom the the intertestament period between old testament new testament the rabbis would say this saying in different forms in one place it I didn't write down I just said Jewish intertestament literature so it's somewhere back there in history okay they said be quick to hear and be deliberate in answering if you have understanding answer your neighbor but if not put your hand to your mouth glory and dishonor come from speaking and a man's tongue is his downfall that was the teaching of the rabbis and so when James is saying this he's not saying this in a vacuum he's taking a very common saying that the rabbis gave to give light your heart and this is not only how you're responding to people but this is how you're responding to God be quick to hear and so he's saying like almost like have a hair trigger on your hearing

I mean I mean I like to shoot guns every now and then we still have that right at least today that could change here shortly we don't know but for now we still have that right I like that but I'll shoot and some guns have the kind of trigger that you have to pull all the way back right and so you aim and you're pulling pulling pulling pulling and you're thinking when is it gonna hit I don't know it's there somewhere it's gonna come it's gonna come and the whole time your sights are off and you're moving because you keep pulling and pulling if you're not practicing with this you won't know where it is which I don't shoot often enough with some of those guns so I'll pull back pull back I'm like there it is bam surprise but I've also shot guns that have a very sensitive trigger and on the sensitive trigger you look and you put your finger on it bam before you know it right it's like it's like the quick response it's like if you're not careful someone is going to be hurt so when our family might do something like that

I'm standing back and I'm like with this one be careful okay please be careful be careful how you respond the response should be a response in listening up you are to listen up proverbs 13 10 by insolence comes nothing but strife but with those who take advice is wisdom a fool proverbs 18 2 a fool takes no pleasure in understanding but only in expressing his opinion speaking but not listening proverbs 5 and you say oh how I hated discipline and my heart despised reproof I did not listen to the voice of my teachers or incline my ear to my instructors incline my ear to my instructors I didn't listen I had all the answers but I wasn't listening

[24:52] I wasn't receiving the things that were coming specifically the wisdom of God this is telling you how you're to respond to God in all of his wisdom and his word he's going to be interweaving this idea about the word coming up and how God speaks with wisdom through his word and how we're to listen and be teachable and be attentive and when God speaks I ought to be on a hair trigger that when I hear it I obey I say God I'm going to listen to you I'm inclining my ear to be sensitive to your voice so that when you speak and when you call me I am ready to obey and respond with explosive response and swiftness and quickness because that is what wisdom looks like you ask questions or are you just quick to tell everybody your opinion nothing more frustrating than to be asked for advice and somebody not to listen when I counsel people from time to time

you know

I Brandon and I have often had that discussion they just won't listen and so I thought you know I'm going to start charging money you know I do it for free right so I'm a pastor it's what I do but I thought I'm just going to charge a deposit like a five thousand dollar deposit you know so that hey if you listen to me you get it all back but if you didn't it's worth like like look I've given you eternal life I've given you my Holy Spirit I've given you my word and I'm in control you need to listen Proverbs 17:27 whoever restrains his words has knowledge and he who has a cool spirit is a man of understanding even a fool who keeps silent is considered wise when he closes his lips he is deemed intelligent that is the most beautiful song it's

I can't remember how it was worded but Brandy's dad would have that saying posted in different places he who stays silent is deemed wise or is thought not to be a fool but he who opens his mouth removes all doubt James is saying be a student before you become a professor your disposition is to be one of receiving you are to listen up number two and this is not for our children you are to shut up kids don't say that that phrase is not allowed in your home I know your parents they don't want you saying shut up to everybody and so I don't mean it in the insulting way that sometimes you hear it but the reality of what James is saying is there are times that you need to close your mouth you're to be slow to speak the contrast of being quick and swift you're to be swift to listen eager to learn ready and willing to receive from God and you are to be slow to speak later he's going to say let not many of us become teachers why because the tongue is a very delicate and dangerous thing we got to be really careful with our mouth the things that we say matter and he's not just saying I want you to just really slow down your speech so that by slowing down you can understand that's not what he's saying it means to be careful and deliberate sometimes the word is used meaning to be late like to be tardy some of you when it's time to start you're not here right

I'm not picking on you I just I notice you know and then and then after it starts you know you'll come in and I know some of you are like it doesn't matter what it is your funeral you're going to be late 15 minutes you're going to you're going to come in and that tardiness you know you're coming after the fact and so sometimes when when somebody's working a project we'll we'll be sweating digging a ditch or something or whatever we're working on this project and then somebody comes after it's almost done right and then they come and we're like hey where you been like a blister you show up after the work's done right it's just late slow tardy you're to speak in a way that doesn't mean to be sensitive to the moments but this is when you're in the trials and when you're in the learning moments where you're receiving from God you're to be very slow about how you speak in response to these things he just gave the example of don't say some will say this when they're tempted don't say that don't be so quick to speak well God hates me don't be so quick to speak God why is God bringing this into my life hold up slow your tongue down you need to preach to your own soul in this moment tell your soul listen up and for just a moment you need to shut up you need to listen to God there's a time to speak as somebody said fly into a rage often make a bad landing right I think that's true I think our initial response to things sometimes is way too quick and we respond way too wrongly I think even going through situations as I brought up before when people look at something and they respond too quickly a doctor we go in and you guys have been dealing with doctors who's going to be done with it oh you'll be back in action in just a couple of weeks and then we find out oh if he would have done that that cancer would have killed her you know you just whoa hold up buddy slow down your response is important there was a poster that read temper is such a valuable thing it's a shame to lose it we speak of temper we're talking we talk about steel and it's strength when you lose your temper you're losing your strength James says a lot about the tongue James 1:26 if anyone thinks he's religious and does not bridle his tongue so what is he talking about here being slow to speak he's talking about this governing of your responses to things be careful how you respond he who thinks he's religious and does not bridle his tongue he deceives his heart what's he saying these outward things are indicative of an inward reality about your heart and how you're responding to God it's not just a separate issue of you responding

[32:34] I'm a godly man and I love the Lord and I'm walking with Jesus but I really have control my anger's out of control and I speak rashly guess what something's wrong with your relationship with God it's just indicating something that's wrong in your heart and if you'll get this right with God it will show in your relationship with others James 3:5

the tongue he said James goes on to say the tongue is a small member yet it boasts of great things how great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire and the tongue is a fire a world of unrighteousness remember the goal is righteousness goal is righteousness and wisdom that you respond rightly and that from the heart you are transformed by the presence of Jesus in your life world of unrighteousness the tongue is set among our members staining the whole body setting on fire the entire course of life and set on fire by hell and he uses like so many different pictures about what your mouth is a bit needs to be put in it a bridle a rudder needs to control this thing it's controlling your whole life you need to get control of this it's like a fire it's like a dangerous animal it's like a spring that things are coming out of it's like fruit that's being born in your life and that's exactly what

Jesus said he said out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks am I governable does the Holy Spirit have control this is a book of wisdom there's circumstances in my life that I really need to look at and say Lord am I controlling my tongue am I controlling them when my words are damaging relationships like Proverbs 16 says a dishonest man spreads strife and a whisperer separates the closest of friends when my words are not verified and I'm spreading those Deuteronomy 17 6 on the evidence of two or three witnesses am I speaking when I don't know the facts if one gives an answer Proverbs 18 13 if one gives an answer before he hears it is to his folly and his shame am I making light of holy things with my words

Ecclesiastes 5 2 do not be rash with your mouth nor let your heart be hasty to utter a word before God for God is in heaven and you are on the earth let your words be few I damage other people's relationship when I don't reflect the character of Christ on and on I go through Proverbs my words matter how I respond to God how I respond to others you notice in Job the one thing it says about Job when he's going through all of his trials and he goes through such horrendous things I mean lose your job lose your income your livestock and all of those things and that's a terrible thing if anybody ever goes through that it's heartbreaking it's devastating but there's nothing like losing a child like a family member and he loses all of his kids and then his health is gone and all the trial trial on top of trial on top of trial and Job 122 it says and in all of this

Job did not sin or charge God with wrong he didn't speak quickly to God and charge God Job 210 it said he said shall we receive good from God and shall we not also receive evil and in all of this Job did not sin with his lips how do you respond to trial you want to see where your maturity is this is the test how are you responding to other people in trials now I want to make note there is a time that we need to speak and this is not saying that we're just always to be silent there are times to speak ecclesiastes 3 7 says there's a time to hear a time to tear and a time to sow a time to keep silence and a time to speak it's it's speaking in the right times it's not being rash in my response whether to God or to others and there are times that I'm to speak we're living in a time when we need to speak I've had pastors from time to time tell me James you really shouldn't speak to politics it'll divide your congregation you shouldn't speak to these moral issues so much because it can just be so divisive and I hear that from pastors who take that position where it seems to be much more noble to stand back and not speak the truth in a time when we actually need to be hearing the truth and from my perspective I've just decided I'll just make it as a public service announcement I don't listen to weenie pastors these pastors that are not speaking to the issues of our time are doing more damage to the church than anything not speaking to moral issues in our time when things day and pastors practicing the gentle art of saying absolutely nothing about anything controversial

[38:39] I'm not doing that because there is a time to speak there's a time for us to speak to things but what James is saying be careful how you do it be cautious how you do it don't just react God's at work in these things acknowledge the sovereignty of God and the wisdom of God and the unchangeability of God and the goodness of God acknowledge all of that keep all of these things in perspective but when it comes time to speak speak and speak authoritatively and speak with zeal and speak as the oracles of God that's the encouragement for us as someone said speech is as silver sometimes silence is as gold there's a time for both you're to listen up you're to speak up and you're to hold up be slow to anger

hold up hold back on the ranks all of us from time to time get mad there are righteous reasons to get mad and there are unrighteous reasons to get mad there are righteous ways to respond in anger and there are unrighteous ways to respond in anger anger is not a sin anger when it's harbored is sinful anger when it's misapplied is sinful but we are actually to have a righteous indignation a righteous hatred towards sin not toward people but towards sin anger is from the word orge which conveys the picture of something swelling to the point of bursting it's internal what James is talking about is an anger inside that seems to be akin that we might think of as like bitterness anger and bitterness that's welling up on the inside that's ready to burst so what this is picturing is

I'm in a trial I'm going through my trial right now and I'm accusing God of being responsible for the trial not realizing that God is good and has a purpose in this and he's using this for his glory in my life and so I've responded wrongly and now I've let it turn inwardly into some bitterness in my soul and you say when does something like that happen well it happens when you're single and wanting to be married and the trial of your life has led you to a place where internally you've allowed some bitterness about your circumstances or you're married because there are worse things than being single you can be married and in a situation that is so burdensome and so hurtful and you're waiting for

God to rescue you and internally this can turn into an anger and a bitterness that just keeps swelling to the point that it just bursts you're to be slow to anger you're to hold off on anger because you're remembering that God is good and that God is all wise and that God is unchangeable and God is sovereign and he loves me and he's in control of my life and he's in control of every circumstance that happens to me which means I've got to look at my circumstances and listen up and shut up and hold up and let God be God and worship him and respond rightly and let him produce righteousness that only comes in these times some people deal with anger in a different way they just let it run rampant thinking that they're justified in their anger all the time Ephesians 4:26 says be angry and do not sin do not let the sun go down on your anger some of you act like you live in the antarctic where the sun never goes down and the reality is God has called you to surrender that to him you are not allowed under any circumstance there's no circumstance that gives you excuse to let anger become your go-to for you to let it burst over and over again in your life or in other people's lives or in your kids lives or in your spouse's lives or in your friends lives how do you respond when the trials come truth is God's got a purpose in all these things someone wrongs me someone corrects me or correction comes from like a parent when I'm confronted with the wisdom of God from the teaching of his word this whole conversation is about the application of wisdom and James is somebody that's grown up with Jesus the brother of Jesus he saw him as he grew up I can only imagine after becoming a believer the relationship that he had with Christ because he grew up with him he saw him in all kinds of situations and after the resurrection when James is changed and becomes a follower of Christ and then matures and becomes a leader of the church of Jerusalem I can only imagine God to be maybe the most knowledgeable walk in all of scripture and he's saying here's what faith looks like here's what wisdom looks like in your life here's the rules for a righteous response and reaction someone said it's easy to listen to words that are said and not hear the facts at all but listening for truth and not just to words will save you from many a fall this morning as we come to our invitation time and prepare our hearts for the

[45:43] Lord's supper it's really just a time for us to respond to God maybe you're here today and you don't have a relationship with Christ my prayer is that you will understand the reality of this gospel Jesus Christ came for sinners that's who we are he came according to the scriptures he died according to the scriptures to pay the penalty for sinners he rose again so that he could justify sinners and he's coming again one day and all of those who are not covered in the blood of Christ they will be judged as sinners still all those that are in Christ will be judged according to the work of Christ he's imputed his righteousness to us he's taken our sin upon himself he died in our place as a substitute

there's no excuse for our sinfulness and we're going to work on that all the rest of it pertains to life and godliness and he wants us to walk with him you've been saved and you have that foundation he's calling you today to reflect that in your relationships with others and when these tests come he's going to show you where your heart is with him you want to know where your fellowship is with

God how you doing in that test how you doing in that trial God wants to draw you close give you strength so as we have this invitation time it's really a call if there are things that this has brought up and you say Lord I need to let this thing go it's for you to lay it down at the altar and just say God take this this anger my quick mouth I don't listen whatever it is lay it at the altar with the Lord and just have him take it as we prepare our hearts for the Lord's supper there are relationships that are undone because of maybe your mouth because of the way you've responded because of things you've said make those things right leave your gift at the altar make it right with your brother let's be the body of Christ and show the difference what it means to be followers of

Jesus together let's pray father we come to you in this time of invitation because we've been invited by your word to respond to you how we respond the Lord is going to reveal so much there are so many tests in our life so many trials temptations that we're dealing with things that are going on in our life and Lord for believers in this room take hold of you as you take hold of them filled with your Holy Spirit I pray God that you would just enable them with supernatural strength to let go of those things that are harming their fellowship with you things that are cropping up in their relationship with others and that you would just bring victory today for someone that's lost today I pray that even in this moment Lord they would surrender their life to you Lord that they would do what Romans 10 9 and 10 says that if we confess with our mouth the

Lord Jesus believing in our heart that God has raised him from the dead we shall be saved Lord I pray that they be saved today Lord do business with us as we surrender ourselves to you in Christ's name we pray amen