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ARISE, AND GO BACK HOME!

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF JAMES
NUMBER 49
JAMES 5:19-20

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JAMES 5:19-20 "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."

Tonight we come to the close of our long study of the Book of James. We began this study in October, 1976, and now, after 48 studies, we have come to the conclusion. We have discovered that James is a very practical book. We have learned that the believer is not only to be a hearer of the Word but "A doer of the Word." At the conclusion of this study, we will turn our attention to 1st, 2nd, and 3rd John and will exegete these books for our coming Wednesday night studies.

JAMES 5:19 "Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him;" "Brethren" is a vocative plural of the word adelphos and it refers to believers. A better translation is "members of the family of God." At the point of salvation, we enter a new family. So this passage is for those who have been born into God's family. The cross is the point of eternal salvation. The moment we believe in Christ, we immediately receive at least 36 things from God. One of the things we receive is the fact that we are born into the family of God. From that moment on, God as our Father is responsible for us. It is God's objective, after we are born again, for us to move on into super grace and this makes it possible for God to begin to share his perfect happiness with us.

Capacity The Key

The only problem God has in sharing with us his happiness is our capacity. As we learn doctrine, we will develop the capacity for grace and happiness and blessings. The way to develop this capacity is to be positive toward doctrine. Going negative toward Bible doctrine brings reversionism and this opens up a vacuum in the soul, and in comes darkness. At this point, human viewpoint takes over. This leads to a frantic search for happiness which eventually will end in the sin unto death. Therefore, the closing emphasis of James is about recovery from reversionism. He urges the believers not to be just hearers of the word but to be doers of the word. The doer of the word is the one who puts his faith into practice and who builds an edification complex in his soul. Only doctrine learned and stored in the human spirit can lead the believer into super grace.

A Horrible Road

The road to reversionism is a very horrible road. It always leads to divine discipline. This is the force of these two concluding verses of James 5. In verse 19 we have the protasis of a conditional sentence and in verse 20 we have the apodosis. In the greek we have the word mou before adelphos and it means "my brethren." A better translation is "members of the family of God." So this is for believers. The word for "convert" is a total mistranslation as we will point out a little later on. "If" is ean plus the subjunctive so this is a third class condition. It means maybe yes or maybe no. The third class condition

always stresses your personal volition like in 1 John 1:9 "if we confess our sins..." In this instance the third class condition says, in effect, that there will be many believers who will enter into reversionism. All you have to do is to neglect Bible doctrine, and you will find yourself in reversionism. When the old sin nature is in control, reversionism is the result every time. And all who persist in staying in reversionism will eventually die the sin unto death. Next we have tis en humin and it means "any of you." It really means "any among you." "Do err" is old english and doesn't properly describe the meaning of this word. It is an aorist, passive, subjunctive of planao and means "seduce," "to wander from," "to delude." So this means to go astray, to wander from the right way. This is a constantive aorist, so it means the sum total of all that goes into the straying away. "From the truth" is apo, plus the ablative of aletheia and it means "from the source of the doctrine."

"And if one convert him." Now we have to stop right here, because the aorist, active, subjunctive of epistrepho doesn't mean convert. Epi means "around" and Strepho means "to turn." So this means to turn around, to turn back. These words are usually used for the changing of someone's mind. The subject is tis and this refers to any reversionist. Next we have the accusative singular of autos and is here translated "and one" and it means the pastor-teacher or any super grace believer who can help restore the reversionist. So look at what we have in this verse--

"Members of the family of God, if anyone among you has been seduced, led away from doctrine and someone turns him around..."

"Turning someone around" refers to the communication of doctrine so the reversionist will turn from negative to positive volition. The change of attitude is necessary for the turning around to be effective.

JAMES 5:20 "Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." "Let him know" and this now introduces the apodosis of the conditional sentence. There is no pronoun here for the word "him." That is a bad translation. We have a present, active, imperative of ginosko and it means "keep on knowing." Then next we have the conjunction hoti and it introduces an objective clause. "Which converteth" is an aorist, active, participle of epistrepho and means "the one turning back." Next we have "the sinner" and this is from hamartolo and means "the one who has deviated from the plan designed by God." Please notice that this is not an unbeliever. We saw that in the beginning from the word "brethren." The "sinner" here refers to the reversionistic believer, the one who misses the way God has planned for him. Ek plus plane means "the way of error, the wrong way."

Now look what we have thus far in these verses--

"Members of the family of God, if anyone among you has wandered from the doctrine (and has become a reversionist) and someone turns him around, someone restores him; keep knowing, that the one having turned him around from the delusion of his way..."

Next we have "shall save" and this is a future, active, indicative of sozo and when sozo is in the future tense, it always means "to deliver." We are not talking about the salvation of the soul. That had already taken place in the life of this person, for he is in the family of God.

Then this is a nomic future which states a fact that can be expected when you have the condition which has been specified. So this nomic future indicates that it is always possible for a believer, who is under the sin unto death, to recover, provided he goes back to his original authority, after repentance. This nomic future states the conditions under which this reversionistic believer can be restored and delivered.

Next we have "a soul" and the word is "pseuche." This indicates that your soul has the capacity for great things from God, but you will never know what these great things are if you go into reversionism.

Many Ways To Become A Reversionist

One--The reversionist rejects God's spiritual food, which is Bible doctrine taken in on a daily basis. Reversionism is blasphemy against the Word of God.

Two--God has a fantastic supply of blessings for every believer, however, reversionism reduces the capacity of the believer to zero and the reversionist can't take in the blessings. It comes back to our old principle--God can't pour unless you have a cup. The soul is the battleground in the Angelic Conflict and here is a reversionistic soul who has rejected all that God has provided for him. He rejected because of the lack of capacity. In other words he says in essence, "I don't want your stinking blessings, God. I can get along without them."

God Waits On Your Capacity

God has an amazing capacity for giving and he has been waiting for years to give you these things. He just sits there patting his foot, waiting on you to develop the capacity to receive what he is capable of giving. You see, it is God's intention to give and to keep on giving in abundance. This is the hallmark of his character. He gives on a grace basis and every day he wants to give to every believer. But if you keep on refusing because you don't have the capacity to receive, eventually all that God can give you is the sin unto death.

Next we have "shall save a soul from death" and the words "from death" come from "ek thanatos" and it is used here for physical death. This is maximum discipline, called the sin unto death.

Thus far in this verse we have--"Keep knowing, that the one having turned back or restored the reversionist from the delusion of his way, shall deliver a soul from the sin unto death..."

Which Will It Be

God offers you the sharing of his happiness or the sin unto death. You are the one who must decide which one you will take. In order for you to be a recipient of all that God wants to give you, it requires doctrine today, and tomorrow and on and on day by day until the end of your life. The ability of God to give is unlimited because of his perfect character, and doctrine gives us the capacity to appreciate and use what he gives. So all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ have the choice to make. It may be a miserable life, less doctrine, or it may be the life of super grace.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE SIN UNTO DEATH

It is one thing to die according to God's plan for you, to die at exactly the right moment for you, or to die in reversionism entirely outside of God's divine plan.

1. Definition.

The sin unto death is the maximum discipline from God which comes to the reversionistic believer. This discipline is the only exception to dying grace which is available for all believers. The only one who receives such discipline is the reversionist who continues to refuse to repent and return to doctrine. The sin unto death includes maximum misery, maximum pressure, terminating in the sin unto death. He dies before his time and he dies apart from dying grace.

PSALM 118:17-18 "I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord. The Lord hath chastened me sore: but he hath not given me over unto death."

1 JOHN 5:16 "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it."

2. Sin Unto Death Does Not Mean The Loss of Salvation.

Once you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, you have crossed the bridge. It is a one way bridge and you can never go that way again. You can't commit a sin so great that you can undo what Christ did for you when you believed in him. No believer can commit the unpardonable sin. ONCE YOU HAVE BEEN CONVERTED, YOU CANNOT COMMIT THE UNPARDONABLE SIN. You can die the sin unto death but you can't lose your salvation.

2 TIMOTHY 2:12-13 "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us: If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself."

3. Reversionism Is Always The Cause For The Sin Unto Death.

JEREMIAH 9:16 "I will scatter them also among the heathen, whom neither they nor their fathers have known: and I will send a sword after them, till I have consumed them."

JEREMIAH 44:12 "And I will take the remnant of Judah, that have set their faces to go into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, and they shall all be consumed, and fall in the land of Egypt: they shall even be consumed by the sword and by the famine: they shall die, from the least even unto the greatest, by the sword and by the famine: and they shall be an execration, and an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach."

PHILIPPIANS 3:18-19 "(For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)"

REVELATION 3:16 "So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth."

There are four reasons why Christians die physically.

(1) Their work is finished.

2 TIMOTHY 4:7 "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:"

- (2) Some special case (Such as martyrdom)
PHILIPPIANS 1:20-21 "According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."
 - (3) Imposing Human Volition Over Divine Volition
This we call suicide.
 - (4) The sin unto death.
And this is a very horrible way for a believer to die.
1 CHRONICLES 10:13 "So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the Lord, even against the word of the Lord, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to inquire of it:"

1 JOHN 5:16 "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it."
4. All Reversionists Die Apart From Dying Grace.
 5. Case Histories Of The Sin Unto Death.
 - (1) Monetary reversionism. As the case of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5.
 - (2) Phallic Reversionism. As illustrated in 1 Cor. 5:1-15. Incest.
 - (3) Ritual Reversionism. Participating in The Lord's Supper while in reversionism. 1 Cor. 11:30-31
 - (4) Mental Attitude Reversionism. 1 Sam. 13:9-14, 1 Chro. 10:13-14. King Saul rejected God's specific commands.
 - (5) National Reversionism In Foreign Policy. Isaiah 30:1-3 and 31:1-3. This was King Hezekiah.
 - (6) Verbal Reversionism
1 Timothy 1:19-20

This is a great rebound passage. So, James ends with a warning to reversionistic believers--stay in fellowship and thereby avoid the terrible thing called "The sin unto death."