

TITLE: FINDING THE SECRET TO PEACE

- IT IS MY HOPE THAT WE WILL... BEGIN TO SLOW DOWN, RESPOND TO GOD'S INVITATION TO SIT WITH HIM, AND TO RECEIVE & DEMONSTRATE HIS LOVE TO OTHERS.

INTRO

WHAT IF I SAID THAT 'REGRET' IS INEVITABLE FOR THOSE WHO TRY TO MANAGE LIFE ON THEIR OWN? WOULD YOU STOP AND LISTEN TO ME FOR A FEW MINUTES, OR JUST CONTINUE DOING THE THINGS THAT YOU ARE DOING? WELL, FOR STARTERS: ADAM AND EVE, THE FIRST KNOWN HUMANS, WERE NOT ABLE TO REMAIN IN (PARADISE) THE GARDEN OF EDEN ONCE THEY TRIED TO DO THINGS ON THEIR OWN - BY NOT FOLLOWING GOD'S ESTABLISHED PLAN. AND IF THEY FAILED IN THEIR ATTEMPT TO LIVE - APART FROM GOD - THEN, WHY DO WE THINK WE CAN DO ANY BETTER BY TRYING TO DO THINGS ON OUR OWN WITHOUT THE HELP OF HIM?

JOHN 15:5 JESUS SAID:

"YES, I AM THE VINE; YOU ARE THE BRANCHES. THOSE WHO REMAIN IN ME, AND I IN THEM, WILL PRODUCE MUCH FRUIT. FOR APART FROM ME YOU CAN DO NOTHING.

TODAY, WE ARE FORTUNATE ENOUGH AS CHRISTIANS TO HAVE THE WRITTEN WORD OF GOD WITH WHICH WE CAN READ AND LEARN FROM. BUT WE MUST LEARN TO SIT AND LISTEN TO GOD SO THAT HE WILL REVEAL TO US HIS TRUTH.

JOHN 14:27 JESUS SAID:

"I AM LEAVING YOU WITH A GIFT – PEACE OF MIND AND HEART. AND THE PEACE I GIVE IS A GIFT THE WORLD CANNOT GIVE. SO DON'T BE TROUBLED OR AFRAID.

JOHN 14:15-18 JESUS SAID:

"IF YOU LOVE ME, OBEY MY COMMANDMENTS. 16. AND I WILL ASK THE FATHER, AND HE WILL GIVE YOU ANOTHER ADVOCATE, WHO WILL NEVER LEAVE YOU. 17. HE IS THE HOLY SPIRIT, WHO LEADS INTO ALL TRUTH. THE WORLD CANNOT RECEIVE HIM, BECAUSE IT ISN'T LOOKING FOR HIM. BUT YOU KNOW HIM, BECAUSE HE LIVES WITH YOU NOW AND LATER WILL BE IN YOU. 18. NO, I WILL NOT ABANDON YOU AS ORPHANS – I WILL COME TO YOU.

ALBERT EINSTEIN IS OFTEN CREDITED FOR SAYING, "The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again but expecting different results."

SO, WHAT MIGHT THIS LOOK LIKE? EXAMPLE: IF YOUR HEAD HURTS AFTER HITTING A WALL – STOP HITTING THE WALL. HOW DO YOU DO THIS? FIRST, ACKNOWLEDGE THAT SOMETHING IS WRONG. IN OTHER WORDS, YOU ARE NOT SUPPOSED TO KEEP HITTING YOUR HEAD AGAINST THE WALL. SECOND, GET A DIFFERENT VIEW/PERSPECTIVE OF WHY THIS IS HAPPENING. MAYBE FIND AN ALTERNATIVE WAY TO EXPRESS YOURSELF. TAKE A NEW APPROACH TO THE PROBLEM

YOU ARE FACING. OR LOOK FOR A NEW SOLUTION FROM SOMEONE ELSE WHO MIGHT SEE THINGS A LITTLE DIFFERENTLY. FOR ME, GOD – THE CREATOR OF LIFE – IS THE SOURCE FROM WHICH I DAILY CHOOSE TO SEEK HELP FROM. HE GIVES ME THE FRESH PERSPECTIVE I NEED.

ISAIAH 55:8-9

“MY THOUGHTS ARE NOTHING LIKE YOUR THOUGHTS,” SAYS THE LORD. “AND MY WAYS ARE FAR BEYOND ANYTHING YOU COULD IMAGINE. 9. FOR JUST AS THE HEAVENS ARE HIGHER THAN THE EARTH, SO MY WAYS ARE HIGHER THAN YOUR WAYS AND MY THOUGHTS HIGHER THAN YOUR THOUGHTS.

JEREMIAH 29:11-13

FOR I KNOW THE PLANS THAT I HAVE FOR YOU,” SAYS THE LORD. “THEY ARE PLANS FOR GOOD AND NOT FOR DISASTER, TO GIVE YOU A FUTURE AND A HOPE. 12. IN THOSE DAYS WHEN YOU PRAY, I WILL LISTEN. 13. IF YOU LOOK FOR ME WHOLEHEARTEDLY, YOU WILL FIND ME.

- If you want different results, then try seeing things differently - FROM GOD’S POINT OF VIEW - Take a new approach!

BEGIN: JAMES 1:1-27

1. THIS LETTER IS FROM JAMES, A SLAVE OF GOD AND OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST. I AM WRITING TO THE “TWELVE TRIBES” – JEWISH BELIEVERS SCATTERED ABROAD. GREETINGS!

2. DEAR BROTHERS AND SISTERS, WHEN TROUBLES COME YOUR WAY, CONSIDER IT AN OPPORTUNITY FOR GREAT JOY.

- LIFE HAPPENS – BUT DON’T LET YOURSELF, OR OTHERS KEEP YOU IN THE DARK.

3. FOR YOU KNOW THAT WHEN YOUR FAITH IS TESTED, YOUR ENDURANCE HAS A CHANCE TO GROW. 4. SO LET IT GROW, FOR WHEN YOUR ENDURANCE IS FULLY DEVELOPED, YOU WILL BE PERFECT AND COMPLETE, NEEDING NOTHING.

- KNOW THAT GOD HAS YOUR FUTURE, AND YOUR BEST LIFE IN MIND.

5. IF YOU NEED WISDOM, ASK OUR GENEROUS GOD, AND HE WILL GIVE IT TO YOU. HE WILL NOT REBUKE YOU FOR ASKING. 6. BUT WHEN YOU ASK HIM, BE SURE THAT YOUR FAITH IS IN GOD ALONE. DO NOT WAVER, FOR A PERSON WITH DIVIDED LOYALTY IS AS UNSETTLED AS A WAVE OF THE SEA THAT IS BLOWN AND TOSSED BY THE WIND. 7. SUCH PEOPLE SHOULD NOT EXPECT TO RECEIVE ANYTHING FROM THE LORD. 8. THEIR LOYALTY IS DIVIDED BETWEEN GOD AND THE WORLD, AND THEY ARE UNSTABLE IN EVERYTHING THEY DO.

- DO NOT BE LOOKING TO OTHERS FOR WHAT ONLY GOD CAN DO.

9. BELIEVERS WHO ARE POOR HAVE SOMETHING TO BOAST ABOUT FOR GOD HAS HONORED THEM. 10. AND THOSE WHO ARE RICH SHOULD BOAST THAT HAS HUMBLING THEM. THEY WILL FADE AWAY LIKE A LITTLE FLOWER IN THE FIELD. 11. THE HOT SUN RISES AND THE GRASS WITHERS; THE LITTLE FLOWER DROOPS AND FALLS, AND ITS BEAUTY FADES AWAY. IN THE SAME WAY, THE RICH WILL FADE AWAY WITH ALL OF THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS.

- DO NOT PLACE SO MUCH VALUE ON THE THINGS WHICH ARE WORLDLY/ TEMPORARY.

12. GOD BLESSES THOSE WHO PATIENTLY ENDURE TESTING AND TEMPTATION. AFTERWARD THEY WILL RECEIVE THE CROWN OF LIFE THAT GOD HAS PROMISED TO THOSE WHO LOVE HIM.

- TO THOSE WHO LOVE GOD, YOU CAN EXPECT GOD WILL REWARD YOU MIGHTILY.
- BE PATIENT, AND LOOK TO HIM!

13. AND REMEMBER, WHEN YOU ARE BEING TEMPTED, DO NOT SAY, "GOD IS TEMPTING ME." GOD IS NEVER TEMPTED TO DO WRONG, AND HE NEVER TEMPTS ANYONE ELSE. 14. TEMPTATION COMES FROM OUR OWN DESIRES, WHICH ENTICE US AND DRAG US AWAY. 15. THESE DESIRES GIVE BIRTH TO SINFUL ACTIONS. AND WHEN SIN IS ALLOWED TO GROW, IT GIVES BIRTH TO DEATH.

16. SO DON'T BE MISLED, MY DEAR BROTHERS AND SISTERS. 17. WHATEVER IS GOOD AND PERFECT COMES DOWN TO US FROM GOD OUR FATHER, WHO CREATED ALL THE LIGHTS IN THE HEAVENS. HE NEVER CHANGES OR CASTS A SHIFTING SHADOW. 18. HE CHOSE TO GIVE BIRTH TO US BY GIVING US HIS TRUE WORD. AND WE, OUT OF ALL CREATION, BECAME HIS PRIZED POSSESSION.

- A PERFECT LIFE, CAN ONLY COME FROM ABOVE. WE SEE THIS IN GOD'S SON - JESUS.
- AND AS WE ACCEPT HIS WORD – WITH HELP OF THE HOLY SPIRIT – WE RECEIVE PEACE.

19. UNDERSTAND THIS, MY DEAR BROTHERS AND SISTERS: YOU MUST ALL BE QUICK TO LISTEN, SLOW TO SPEAK, AND SLOW TO GET ANGRY. 20. HUMAN ANGER DOES NOT PRODUCE THE RIGHTEOUSNESS GOD DESIRES. 21. SO GET RID OF ALL THE FILTH AND EVIL IN YOUR LIVES, AND HUMBLY ACCEPT THE WORD GOD HAS PLANTED IN YOUR HEARTS, FOR IT HAS THE POWER TO SAVE YOUR SOULS.

- NO NEED TO PUSH GOD INTO ACTION. GIVE HIM ROOM TO WORK. LET HIS WORD BE PLANTED IN OUR HEARTS AND MINDS. WHAT DOES HE SAY TO YOU TODAY?

22. BUT DON'T JUST LISTEN TO GOD'S WORD. YOU MUST DO WHAT IT SAYS. OTHERWISE, YOU ARE ONLY FOOLING YOURSELVES. 23. FOR IF YOU LISTEN TO THE WORD, AND DON'T OBEY, IT IS LIKE GLANCING AT YOUR FACE IN A MIRROR. 24. YOU SEE YOURSELF, WALK AWAY, AND FORGET WHAT YOU LOOK LIKE. 25. BUT IF YOU LOOK CAREFULLY INTO THE PERFECT LAW THAT SETS YOU FREE, AND IF YOU DO WHAT IT SAYS AND DON'T FORGET WHAT YOU HEARD, THEN GOD WILL BLESS YOU FOR DOING IT.

26. IF YOU CLAIM TO BE RELIGIOUS BUT DON'T CONTROL YOUR TONGUE, YOU ARE FOOLING YOURSELF, AND YOUR RELIGION IS WORTHLESS. 27. PURE AND GENUINE RELIGION IN THE SIGHT OF GOD THE FATHER MEANS CARING FOR THE ORPHANS AND WIDOWS IN THEIR DISTRESS AND REFUSING TO LET THE WORLD CORRUPT YOU.

- **VERBAL FAITH IS NOT ENOUGH; NEITHER IS MENTAL FAITH. FAITH MUST MOVE INTO ACTION.** WHO/ WHAT HAS BEEN GETTING YOUR ATTENTION LATELY? READY TO HAVE THE LIFE GOD INTENDS FOR YOU? THEN LET'S BEGIN TO SEE THINGS DIFFERENTLY!