

# Daily Thoughts for week beginning 26<sup>th</sup> February 2024

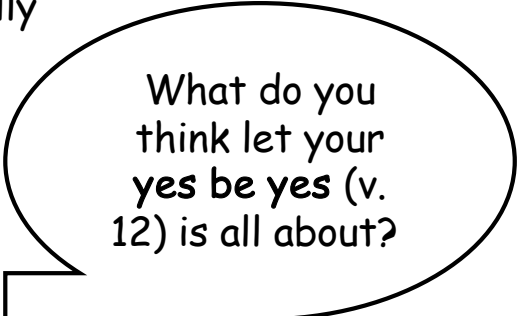
Week8

## Monday 26<sup>th</sup> February

Have you ever been given a "to-do" list, a list of things to do while some one is gone? Are you the kind of person who rushes through the list before sitting down for a cuppa or are you the kind of person who says "I know I have a list, and I have plenty of time to complete it and so try to fit in soo-many other things Instead of doing those things first. You think you have so much time before your deadline. But your friend phones or visits ... or you switch the TV on or you start reading a book and fall asleep.

Before you know what happened, you hear the sound of the key in the front door, or maybe the garage door opening... or the time has come for you to leave for the appointment for which your to-do list was for ... what happens next? You know it's bad. You didn't do what you were supposed to do. Not one thing on the list is done.

We don't always spend our time in the best way, do we? So often we know what we are supposed to be doing; it's just that we fail to do it. We think we have more time, or we think that we can do it later. Usually we know the expectations, we just don't do what we're supposed to do. We get to see an example of this very thing in James today. James is concerned with what these believers are doing while they wait for the coming of Christ.



What do you think let your **yes be yes** (v. 12) is all about?

**Read:** James 5: 7-12

**Consider:** What do you think let your **yes be yes** (v. 12) is all about? In what ways do you use your "yes" when you don't really mean it?

**Prayer:** Lord, We praise you, because you are a God who keeps his word! as we read your promises for us in the Bible, we can't help but rejoice knowing that they will happen. Today we pray we will honour you by being people of our word. When we fail at this, we pray we will make it right. We don't want our own words to condemn us. In Jesus' holy name - Amen!

## Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> February

It should be no surprise to anyone that James would mention something about our speech. He has mentioned the way we talk in every other chapter of this letter. I'm not surprised he mentioned it, and honestly, I'm not surprised that he leads off with it. James warns these believers not to take oaths, not to swear or make promises on objects in heaven or earth.

**Read (again):** James 5:12

Have you ever promised to do something, or promised that what you are saying is true...only to later you haven't done the promised thing or when you were found out blurt out, "it doesn't matter because I had my fingers crossed?" What a stupid superstition! As if ... crossing your fingers makes a real difference!

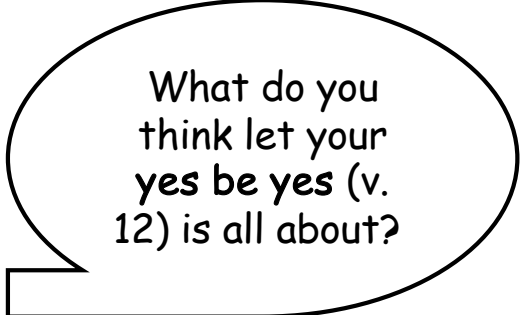
James is saying you shouldn't swear on your life, or anything on the earth knowing you will break your promise later.

God's message then and now hasn't changed. Just be truthful! You shouldn't have to make oaths. You shouldn't have to swear on anything for people to believe you. Be known for truth. Live a life of being truthful and honest and clear. You shouldn't have to swear on a stack of Bibles for people to believe you. Be reliable. There is no need for promising. If you say you're going to do something, then do it.

Don't be the person that loves to break their promises. Even laughs about doing it. Don't be the person that thrives on dishonesty.

Don't imitate the culture that uses yes and no interchangeably. How does God expect a Christian to live? He expects us to be honest and true. If we're not, James is reminding us that maybe you aren't a believer after all.

The condemnation that James has in mind there at the end of verse 12 is the judgment that unbelievers face. Being characterised as someone who is: constantly lying; untrustworthy; promise breaking ... This is the pattern of life that gives evidence of an unchanged heart. An unbelieving, God-rejecting heart. Be truthful!



What do you think let your **yes be yes** (v. 12) is all about?

### Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> February

**Read:** Matthew 5:33-37

**Thoughts:** How can we practice radical truthfulness in a world of deception? Essentially, the first sin that happened on the earth was a lie. Satan deceived Adam and Eve, which plunged the world into sin and destruction. From that point, lying became common.

In Matthew Christ addresses the abuse of oaths and how dishonesty was prevalent in the ancient world. Christ has been correcting common misinterpretations of the OT law; here he corrects the fourth out of six. Essentially, he declares that citizens of his kingdom will be identified by radical honesty. The Old Testament did not forbid taking oaths; in fact, it encouraged taking them.

Deuteronomy 10:20 "Have reverence for the Lord your God and worship only him. Be faithful to him and make your promises in his name alone." God permitted oaths to restrain humanity's natural tendency to lie. By invoking God's name, it brought a greater accountability between people. Essentially by invoking God's name, one asked for God's judgment in the case of lying.

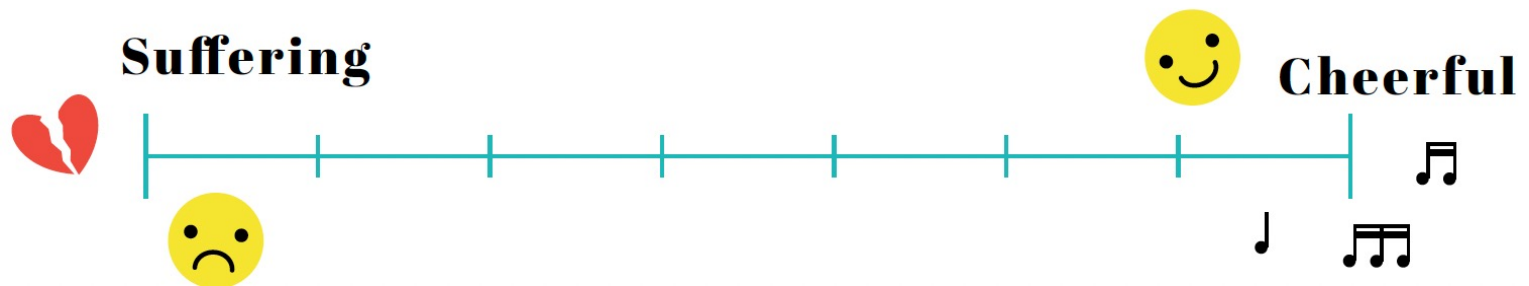
**Prayer:** Take time today (and often) to ask God for the strength and courage to be honest and truthful.

Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> February

God wants our focus to be on Him.

Read : James 5 verse 13.

James gives us a helpful contrast here. He gives us the two ends of the scale of what people are going through. James is representing the far ends of all that life is about. Life is like this ...



... on one end, we have a life of suffering. On the other, we have a life that is cheerful.

The "suffering" end involves the parts of life that are unpleasant. This is the part of life that is full of trouble. It is... Nasty, Horrible, Awful, Dreadful and Miserable.

And for moments in life like that, James reminds us to pray.

Then there are moments on the other side. Life is awesome! It is sunshine and skittles, as I like to say. It is... Cheerful, Joyful, Happy, Encouraging and Exciting. And for those moments, James's encouragement is to sing praises to God!

No matter where you are on the scale...suffering or cheerful...you should be focused on God. If you're hurting, you should pray! If things are amazing, you should be praising God!

In a time such as this, can you praise God for the good He is doing in your life? It's not always easy for us to see it, and sometimes we need to sit and think about it!

As you ponder this today, listen to the Ian White hymn "Focus my eyes on you O Lord". <https://youtu.be/bj8LCSNssmg?si=qphcSbEgqQAY0DYv>

Use the words of this hymn in prayer.

Friday 1<sup>st</sup> March

Make today a praise and be grateful day. Make a list of things you are grateful and thankful for. I'm sure your list is long and full. Begin with this ....

You get to wake up every day knowing that your sins are forgiven.

Think about a gift God has given you! How incredible it is to know you're saved! Having a status before God that can never be changed! You can never lose it! Your salvation can never be taken from you!

Schedule another praise day in the next week.



Saturday 2nd March

Read Romans 8:35-39

List and take note of, all the things that are  
unable to separate you from the love of Christ.

Remember to have a God-focused life!

Don't FORGET God when times are good,

AND

Don't DESPISE God when times are tough.

James can help you! You live somewhere on the  
scale between suffering and cheerfulness. And  
no matter where you find yourself, you can't  
forget God.

Live a life focused on God!

GODS  
LOVE  
has NO  
LIMITS

Love THE LORD  
with all  
of  
your GOD  
your HEART and  
SOUL and  
MIND and  
your STRENGTH  
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MARK 12:30