



# **The Epistle of James**

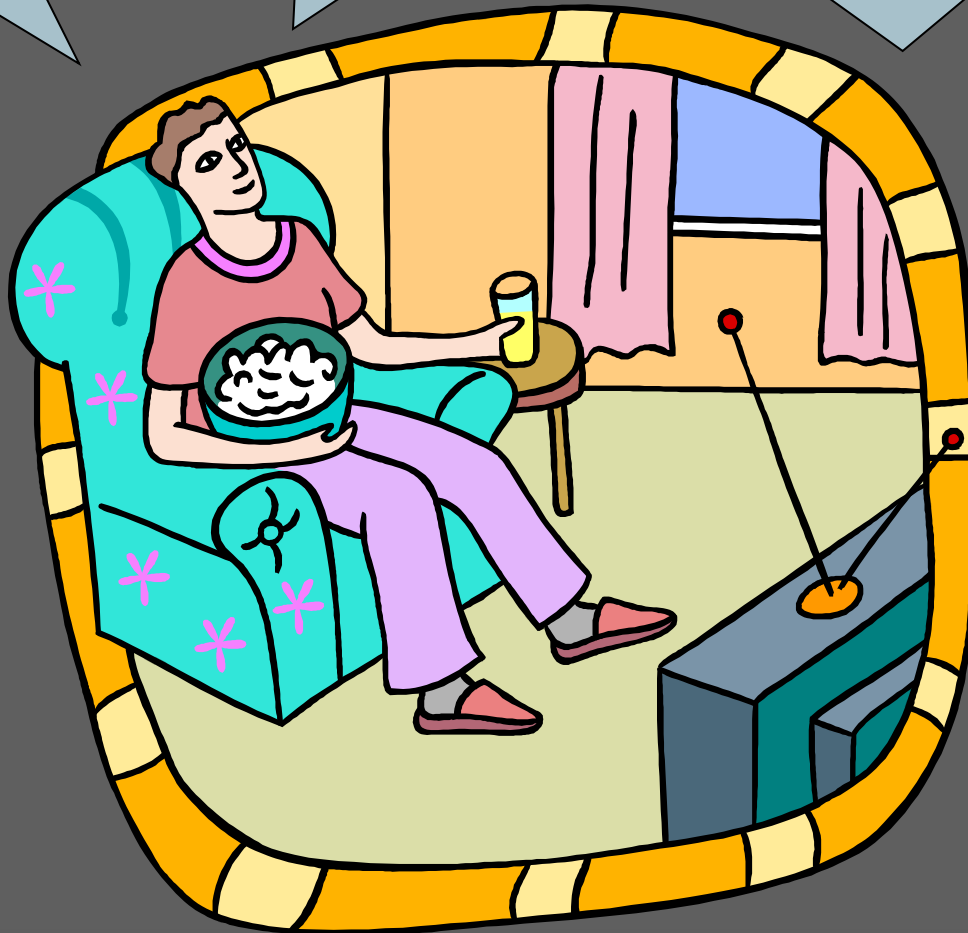
Practical Christian Living

“Where the Rubber Meets the Road”

Hey Dad,  
could you  
hand me the  
remote.

Mom, write  
down my phone  
messages

Hey Mom, could you  
bring dinner in here,  
Survivor is on.



# Background: Author

Now, which James was it that wrote this epistle?



James the son of Zebedee?

James the son of Alphaeus?

James the father of the good Judas?

James the brother of the Lord!

# Background: Recipients

## Key Phrases

Twelve  
tribes  
scattered  
abroad

In the  
dispersion

Scattered  
seed



Acts 8:4 tells us, “they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word.”

# Background: Purpose

To instruct Jewish Christians in living the Christians life.

Many have called the theme of the epistle “practical Christian living.”

It deals with the practical more than the theological.

It could be called, “Where the rubber meets the road.”

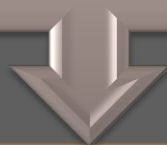


# Attitude During Trials

We are reminded that trials are inevitable



We are commanded to consider them all  
joy

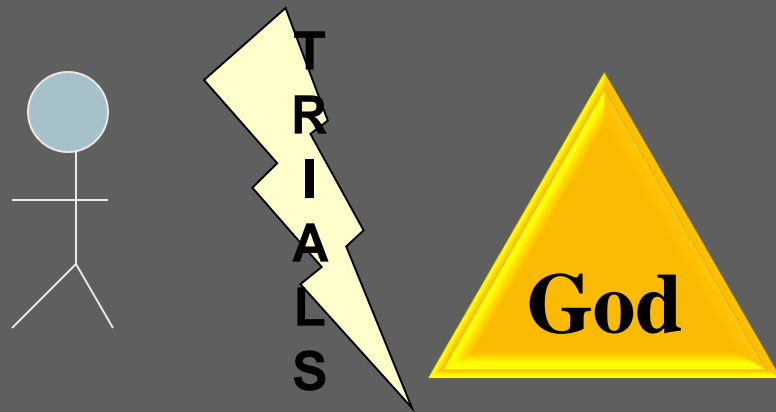


We are promised that they help produce  
Christian character

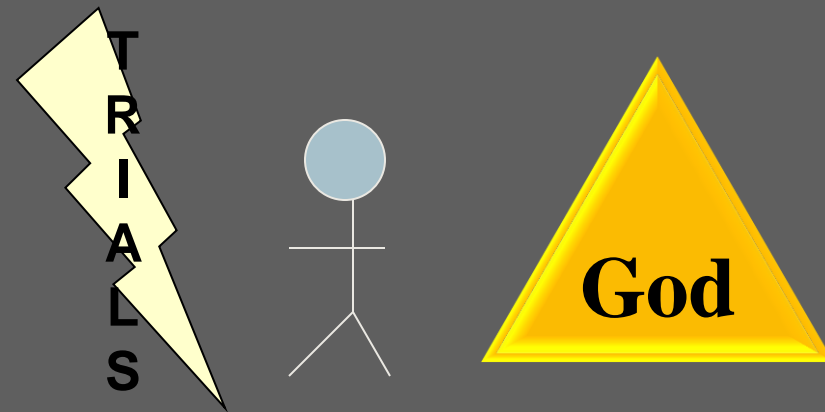


# Trials As Pressure Points

Trials can come between you  
and God



Trials can push you closer to  
God



The key is: Where does the pressure lie? Does it push you away from God or closer to God?

# Four Benefits of Trials



Trials work in our favor

Trials bring us closer to  
God

There is a reward for  
enduring trials

God often has a higher  
purpose for our trials

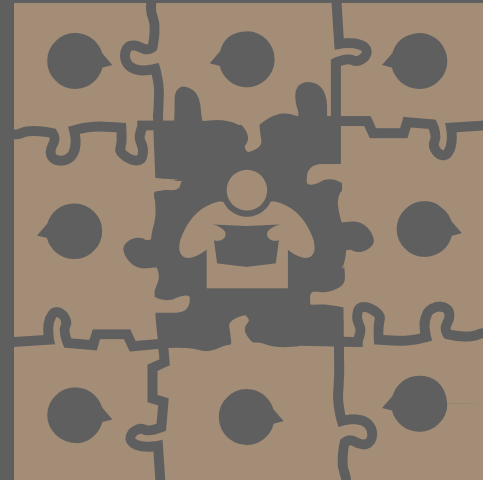


# Trials Develop Endurance and Maturity

⇒ Patience Equals  
Endurance



⇒ Perfect Equals  
Mature, Complete



# The Need for Wisdom During Trials



When we lack wisdom,  
we must go to God

God gives wisdom  
liberally

God's wisdom keeps us  
stable

# Overcoming Doubt

## Three Helps in Overcoming Doubt

Read and heed the Word of God



Use it or lose it



Prayer

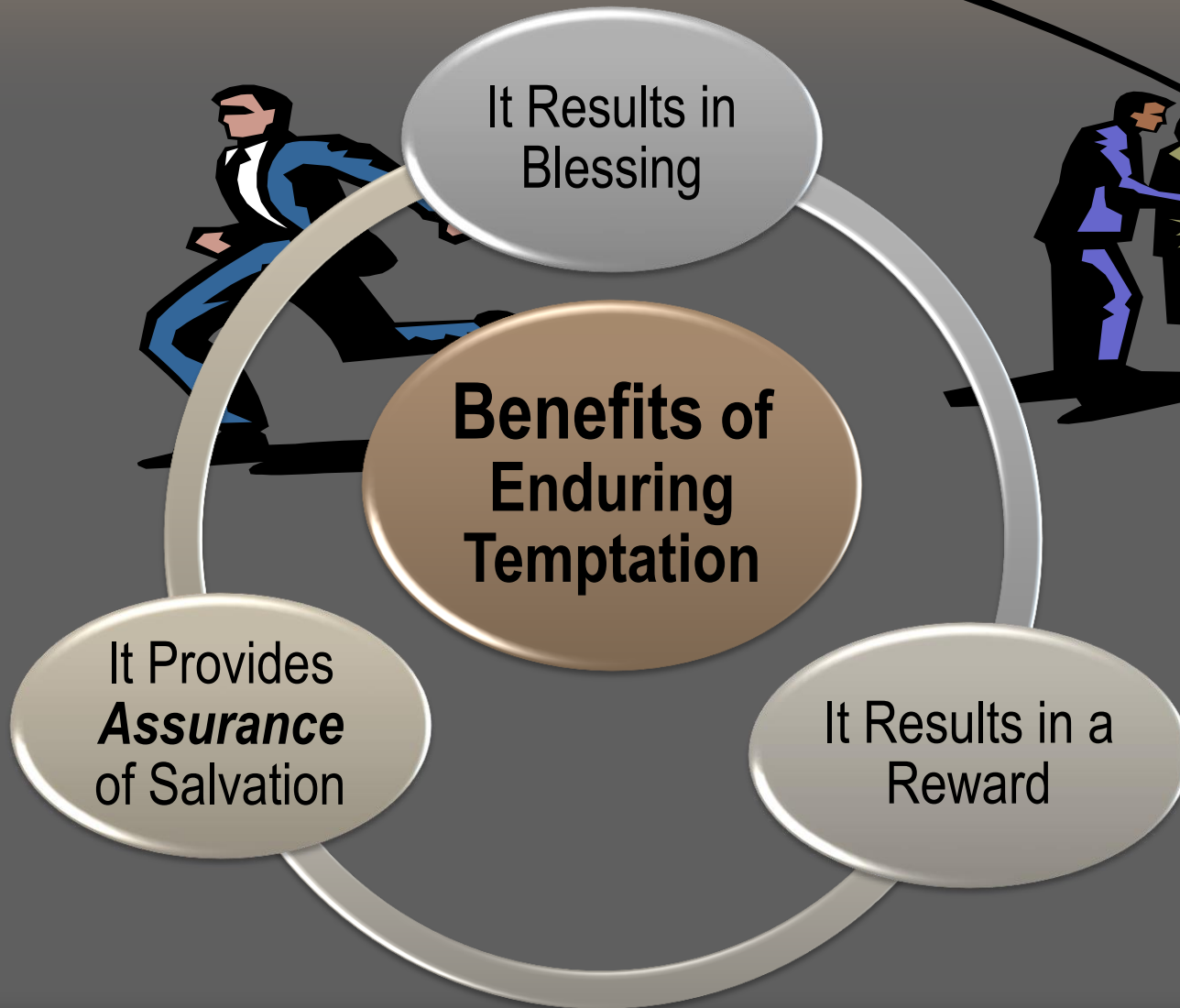


# Contentment



We should not measure ourselves by our *position in life* but by our *disposition towards life*.

# Just Say "No!"



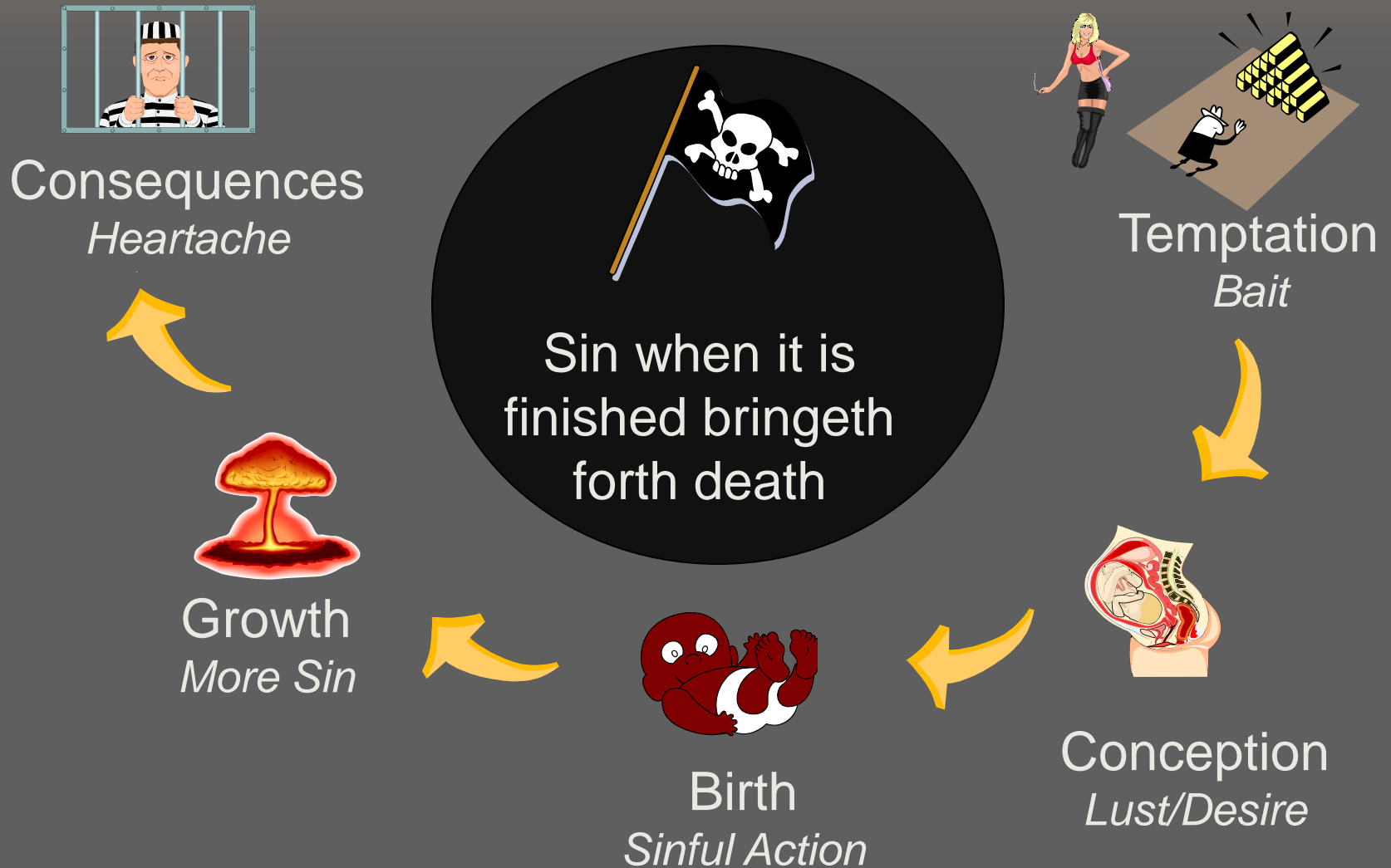
# The Problem of Evil



If God is all good and created all things, then how did evil originate?

If God is all powerful, why doesn't He destroy evil?

# Life Cycle of Sin



# The Goodness of God

God gives only good gifts

God gives His gifts in a  
good way

God gives good gifts  
constantly

God does not change





# The Immutability of God



Logically, God's Greatest Attribute Is His Immutability

- ⇒ If He could change, what benefit would there be in any of His other attributes?
- ⇒ If He could change, we could not count on His love, mercy, forgiveness, and goodness

# Aspects of Salvation



- ⇒ Drawing of God
  - Death of Christ
  - Conviction of the Spirit
- ⇒ The Word of God
- ⇒ Fruit or Change in the Recipient by God
  - Belong to God
  - Finest of God's Creation

# Putting Off & Putting On



## Put Off

- ◆ Superfluity of naughtiness
- ◆ Evil speaking
- ◆ Lying

## Put On

- ◆ The engrafted word
- ◆ Edifying speech
- ◆ Truth



# Guard Your Tongue and Temper



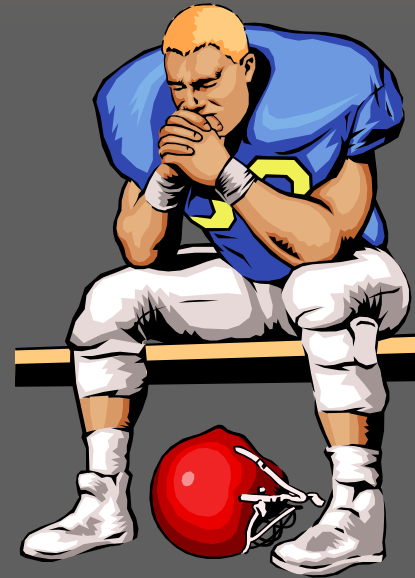
Control Your Tongue

Control Your Temper



# Be a Doer, Not a Hearer

- ◆ Get in the Ballgame
- ◆ Don't jeer, cheer
- ◆ Check your mirror daily



# Helping the Fatherless

We are to let them live in our cities (Deut. 14:29)

We are to provide food for them (Deut. 24:9)

We are to provide justice for them (Deut. 24:11)

We are to use some of the tithe to help them (Deut. 26:12-13)

We are to be substitute fathers for them (1 Thess. 2:11)

We are to teach them that God is their father (Ps. 68:5)

# Caring for Widows

The family has the primary responsibility of caring for widows

The church is also responsible to make sure that widows in its membership are cared for

The church is not obligated to help widows who are not faithfully serving the Lord



# Criteria for Determining Those Who Are “Widows Indeed”



Desolate

Trusting in God

Prayer warrior

Must be at  
least 60 years  
old

Demonstrated  
a pattern of  
good works



# Pure Religion In Action

Control  
your  
tongue

Visit the  
fatherless

Visit the  
widows

Keep  
oneself  
pure



# Don't Show Favoritism



“My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord glory, with respect of persons.”

# Accepting the Poor

Jesus, the Lord of glory, was poor

Jesus was not a respecter of persons

God's judgment is different from Man's judgment

God has chosen the poor

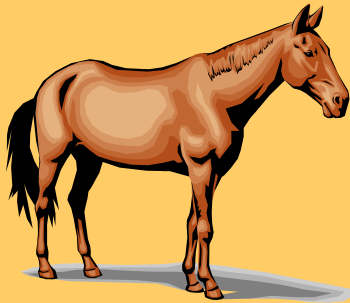
The Royal Law demands right treatment of the poor

Prejudice is a sin

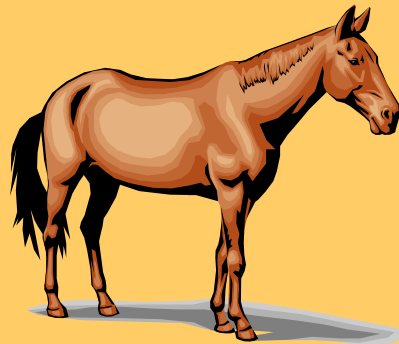
Judgers will be judged



# Faith and Works



Good works do not produce salvation



Salvation produces good works

Don't get the cart before the horse when thinking of works and salvation.



# Faith and Works Illustrated

## ◆ Abraham



Abraham was saved long before he was circumcised and several hundred years before the law was given.

For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is a gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast.”

## ◆ Rahab



Rahab was a Gentile woman harlot who couldn't have been saved by the Law. She had not heard of the law and she definitely failed to live up to it.

# Evidences of Faith in the Light of 1 John

Walking in the Light (1:5-7)

Confession of sin (1:9)

Keep His commandments (2:3)

Lives like Jesus (2:6)

Loves the brethren (2:10; 3:14)

Does not live habitually in sin (3:6, 9)



# Suggestions on Helping the Truly Needy

- ◆ Identify the truly needy
- ◆ Develop programs to address their needs



- Free babysitting
- Free auto maintenance
- Clothing Give-Aways
- Mentor Job Skills
- Clean house
- Benevolence Fund

- ◆ Provide financial counseling
- ◆ Require responsible actions or behavior

# Taming the Tongue



**Cursing**



**Gossip**



**Lies**

**Vulgarity**

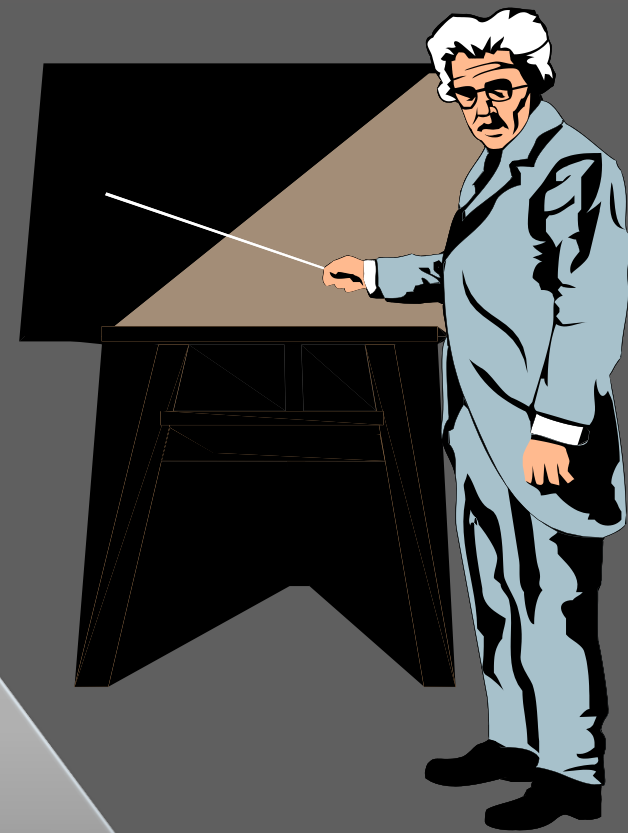


# Why Teachers Are Responsible

Correct doctrine  
makes them  
responsible

Visibility makes them  
responsible

Stewardship of their teaching  
gift makes them responsible



# Six Illustrations of the Tongue

Bit



Rudder



Fire



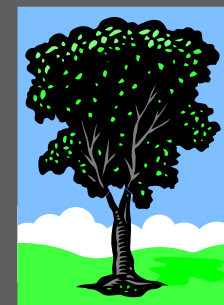
Wild Beast



Fountain



Fruit Tree



# Human Wisdom



Characterized by bitter envying

Characterized by selfish ambition

Characterized by deceit

Characterized by natural thinking

Characterized by confusion

# Godly Wisdom

Characterized by good works



Characterized by meekness



Characterized by truth



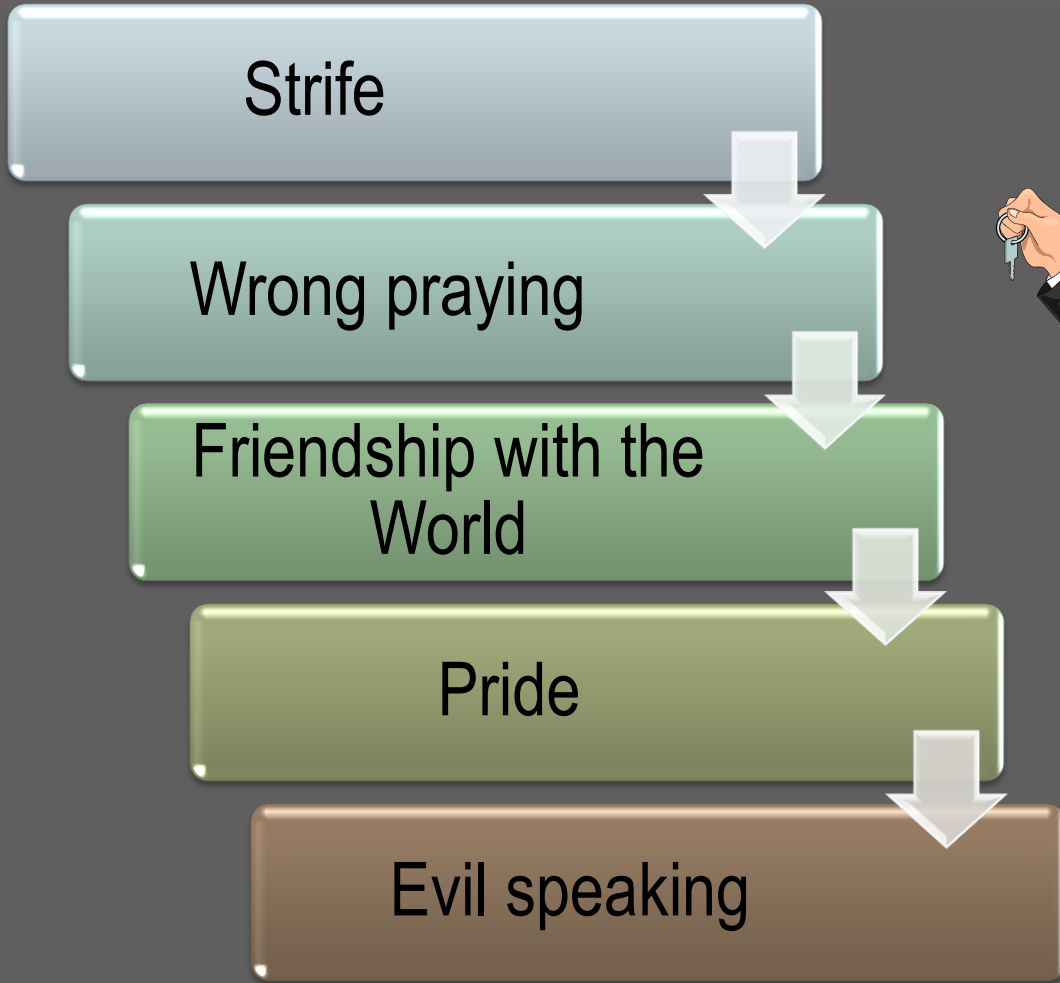
Characterized by purity



Characterized by fairness and sincerity



# Evidences of Worldliness



# Seven Steps to Cure Worldliness



Grace of God

Submission to God

Resist the Devil

Draw nigh to God

Cleansing from sin

Single-mindedness

Brokenness over Sin

# Thoughts on Judging



“Judge not”  
does not  
prohibit  
making  
judgments

You must  
make  
discerning  
decisions

Do not be  
*hyper-*  
*critical*

Do not be  
*hypocritical*



# More Thoughts On Judging

Don't be hypocritical

Judge doctrine

Judge righteously

Judge pastors and deacons

Judge sin within the church

Don't judge outside your  
sphere of authority

Be careful of judging those  
outside the church

Learn to discern



# Getting the Right Perspective



## Wrong Views of God

- ◆ Vending Machine
- ◆ Doting Grandfather
- ◆ Arbitrary Cosmic Tyrant
- ◆ Unconcerned Caretaker
- ◆ You're OK, Don't Worry

## Right View of Life

- ◆ Life is short in light of eternity
- ◆ Life is uncertain, there are no guarantees
- ◆ The purpose of life is to bring glory to God

# Knowing God's Will

- ◆ Follow the revealed will of God in Scripture
  - Salvation (2 Peter 3:9)
  - Sexual purity (1 Thessalonians 4:3)
  - Suffering (1 Peter 4:19)
  - Submission (1 Peter 2:13)
  - Spirit-filled (Ephesians 5:17-18)
- ◆ Remain faithful to God
- ◆ God will give you desires that are compatible with His will for you (Psalm 37:4)



# Money Mismanagement

## The Wicked Rich

They had a  
wrong attitude  
toward money

They earned  
money in the  
wrong way

They spent it in  
a wrong way



# God's Handling of the Wicked Rich

Their  
riches will  
waste  
away

Misery  
shall come  
upon them

God will  
avenge the  
poor and  
helpless



# Handling Oppression

We must wait patiently and follow the example set by the prophets

We must wait patiently to avoid judgment

We must wait patiently for the Lord to return

We must wait patiently for the Lord to avenge

“Vengeance is mine, I will repay saith the Lord.”

Romans 12:19

# Instructions to the Sick and Suffering



Call for the elders of the church, not a faith healer



Go to the doctor and take the necessary medicine



Pray for healing



Confess any sin



# More Thoughts On Healing



Healing is the result of prayer, not a faith healer

The gift of healing, *as practiced by the apostles*, is no longer valid

Faith healers, as promoted today, are not biblical

God can and does heal miraculously, but not through a “faith healer.”

# Reasons Faith Healers Are Unscriptural



They do not go to the sick

They only heal at appointed times

They only heal psychosomatic or functional diseases

They do not follow the biblical patterns



# Helping an Erring Brother

- ◆ The goal is restoration, not condemnation
- ◆ Do not broadcast sin
- ◆ Follow the Scriptural procedure
  - Personal confrontation
  - Two or three witnesses
  - Bring it before the church
  - Excommunication

