

GLENKIRK CHURCH



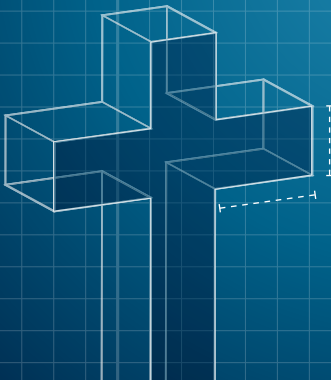
WEEKLY DEVOTIONS

# The DEVO

OCTOBER 18 - 22, 2021

# FAITH WORK

the book of  
James



# MONDAY

## James 3:13-18

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### The wisdom of humility (Jesus modeled this wisdom)

Paul said, *“All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden in Jesus”* (Colossians 2:3). And Jesus Himself said, *“One greater than Solomon is with you now”* (Matthew 12:42).

Jesus humbled Himself from heaven to earth, *“taking upon Himself the form of a servant”* (Philippians 2:7). He told the story of two men who went up to the temple to pray (Luke 18:10-14). The first man, a Pharisee, looking disdainfully at the second, said, *“I thank You, God, that I do all things properly, fasting often and giving to the poor. I am not like that other man over there, thank goodness for that.”* The first one found neither grace nor mercy, showing himself to be unwise in his pride. The second man beat his chest saying, *“Woe is me. Be merciful to me, a sinner.”* This second man showed himself to be wise in his humility. Jesus said, *“This man rather than the other went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted”* (18:14).

Jesus, though He never sinned, became sin in order that we might be made righteous (2 Corinthians 5:21; Isaiah 53:6). C.S. Lewis captured this in *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. The witch thought she had bested Aslan (metaphor for Jesus), but she did not know the deeper magic that if Someone (a qualified someone) gave Himself for others in this way, death could not hold Him. And Jesus was not

restrained by death, the witch or Satan. The resurrection of Jesus makes all the difference in us and in His world.

At the end of chapter 3, James describes what God's wisdom from heaven is. It is submissive. Then in James 4:6, he quotes the Old Testament, saying, "*God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.*" This verse, repeated in Peter's first letter (5:5), plainly tells us that pride could be the least wise thing for us to have, and humility could be the wisest.

Humility is hard to attain, and once attained can lead to pride. Keeping close to Jesus is the answer. He will keep us in our proper place. Come closer to Him today, and learn from Him.

## QUESTIONS

When have you struggled with pride? Let us, in humility, ask God for the wisdom of being humble.

## PRAYERS FOR MISSIONS

Pray for all of Glenkirk's mission partners who visited with us on Mission Sunday. As they travel back home, pray that they would feel encouraged, supported, and loved. Pray that they would have safe traveling as well.

# TUESDAY

James 3:13-18

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## The wisdom of generosity

Magi from the east exhibited the wisdom of giving (Matthew 2:1-12). They saw a star and trekked all the way to Jerusalem and asked, “*Where is the One who has been born king of the Jews?*” Somehow God revealed to them the birth of a very significant King, the revelation being so strong and the importance being so great that it stimulated a faith that led to their taking considerable action, not resting until their assignment was completed. They gave gifts (gold, frankincense and myrrh) to honor this king. They gave of themselves, their time, and their planning to make the trip. And they obeyed the dream warning them of King Herod’s plans to kill the newborn King, outwitting him in his evil designs on the child.

This story challenges us to offer ourselves and our gifts to Jesus, too, practicing the wisdom of generosity. Later in Matthew’s gospel, Jesus Himself expands this challenge to include the hungry, the thirsty, strangers, and the naked, sick and imprisoned (25:40).

Remember that Jesus loved us first. He gave Himself, inviting us to give ourselves to Him. He gave His all and invites us to do the same.

What other places in the Bible give examples of the wisdom of generosity? There is the widow who Jesus said gave more than all the others into the temple treasury because she gave all she had—two very small copper coins (Luke 21:1-4).

There was Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, also called Barnabas (son of encouragement), who sold a field he owned and gave the money to the apostles (Acts 4:36-37). Barnabas went on to be both a sponsor (Acts 9:27; Acts 11:25-26) and missionary partner of Paul (Acts 13:3), and a partner of the gospel writer Mark (Acts 16:39).

Jesus taught the wisdom of generosity, saying, *“Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you”* (Luke 6:38).

How have you experienced this to be true?

## QUESTIONS

In what ways did the Magi show themselves to be wise men?

## PRAYERS FOR MISSIONS

Pray for Glenkirk’s different missionaries. Many are facing difficulties due to COVID-19 restrictions, national policies, and political turmoil. Pray for their wisdom and perseverance as they learn to navigate these challenges and continue sharing the gospel around the world.

# WEDNESDAY

**James 3:13-18; Galatians 4:19**

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## The wisdom of having integrity

Heaven is full of the wisdom of purity (James 1:17). Synonyms of *purity* include righteousness, holiness, uprightness, character, integrity.

Charles Swindoll, in his book *Job: A Man of Heroic Endurance*, says Job refused to give up his integrity before God. God boasted to Satan of Job's uprightness and called Job His servant. Satan questioned God's judgment of character saying, "It's not for nothing Job worships you. Look at all You do for him. He is rich and has many children" (Job 1:9-10). After God allowed Satan to take away Job's possessions and his children, Job still worshipped God. Satan tried again, "Okay, okay, but take away Job's health, and he will turn from You. He will not worship you for You Yourself" (Job 2:4-5). Job wanted to question God about all this, but he still worshipped God and maintained his integrity.

Throughout the Bible, God shows He is the best Judge of character. He did it with David through the prophet Samuel, who chose wisely and said, "God looks on the heart, while mankind looks on the outward appearance" (1 Samuel 16:7). He did it with Nathanael, when Jesus said, "Here is a man without guile, a true Israelite" (John 1:52).

But God is not only the best Judge of character, He is also the One who makes people holy (Hebrews 2:10). He is the One who transforms

people into the image of Christ (Romans 8:19; 2 Corinthians 3:18). (See Dallas Willard's *Renovation of the Heart: Taking on the Character of Christ*)

As born-again believers, we have been fully justified in Christ. That is past tense. There is also a present-tense process called *sanctification* that Jesus is doing right now in each of us. In his letter, James is as concerned about this process going on in him and his congregants and all who read his letter, as he is about any other wisdom he is imparting. *"In simple humility, let our Gardener, God, landscape you with the Word, making a salvation-garden of your life"* (James 1:21b MSG). This is character formation in action.

## QUESTIONS

How is God forming your character in such a way that Christ is being formed in you (Galatians 4:19)?

## PRAYERS FOR MISSIONS

Pray for Glenkirk's local mission partners. Pray that they would be strengthened to continue ministering to the needs of those around us. Pray that each ministry would be a light of God's love and hope in the midst of our community.

# THURSDAY

James 3:13-18; Philippians 4:6-7

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## The wisdom of making peace

Who is the person God wants me to be? Am I that person? How do I become that person? Do I want to be an ambassador of reconciliation, a good advertisement of the kingdom of God, a fisher of men, a peacemaker?

Jesus said, “*Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God*” (Matthew 5:9). Peace-making, in Jesus’ thought, is **shalom-making**—a richer, fuller peace, and surely not just the absence of war. Heaven is a place of **shalom**, with no room for war or disharmony. So it makes sense that James, in describing heavenly wisdom, makes such a point of the wisdom of peace-loving and peace-making.

*“But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.”* (James 3:17-18)

Jesus is the ultimate peacemaker, as He made peace between us and God His Father in heaven. Paul describes how Jesus made peace between Jews and Gentiles in Ephesians 2:11-19. “*For He Himself is our peace, who has made the two groups on. ... [reconciling] both of*



*them to God through the Cross. ... He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. For through Him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit” (vv. 14-18).*

Jesus has commissioned each of us to be His peacemakers. *“If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone”* (Romans 12:18). This can be hard work, for sure, but we can count on His help and partnership in His plan.

In order to impart peace to others, we must have it ourselves first. We receive His peace as His gift (John 14:21). We are filled with His peace, which surpasses all understanding, when we make our requests to Him with thanksgiving (Philippians 4:6-7). Great is our peace when our minds remain focused on Him (Isaiah 26:3). One of the fruits of God’s Spirit that is listed right after love and joy is peace (Galatians 5:22).

## **QUESTIONS**

With whom are you needing to make peace? Ask God for His wisdom in this endeavor.

## **PRAYERS FOR MISSIONS**

Pray for our global partners that God’s guidance, protection, and boldness would fall upon Glenkirk’s partners and their fellow laborers. Pray that the Holy Spirit would give them the knowledge and compassion to minister the love of Christ in this challenging season around the globe.

# FRIDAY

**James 3:13-18; Matthew 5:7**

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## The wisdom of being merciful.

Pastor Tim Peck said at the start of this “Faith Work” series on the book of James, “There are two kinds of wisdom: heavenly and worldly. What happens when wisdom comes from heaven to earth? New facets of heavenly wisdom amazingly show up on earth.” (Tim Peck) It’s all because of Jesus, who is the wisdom of heaven in Person (1 Corinthians 1:24).

On earth, we need mercy. Oh, how we indeed need mercy! Jesus said, “*Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy*” (Matthew 5:7). The unmerciful will not receive mercy (James 2:13). What a stark warning! There is wisdom in mercy.

On earth we need forgiveness. Oh, how we indeed need forgiveness! Because all have sinned, we all need it. When we confess our sins, “*God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*” (1 John 1:9). If, however, we withhold forgiveness, forgiveness is withheld from us (Matthew 18:35). Another stark warning! This is yet another sparkling facet of heavenly wisdom, shining through on earth because of Jesus.

The wisdom of love includes the truth that “*love covers a multitude of sins*” (1 Peter 4:8). Our world is full of sin and sinners. Not so in heaven. Heavenly wisdom works on earth because of Jesus.

The wisdom of faith is highlighted in the book of Hebrews. *“Without faith, it is impossible to please God, for he who comes to God, must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him”* (11:6). It is wisdom to trust in the trustworthiness of God.

Heavenly wisdom is “full of mercy and good fruits” (James 1:17). Do you want good fruits in your life? Abide in Jesus the Vine (John 15:5), who is the wisdom of God, and good fruits will grow on the branch of your life in Him. All the facets of heavenly wisdom shine in people who receive Jesus as their Savior and Lord and walk with Him daily. He delights to do this, and we can join with Him in this delight.

## QUESTIONS

According to James, wisdom comes from God. And it often comes in hard times, when we especially need it. What wisdom came to you in a hard time? What wisdom are you needing from Him now?

## PRAYERS FOR MISSIONS

Pray for Glenkirk’s Mission Committee. Pray that they would have wisdom and discernment in how to engage and support our partners. Pray that they would feel encouraged in their work to connect our congregation with the work and needs of our local and global partners.

## Sources

- Tim Peck, “Faith Work” Sermon Series, Glenkirk Church (Fall 2021), [www.glenkirkchurch.org](http://www.glenkirkchurch.org).
- Charles R. Swindoll, *Job: A Man of Heroic Endurance: Great Lives from God’s Word* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2004).
- Dallas Willard, *Renovation of the Heart: Putting on the Character of Christ* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2002).
- C.S. Lewis, *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe: Chronicles of Narnia* (Original publication in London: Geoffrey Bles Publishing, 1950).

