

NT 42: Epistle of James
Monte F. Shelley, 20 Nov 2011

Quotes

- Now there are those among us who are trying to serve the Lord without offending the devil. (Marion G. Romney)
- Faith and prayer are gifts that enable me to do the will of God. They are not tools for me to have God do my will.

Codes: {} = JST; <> = NIV translation;

[] = alternate translation or paraphrase; GR = Greek work

1. James (James 1)

¹ James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting.

James is almost universally recognized as the brother of Jesus (Mk 6:3). He was active in Jerusalem from [AD 40 to 62], when he was martyred. Tradition ascribes to him the office of bishop of the Jerusalem Church, and Acts 15:13 places him in a pivotal position in the Jerusalem Conference of AD 49. ... The letter is largely a collection of short statements emphasizing principles and truths. ... It gives advice for living life as a Christian in a world where faith and piety were under siege. (Sense 460)

2. Martin Luther

“Many sweat to reconcile St. Paul and St. James, but in vain. ‘Faith justifies’ and ‘faith does not justify’ contradict each other flatly. If any one can harmonize them I will give him my doctor’s hood and let him call me a fool. Let us banish this epistle from the university [of Wittenberg], for it is worthless. It has no syllable about Christ, not even naming him except once at the beginning. I think it was written by some Jew who had heard of the Christians but not joined them.” (ML 269)

Which New Testament books did he consider apocrypha?

Luther began the Protestant movement (c. 1517), translated the Bible into German, and was condemned by the Catholic Church as a heretic. For Luther Hebrews, James, Jude, and Revelation did not belong among “the true and noblest books of the New Testament.” “In the Prefaces to these four writings [Luther] set forth reasons that had induced him to doubt their apostolic and canonical character. ... James, a ‘right strawy epistle compared with the others’, contradicts Paul by teaching justification by works; ...” Some later editions of the Lutheran Bible separated Hebrews, James, Jude, and Revelation from the rest of the New Testament, and labeled them “apocryphal” and “non canonical.” “Thus we have a threefold division of the New Testament: ‘Gospels and Acts’, ‘Epistles and Holy Apostles’, and ‘Apocryphal New Testament’—an arrangement that persisted for nearly a century in half a dozen printings.” (Metzger, *Canon*, 242-3; SER 53; fn 15) Other Protestant leaders did not agree with Luther. (Monte Shelley, “History of the Bible,” unpublished)

What was the prevailing theology of Luther’s day?

Catholics: “Though not every individual has to receive every sacrament, the Church affirms that, for believers as a whole, the sacraments are necessary for salvation, as the modes of grace divinely instituted by Christ himself.” (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sacrament>; www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/P33.HTM)

What did works mean to Paul, Luther, James, Protestants?

(a) **Paul:** Works of the law of Moses.

Did Paul baptize, lay on hands for Holy Ghost, ordain elders? YES! Why did he emphasize faith but not these things? He was writing to members, NOT non-members.

(b) **Luther:** Seven Catholic sacraments.

2 **Lutheran Sacraments** (Commandments of God with a promise of grace): (a) Baptism, (b) Eucharist.

NOT Confession/Penance, Confirmation, Marriage; Priesthood; Anointing sick (last rites)

(c) **James:** Faith without works is dead!

obedience to commandments (Abraham ready to sacrifice Isaac, help poor, Rahab sent men other way)

(d) **Modern Protestants:** find fault with LDS belief in works (ordinances and keeping commandments)

3. Trials, temptations, afflictions (James 1)

² My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into {*many afflictions*} <or trials>; ³ Knowing *this*, that the trying <or testing> of your faith worketh patience. ⁴ But let patience have *her* perfect work, that ye may be perfect and <complete, lacking> nothing.

Trials : temptations and afflictions are two types of trials

Patience : GR patience, endurance, perseverance, steadfastness

Brigham Young: Those who do right, and seek the glory of the Father in heaven, whether their knowledge be little or much, or whether they can do little or much, if they do the very best they know how, they are perfect. ... “Be ye as perfect as ye can,” for that is all we can do. ... To be as perfect as we possibly can, according to our knowledge, is to be just as perfect as our Father in heaven is. He cannot be any more perfect than He knows how, any more than we. (JD 2:129–130.)

¹² Blessed is the man that endureth {or *resisteth*} temptation <or *perseveres under trial*>: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. ¹³ Let no man say ... I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: ¹⁴ But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust <or *evil desire*>, and enticed. ¹⁵ Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is <full-grown>, bringeth forth death.

The word translated as *drawn out* was used to describe how hunters lured wild game out of thick brush into an area set with snares. The word *entice* came from fishing and meant ‘to bait, or to catch with bait.’ The lusts or desires of the flesh are used to lure us out from the safety of our covenants. (I-NT, 408)

Put off natural man who is easily tempted because of his desires for fame, money, power, and the lusts of the flesh.

4. If you lack wisdom, ask God (James 1)

⁵ If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all *men* liberally, and [reproaches] not; and it shall be given him. ⁶ But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering [or *doubting*]. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. ... ⁸ A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.

Bruce R. McConkie: This single verse [v. 5] of scripture has had a greater impact and a more far reaching effect upon mankind than any other single sentence ever recorded by any prophet in any age. (DNTC 3:246–7)

What wisdom did Joseph lack when he read this verse?

Wisdom = “how to act” especially during trials and afflictions

¹² Never did any passage of scripture come with more power to the heart of man than this did at this time to mine. ... I reflected on it again and again, knowing that if any person needed wisdom from God, I did; for how to act I did not know, and unless I could get more wisdom than I then had, I would never know. ... ¹³ At length I came to the conclusion that I must either remain in darkness and confusion, or else I must do as James directs, that is, ask of God. (JS—H 1:12–13)

5. Hearing and Doing (James 1)

¹⁹ Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: ²⁰ For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. ... ²² But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. ²³ For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man <who looks at his face in a mirror ²⁴ and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like.> ... ²⁶ If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion *is vain* <or *worthless*>.

6. Pure religion (James 1)

²⁷ Pure religion ... is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.

⁹ And that thou mayest more fully keep thyself unspotted from the world, thou shalt go to the house of prayer and offer up thy sacraments upon my holy day; (D&C 59:9)

“**Sacraments** are sacred oaths or covenants. Anciently, a sacrament was a ceremony in which a soldier swore an oath of allegiance to his king. ... A sacrament is a ceremony associated with a covenant in which we pledge loyalty to Christ and the standards of his gospel. Thus a sacrament is a formal expression of commitment and loyalty to our divinely sent King. (McC 432)

Fatherless :GR *orphanóús* orphan, (KJV fatherless, comfortless)

¹⁸ I will not leave you comfortless [orphans]: I will come to you. (Jn 14:18)

Widow : OED woman whose husband is dead, a wife separated from or deserted by her husband;

GR “a woman whose husband is dead,” or “a woman living without a husband.” A widow could return to her own family if the purchase price was paid back to her husband's heirs. Otherwise she had to remain in the husband's family, where she took an even more subordinate and often humiliating position. In many cases she was not allowed to remarry. Many women preferred death to life without their husbands. (TDNT 9:440–442) The Bible uses marriage metaphors to represent the covenant relationship between God and his people. “When the people is unfaithful to God, its marriage with God breaks up and it becomes a [‘widow’ or] ‘a desolate woman abandoned by her husband.’” Jerusalem represents people with God (the bride) and Babylon represents people without God (the widow). (TDNT 9:459)

Church widows, golf widows, ...

Visit: GR *episképtomai*: to look upon or after, visit (Bauer) From: *epi* (upon or over) + *skopos* (look, English=scope); *epískopos* = *bishop, overseer*. [Episcopal church.]

The Greek word for *visit* denotes visitation plus active concern out of a sense of responsibility (TDNT 9:458) like a bishop.

Thus, anyone can practice pure religion by looking out for and helping **physical orphans** without mortal parents and **widows** without mortal husbands as well as **spiritual orphans** without a heavenly parent (not baptized → missionary work) and **spiritual widows** without a heavenly husband (unfaithful to covenants → perfect the saints).

7. The royal law (James 2)

¹ {Ye cannot have the faith of our Lord ... and yet have respect to persons.} ² For if there come unto your <meeting> a man with a gold ring, in <fine clothes>, and ... a poor man in <shabby clothes>; ³ And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay [or splendid] clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there ...: ⁴ {Are ye not then

in yourselves *partial judges,* and become *evil in your thoughts?* ... ⁸ If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: ⁹ But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are <convicted by> the law.

The Royal law (AKA Golden Rule, law of the Gospel, more excellent way) is the principle behind many commandments.

Partial to people because of skin color, learning, clothing, money, race, religion, gender, age, nationality, or group

8. Faith and works (James 2)

¹⁴ What doth it profit ... {for} a man {to} say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? ¹⁵ If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, ¹⁶ And ... you say ..., Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what *doth it profit?* ¹⁷ Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. ¹⁸ ... [Show] me thy faith without thy works, and I will [show] thee my faith by my works. ¹⁹ Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. ²⁰ But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

Mt 7 ²¹ Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. (Mt 7:21)

²¹ Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? ²² Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? ²³ ... Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. ...

Jn 15 ¹⁴ Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

²⁵ Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent *them* out another way? ²⁶ For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

Paul used these same examples in Hebrews to show that we are saved by faith in God, not by the works of the law of Moses.

Paul: ¹⁸ If ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law [of Moses]. ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh ... are *these*; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, ²⁰ Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, ²¹ Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: ... they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, ²³ Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. ... ²⁵ If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. (Gal 5:18–25)

“According to rabbinic tradition the Torah contains 613 mitzvot; 248 of them are positive commandments (the ‘do’ laws, e.g. Honor your father and mother) and 365 are prohibitions (the ‘don’t’ laws, e.g. You shall not eat anything on the Day of Atonement).” “Whatever the reasons for the commandments, it is clear that a person who observes them carefully will constantly be aware of the presence of God in his life. Indeed, the benediction with which the observance of most commandments is to be prefaced explicitly points to its being in conformity with God’s will. Judaism insists on belief, faith and good deeds (which are also called mitzvot); but by themselves they are not enough. The actual observance of the mitzvot, notwithstanding the fact that it may occasionally cause inconvenience, is a prime doctrine of Judaism.” (EJ Jr.) (Rona #42)

9. Controlling the tongue (James 3)

² <We all stumble in many ways.> If any man [*stumbles* or *errs*] not in word, the same *is* a perfect man, *and* able also to bridle <or *keep in check*> the whole body. ... ³ We put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body.⁴ ... Ships ... [are] turned about with a very small <rudder>, whithersoever the <*pilot wants to go*.⁵ Likewise the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark.>⁶ And the tongue *is* a fire, a world of iniquity: ... it defileth the whole body. ...

In 2002 Forest Service employee Terry Barton accidentally started a forest fire. She burned a letter from her estranged husband in a no fire area. She could not stop the fire, and it became the largest fire in Colorado history. The cost: 140,000 acres, \$40,000,000, 600 structures lost including 133 homes. Terry pled guilty to arson and began a 6 year prison term. All because she was angry and started a fire. (Beardall #42)

Joseph Smith: If you know anything calculated to disturb the peace or injure the feelings of your brother or sister, hold your tongues, and the least harm will be done. (HC, 5:140)

Dale Carnegie: There is one way ... to get the best of an argument--and that is to avoid it. Avoid it as you would avoid rattlesnakes and earthquakes. (Win, 122)

If you want to gather honey, don't kick over the beehive. (3)

Ben Franklin: If you argue and rankle and contradict, you may achieve a victory sometimes; but it will be an empty victory because you will never get your opponent's good will. (Win 124)

Abraham Lincoln: Better give your path to a dog than be bitten by him in contesting for the right. Even killing the dog would not cure the bite. (Win, 126)

Dallin H. Oaks: Profane and vulgar expressions are public evidence of a speaker's ignorance, inadequacy, or immaturity. A speaker who profanes must be ignorant or indifferent to God's stern command that his name must be treated with reverence and not used in vain. A speaker who mouths profanity or vulgarity to punctuate or emphasize speech confesses inadequacy in his or her own language skills. Properly used, modern languages require no such artificial boosters. A speaker who employs profanity or vulgarity to catch someone's attention with shock effect engages in a babyish device that is inexcusable as juvenile or adult behavior. Such language is morally bankrupt. It also progressively self-defeating, since shock diminishes with familiarity and the user can only maintain its effect by escalating its excess. Members of the Church ... should never allow profane or vulgar words to pass their lips. The language we use projects the images of our hearts, and our hearts should be pure. (Ensign, May 1986, 51-52)

⁷ Every kind of ... [animal has] been tamed...⁸ But the tongue can no man tame; *it is* an [uncontrollable] evil, full of deadly poison.⁹ Therewith bless we God ... and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God.¹⁰ Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.¹¹ <Can both fresh water and salt [or bitter] water flow from the same spring? ¹² ... Can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water.>

Like Greek, Spanish words for bless and curse are compound words (bien+decir and mal+decir) meaning to speak good or bad words. The spirit let me realize that my unkind and angry words to my children were not appropriate.

10. Submit to God (James 4)

¹ <What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you?>² Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not.³ Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask [wrongly], that ye may <spend> it upon your lusts <or pleasures>.

Faith and prayer are gifts that enable me to do the will of God. They are not tools for me to have God do my will.

Neal A. Maxwell: When our prayers are uninspired, we petition for things we should not ask for, even though we do so innocently. This is, in effect, what we do when we pray and "ask amiss." (James 4:3.) When we ask amiss, God, being perfect, must reject our petitions: "And whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, *which is right*, believing that ye shall receive, behold it shall be given unto you." (3 Ne 18:20) The task is to draw close enough to the Lord that we progress to the point where we petition Him according to His will, not ours. "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us." (1 Jn 5:14.) In modern revelations the Lord has declared His willingness to grant us the requests ... *if* what we ask for is *expedient* for us. (D&C 88:64-65.) (*All These Things*, 94.)

⁴ Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. ...⁷ Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.⁸ Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. ...¹⁰ Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

11. No envy or contention (James 3)

¹⁴ If ye have bitter envying and strife [or *contention*] in your hearts, <boast> not. ...¹⁶ For where envying and strife *is*, there is confusion and every evil work.

Marvin J. Ashton: If the adversary can influence us to pick on each other, to find fault, bash, and undermine, to judge or humiliate or taunt, half his battle is won. Why? Because though this sort of conduct may not equate with succumbing to grievous sin, it nevertheless neutralizes us spiritually. The Spirit of the Lord cannot dwell where there is bickering, judging, contention, or any kind of bashing. (*Ensign*, May 1992, 20)

12. No evil speaking of or judging others (James 4)

¹¹ Speak not evil one of another. ... He that speaketh evil of *his* brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge.¹² There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?

²⁰ Keep all your pledges one with another; and covet not that which is thy brother's. ...²³ Cease to contend one with another; cease to speak evil one of another,²⁴ ... and let your words tend to edifying one another. (D&C 136:20-24)

See that there is no iniquity in the church, neither hardness with each other, neither lying, backbiting, nor evil speaking; (D&C 20:54)

²⁷ Thou shalt not speak evil of thy neighbor, nor do him any harm. (D&C 42:27)

2 Tim 3² [Teach saints] To speak evil of no man, to be ^bno brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men.

^b GR not quarrelsome.

13. Boasting about tomorrow (James 4)

¹³ <Listen> ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: ¹⁴ <Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes.> ¹⁵ ... Ye *ought* to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that. ¹⁶ But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil. ¹⁷ Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

14. Patiently endure (James 5)

⁷ Be patient. ... <See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop and how patient he is for the autumn and spring rains.> ⁸ Be ye also patient. ... ⁹ <Don't grumble against each other>, ... lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door. ¹⁰ Take ... the prophets ... for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. ¹¹ Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job.

Neal A. Maxwell: Enduring 'well' means passing the breaking point without breaking, having cause to be bitter—as men measure cause—without being bitter. Enduring 'well' means the disciple in the very trough of his difficulties avoids, as Job wisely did, having 'charged God foolishly.' The 'murmuring' so often mentioned in the Book of Mormon is kindred to the feelings we may sometimes have when we do not really question God's existence but rather his fair play, and we wrongly begin to make demands of him. (Hel 16:17-20) Murmuring may have no single cause, but a lack of perspective is suggested: 'They did murmur because they knew not the dealings of that God who had created them.' (1 Ne 2:12) A brighter time will come when they that murmured 'shall learn doctrine,' (Isa 29:24) suggesting that conceptual inadequacy can cause us to murmur and complain. (*A Time to Choose*, 42)

15. Don't swear. Keep your word. Yes=yes. (James 5)

¹² Swear not ... by heaven, ... earth, ... [or] any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and ... nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation.

During a temple marriage, the bride and groom say "yes" not "I do" when making the marriage covenant.

16. Prayer of faith (James 5)

¹³ Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms [or *hymns*]. ¹⁴ Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:

Olive oil was used to anoint temple objects, kings, and priests to make them sacred or holy. Oil was used by the Good Samaritan for medicinal purposes. Oil and wine were believed to have curative and antiseptic properties. The laying on of hands and the oil do not heal. It is faith in Christ that heals. Pure olive oil is the symbol of the greatest healing agent—Christ and his atonement. (Ogden 271–274)

¹⁵ And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. ¹⁶ ... pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. ¹⁷ <Elijah> was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of [3½ years]. ¹⁸ And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.

17. Fellow citizens with the saints (Eph 2)

¹⁹ Ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

Strangers = GR *xenos* a foreigner or stranger

Foreigners = GR *Paroikos* stranger, alien, one who lives in a place that is not his home (Bauer) without the right of citizenship (blueletterbible.org)

To become a citizen of a kingdom (or country now), one must:

a. Prepare and qualify (age, lineage) [age 8+, interview]

US Citizen: 18 years old, lawful resident for 5 years, good moral character, no outstanding deportation orders, simple English skills, pass test on basic history and government,

b. Take an oath of allegiance to the king or Lord. [baptism] (Baptism=Obedience) → commanded to "receive the HG" to know what to do

• I ... renounce ... all allegiance ... to any foreign [government]. {No other Gods before me.}

• I will support and defend the Constitution and laws of the [US] against all enemies, foreign and domestic; I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; {Obedience to the laws of God}

c. Sustain the kingdom with tribute (money, food, animals) (animal sacrifices fed priests),

d. Be willing to defend the kingdom as soldiers or with goods, (tribes, captain Moroni, Ammonites; defending Kirtland)

• I will bear arms on behalf of the [US] ...; perform noncombatant service in the [US] armed forces ...; perform work of national importance under civilian direction when required by the law; and

e. Obey laws regarding other people in the kingdom (crimes) not kill, steal, lie, adultery, false witness in courts; harm; New Law: Golden rule = love neighbor as if he were your own flesh and blood → nourish; seek welfare

f. Law of chastity (not commit adultery or fornication)

g. Law of consecration: Build up kingdom and establish his righteousness or Zion (Mt 6:33 JST), see my D&C lesson #14 e.g., King Benjamin & Mosiah

18. Becoming a Scout

Scout Oath: On my honor, I will do my best

To do my duty to God and my country and to obey the Scout Law; To help other people at all times; To keep myself physically strong, mentally awake and morally straight.

Duty to God and country; to other people (neighbors); to self

Scout Law: A Scout is: Trustworthy, Loyal, Helpful, Friendly, Courteous, Kind, Obedient, Cheerful, Thrifty, Brave, Clean, and Reverent.

Before an advancement, a scout is asked how he shows Scout Spirit (what he does to live the Scout oath and law).

19. Organizing a royal priesthood (Hugh W. Nibley)

To organize a race of priests in ancient as in modern days, God processed all volunteers by a series of preparatory steps. First, there is an initiatory stage in which one is physically set apart from the world: actually washed, anointed, given a protective garment, and clothed in sanctified robes. ...

[Then] the candidates are ... asked (and this we find in the Dead Sea Scrolls ... [and] other ancient works): “**Do you agree ... to do things his way rather than your way—to follow the law of God?**” ...

“**Will you be obedient to him no matter what he asks...?**”

“**Will you willingly sacrifice anything he asks for, including your own life?**” ...

“**Will you at all times behave morally and soberly?**” ...

Your determination must be confirmed by your deportment at all times. This is the law of the gospel.

Finally God says, “... **this is what I want you to do.**” ... The Ten Commandments are standing orders. What follows are the necessary steps to implement the law [of Moses] ... the Torah. The prophets ... don’t add to the law; they appeal to the people to observe it, to return to it, because the people ... haven’t been observing it. (*Approaching Zion*; Law of Consecration)

20. Law of the Gospel

⁷⁸ Teach ye diligently ... that you may be instructed more perfectly ... in the law of the gospel, ... (D&C 88:78)

¹⁸ If any man shall take of the abundance ... and impart not his portion, according to the law of my gospel, unto the poor and the needy, he shall, with the wicked, lift up his eyes in hell. (104:18)

Stephen E. Robinson: “The law of the gospel in its most basic form is the new commandment given by the Savior to his disciples anciently and repeated to his modern disciples, that we love one another. This love inspires obedience and selflessness, which is the opposite of covetousness. Thus, when we obey the law of the gospel, we ‘cease to be covetous’ and impart ‘as the gospel requires’ (D&C 88:123). James, the brother of Jesus, called this ‘the royal law.’ Observing it brings obedience to the other commandments (Rom 13:8–10).” (CD&C 300) Paul calls charity or the pure love of Christ “a more excellent way” (1 Cor 12:31).

No contention or evil speaking. The light mindedness, loud laughter, and boisterousness found during drinking parties (e.g., fraternities) as shown in movies are not appropriate for disciples of Christ.

Law of the gospel (Sermon on the Mount) replaced the law of Moses (schoolmaster)

¹²³ See that ye love one another; cease to be covetous; learn to impart one to another as the gospel requires. ¹²⁴ Cease to be idle; cease to be unclean; cease to find fault one with another. ... ¹²⁵ And above all things, clothe yourselves with the bond of charity, as with a mantle, which is the bond of perfectness and peace. (D&C 88:123–125)

The Law of the Church (D&C 42; see my D&C lesson #14)

The Lord promised a month before giving section 42 that if the Saints would gather in Ohio, he would give them his law (D&C 38:32). After receiving section 42, “Joseph’s history says they ‘readily abandoned’ their errors ‘for the more perfect law of the Lord’” {Harper, 139}

² Obey the law which I shall give. ... ¹⁸ Thou shalt not kill; ... ²⁰ steal; ... ²¹ [or] lie; ... ²² Thou shalt love thy wife with all thy heart, and shalt cleave unto her and none else. ... ²⁴ Thou shalt not

commit adultery; ... ²⁷ Thou shalt not speak evil of thy neighbor, nor do him any harm. ²⁸ ... He that sinneth and repenteth not shall be cast out [excommunicated]. ²⁹ If thou lovest me thou shalt serve me and keep all my commandments. ³⁰ ... Remember the poor, and consecrate of thy properties for their support that which thou hast to impart unto them. ... ⁴² Thou shalt not be idle; for he that is idle shall not eat the bread nor wear the garments of the laborer. ... ⁴⁵ Thou shalt live together in love, insomuch that thou shalt weep for the loss of them that die. ... ⁵⁴ Thou shalt not take thy brother’s garment; thou shalt pay for that which thou shalt receive of thy brother. ... ⁸⁴ And if a man or woman shall rob, ... ⁸⁵ steal, ... ⁸⁶ [or] lie, he or she shall be delivered up unto the law of the land. ⁸⁷ And if he or she do any manner of iniquity, he or she shall be delivered up unto the law... of God. (D&C 42)

Every man seeking the interest of his neighbor, and doing all things with an eye single to the glory of God. (82:19)

Baptism is a witness that we “are willing to bear one another’s burdens, ... ⁹ to mourn with those that mourn ... and comfort those that stand in need ... and to stand as witnesses of God at all times ... [and] that ye have entered into a covenant ... [to] keep his commandments, that he may pour out his Spirit more abundantly upon you?” (Mos 18:8–10)

The rules or models of loving one’s neighbor, turning the other cheek, suffering humiliation, going the extra mile, giving up one’s time and personal belongings, giving the poor more than is asked, loving one’s enemies, and doing good to all people are given [in the Sermon on the Mount]: ... Although the law of the gospel is never expressly defined in scripture, I understand this law to be the law of love and generosity: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God ... [and] Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself” (Mt 22:37–39; quoting Dt 6:5; see D&C 59:5–6). (Welch, (Nibley

“Judaism absolutely forbids inflicting suffering on other people and even on animals. Also, no man may ignore the suffering of others but must do everything in his power to help remedy the situation. This applies to physical suffering, to poverty and to psychological suffering.” (EJ Jr.) (Rona #42)

²⁰ Keep all your pledges one with another; and covet not that which is thy brother’s. ... ²³ Cease to contend one with another; cease to speak evil one of another. ²⁴ Cease drunkenness; and let your words tend to edifying one another. ²⁵ If thou borrowest of thy neighbor, thou shalt restore that which thou hast borrowed; and if thou canst not repay then go straightway and tell thy neighbor, lest he condemn thee. ... ²⁷ Thou shalt be diligent in preserving what thou hast, that thou mayest be a wise steward. ... ²⁸ If thou art merry, praise the Lord with singing, with music, with dancing, and with a prayer of praise and thanksgiving. ²⁹ If thou art sorrowful, call on the Lord thy God with supplication, that your souls may be joyful. ³⁰ Fear not thine enemies, for they are in mine hands and I will do my pleasure with them. ³¹ My people must be tried in all things, that they may be prepared to receive the glory that I have for them, even the glory of Zion; and he that will not bear chastisement is not worthy of my kingdom. (D&C 136:20–31)

21. James and the Sermon on the Mount

| James | Matt | Teachings |
|----------|-------------|--|
| 1:2-4,12 | 5:11, 12 | Trials can be blessings for our good |
| 1:5-9 | 7:7-11 | If you lack wisdom, ask God |
| 1:17 | 6:33; 7:11 | Good gifts come from God. |
| 1:22-25 | 7:21, 24-27 | Be doers not just hearers of the word |
| 1:27 | 6:1-4 | Help widows, orphans, poor, needy |
| 2:8 | 7:12; 5:38+ | Royal law: love neighbor= Golden Rule |
| 3:2-10 | 5:21-26 | Control the tongue |
| 3:10-12 | 7:17-20 | Good springs bring forth good water |
| 4:2-4 | 5:27-30 | Lust or evil desire is destroys the soul |
| 4:11-12 | 7:1-5 | No evil speaking or judging of others |
| 5:1-5 | 6:19-21 | Ye cannot serve God and money or riches |
| 5:10 | 5:10, 11 | Follow prophets' words/lives (3 Ne 12:1) |
| 5:12 | 5:33-37 | Swear not. Keep your word. Yes=yes. |
| 5:14-15 | 3 Ne 12:2 | Gospel ordinances essential (JST Mt 5:4) |
| 5:15-18 | 6:5-15 | Righteous prayers can be powerful |

Like the Sermon on the Mount, James focuses on the law of the Gospel. My lesson #9 shows how the Sermon on the Mount relates to the temple.

Conclusion

Paul taught that salvation comes by faith in Christ, not by the works of the law of Moses (e.g., circumcision, kosher foods, holy days). “a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ” (Gal 2:16)

For Paul, faith in God is shown by obedience to the commandments or promptings from God. “If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.” (Gal 5:25)

Read Joseph Fielding Smith

The Church teaches and provides opportunities (e.g., callings) to practice “pure religion” (royal law, golden rule, charity, the “more excellent way”) so we can be more Christlike.

As members of the Church, we renew our covenant to keep the commandments God gives us through his servants or through the promptings of the Holy Ghost. After baptism we are each commanded to receive the Holy Ghost. Although it is a gift, “what doth it profit a man if a gift is bestowed upon him, and he receive not the gift?” (D&C 88:33)

May we practice pure religion by seeking and following the promptings of the Spirit, and thus be doers of the word not hearers only.

Quotes

Joseph Fielding Smith: James said pure religion is to visit the fatherless and the widows. “This may be interpreted as meaning that a person who is religious is thoughtful to the unfortunate, and has an inner spirit that prompts to deeds of kindness and to the leading of a blameless life; who is just, truthful; who does not, as Paul says, think more highly of himself than he ought to think; who is affectionate, patient in tribulation, diligent, cheerful, fervent in spirit, hospitable, merciful, and who abhors evil and cleaves to that which is good. The possession of such a spirit and feeling is a true sign that a person is naturally religious.”

“The Church’s outward ordinances and requirements are but necessary ... aids to the inner spiritual life. The Church itself, the organization, meetings, ordinances, requirements, are... necessary helps, to the practice of true religion—schoolmasters to direct us in the way of eternal light and truth.” (*Gospel Doctrine*, 121)

Bruce R. McConkie: The tongue is the mirror of the soul. Spoken words reveal the intents, desires, and feelings of the heart. ... What better test can there be of a godly self-control than the ability to tame the tongue! (*DNTC* 3: 263)

Hugh B. Brown: A middle-aged couple on the farm had a violent quarrel at breakfast time. Later ... they started for town in the buggy with a fine team of horses to sell their vegetables and eggs. As the horses trotted along, Mary said, ‘John, why can’t we travel together like these horses do? They don’t quarrel and fight.’ John said, ‘Mary, we could if there was only one tongue between us.’

Oh, the unkind things we say to those we love.

We have kind words for the stranger

And smiles for the sometime guest,

While oft to our own

The bitter tone,

Though we love our own the best! (*The Eternal Quest*, 310.)

Theodore M. Burton: Whenever you get red in the face, ... raise your voice, ... get “hot under the collar,” or angry, rebellious, or negative in spirit, then know that the Spirit of God is leaving you and the spirit of Satan is beginning to take over. At times we may feel justified in arguing or fighting for truth by contentious words and actions. Do not be deceived. Satan would rather have you contend for evil if he could, but he rejoices when we contend with one another even when we think we are doing it in the cause of righteousness. He knows and recognizes the self-destructive nature of contention under any guise. You can recognize the Spirit of Christ within you when you speak to one another or speak of another person with a warm smile instead of with a frown or scowl. (*Ensign*, Nov 1974, 56)

Ezra Taft Benson: “A priesthood holder who would curse his wife, abuse her with words or actions, or do the same to one of his own children is guilty of grievous sin. ‘Can ye be angry, and not sin?’ asked the Apostle Paul (1st Eph 4:26)” (*Ensign*, Nov. 1983, 42).

“If a man does not control his temper, it is a sad admission that he is not in control of his thoughts. He then becomes a victim of his own passions and emotions, which lead him to actions that are totally unfit for civilized behavior, let alone behavior for a priesthood holder” (*Ensign*, Nov. 1986, 47).

“What does it mean to love someone with all our hearts? It means with all our emotional feelings and our devotion. Surely when you love your wife with all your heart, you cannot demean her, criticize her, find fault with her, nor abuse her by words, sullen behavior, or actions” (*Ensign*, Nov. 1983, 43).

Howard W. Hunter: “Any man who abuses or demeans his wife physically or spiritually is guilty of grievous sin and in need of sincere and serious repentance” (*Ensign*, Nov. 1994, 51).

Gordon B. Hinckley: We are doing all we know how to do to stamp out this terrible evil [spouse and child abuse]. When there is recognition of equality between the husband and the wife, when there is acknowledgment that each child born into the world is a child of God, then there will follow a greater sense of responsibility to nurture, to help, to love with an enduring love those for whom we are responsible. No man who abuses his wife or children is worthy to hold the priesthood of God. No man who abuses his wife or children is worthy to be a member in good standing in this Church. The abuse of one’s spouse and children is a most serious offense before God, and any who indulge in it may expect to be disciplined by the Church (*Ensign*, Nov. 1998, 72).

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- TDNT = Gerhard Kittel, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*.
- KJV King James Version of the Bible.
- NIV = New International Version of the Bible
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- *OED* = Oxford English Dictionary
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