

Texas is known for tall tales. One of those tales involves a teacher helping a little Texan get his boots on. He was having difficulty getting them on. She pushed, pulled, and finally got them on. The little boy said, "They're on the wrong feet."

So, she pulled and pushed and tugged until they got them off and on again. The little boy said, "These are not my boots."

So, she pulled and pushed and tugged until she got them off. The little boy said, "These are my brother's boots. My mom made me wear them today."

So, she pulled and pushed, and tugged until they got them on. The teacher was happy for the victory. "Get your coat on. Now where are your mittens?" The little boy said, "They're stuffed in the toes of my boots."

How do you think she fared in that trial?

In the early verses of the book of James, James, the half-brother of Jesus told his readers that the way a person endured trials is a test of their faith. There are many tests of faith that are found in the book. These tests are not to see how strong it is as much as to see if there faith is real.

With the test of faith, there is a goal God has in mind for you. Let's read the first 8 verses. We will see what God's goal is, and then we will get in the message God has for us this morning.

Begin with verse 2 and let's read through verse 8.

² Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials,

³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.

⁴ And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

⁵ But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

⁶ But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind.

⁷ For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord,

⁸ being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

The goal God has for the multi-faceted trials that come your way is to grow your faith to become an enduring faith so that you can continue maturing in your Christian faith. To help us with that goal, God offers to us His wisdom which He longs to give to us generously. However, there is one type of person whose spiritual heart condition will simply not allow him to reach these goals. It is the person that James calls a double-minded man.

Look again at verse 7-8. For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

Are you a double-minded person? I am led to this as our message for the morning. So, let's talk about this person. We will use scripture to describe the person to us. In doing so, it is necessary that the Holy Spirit examine our hearts to see if we are guilty of being this person.

The one place in the OT where this word is found is Psalm 119:113. The Psalmist says, "I hate those who are double-minded, but I love your law." In the NT, only James mentions the double-minded man. It is here in 1:8 and also in 4:8.

When you study these verses and the verses surrounding them, we begin to learn of the character traits of the double-minded person. We will start with chapter 1 and then go to 4.

First, the double-minded person is a doubter.

Verse 6 says, The one doubting is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. Verse 8 says the doubter is a double-minded person.

He or she may pray, but probably doesn't because they believe that God will not really honor their request. They don't trust Him. They don't trust He really is the God that the Bible tells us about. They don't believe He is faithful. They don't believe He is all-powerful. They don't believe He works today the same as He did in the Bible. Oh, they say they do, but their actions really says they don't.

When this person gets into a trial, they go to human resources rather than God. They start trusting in their own power. Sometimes, they may not even trust and turn to anything, but instead, let the trial make them bitter and resentful.

Does this person not know God personally? If they do know Him personally, do they not trust His character? Have they put Him in the category of a person who lived in the past, but no longer has dealing with His people today?

Second, the double-minded person is a hesitator.

Verse 7 says that person ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord being a double-minded man. One way that NT word can be translated is hesitator.

In Pilgrim's Progress this person is named Mister Facing Both Ways. This is impossible physically. Why would it not be the same spiritually? Because attention is given both ways, the hesitator gets nowhere.

Because the person is facing both ways, they will receive nothing from God. Listen to Elijah rebuke ancient Israel.

"How long will you hesitate between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him, but if Baal, follow him." They did neither.

There are similarities between the double-minded person and the church of Laodicea. Do you remember what Jesus said to this church? He told them that they were neither cold nor hot. Because they were lukewarm, he would spit them out. Literally, He would throw them up. Folks, our double-mindedness make God sick to His stomach.

Third, the double-minded person is a friend to the world and an enemy of God.

Go to chapter 4. We dealt with this passage extensively last Sunday night. Verse 8 of that chapter calls for repentance of the what, the double-minded man. Putting that within the context that starts with verse 1, what we find is that James is rebuking the friend of the world. They show that they are friends of the world by the fact that they are constantly in conflict. They are in conflict with

others including church members, they have conflict within themselves due to unfulfilled, controlled, and selfish desires and searches for pleasure, and they are in conflict with God.

Friends, are those who have common objectives, common values, and common interests. Friends are those who are emotionally and affectionately attached. This passage says that the double-minded man is a friend of the world. If you're going to be a friend of the world, you cannot be a friend of God. Why? The world and God are two extreme opposites. One who is not God's friend is God's enemy. The world is hostile to God. If you're going to be a friend of the world, then you are going to be hostile towards God.

What is the Holy Spirit telling you now?

What are we to do if the Holy Spirit is saying something you don't like?

The answer is given in James 4. Boil it down to one word, it is repent.

Look beginning with verse 7.

Submit therefore to God. Literally be submitted to God. Submit to His sovereign authority. Submit to Him completely. This is a command.

Resist the devil. Oppose him. Stand against him. You have to make a clean break away from him. It is a must if you are going to submit to God. When you submit to God, the devil will flee. Darkness hates the light.

Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you. Establish or reestablish that relationship with Him. This is an intimate, close relationship with God. When you do that, the devil will have to flee. As one of Natalie Grant's song says, "The enemy, he has to leave at the sound of His great name."

Cleanse your hands. Purify your hearts. Ask for forgiveness. Be willing to turn from sin.

Be miserable, mourn, and weep. Let your laughter turn to mourning.

Humble yourself in the presence of the Lord.

Bow low. The promise is there. He will exalt you in forgiveness, and restore to you a joy you once knew or a joy you have never known.

That all has to do with your relationship with God. If you are not a friend with Jesus Christ you need to in order to repent of being double-minded.

After that, there is one thing that needs to happen as far as the context of the church. It is necessary that church as a whole repent of double-mindedness. Submit to God.

Be same minded. United.

Acts 1:14 – These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer, along with *the* women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.

Acts 2:46 - 46 Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread [a]from house to house, they were taking their [b]meals together with gladness and [c]sincerity of heart,

Romans 15:5-6 - ⁵ Now may the God ^[b]who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus, ⁶ so that with one accord you may with one ^[c]voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 1:10 tells us another thing that needs to happen.

¹⁰ Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all ^[a]agree (speak the same things) and that there be no ^[b]divisions among you, but that you be ^[a]made complete (united) in the same mind and in the same judgment.

Be made complete in the same mind. Like-minded. That only happens when God is in complete control. He is declared Lord, and it is His will that is sought, not our own.

Do you see the pattern? Each time the people became one minded towards the Lord, they were one minded towards each other, and God did tremendous things among them.