



Shoe Leather Christianity

A Study on the Book of James

Lesson 2A | May 14, 2015 | James 2:1 – 13

Lesson Overview

At the very core of this week's lesson is how we treat each other, especially when it comes to wealth. The world seems to place great value and honor on wealth, but when we look at Jesus' interaction with people it was very rare that he approached the wealthy (and when it did it was usually not very good!). You can almost be guaranteed that when the world places great value on something, it is unlikely to be an area that God's people should pursue.

James is very specific in this chapter that the church is not supposed to favor the wealthy. This is counter to many churches in America where we see a great emphasis placed on money, often to fund the construction of large facilities and hire large staffs to do the work that should likely be done by lay people. I recently heard a statistic that of all money collected by American churches only 10% goes to overseas missions, yet the vast majority of non-Believers are outside this nation. I wonder what would happen if we took a small percentage of the remaining 90% and invested it in missions work and church plants around the world. We might see a lot of people come to know Christ!

Series Overview

Success comes from training, not trying. As we study the book of James, we will find a cause and effect relationship with regards to the choices we make in life. There is always a pattern associated with success or failure. The key is to determine areas in our life where we are weak and seek the Lord's guidance in making lasting changes, not the temporary changes often associated with today's "boot strap" self-help approaches.

Throughout this series we are going to focus on the following flowchart that represents the "progressive" phases of our Christian life; each phase of the Christian life is associated with the previous phase. **Environment** leads to beliefs; **beliefs** lead to thoughts; **thoughts** lead to actions; **actions** lead to habits; and **habits** lead to **lifestyles**. A phrase to help us remember this progression is *Every Boy Thinks About Hunting Lions*. Try and commit this flowchart to memory as it will be useful throughout the series.



Figure 1: Progressive Phases of the Christian Life

