



# connect

Vol. 13, Issue 4, April 2024



# Back to Life

**11**  
**Widows Luncheon: He's Alive!**  
 12:30 pm, Renaissance Room

**14**

## starting point

### Interested in Lewis Memorial?

Are you looking for a church home or simply more information about LMBC? Our next Starting Point is **Sunday, April 14 @ 4:30 pm** in the HIS Way Cafe (SMB).

Below are our four steps to membership:

1. Trust in Christ and follow Him in believer's baptism.  
**Online:** [lmbc.org/register](http://lmbc.org/register)
2. Scan the QR code on the pew in front of you and let us know you would like to join or ...
3. Check out the information in the visitor packet you received when you registered with us or visit [lmbc.org/what-we-believe](http://lmbc.org/what-we-believe) to learn about our core beliefs and more.
4. Come to Starting Point on **Sunday, April 14 @ 4:30 pm** in the HIS Way Cafe (SMB), where you'll meet with our pastors to begin your membership experience.  
**Register:** [lmbc.org/starting-point](http://lmbc.org/starting-point)

**15**  
**PrimeTime Celebrates the Resurrection**  
 6 pm, Renaissance Room

Menu: Ham with sweet potatoes, baked chicken with stuffing, bread & drink. You bring: a veggie, salad, or dessert. Contact Vida or Blanche to register.

**20**  
**Men's Meeting w/ Tim Lee**  
 5 pm  
 in the FLC Gym



Details and registration on pg. 22

**21**  
**Guest Speaker: Tim Lee**  
 9 am, 10:45 am, & 6 pm  
 in the Main Auditorium

LMBC welcomes back Tim Lee who will speak in all services.

**-May 2**  
**National Day of Prayer**  
 Details on pg. 23

# Lewis Kids Connection

Visit [lmbc.org/lkc](http://lmbc.org/lkc) or join our Facebook group

**APRIL**  
**Sunday Mornings**  
 (Worship Center lower level)

- 7: Jesus fed many people
- 14: Jesus's miracles prove He is God
- 21: Jesus taught about character
- 28: Jesus taught about behavior

**Wednesdays @ 7 pm**  
 (Family Life Center)

- 3,10,17: Bible Basics
- 24: Trivia Game Night

## Trivia Night!

Put your KNOWLEDGE to the test!

**April 24**

# 2024 SPRING CALENDAR

## APRIL

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				



### SAVE THE DATE

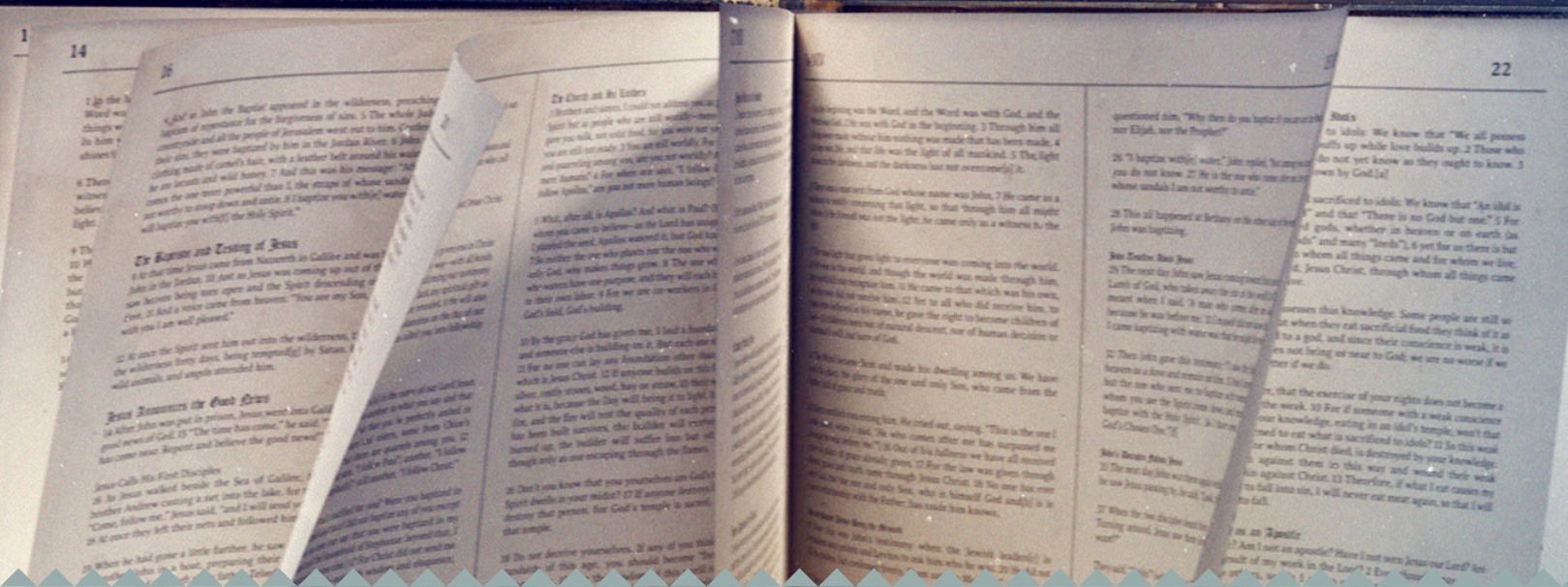
**VBS@EBENEZER**  
**JUNE 17-21**  
**DR MISSION TRIP**  
**JULY 13-19**

- 3 **TACO NIGHT | 645-815 pm**  
 It's our regular Refuel program on Wednesday night, plus tacos for dinner. Does it get any better than this?
- 21 **OUTREACH SUNDAY W/TIM LEE**  
 Join us at 900 am, 1045 am, & 600 pm as Tim Lee, a war hero, preaches the gospel. Bring a friend!
- 21 **VBS AT EBENEZER PLANNING | 4:30-5:30 pm**  
 VBS at Ebenezer is 100% student planned! Want to be on the planning team this year? Join us in the Student Ministry Building at 4:30 pm.



THE  
BOOK  
OF

# James



center of the book of James is a discussion on the two kinds of wisdom: heavenly wisdom versus human wisdom.

All the topics or discussions that the Book of James offers can be filtered through the question of which wisdom is best. For example, which wisdom is best during a trial or temptation (chapter 1)? Human wisdom would say, "Find a way out of the trial/temptation," but God's wisdom would say, "I need to endure through the trial/temptation and pay attention to what God might be teaching me." Human wisdom would teach us to be escape artists, only concerned with our personal happiness. God's wisdom permits us to see trials/temptations as gifts that can grow us into the image of Christ. What about the issue of showing partiality in James' chapter two? Human wisdom would say partiality is given to those who are rich according to the world's standards; preference is given to them. Heavenly wisdom would state that all people are made in the image of God, and God Himself is not a respecter of persons. This divine wisdom versus human wisdom rubric can be applied to every chapter. In other words, it's all about your choices; that reminds me of an Old Testament parallel; keep reading.

The Book of Joshua begins with God providing encouragement to Joshua about staying faithful to God's Laws. But faithfulness was only the first step, God said to meditate on His Laws (Joshua 1:8) so that it would become clear that using God's wisdom would lead to Israel's success. After Joshua led the nation of Israel over the miraculously-parted Jordan River and into the Promised Land, the work to conquer the land and drive out the inhabitants began quickly. With God's help and as God's instruments of justice, the nation of Israel conquered the land of Canaan in a mere seven years. After dividing up the Promised Land into tribal allotments, Joshua makes one final speech before his impending death in Joshua 24. Listen to his words, "...choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord (Joshua 24:14-15)." Joshua's last speech to the

people was to remind them to make the right choices. For Joshua and his household, there was no question as to whom He served, and there was equally no question as to whose wisdom he followed. God had proven Himself faithful to Joshua because Joshua wisely chose to use God's wisdom rather than relying on human wisdom. May this be a lesson for us all: choosing heavenly wisdom over human wisdom needs to be a choice that we make every day for the rest of our days.

- Jeremy Shaffer

On the following pages, you will find ...

## 6 Making Opportunities out of Obstacles

(James 1:1-3)

## 7 Showing Favoritism

(James 2:1-9)

## 9 An Active Faith

(James 2:14-26)

## 12 The Human Tongue

(James 3:1-12)

## 14 A Tale of Two Wisdoms

(James 3:13-18)

## 15 Double-Minded Disease

(James 4:1-10)

## 16 Praying Always

(James 4:4-17)

This month's devotional, **Should We Pray for Patience?**

is based on James 5:7-11 and other selected scriptures. You can find it on page 18

April provided us with a unique opportunity to theme the articles of the Connect Magazine around the beloved Book of James. Even though reformer Martin Luther called the Book of James "a right strawy epistle," much wisdom can be gleaned from its pages. We hope you can use these articles as a starting point to dig deeper into one of the New Testament's most practical books.

With so many different topics and subjects to consider from the Book of James, many Bible scholars and students have often wondered how they all work together. I've enjoyed studying the variety of ways that past and present writers, teachers, and authors have

analyzed and outlined the book. Many have been quite plain in their approach, and others have new, even novel approaches. I feel that listening to the text is the key to the Book of James, and the only way that you can genuinely listen to what the text is saying is to read, re-read, and read again. Did you know that the most valuable part of Bible study is the simple repetition of reading the text repeatedly; it might also be the most neglected part of Bible study as well. Once you've read the text repeatedly, bathed in prayer and guidance from the Holy Spirit, primary structures and patterns start to emerge. For me, the keyword that seems to dictate the book's structure is wisdom. Ironically, or maybe not, the very

# Making Opportunities out of Obstacles

James 1:1-3 by Mike Smith

In his work entitled, *The Rainy Day*, American poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow immortalized the words that read, “Into each life a little rain must fall.” How well each of us knows that the Christian life is not always an easy road. Throughout the Scriptures, we are reminded that our earthly existence will be sprinkled with adversity. There are two passages in the Gospels where Jesus exhorted the disciples to expect difficulty. In Matthew 5:11, He told them to “marvel not” when they were hated and persecuted because of Him, and in John 16:33, He instructed them to remember that “in this world you WILL have trouble...”. Paul’s words to Timothy could not have been more clearly stated, “All who live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution (2 Tim. 3:12).” These are just a few of the examples that remind us of the reality of difficulty. So, how do we respond to trials when they do come our way? As devoted disciples of Jesus, our sense of peace and sincere joy is primarily determined by our perspective. But this is one of those life lessons that can only be learned by those who have faced tribulation.

Indeed, the Christians of the first century knew first-hand the pain of persecution at every possible level, especially those who had been born and raised in traditional Judaism and later decided to become Christ-followers. Such was the immediate biblical audience to whom James penned his letter. According to biblical history, these Jewish believers who embraced the truth that Jesus is the Messiah were subjected to every imaginable kind of oppression by their fellow countrymen. But persecution at the hands of the ruling Roman government was ruthless. When James wrote this letter, the Diaspora, taken from the Greek word which translates as “the scattering

or dispersion,” was in full swing. As well as physical pain and suffering from torture, believers had to forfeit their livelihoods, were now living in extreme poverty, and were displaced to unfamiliar areas all over the Roman Empire. This was the meaning behind the initial salutation given by their loving pastor and fellow believer as he wrote “. . . to the twelve tribes who are scattered abroad. . .” (1:1). But, James goes on to address the issue of maintaining a proper perspective to their unpleasant circumstances. The ability to view their obstacles as opportunities to experience God’s power and purpose required the right outlook. When facing trials, allow me to give you three reminders that will enable you to make opportunities out of obstacles.

## Opportunity #1: God’s presence in the midst of obstacles can bring contentment.

James writes, “Consider it all joy” during times of various trials (vs. 2). Simply put, this contentment or “joy” is only possible because of the inner peace that the experience of God’s presence in our adversity can bring. God had not left them to deal with their difficulties all by themselves. I love what Paul writes regarding the reliability of God’s faithfulness in times of testing (1 Cor. 10:31). The experience of this divine presence brings real joy amid life’s obstacles. The words of the prophet Isaiah promise perfect peace when we “fix our mind” on the Lord. When facing obstacles, no matter how big or small, we can find the peace of the Lord by resting in the unfailing and constant presence of the Lord.

## Opportunity #2: God’s purpose for obstacles allows us to exercise confidence.

James went on to say that those being tested could “know” that the testing of their faith would strengthen their endurance. The verb used here for “knowing” refers to knowledge that comes from experience. In other words, the process of “going through it” allows us to understand that God’s refining purpose is to help us endure adversity and come out on the other side with faith in His wisdom about what is best for us. Jeremiah 29:11 says, “I know the plans that I have for you,” these “plans” were to bring about favor and God’s goodness to those who belong to Him. God is always at work in the lives of His children as He gently shapes us into the image of Jesus. No one knew more about human suffering than the Son of God. Yet even when faced with the inevitability of torture and crucifixion on a cross, He prayed for the Father’s will to be done (Luke 22:42). This was the “joy that was set before Him,” according to the author of Hebrews (Heb. 12:2).

## Opportunity #3: God’s power will give you the courage to overcome obstacles.

This courage belongs to those willing to weather the storms that will likely come. Scripture reminds the believer that God’s strength is “perfect” in the midst of our weakness (2 Cor. 12:9). God promises His power to face the obstacles in our lives, even when our strength is “weak” at its best.

The next time obstacles such as trials and testing tempt us to give in and give up, may we take advantage of their unique opportunities. May our prayer during adversity be, “Father, by your grace, grant us the opportunity to have the contentment of Your presence, the confidence in Your purpose, and the courage by Your power to endure the tests of life and deepen the measure of our faith in what You long to do in and through us as You conform us to the image of Your Son.” Amen.

# Showing Favoritism

James 2:1-9 by Dr. Tim Yates

How do you treat guests who attend your Church? Do you size them up when they walk in or ignore them? Do you go out of your way to make them feel welcome? Unfortunately, many walk past the guests saying nothing. Or we see right through them, not really seeing them, and keep moving to “our pew.” If we don’t save “our pew,” one of those guests might sit in “our seat.” That’s “our spot,” and it’s where I enjoy being seated because I like to feel comfortable; saying “Hi” to people is out of my comfort zone. Yes, I’m impressed by the rich, and I guess I do look down on the poor. Perhaps I’ve fallen into the trap of favoritism?

James shares a story about a rich man and a poor man visiting a local “assembly” (transliterated: synagōgē). He points out the problem of ignoring one group and showing favoritism to the other.

## The Admonition (vs.1)

James is talking to believers in the local assembly. In verse 1, he addresses them as “My brethren.” And then, in verse 5, he says, “Listen, my beloved brethren.” There’s no doubt James is addressing members of the synagogue/congregation. He admonished them, “Do not hold” (embrace) a Christian faith that shows favoritism. What’s the problem? They received “the rich” with great fanfare while degrading “the poor.” They were grouping people by financial status. Like Wall Street, they determined self-worth by net worth. But James admonished, “do not” show partiality/favoritism.

## The Apparel (vs.2-3)

Both guests were defined by their dress. The rich man had on “gold rings” and “fine

apparel." The word "fine" means to shine and sparkle. The apparel of "the rich" dazzled the crowd. On the other hand, the "poor man" had on "filthy clothes." He was dirty, shabby, and unclean. Will the church crowd "pay attention to" the rich or the poor? Will you seat the rich man in a "good place" and make the poor man "stand" or even "sit at my footstool" (v. 3)? Unfortunately, this assembly defined people by apparel. Those who wore designer clothing were given the best seats in the house. On the other hand, the poor didn't receive the same attention. In fact, they were ignored.

### The Action (vs.6)

"But you have dishonored the poor man" (v. 6). The word "dishonored" (transliterated: atimazo) means to degrade. When you dishonor a person, you place very little value on that person. That my friend is "favoritism," and favoritism is a BIG SIN (v. 8).

### So...How should we treat people?

#### Value all people

If you value people, you won't show favoritism. Even James says, "If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself,' you do well" (v. 8). Do you want to "do well?" Then, love and value people... you will "fulfill the royal law" and please God.

#### Come early and welcome guests

Welcome people you don't know. Both rich and poor. Write down their names. Pray for them when you have your devotions. Next Sunday, when you see them, greet them by name and tell them how glad you are to see them. Unfortunately, many church members gather in "Holy Huddles" and only talk to people they know. We talk about the Super Bowl, NASCAR, and politics. Don't get caught up in the trap of talking only to your friends. Intentionally OPEN your spiritual eyes and look for the unknown, unfamiliar, and the unsaved. These are the people Jesus is seeking.

### Be prepared to serve our guests

Company is in the house. Don't ignore the very people God sent. If they have children, DON'T tell them where the children's ministry meets... TAKE THEM downstairs to where the children's ministry meets. Introduce them to the various workers. Help them find the restroom. Help them find the member who invited them to church...This is a BIG deal with guests. It's a game-changer.

### Memorize Romans 15:7

Ask God to help you live out this biblical truth. If you're a "deeper lifer," take this verse deep into application. Take it seriously. Paul said, "Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God" (Rom 15:7 ESV). How did Christ welcome you into the family of God? He welcomed you in the same way the father welcomed the prodigal son. He pursued YOU and He welcomed YOU with open arms (Luke 15:20-22). This Sunday, live out this verse. Don't ignore it. Memorize it and do it.

Beware of favoritism. Value all people, rich and poor. Notice people, not jewelry, not designer clothing. Just people. Love them. Serve them. Welcome them. Pray for them. Roll up your sleeves and be prepared to assist them. They're coming. But the question is, "How will YOU receive them this Sunday?" Don't let them walk past you without even acknowledging they exist. Will you help make Lewis Memorial Baptist Church a friendly church? Deny self-centered favoritism and love ALL the guests flooding our church.

# An Active Faith

James 2:14-26 by Matt McClay

I recently attended a conference featuring an exhibit hall with various vendors. Of course, each vendor had developed some kind of attraction to incentivize conference attendees to stop by their booth and learn about their product(s). While making the rounds in the exhibit hall, I visited a booth that was giving away a one-hundred-dollar prepaid debit card to anyone who provided their contact information to the sales team. I had little interest in entering the drawing because I had never won a giveaway before in my life. But because I'm a pushover, the vendor talked me into signing up. While completing the registration form, I told my wife, "I don't know why I'm filling this out; I never win these kinds of things."

Imagine my surprise when, the next day, I received a congratulatory phone call informing me that I was, indeed, the winner of a one-hundred-dollar prepaid debit card! Of course, I was beyond thrilled. After returning to the exhibit hall, claiming my prize, and expressing my thanks and appreciation to the vendor who organized the giveaway, I left the convention center victoriously, thinking about what to buy with my prepaid debit card. I decided to buy some items we needed around the house, and while checking out at the store, I proudly provided my prized prepaid debit card to the cashier. My excitement quickly turned into confusion when the cashier replied, "I'm sorry, but your card was declined." Bewildered, I went home to conduct a little research. I called the number on the back of the card and verified that the card, indeed, did have a balance of one hundred dollars. What, then, was the problem? After speaking with a helpful representative, it turned out that although the card had a balance, it had never been activated. I followed the prompts to activate the card, and voila! The card was now working!

My prepaid debit card fiasco reminded me of the "faith fiasco" that Bible readers will encounter when reading the book of James. Just as my prepaid debit card had a balance but was not working, James 2:14-26 teaches readers about the problem of a faith that is genuine but not working. Debit cards must be activated to



be of use in a store, and according to James, our faith must be activated to be of help to ourselves and others while navigating the ups and downs of life. Let's look at four aspects of an active faith in James 2:14-26.

## What An Active Faith Is...

When believers are deciding on a portion of Scripture to select for a group Bible study, the book of James is often high on the list of recommendations. What draws people to this little book in the back of the Bible? The answer often has to do with the practicality of the content in James. The book of James covers real-life issues and actions, guiding its reader to make God-honoring decisions. In short, the book of James teaches us how to have an active faith that makes a difference in our lives and the lives of others. What is an active faith? James centers his writing on two outward aspects of our faith: our attitudes and actions.

**First**, an active faith means having the right attitude about the various circumstances we encounter in life. From the outset, believers are instructed to “consider it all joy” when they encounter trials (1:2), to avoid the trap of being double-minded (1:6-7), and to consider themselves “blessed” when staying steadfast during difficulty (1:12). Throughout his short letter, James reminds believers to not look down on other believers because of their economic status (2:1-7) and to remove the attitudes of jealousy (3:14), selfish ambition (3:14), wrong desires (4:2), covetousness (4:2), arrogance (4:16), and self-indulgence (5:5). An active faith involves having a Christ-like attitude about God, life, yourself, and others!

**Second**, an active faith means conducting our lives in a way consistent with God and His Word. An active faith is faith in action! In chapter one alone, James directs his readers to live a faith-filled life by praying boldly (1:5-7), talking slowly (1:19), listening intently to others (1:19), not being easily angered (1:19), putting away sin decisively (1:21), reading God's Word (1:21), obeying God's Word (1:22), caring for orphans and widows (1:27), and resisting the polluting influence of the world (1:27).

Later in his letter, James exhorts his readers to use their words wisely and constructively (3:1-12), submit to God (4:7), resist the devil (4:7), draw near to God (4:8), confess and turn from sinful habits and lifestyles (4:8b-10), practice patience toward brothers and sisters in Christ (5:7-11), pray for one another (5:13-18), and restore believers who have wandered from the truth (5:19-20). Do you see the action in these imperatives? An active faith is manifested in the life of a believer who thinks and acts like Jesus!

## What An Active Faith Does...

What are the results of living with an active faith? James answers two pointed questions about inactive faith right out of the gate, clueing us in on what believers can expect when they live with an active faith.

*“What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and filled,” without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead” (James 2:14-17 ESV).*

James first raises the question of how living with an active faith impacts a believer personally. Can faith without works save someone? The word “save” appears throughout the Bible and generally carries one of two meanings. First, “save” can refer to the eternal salvation offered by grace alone through faith in Jesus alone. An example of this meaning can be found in Ephesians 2, which reads, “By grace, you have been saved” (Ephesians 2:8). Second, “save” can refer to being delivered from trials or circumstances in life. This second meaning makes sense in the context of James, as the letter kicks off by encouraging believers to “Count it all joy when you meet trials of various kinds” (1:3). James uses the term “save” later in his letter to describe how faith-filled praying will “Save the one who is sick” (5:15). The rhetorical question in James 2:14, “Can that faith save him?” refers to the delivering power of an active faith. It makes sense, doesn't it?

When we develop Christlike attitudes and live a Christlike lifestyle, we are delivered from having to suffer the consequences of personal sin, and we are delivered through trials and tribulations that test our faith. Living for God is worth it!

Next, James demonstrates how an active faith impacts others. Has someone ever poured out their heart to you about a need in their life, and your response was to politely provide inspirational platitudes about God's provision, all the while being unwilling to be God's instrument of provision in his or her life? I'm ashamed to admit that I've failed in this area, too. According to James, this happens far too often among believers. He provides an example of a believer in desperate need of food and clothing. What's the appropriate response to seeing a brother or sister in Christ who is in need? James says this is an opportunity for active faith! Cook the meal! Provide the clothing! Meet the need! An active faith not only delivers us from trials but also lifts up those around us. Wouldn't you agree that our world is in desperate need of believers with an active faith?

## What An Active Faith Isn't...

James describes faith apart from works as “dead” (2:17,26) and “useless” (2:20). So, what is the relationship between faith and good works? This passage, at first glance, seems to stand in opposition to the rest of Scripture, which firmly and unambiguously presents eternal life as a gift to be received by trusting in Jesus. Is James really contending that works are necessary to earn eternal life? Is he arguing that works are necessary to prove eternal life? Again, a close look at the surrounding context of this passage in James relieves the unnecessary tension that is sometimes read into this heavy passage.

**Active faith isn't about who is a true believer.**

A wonderful reality of salvation is that all who believe in Jesus become children of God and

brothers and sisters in Christ. Notice that James addresses this section of his letter, dealing with faith and works, to his “brothers” (1:14). Later in the passage, he exhorts readers to assist a “brother or sister” who needs food or clothing. From his opening statement (1:3) to his concluding admonition (5:19), James addresses his readers as “brothers” or “brothers and sisters.” We can sensibly conclude, then, that James's exhortation to an active, working faith is aimed at believers, not unbelievers who claim to be Christians.

**Active faith isn't about earning salvation.**

What about sections in this passage that read, “Faith was completed by his works” (2:22) and “A person is justified by works and not by faith alone” (2:24)? Again, it's helpful to remember James' perspective in writing this letter to genuine believers is to explain the delivering power of an active faith. Believers are justified by works, not in the sense of earning a right standing before God, but in the sense of their faith being vindicated before others. Longtime evangelist Dr. Larry Moyer has written helpful words on this subject. He writes of James 2:24, “Justification by faith gives a person a right standing with God, but justification by works saves him or her from the consequences of sin in this life and before others shows faith to be active.”<sup>1</sup> The truth is, we can't work to earn our salvation, we can't work to keep our salvation, and we can't work to prove our salvation. As children of God, we find assurance of our salvation in knowing that we have believed in Jesus' finished work, not our own works (Jn. 1:12, Jn. 3:16, Jn. 20:31, Rom. 3:28, Rom. 5:1, Gal. 2:16, Eph. 2:8-9). Although we can't work for our salvation, James encourages us to work from our salvation to glorify God, sanctify our lives, and impact others for Jesus. Salvation may be opposed to earning, but it's not opposed to effort!

## What An Active Faith Looks Like...

The concluding section of James 2:14-24 provides two classic examples of what an active faith looks like in the life of a believer.

<sup>1</sup>Larry Moyer, *Free and Clear: Understanding and Communicating God's Offer of Eternal Life* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Kregel Publications, 1997), 75.

James goes back to the Old Testament and considers the historical accounts of Abraham and Rahab. It's hard to imagine two more opposite examples, as Abraham was the wealthy patriarch of the Israelite nation, and Rahab was a Gentile prostitute in an occupied city. Their life experiences were vastly different, but they each modeled an active faith. James says of Abraham, "Faith was active along with works" (2:22). Both Abraham and Rahab, through their respective stories, illustrate what an active faith looks like.

Read the stories of Abraham and Rahab and see if you can notice any commonalities between the two. Abraham's story can be found in Genesis 22, and Rahab's story is chronicled in Joshua 2 and Joshua 6:15-25. Let's consider five common aspects of an active faith that can be found in the stories of Abraham and Rahab. First, both had placed their trust in God before their faith was tested. Second, both were put in a position where they acted upon their faith. Abraham willingly offered his son to God, while Rahab willingly exposed herself to potential danger by hiding the Israelite spies. Third, through having an active faith, both were delivered from trials and tests. Abraham passed God's test with flying colors, while Rahab and her household became the only residents of Jericho who were spared from utter and total destruction. Fourth, by their active faith, both Abraham and Rahab helped others. Through Abraham's obedience to God, the Lord's plan of redemption, by which all families of the earth would be blessed (Genesis 12:1), continued to unfold, while Rahab saved the lives of the Israelite spies and, ultimately, the lives of her own family members! Finally, the active faith of Abraham and Rahab was seen by others, and both biblical figures serve as examples of faithful living to this day. Hebrews 11, often classified as "The Hall of Faith" by Bible students, lists both Abraham (Hebrews 11:8-19) and Rahab (11:31) as those worthy of commendation for their faith.

What about you? The Bible illustrates what an active faith looked like in the lives of Abraham and Rahab. What does an active faith look like in your life? As we dive into the book of James in this month's Connect magazine through

various articles written by our staff, consider how this practical book can spur you on to an active faith that glorifies our Savior, delivers you from and through the circumstances of life, and helps others in their time of need!

## The Human Tongue

James 3:1-12 by Dr. David Lemming

On his first day as a new clerk in the green goods department of his local grocery store, a young man found himself face-to-face with a customer who had a rather unusual request: she wanted to buy half a head of lettuce. He gently tried to steer her away from this idea, but she was adamant about what she wanted.

Eventually, he sighed, "Alright, let me check with the manager."

He started to head towards the back of the store, oblivious to the fact that the customer was following him. As soon as he reached the manager, he blurted out, "We've got a bit of an oddball out there who wants to buy half a head of lettuce. What do I tell her?"

Catching the manager's shocked expression, he quickly turned around and noticed the woman. Swiftly, he added, "And this lovely lady here wants to buy the other half. Is that okay?"

Visibly relieved, the manager agreed, "Of course, that would be fine."

Later that day, the manager commended the young man for his quick thinking. Curious, he asked, "Where do you hail from, son?"

The boy replied with a grin, "I'm from Toronto, Canada, home to fabulous hockey players and, well, not-so-fabulous looking women."

Upon hearing this, the manager raised an eyebrow and said, "My wife's from Toronto."

Without missing a beat, the young man asked, "Oh really, which team did she play for?"

Because what we say can get us into so much trouble, I want you to take a spiritual journey with me into the heart of the book of James. We specifically want to spend our time in the third chapter, where we learn about an incredibly powerful element of our being: the human tongue.

James utilizes language in a purposefully vivid and striking manner to communicate the significance of the words we use. Although they may seem to be fleeting whispers that punctuate the air and then disappear, our words actually have the ability to leave a lasting impression, either positive or negative, on the world around us.

Take a moment to visualize a majestic stallion in all its splendor, roaming free across vast plains. This magnificent creature is the epitome of raw power and untamed spirit, a true force of nature that commands our admiration. As awe-inspiring as this beautiful animal might be, it still requires a rider, someone who can provide direction and channel the abundant energy of this creature in a meaningful and useful manner.

James uses a horse and its bridle as a metaphor for how we use our tongues (James 3:3). They are reservoirs of immense potential and power. They can construct bridges of love and mutual understanding, using heartfelt words of encouragement and praise. They can provide solace to a troubled soul with soothing whispers of consolation. They can even ignite a burning fire of passion within others through inspiring words.

However, just like the untamed stallion, our tongues are also prone to loss of control or careless comments. They can release venomous words in the form of harsh criticism and malicious gossip. They can trample upon relationships with reckless and thoughtless words of anger. They can set a path of destruction ablaze with negativity and deceit.

This is where we all encounter a profound challenge. Unlike the stallion, which can be tamed to a certain extent, James says that our tongues are restless entities, always on the verge of erupting. However, the fact that we can't completely tame them doesn't mean that we are helpless in controlling them.

Consider a horse's bridle. It doesn't rob the stallion of its inherent strength, but rather, it gives the rider the ability to direct that power in a positive and beneficial manner. Similarly, all of us require a metaphorical "bridle" for our tongues.

So what does this bridle consist of? It is a collection of several elements:

- **Thoughtful reflection:** Before we let our words loose into the world, it's crucial to take a moment to reflect on their potential ramifications. Are they building up or tearing down? Are they spreading love or fostering negativity?
- **Guarded hearts:** The Scripture says, "Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks." This means that if our hearts are filled with love, kindness, and forgiveness, our words will naturally reflect these attributes.
- **Seeking wisdom:** The Bible enlightens us that wisdom is characterized by gentleness, peace, and mercy (James 3:17). By actively seeking wisdom, we learn to harness the power of our words for positive ends.

By effectively employing these tools, we can gain better control over our tongues, directing them toward a path of love, encouragement, and positive influence. Always remember, our words hold the power to either bless or curse. Let us make the conscious decision to use them for the glory of God and for the uplifting of our fellow human beings.

# A Tale of Two Wisdoms

James 3:13-18 by Nathan McClay

Wisdom is a crucial element to success in the Christian life. It can be described as the correct application of knowledge. The book of Proverbs reminds us that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the opening chapter of James assures us that God will give wisdom to us in abundant supply if we ask in faith. But, in these few verses at the end of the third chapter of James, we see an apparent paradox in two wisdoms. Undoubtedly, one is true wisdom, and the other is a pseudo-wisdom. The passage goes back and forth, contrasting them both.

## Heavenly wisdom is selfless; human wisdom is not.

One of the first traits we notice about true, heavenly wisdom is that it is proven by works done in a spirit of meekness (vs.13). Other synonyms for meekness are gentleness and humility. Philippians chapter two describes the humility of our Lord when He took on the form of a servant, was made in the likeness of man, and was obedient to death on the cross. We are encouraged at the beginning of that chapter “to let His mind be in us.” The mind of Christ is selfless, as is wisdom from above, but according to verse 14, the wisdom that is not from above is full of envy and is self-seeking. We could say that this type of wisdom is around us, within us, and beneath us. This kind of wisdom is nothing to be proud of and causes us to lie against the truth, but on the other hand, heavenly wisdom is tempered with love. First Corinthians 13 tells us true love is not proud and does not seek its own. This very chapter that describes the ideal qualities of love is sandwiched between two chapters about spiritual gifts (chs.12 & 14), which truly shows us the love and wisdom with which our service should be rendered.

## Heavenly wisdom is sourced with God; human wisdom is not.

Human wisdom does not find its source with God above but is earthly, sensual, and demonic. This wisdom is around us (earthly) – it is of this world. In 1 John 2:15, the Apostle John lists all that this world has to offer us as being the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. This is what Satan offered to Eve in the Garden of Eden, as recorded in Genesis 3:6 “So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food (the lust of the flesh), that it was pleasant to the eyes (the lust of the eyes), and a tree desirable to make one wise (the pride of life), she took of its fruit and ate.” Satan tempted Eve with “better” wisdom, and today we can fall into a similar temptation. Wisdom not from above is within us; it is sensual and appeals to our old nature. James has already reminded us about how our lusts affect us. “Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death” (James 1:13-15).

This pseudo-wisdom is also beneath us because it comes from the devil and his forces. According to verse 16, employing this false wisdom results in confusion and all kinds of evil. Furthermore, in the next chapter, we see that using this kind of wisdom leads to wars and fighting (James 4:1). What a stark contrast there is between earthly wisdom and the wisdom that is from above! Heavenly wisdom is pure because its source is from God Himself.

## Heavenly wisdom is peaceable; human wisdom is not.

The KJV and NKJV use the word “peaceable,” while other translations use “peace-loving.” Have you ever met someone who loves a good argument, constantly putting people in their places? That would be an individual who doesn’t possess the wisdom from above.

This wisdom is gentle and willing to yield. Kindness and reasonableness are essential if we want to be truly wise. It’s also full of mercy, which, according to John MacArthur, is a “gift of showing concern for those who suffer pain.” This wisdom also shows no partiality (or favoritism) and hypocrisy, resulting in people seeking peace.

This passage should cause us to search our hearts and seek wisdom that pleases God, serves others, and creates peace.

# Double-Minded Disease

James 4:1-10 by Dr. Jeremy Shaffer

Beginning in chapter 1 and continuing through chapter 3, James has been building a case for the two choices that we have in life. We can choose to follow the wisdom of the world or the wisdom of God. A person who cannot choose between the two is called double-minded, a reality that James already mentioned (1:8). Like a good doctor who is concerned with the health of his patients, James describes the symptoms of double-mindedness so that they can recognize this disease when it rears its ugly head.

## Symptoms of Double-Mindedness

### Conflict (v.1)

Conflict comes naturally to humanity because of our sin nature. You don’t have to teach siblings the art of fighting; they can master it independently. The first recorded fight in Scripture was between Cain and Abel, and that fight between siblings ended in murder. But not all conflicts are a battle of fists; some conflicts are verbal, which can be even more deadly. This first-century Christian community was not exempt from conflicts; in fact, the use of plurals in the words “wars” and “fights” tells us this was a chronic condition. James goes on

to explain that these conflicts are all sourced from within. When our desire is for the world rather than for God, conflict will show itself. When something or someone steps in the way of fulfilling our desires, we tend to fight until we get our way. Whether internal or external, conflicts are signs that we’ve been infected with double-mindedness.

### Jealousy (v.2)

When jealousy infects a person, they are bent on getting what they want, no matter the cost. A jealous person fails to turn to God for their provision. They are the ones who say, “God, I don’t need your help; I can do this myself,” or “God, you’re too slow in getting me this or that; I can do it myself.” Desire-filled, envious believers do not make requests of God but instead are driven by self-sufficiency. If the jealousy is not curtailed, then it has the potential to lead to murder. Statistics show that most murders take place between family members or close relationships. Man has always wanted to control his own life, to rule his own roost. It all started in the Garden when Satan tempted Eve with a “better” life. The “American dream” has been couched as a “better life,” but it often leads to a life that follows after the wisdom and wealth of the world rather than the wisdom of God. Jealousy (and envy) are signs that we’ve been infected with double-mindedness.

### Selfishness (v.3)

Sometimes, it’s helpful to state the obvious: double-minded disease is selfish. This symptom follows up on the previous one. We often ask God for things that enable us to satisfy our own selfish desires. For example, we request more time, more wealth, or more energy to do what we want. We ought to ask God to give us a desire for what He wants. Asking for something with the wrong motives means that we don’t have God’s motives. We could move the needle even further by saying that, in this sense, prayer can act as a form of idolatry because you’re asking God for something to satisfy the god of self. Praying with wrong motives is a sign that we’ve been infected with double-mindedness.



## Rebellion (v.4-5)

Why does James call some of his readers “adulteresses?” Because they are cheating on God! Did you ever stop to consider that focusing on the world’s wisdom instead of God’s wisdom could be considered adultery? When a believer cozies up to the wisdom of the world, he is placing himself in enmity with God. We cannot be on friendly terms with God if we follow after the world’s philosophy (Matt. 6:24, “You cannot serve two masters). The world wants us to rebel against God and exclude Him from all aspects of life. But God wants us to include Him in all of life because He is life, and without Him, we can do nothing (John 15:5). When we become friends with the world, the Holy Spirit that dwells inside of us gets jealous of that relationship. The Holy Spirit is jealous when we seek other ways to solve our problems rather than going to Him; when we do this we are saying, “I don’t trust your expertise and wisdom.” Seeking the world’s wisdom instead of God’s wisdom is a sign that we’ve been infected with double-mindedness.

### The Cure for Double-Mindedness

The symptoms of double-mindedness have been laid out: conflict, jealousy, selfishness, and rebellion. Now, in verses 7-10, James lists ten imperatives (all of which sound like military commands) that can provide a cure for this dreadful disease. Read these verses, reread them, and see if you can mark all ten imperatives so that you can study each one in detail. Humility, repentance, and submission are three to start you off. Remember, double-mindedness is as old as the Garden of Eden... “when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate” (Genesis 3:6). When Eve realized that there was another kind of wisdom, she took it, hook, line, and sinker. We will never find stability in the world’s wisdom; we can only find stability in God’s wisdom because He is the only one who is stable.

## Pray Always

James 4:4-17 by Bill Blankenship

The scripture continually encourages us to be in an attitude of prayer. We see prayer as our direct way of communicating with God and an essential part of our Christian life. Through prayer, we acknowledge our creator and express our thankfulness, trust, and dependence on Him. God isn’t looking for His followers to pray out of some sense of duty or obligation. When we have a loving, personal relationship with God, we can share with Him whatever is on our hearts without fear. When we pray, it should be out of a desire to share our praise, thoughts, feelings, desires, and needs with God. We can be open about who we are and express ourselves to Him; after all, He already knows who we are. Christ came so that we could have a relationship with God and to bring us the freedom to approach the throne of grace and not to weigh us down by heaping religion, law, and obligations on us. “Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” Hebrews 4:16

There are many types of prayers mentioned in the Bible for different situations. We saw this in our twenty-one days of prayer in January as we read and studied the book by Dave Earley, “The 21 Most Effective Prayers in the Bible.” In this book, we read several accounts of well-known people from centuries ago and how they dealt with their life issues. They called upon God in prayer, asking Him to remember them, give them wisdom, give them a sign, help them, deliver them, give them mercy, grant them favor, increase their faith, send them, strengthen them, give them success, and bless them. If these well-known people of the past struggled in these areas, what makes us think we will be exempt from the same struggles?

Many times, we are drawn away by our lust. James tells us in chapter 4 of his writings to the Christ followers, who have been scattered abroad, that there is a warfare going on with them. They desired pleasures that satisfied the flesh while their spiritual life was lacking. They could not produce and succeed in their walk with God because they did not discipline themselves to turn away from worldly desires. James says, “Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. Or do you think that the scripture says in vain, “The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously?” -James 4:4-5

Remember, these Christ followers were scattered into various parts of the known world and were being influenced by the cultures they encountered. The culture, customs, and social ways of these places weighed heavily on these Christ followers, who tried to fit in so they would be accepted. The ways of society fit the lust of their flesh, and they forsook their disciplined walk with God. This happens to many in our churches today. If we forsake our disciplined walk, we make ourselves an enemy of God.

James 4:6-10 tells us that we must humble ourselves and submit to God to overcome the world. If we do this, the devil will flee, and God will draw near to us as we draw near to Him. We are to cleanse our hands, purify our hearts, and not be doubled-minded. We can not hold on to the world and its ways, and God and His ways; it does not work, as Exodus 34:14 tells us, “For you shall worship no other God, for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God.”

James also warns us in James 4:11-12 not to judge one another. Who are we to judge another? Do we have sovereign knowledge or divine understanding of another? We should be praying for the Holy Spirit to impart wisdom and conviction. “There is one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy. Who are you to judge another?” So, let us pray for one another.

In James 4:13-17 he reminds us not to boast about our tomorrow. We are prone to make

plans for what we think tomorrow holds for us, but only God knows the future. James tells us that we do not know what will happen tomorrow. Then, James asked one of life’s greatest questions, “For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.” We must pray for the Lord’s will to be done. Verse 17 is a warning, “Therefore, to him that knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is a sin.”

Let us, therefore, “Pray always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.” (Ephesians 6:18)



# Should We Pray for Patience?

by Mary Ellen Black

**M**y mother often told me, “Do not pray for patience.” The premise behind this statement is that if you pray for patience, the Lord will answer with situations that train you to be patient. We are called to be patient in trials, patient in waiting, patient in listening, patient with a difficult child, patient with someone slower than you; James even warned his readers to be patient in waiting on the Lord. You name it; there are a myriad of situations that offer us the need or chance to practice patience, most of which often involve incidences of delays, troubles, or suffering. I don’t know about you, but this sounds like a rehearsal I’d like to miss. Yet, as my mother also said many times over, “practice makes perfect,” which makes me think we would be wise to pray for patience.

*The Dictionary of Oxford Languages defines patience as: “The capacity to accept or tolerate delay, trouble, or suffering without getting angry or upset.”*

## IT’S ALL IN THE ATTITUDE

Patience isn’t just waiting; it is waiting with style and attitude—an attitude not fueled by our desires and demands but by confidence in God’s sovereign and omniscient power. This was, in essence, David’s point in Psalm 37:7, when he wrote three specific instructions: “Wait patiently ... wait confidently ... and do not fret.” When we are confident in the LORD, waiting patiently will come more naturally and with less fretting over the schemes and outcomes of others. James wrote about this

to his readers in James, chapter five, when he warned them against grumbling about each other and encouraged them, instead, to be patient and endure like Job and the prophets, characters who were undoubtedly confident in God and were as James said, blessed for their endurance in trials and suffering.

## THE RIGHT INFLUENCE

A confident attitude is essential to overcoming the battle with patience, but the other key ingredient is God’s Word. Consider the words of Paul in Romans 15:4-6 (NLT), where he tells his audience that the Scriptures were meant to teach [believers], but even more to the point that they were meant to give us, as verse four says, “hope and encouragement as we wait patiently for God’s promises to be fulfilled.” God not only encourages us, but Paul says that God is also the One who “gives this patience.” And He does all of this “so that” the followers of Christ can come together to glorify and praise God with one voice.

*“Patience is not just the ability to wait, but to abide. It is not just gritting our teeth and waiting for a circumstance to change, a trial to resolve, or crossing days off on a calendar. It is living daily in the awareness that God holds all things together, and that, in the grand scheme of things, whatever trouble we face during this life is light and momentary. Sin and suffering have an expiration date. They are not eternal.”*

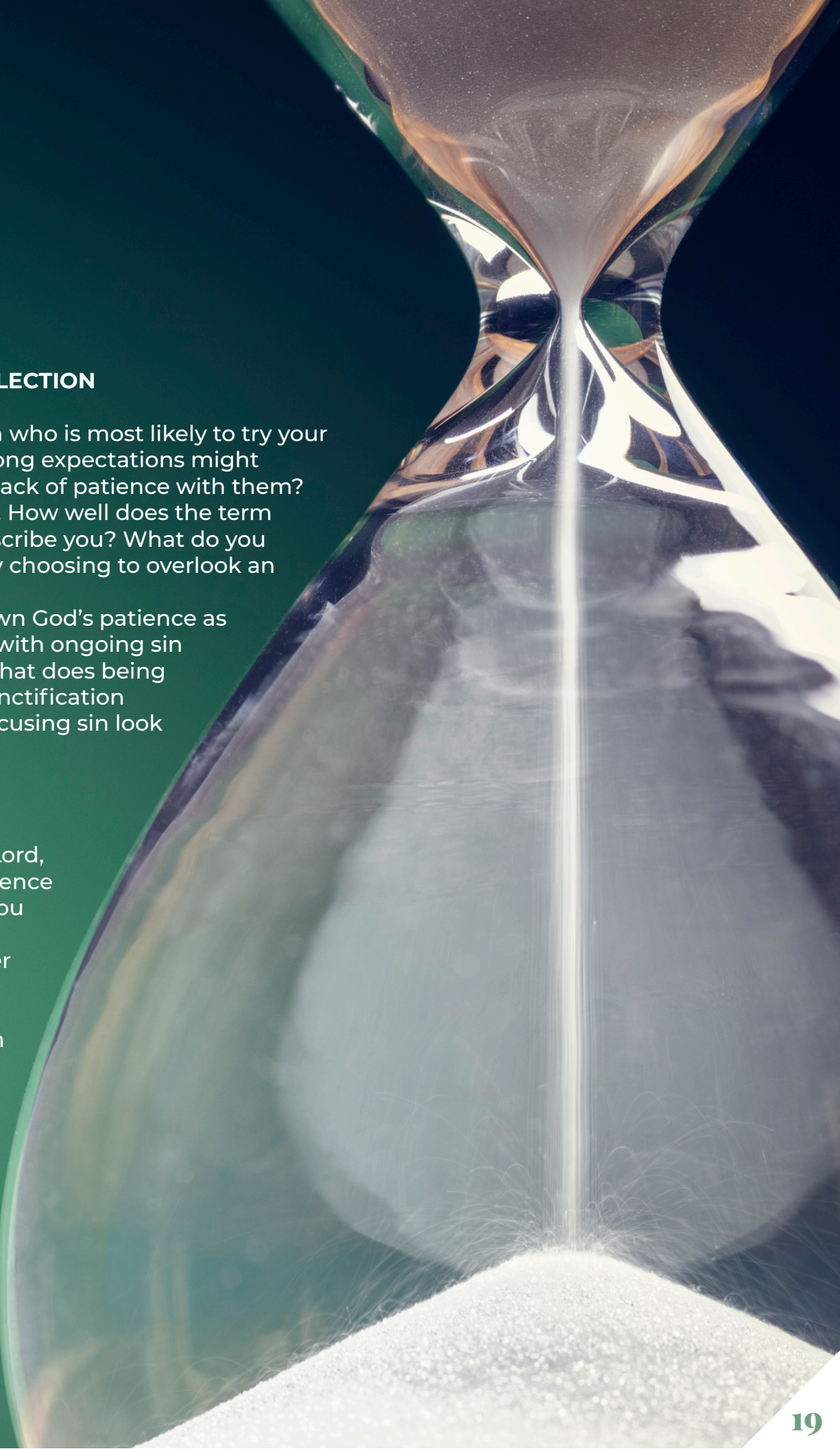
- Jen Wilkin

## QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. Think of the person who is most likely to try your patience. What wrong expectations might contribute to your lack of patience with them?
2. Read Proverbs 19:11. How well does the term “slow to anger” describe you? What do you fear you will lose by choosing to overlook an offense?
3. How have you known God’s patience as you have wrestled with ongoing sin in your own life? What does being patient with the sanctification process without excusing sin look like?

## PRAY

Write a prayer to the Lord, thank Him for His patience and ask Him to help you grow in patience with others and to be better at waiting on Him in your circumstances. Ask Him to help you in being slow to anger, abounding in love, and quick to overlook the offense of others. Thank Him for the faithful example of Christ, who shows us the way of patience.



## NEWS FROM THE FIELD

For full updates, go to [lmbc.org/missionary-updates](http://lmbc.org/missionary-updates)

*Is anyone among you suffering? He should pray. Is anyone in good spirits? He should sing praises. <sup>14</sup>Is anyone among you ill? He should summon the elders of the church, and they should pray for him and anoint him with olive oil in the name of the Lord. <sup>15</sup>And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick and the Lord will raise him up*

*- James 5:13-15a*

**W**e receive many prayer requests from our missionaries, and we are called to pray for each other. Specifically, as James writes - we are to pray for those who are suffering or sick. Please read through each request and join us in praying for this family who is serving the Lord on the fields of Saipan. May God grace them with hope and strength and the provisions they need in these days of trouble.

### The Madasus from Saipan

#### Prayer Request for My Wife's Medical Illness:

-- On a more personal note, I would like



Joel & Stellan  
**MADASUS**

to request your prayers for my wife, Stellan, who is recovering from a medical illness. On January 27, 2024, Stellan had severe lower abdominal pain with sweat and nausea. She was not able to stand or walk, so I rushed her to the ER.

After spending all day and going through multiple tests, the doctors at the ER said there was some fluid in the uterus due to the cyst, which was ruptured. They referred her to CT Scan, which also showed no significant concerns. They gave her some antibiotics and asked for a follow-up check-up this Thursday.

We believe in the power of prayer and know that your intercessions will provide comfort and healing during this challenging period. Please keep us in your thoughts and prayers.

In times of celebration and challenge, the love and support are invaluable. We appreciate your continued prayers, encouragement, and the sense of unity that binds us together as brothers and sisters in Christ.

Thank you for your continuous prayer and support; may God's blessings be upon you and your loved ones

## MISSIONARIES WE SUPPORT IN North America

JJ & Melissa Alderman (Timothy Initiative)  
Trey & Terri Bailey, USA (DBMI)  
Tim & Diane Bilbrey, USA (DBMI)  
Jenn Morla, Dominican Republic  
A New Beginning Crisis Pregnancy Center  
Backpack Ministry  
Paul Bock, USA (SCORE)  
Brown Bags Ministry  
Daystar Baptist Missions, Inc.  
Jake & Elizabeth Delich, Puerto Rico  
Benji & Kerri Dryden, Haiti  
Ebenezer  
Matt & Dallita Goins, Honduras  
Becky Hale-Staggs, USA

#### Prayer Requests:

- As soon as the ER doctors said she would have to go through ALL the tests they recommended, I understood there would be thousands of dollars of bills. We do not have insurance. Insurance for a family of three is around \$680 per month. There is no way I can afford it. Please pray that our Supreme and Sovereign Lord would care for our needs as He always did.
- Please pray for the Church ministries in Saipan. Please pray that many would come to a saving knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- According to the Local Zoning authorities, we have to put up a Church board that shows the Church's name on the building (Sign Board), but this will cost us around \$1500. Please pray; this must be according to the specifics they have given. They will have us do the board repeatedly if we do it wrong.
- Please pray for our families at home.
- Please pray for our Son, Enoch. By God's grace, he has memorized Psalms 1, 23, 100, and 117; he would pray the Lord's prayer, the

Gary & Alli Hale, Dominican Republic  
Wendy Hinzman, USA (AVANT)  
Doug & Paula Hodges, D.R. & Honduras  
Huntington City Mission  
Chris Katulka, USA (Friends of Israel)  
Tom & Selva Kweder, USA  
Patrick & Lisa McCoy, USA (Hawaii)  
Randy & Ellen Mumper, Canada  
Nahum & Arin O'Brien, USA  
Gerald & Marguerite Pauley, Canada  
Dan & Jennifer Post, Canada  
Wade & Kacey Rainey, Dominican Republic  
Nathan & Erin Sayre, USA (Children)  
Mike & Pam Smith, USA (Ebenezer)  
Jason & Sarah Sykes, Dominican Republic  
Jerry & Sue Thomas, USA  
Tri-State Bible College (local)  
Nathaniel & Stacy Wall, USA (Mormons)

"morning prayer," and the "evening prayer" in his way - so adorable. We pray that God will save and use him for His glory.

- Please pray for us as we are trying to find another apartment. Our current one is going bad; the ceiling is coming off. When we talked to the Chinese landlord, she said we could stay or leave, but they wouldn't fix it. We cannot live here because of the house's extreme sewage smell, mold, and other bugs. Please pray we find an affordable place.

We thank you and those praying for us and helping us financially. Please share the work the Lord has called us to do with others so they may also pray. Prayer is powerful.

Thank you for your time.

*In Christ's Love,  
The Madasus*

Want to send a word of encouragement? Send an email to [joel@gospelheritageministries.org](mailto:joel@gospelheritageministries.org) or a card to P.O. Box 10001 PMB1476, Saipan, MP 96950

# A Weekend with Tim Lee

April 20 & 21



All men are invited (and highly encouraged) to join us for a night with Tim Lee on

**Saturday, April 20**  
in the FLC Gym at 5 pm

There will be food, prizes, and most importantly, motivation by Tim Lee to face the challenges of serving God in this day and age.

All are welcome but **you must register if you want to eat at the event.** (you can scan the QR code to the right for a shortcut)



**“**Like a modern-day apostle Paul, Tim Lee has faithfully shared his life-changing testimony and multitudes have come to Christ. He is one of the few God-anointed evangelists left in our day who can draw the net. Every time he preaches we see people saved and baptized. I thank God for his service to our country and to our Lord.”

Dr. Grant Ethridge | Senior Pastor  
Liberty Live Church  
Hampton Roads, VA

**T**im Lee was born and raised in southern Illinois to John and Wanda Lee. His father pastored Southern Baptist Churches for 60 years.

Tim was an athlete in High School, playing basketball, football, baseball and track and field. He set records in the long jump and hurdles. He played one year of college basketball.

On March 8, 1971 while serving in the United States Marine Corps in South Vietnam, Tim gave both of his legs to America. Instead of quitting or becoming bitter, God used this major event in Tim's life to propel him into a ministry that no one could have imagined at that time.

Tim Lee is not your “typical” evangelist: in appearance—he speaks from a wheelchair—however, most people, within the first five minutes of listening to Tim, forget all about the wheelchair and they are honed in on the message.

We invite everyone to join us

**Sunday, April 21**

to hear Tim Lee speak in all services:  
**9 am, 10:45 am, and 6 pm**

We promise you will be inspired, challenged, and filled with gratitude for our God who gives second chances.

# NATIONAL Day of Prayer

A graphic for National Day of Prayer. The background features a large American flag with stars and stripes. In the foreground, the Washington Monument stands in a park-like setting with trees and a body of water reflecting the monument and the sky. The text 'NATIONAL Day of Prayer' is overlaid on the image, with 'NATIONAL' in a bold, sans-serif font and 'Day of Prayer' in a large, red, cursive script.

## Thursday, May 2

We will gather at Barbourville Park, Shelter #8 (right by the lake) to observe the National Day of Prayer, starting at 6 pm. Drop by as you are able. Take advantage of the walking paths and pray for the nation and its leaders with your church family.

There will also be food!



# EBENEZER COMMUNITY CHURCH

Our connection to downtown Huntington is about to introduce numerous outreach opportunities. Please watch this page for updates!



## Prayer Partner Initiative

# Difference Makers

SERVE GOD | SERVE OTHERS

## LifeBridge Food & Clothing Pantry



## Each Sunday

**Bible Study**  
11 am



**9th**

**First Responders Meals**  
11 am - 2 pm & 7 - 9 pm



**Kids Bible Club**  
4 - 5:15 pm

### *The harvest is ready*

We are asking you to join with us as we seek to share the gospel with the lost. (Matt. 9:37-38)

### *The Holy Spirit's power is needed*

Prayer for the Holy Spirit to fill and use us is essential in order to fulfill the Great Commission and glorify God. (Acts 1:8)

Prayer partners will receive regular correspondence from our leadership team including specific prayer concerns and answers to prayer.

Join with us as we pray:

- for lost men, women, boys, and girls who need to hear the Gospel.
- for God's wisdom, direction, and strength for the leadership team.
- for open doors of opportunity to minister to a community in need.
- for God to raise up volunteers who will help carry on the work that He has called us to do.

**Connect with us on Facebook or at [ebenezer@lmbc.org](mailto:ebenezer@lmbc.org)**

... is in need of **cleaning supplies**, as well as **dishwashing liquid** and **laundry detergent**. They also need underwear for all genders and sizes; please keep in mind they only accept new/unused underwear in unopened packages.

**NOTE:** The pantry cannot accept outdated canned goods, dirty clothes, clothes with pet hair, and no toys please. Our volunteers work one day a week in the pantry; please help us help them to be able to spend their time serving the clientele and be efficient in their efforts to sort and organize the things that are donated without having to be concerned with things that they cannot use. Remember: If you think it's too dirty, stained, outdated, or worn to wear, we will not be able to use it.

## Thank You!

... for sharing the love by handing out the John 3:16 booklets. Booklets are still available in the lobby areas if you would like to keep the love going.

## *Easing Your Burden*

*by Anne Graham Lotz*

*Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.*  
**1 John 4:7**

Most of us increase our pain by dwelling on it or by analyzing it. We throw a pity party and expect others to join us. We spiral downward into depression, withdrawing into self-preoccupation. But the way to overcome is not to focus on ourselves or on the pain, but to focus on the needs of others.

Would you get your eyes off yourself and your problems and your pressures and your pain and look around? Who do you know who is suffering or struggling in some way? What can you do for them? Ask God to bring to your attention those you can care for. Because as you do, you will find joy in easing their burden, and in the process, you will ease your own.



TAKE A LOOK AT THE LATEST  
**FAMILY NEWS**

**Bereavements**

- Jim Burns, Thurman Burns' brother
- Linda Butcher, Shona Johnston's mother
- James Schmit, Kim Schmit's husband
- Jackie Westcott
- Nancy Young, Dorothy Harper's sister

**New Members**

- Noel Drown (by baptism)
- Hadlee Lucas (by baptism)
- Ashton Meehling (by baptism)
- Brooklyn Morgan (by baptism)
- Kennedy Wagoner (by baptism)

**Joining LMBC**

Let's make a difference together

Are you looking for a church home?  
Would you prayerfully consider whether God may be leading you to our family of believers?  
Below are the four simple steps.

Call **304-736-7676** or visit **lmbc.org** to get started

**1st Baptism**

Trust in Christ and follow Him in believer's baptism.

**2nd Register (pick 1)**

**In Service:** scan the QR code on the pew in front of you and let us know you would like to join.  
**Online:** [lmbc.org/register](https://lmbc.org/register)

**3rd Discover**

Check out the information in the visitor packet you received when you registered with us or visit [lmbc.org/what-we-believe](https://lmbc.org/what-we-believe) to learn about our core beliefs and more.

**4th Experience**

Come to the next **Starting Point** on **Sunday, April 14, 2024 @ 4:30 pm** in the HIS Way Cafe (SMB), where you'll meet with our pastors to begin your membership experience.  
**Register:** [lmbc.org/starting-point](https://lmbc.org/starting-point)

**Life Groups**  
Come grow with us

**ADULTS (COED)**

- SUNDAYS @ 10:30 am**  
Believing, Belonging, & Becoming (L114) ..... Thurman Lowder
- @ 10:45 am**  
College Group (S100) ..... Wyatt & Emily McCabe  
Through the Bible (S103) ..... Jared Blankenship  
Wall Builders (S101) ..... Steve Bragg  
Cornerstone (S102) ..... Tim Koletka  
Maranatha (Renaissance Room) ..... Chuck Daniel
- TUESDAYS @ 1 pm**  
Fearless (S102) ..... Estep/Taylor
- @ 6 pm**  
Life Together (S101) ..... Tim Yates
- @ 6:30 pm**  
Pickle Ball & Jesus (Gym) ..... Chuck Daniel
- WEDNESDAYS @ 10 am**  
Encouraging Friends Ministry (L110) ..... Kate McMullen
- @ 6:30 pm**  
At Home with the Word (Tardy Home) ..... Steve & Vicky Tardy  
It's Always Something (S101) ..... Chuck Daniel
- @ 6:45 pm**  
Abundant Life (L108) ..... McMullen/Gibson  
Selah (L114) ..... Nathan McClay  
College Group (S100) ..... Deanna Brammer
- @ 7 pm**  
Friends of God (Renaissance Room) ..... David & Mary Lemming  
The House (S102) ..... Sergent/Ball  
Rooted in Christ (F207) ..... Jonah & MaKayla Howerton  
Whosoever (L112) ..... Austin Fry

**WOMEN**

- SUNDAYS @ 10:45 am**  
Journey with Him (L110) ..... Hale/Tritz
- MONDAYS @ 6 pm**  
Daughters of the King (S101) ..... Rebekah Shaffer
- TUESDAYS @ 9:30 am**  
Kingdom Seekers (Tardy Home) ..... Tardy/McMullen
- @ 10 am**  
At His Feet (S101) ..... Beth Jenkins  
Sewing for God's Children (S103) ..... Barbara Keaton
- WEDNESDAYS @ 7 pm**  
4Ever His (LKC) ..... Leah Adkins  
Women of God (F205) ..... Hager/Bashore  
\*Embrace Grace (F206) \*for single pregnant ladies ..... Angela Cantley
- THURSDAYS @ 10 am**  
Women of Strength (HIS Way Cafe) ..... Mullens/Foreman

**MEN**

- WEDNESDAYS @ 10 am**  
Westridge Wisdom (S101) ..... Jeremy Shaffer
- @ 7 pm**  
Men of Truth (HIS Way Cafe) ..... Steve Bragg  
Iron Sharpeners (L110) ..... Matheny/Miller  
Sons of Thunder (L109) ..... Dan Thompson

**SENIORS**

- SUNDAYS @ 9 am**  
Young at Heart (L114) ..... Bill Blankenship

Connect is the monthly news and informational publication from



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**SUNDAY WORSHIP**  
9 & 10:45 am  
6 pm  
(watch live at [lmbc.tv](https://lmbc.tv))

**WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY**  
7 pm

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