

The Response Hymn *“Give Thanks with a Grateful Heart”*

**Give thanks with a grateful heart,
Give thanks to the Holy One,
Give thanks because He’s given
Jesus Christ His Son. Repeat**

**And now let the strong say “I am weak,”
Let the rich say “I am poor,”
Because of what the Lord has done for us.**

**And now let the weak say “I am strong,”
Let the poor say “I am rich,”
Because of what the Lord has done for us.
Give thanks, give thanks.**

The Litany Prayers (spoken) **LSB 249**

The Closing Hymn *“Sing, My Tongue, the Glorious Battle”*
LSB 454

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Taking It Home

Thursday – Read James 1:1-27

How are James’ words about facing trials so different than our natural response?

What are the two results of trials and testing?

In this context, what “wisdom” do you think James is encouraging us to ask for?

Is it bad to be poor? Is it bad to be rich? What should each take pride in?

What is the final outcome of persevering or remaining steadfast under trials? (vs 12)

While God may test our faith to make us mature, temptations have the opposite goal – to take us away from faith. Where does James say our temptations come from?

What are the three steps of temptation’s destructive power?

What is the comfort in knowing that the Father “does not change like shifting lights?”

How are we “born again” according to James? (vs. 18)

What is the very first thing we should be doing with this new birth?

What is the means of getting rid of the filth? (vs. 21b)

Should we continue to hear and do what God calls good?

What so easily makes our religion worthless?

Prayer: Thank You, Lord, for planting Your Word in my heart and making me a new creation in Jesus. Help me to always seek the wisdom that comes from You, that in the midst of both trials and temptations I would stand firm in Your unchanging gifts and finally receive the crown of life in Jesus. Amen.

Friday – Read James 2:1-3:12

What royal law is broken when we show favoritism?

Whom has God chosen to be rich in faith? Does this mean that the rich are excluded from the kingdom?

Knowing that we fall under the same judgement of the law, what should we be showing to everyone?

What must faith be accompanied by?

What two examples of actions completing faith are given?

What is the problem with our tongues?

Prayer: In some ways it is so easy to say, “I believe,” but it can be hard to live out my faith. Forgive me for the times that I choose to judge people by how I see them instead of how You see them. Forgive me for the many times I have cursed people who are made in Your image. By Your Spirit, strengthen me to live out my faith to Your glory. Amen.

Saturday - Read James 3:13-5:6

What works spring from a wisdom that is earthly, even demonic?

What attitudes and actions spring from the wisdom from above?

Where do quarrels and fights come from?

How can this flow over into our prayer life?

James uses the language of the prophets in the Old Testament to call everyone of us to repentance. “Cleanse your hands...purify your heart” refers to our attitudes and actions which are purified by repentance.

Why should we consider ourselves “wretched” and “mourn and weep?”

How does the “wisdom from above” show itself in the way we plan our lives and go about our business?

Verses 5:1-6 are strong words of condemnation against the rich who have had their fill through corruption. It makes us think of “Lazarus and the Rich Man” (Luke 16:19-31) and also “Naboth’s Vineyard” (1 Kings 21) and the judgements God rendered.

Prayer: O Lord, grant to me the true humility of repentance and the joyful exaltation of Your forgiveness. Fill me with Your wisdom that I would overflow with mercy instead of judgement. Amen.

Sunday - Read James 5:7-20

What does waiting for the coming of the Lord require?

Why should we not swear an oath?

Is it appropriate for us to pray for each other?

Anointing with oil has a rich and varied usage in the Bible. Kings and prophets, even the tabernacle items, were anointed with oil to be consecrated as holy or set apart. Here is another application of the idea, that the oil and prayer marks the sick person as one set apart for God’s care.

The prayer of faith is for the healing of the sick, but the “Lord will raise him up” also directs our eyes to the ultimate goal of the resurrection of the dead in Christ.

Sin and sickness are naturally related in our minds. While not every sickness is directly related to a particular sin, every sickness does provides us an opportunity to humble ourselves before the Lord.

What would be the difference between “judging your neighbor” (James 4:11-12) and the call to “bring back a sinner from his wandering?”

Prayer: My life is in Your hands, O Lord. Save me, heal me, and use my voice to praise You, to pray for my brothers and sisters, and to speak Your life-giving Word. Amen.