

June 23 2024, FPC Port Huron, Pastor Roxie Davis; SERMON: Wisdom in James Scripture: New Testament: Broken/Whole: James 1: 2-4; God's Wisdom: James 1:5; Trust in God: James 1: 6-8; God's Generosity: James 1: 12, 16-18; Listen to God: James 1: 22-25; Words/Actions: James 1: 26-27

INTRODUCTION

As many of you know, we are in a **Preaching Series, Names: Same but Different.** There are so many people in the Bible who have the same name but they have very different roles in the purposes of God. We ask the question, Is that the same person who appears perhaps in the **Gospels and then in the Letters of Paul?** Or they have the "same name" appears in the **Old Testament and New Testament** but different people—centuries apart.

PEOPLE

We have already looked at the **many Marys, especially in the Gospels. Josephs—in both the Old and New Testament; And last week John,** looking specifically at the writer John who wrote the **Gospel** of John and the **Book of Revelations**—the disciple of Jesus. **TODAY It is James' turn.** If you remember, from last week, **John and James** are brothers. They are **brothers, sons** of Zebedee. They are **fishermen.** They are **called by Jesus to follow Him.** They immediately go with Jesus,--leaving their boats, nets and their father. They become **Disciples of Jesus.** Jesus calls James and John **Sons of Thunder** because they get a bit **"hot under the collar"** when some Samaritans harassed Jesus. Jesus nicknames them Sons of Thunder because of their anger and quick temper! **James and John and Peter are in the Inner circle** of Jesus and get to see more than the other disciples see because they are very close to Jesus. Now there is another James in the list of Jesus' disciples. His name James, always with the sub-title, **"Son of Alpheus," James the Lesser--distinguishing him from the James, brother of John, son of Zebedee.** We know nothing else about this James.

JAMES—WRITER OF THE BOOK OF JAMES

Now that I have given you some **details** about those two Disciples called James. **There is another James in the New Testament who is the one on which we will concentrate today. He wrote the powerful, amazing Book of James in the New Testament. You need to read this book in your Bible.** is in the back of the New Testament—only 5 chapters long. You know, everyone has those books that they want to crack open in these **lazy days of summer. The Book of James really needs to be on your summer reading list.**

THE MESSAGE And if you don't have a **Bible that is understandable to you**— Take one of these, at no cost—**The Message**—very contemporary language— I brought a number of them today—(If we run out, we will order more.)

JAMES—HALF BROTHER OF JESUS

Historically, **This James is called the half-brother of Jesus**. That is, Matthew 1 states that Joseph, Mother Mary's husband: did not "know her"—until she brought forth her "firstborn son" (Jesus)—which means that Joseph and Mary did not have normal marital relations until after Jesus' birth. And it is recorded in **Mark 6** that Joseph and Mary had **other children**: daughters (the daughters' names are not recorded, of course) and sons named: **James, Joses, Jude and Simon**. James, often called the half-brother of Jesus—Becomes the **head of the early church**—He is the leader of the **mother church in Jerusalem**, where there are **Messianic Jews**, who have come to believe in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

JAMES, CHURCH LEADER OF THE JERUSALEM, HAS A REPUTATION

He is very Wise. A Pillar of Exceptional Faith; A Peacemaker (integrated Gentiles and Jews into the early church is not an easy task) and **He is Courageous**. **He dies a Martyr's death**, for the sake of Jesus Christ.

BOOK OF JAMES He is also a writer—He writes the Book of James.

Bruce and I read portions out of the first chapter that gives you all kinds of hints about what is in Chapter 2 through 5. The Book of James has some very wise thoughts in it—based on what **Jesus taught (especially in the Sermon on Mount) and what we studied in the Book of Proverbs. He grew up with both of them**. James is giving a **lot of wise advice** on how to "**Love God and Love Each Other**." **In your bulletin** you will see that there are **Themes** that are all presented in the **First Chapter of the book—which are developed in the rest of the book—Chapters 2-5**.

Broken/Whole—James talks here about trials and hard times—we feel broken—we can all relate to that. **As I see it, faith in Jesus, gets us through those difficult times**.

God's Wisdom—Just ask God for wisdom on how deal with your life and God will give generously to you. But...You (and I) have to **Trust God** with our lives; our situations—our relationships. We have to listen for God's instructions—Sometimes it comes **through God's Word**—Sometimes **through the people around you**— Sometimes **through an experience—A God Moment that you didn't expect**. But you were trusting God to walk with you—You were giving God a chance to do something in your life **that will make you WHOLE**.

You see, belief in Jesus Christ is not an interesting philosophy—a deep theology—**It is life—in all its fullness—here and beyond.** You and I have to **rely on the fact that God speaks through His word in Scripture;** And that God **wants the best for you and for me.** And if we want **the wholeness of God’s love** **In our lives, We can’t just talk the good talk—We’ve got to walk the good talk. Our actions and our words have to match. That is what James says in his book. God will deal generously with us.** When your words (My words) When your behavior (My behavior) **intertwine. Is it easy? No, not always, especially when we go through hard times (which the people in that day were going through—famine, poverty, religious arguments, and persecution.** James in the Book of James is calling us to truly follow Jesus—He tells us **that following Jesus, is a really wise thing to do, listening to the teachings of Jesus and to the Book of Proverbs.** When we say **“YES” to Jesus,** desiring wholeheartedly to devote our lives to Him, the **Great Commandment—Love God and Love Others become a reality for us—and for others: Broken—Whole—God plans it that way.**

DRAGONFLIES

This past week when I was **preparing for this sermon**—reading the Book of James; Reviewing again Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount and the Book of Proverbs, I was also doing lots of other things in my life. This past week, I gathered with a **group of women**—We have been together for over 20 years. We are from Port Huron, Richmond, New Baltimore, Mount Clemens, Grosse Point. We call ourselves the Dragonflies-] **Dragonfly means “Perseverance.”** We get together about **every other month**—We touch down with each other. We talk about our faith—about our lives. We study together and enjoy really good food when we get together, at each other’s houses. This past week, one of our women: **Judy**—shared a poem, really a short drama, written by **John Roedel Writer, Poet and Storyteller—A man whom you can tell, knows God intimately It is titled: Me and God.**

I have asked Bruce Morrison to help me to share this Poem—Drama with all of you. I’m Me and Bruce is God—I told him, “Don’t let it go to your head. That will hard on your wife Sandy.”

Me: Hey God.

God: Hello, my love.

Me: I'm falling apart. Can you put me back together?

God: I would rather not.

Me: Why?

God: Because you aren't a puzzle.

Me: What about all of the pieces of my life that are falling down onto the ground?

God: Let them stay there for a while. They fell off for a reason. Take some time and decide if you need any of those pieces back.

Me: You don't understand! I'm breaking down!

God: No - you don't understand. You are breaking through. What you are feeling are just growing pains. You are shedding the things and the people in your life that are holding you back. You aren't falling apart. You are falling into place. Relax. Take some deep breaths and allow those things you don't need anymore to fall off of you. Quit holding onto the pieces that don't fit you anymore. Let them fall off. Let them go.

Me: Once I start doing that, what will be left of me?

God: Only the very best pieces of you.

Me: I'm scared of changing.

God: I keep telling you - YOU AREN'T CHANGING!! YOU ARE BECOMING!

Me: Becoming who?

God: Becoming who I created you to be! A person of light and love and charity and hope and courage and joy and mercy and grace and compassion. I made you for more than the shallow pieces you have decided adorn yourself with that you cling to with such greed and fear. Let those things fall off of you. I love you! Don't change! Become! Become! Become who I made you to be. I'm going to keep telling you this until you remember it.

Me: There goes another piece.

God: Yep. Let it be.

Me: So I'm not broken?

God: No - but you are breaking like the dawn.

It's a new day. Become!! Become!!

ENDING

So if you are feeling broken. You are not alone. Just two days ago, I had a young man in my office who felt really broken. We talked. God was there.

And **maybe** you are feeling that way also. Or maybe you have felt that way.

Or someone in your life is feeling that way, Just remember your brokenness is God's Gift: A Gift for you to become who God created You to be. So when you are feeling down, Broken, in hard times, going through some trials, open up your Bible, and read the Book of James. written by a wise man who loves Jesus.

My only advise--read it slowly so that God can do His work in making you whole, just the way He wants you.