

SPIRITUAL DIGEST



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ENJOYED AND
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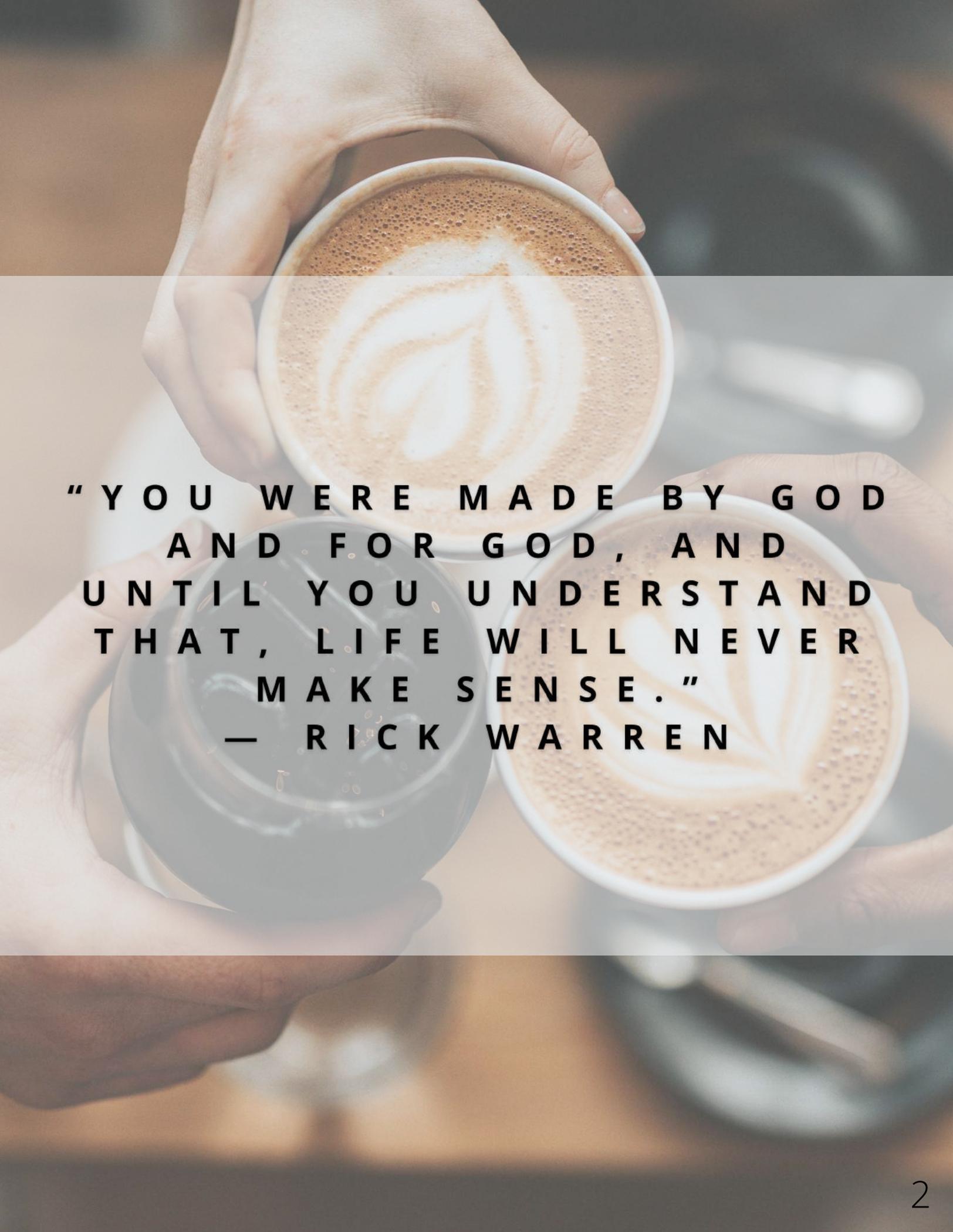
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**"YOU WERE MADE BY GOD
AND FOR GOD, AND
UNTIL YOU UNDERSTAND
THAT, LIFE WILL NEVER
MAKE SENSE."
— RICK WARREN**



LOVE BEING GOD ENJOYED AND TOUCHED BY MAN

Ephesians 3:17 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

All the words in the Bible are intended for man's understanding. But our problem is that we might not have the proper understanding of what God says in the Bible. For example, our understanding of faith might not be the same as what God says in the Bible concerning faith. Likewise, our understanding of love might not be the same as what God says in the Bible concerning love. Christians often talk about faith, but many misunderstand what the Bible says concerning faith. Likewise, love is a favorite subject among Christians, but many misunderstand what the Bible says concerning love. For example, Ephesians 3:17 says that we need to be rooted and grounded in love, and 4:16 says that the church will build itself up in love. Many people understand these verses to mean that we need to love one another in the church so that

we may be built up together. Such an understanding seems appropriate, but it is a natural understanding.

If asked what chapters 3 and 4 say concerning love, some people might answer, "God is love." Although this is true, these chapters go a step further to show that love is God in the Son to be enjoyed by us. Grace is God being gained by us. Grace does not refer to general blessings, such as peace or benefits that God gives to man. Rather, grace is God Himself being gained by man. If we gain God as the Spirit, the divine life, and the divine nature, then we have received grace. After we receive grace and are brought back to God, we will realize that He is love. Both grace and love are God. God is grace, [634] and He is also love. When God comes forth to reach man and to be gained by man, He is grace. When man returns to God in order to enjoy God, man touches love. Grace is God manifested; love is God touched. The Gospel of John speaks of God becoming flesh in order to reach man and be gained by man and therefore emphasizes grace (1:14, 16-17). First John speaks of man receiving grace and by this

grace having fellowship with God, touching God, and entering into God; therefore, 1 John emphasizes love (4:8, 16). The source of grace is love, and when love proceeds out of God, it is grace. Hence, we need to see that love is deeper than grace. If as children of God we know only grace, we are still shallow. We must go deeper by entering into God and enjoying Him as love.

Thus, the word love is rooted and grounded in love and in building up of itself in love does not refer to our own love but to God in the Son being contacted, enjoyed, experienced, and touched by us. We are not only forgiven of our sins to gain life, receive salvation, and become persons of God; we must also enter into God, fellowship with Him, and touch Him. Then we will sense that Christ is making His home in our hearts. After regeneration Christ lives in our spirit, but Ephesians 3 says that Christ is making His home in our hearts (v. 17). Since the heart includes the soul as well as the conscience of the spirit, the heart is an organ that links the spirit with the soul. Therefore, although Christ lives in our spirit, He can touch our emotions, a part of our soul, so that we feel love and sweetness. We can experience Christ in such a way that we sense Him as our sweet and lovely Lord; He is our enjoyment and our love. There is an

indescribable sweetness in our emotion that we sense as we enter into God and have fellowship with Him.

The more we live in God, touch Him, and fellowship with Him in the sweet feeling of our emotion, the more we will be rooted and grounded in love; in other words, we will be saturated with love. This can be likened to putting a handkerchief in water. The handkerchief will be soaked with water. When we fellowship with God and are saturated with Him in such a way that He can touch our emotions and cause us to enjoy His sweetness, we are touching the love of God. Therefore, being rooted and grounded in love means that we are fully immersed in the divine love. At this point it will be impossible for us to hate, condemn, or murmur against others.

The Vision, Type, and Practice of the Building Up of the Church
CWWL, 1958, vol. 2



WALK WORTHILY OF THE LORD

Col. 1:10 To walk worthily of the Lord to please Him in all things, bearing fruit in every good work and growing by the full knowledge of God.

11 Being empowered with all power, according to the might of His glory, unto all endurance and long-suffering with joy.

Gal. 5:16 But I say, Walk by the Spirit and you shall buy no means fulfill the lust of the flesh.

In verse 10 Paul says, "To walk worthily of the Lord to please Him in all things, bearing fruit in every good work and growing by the full knowledge of God." Some think that to walk worthily of the Lord is to be humble, nice, and generous. However, a worthy walk is a walk in which we live Christ. We can be humble, nice and generous without living by Christ. Only by living out Christ can we walk worthily of the Lord. Christ is the will of God, and He should also be our walk.

But to walk worthily of the Lord, we need to be empowered with

all power. In order to know God's will and walk according to it, we need divine, spiritual power. We are not capable in ourselves to walk worthily according to the eternal will of God. We need to be empowered with the divine power of resurrection, with not merely a little power but with all power according to the might of His glory. We know from Ephesians what Paul means when he speaks of being empowered with all power according to the might of God's glory. This power is the resurrection power that is full of the riches of God's glory and that raised Christ from the dead, lifted Him to the right hand of God in the heavens, subjected all things under His feet, and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church (1:19-22). We need this power to strengthen us to walk worthily of the Lord according to what we know of His eternal will.

Pray-reading the Word is one way that opens our spirit and

lets the Lord strengthen our spirit inwardly, occupy our spirit, and spread out of our spirit. The more we pray-read and open our spirit, the more the Lord spreads within us and strengthens us. He desires to occupy not only our spirit but also our mind, emotion, and will. Thus, our whole being will be occupied by the Lord, and we will be filled with the Lord inwardly. This is the inward filling of the Holy Spirit so that we can walk worthily of the Lord.

While we learn to live Christ and walk a worthy walk, we will run into the problem of our flesh. The flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; between the two is the cross. The flesh must be dealt with by the cross, and then there will be room to be filled and strengthened with the Holy Spirit. Therefore, when we open to the Lord to let Him strengthen and gain room in our inner man, the flesh and the Spirit lust against each other in us. Because our flesh, our self, has no desire to give in, disputes arise. During such disputes, we must take the cross to deal with our flesh and put our self to death. In other words, at such a time we need to let the Lord win and allow ourselves to be defeated. We should pray, "Lord, defeat me. Do not let me win. Fill me with the Spirit and strengthen me from within my spirit." Once we open our spirit to enjoy the

Lord and receive the cross, we are inwardly filled with the Holy Spirit and spontaneously will be empowered to walk worthily of the Lord in all things.

References:

Life Study of Colossians, Message 3

The Knowledge and Experience of Christ in Ephesians and Colossians, Chapter 6

Living in the Spirit, Standing

on the Church Ground, and

Spreading the Gospel, Chapter

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WHO WAS JAMES, THE BROTHER OF JESUS, IN THE BIBLE?

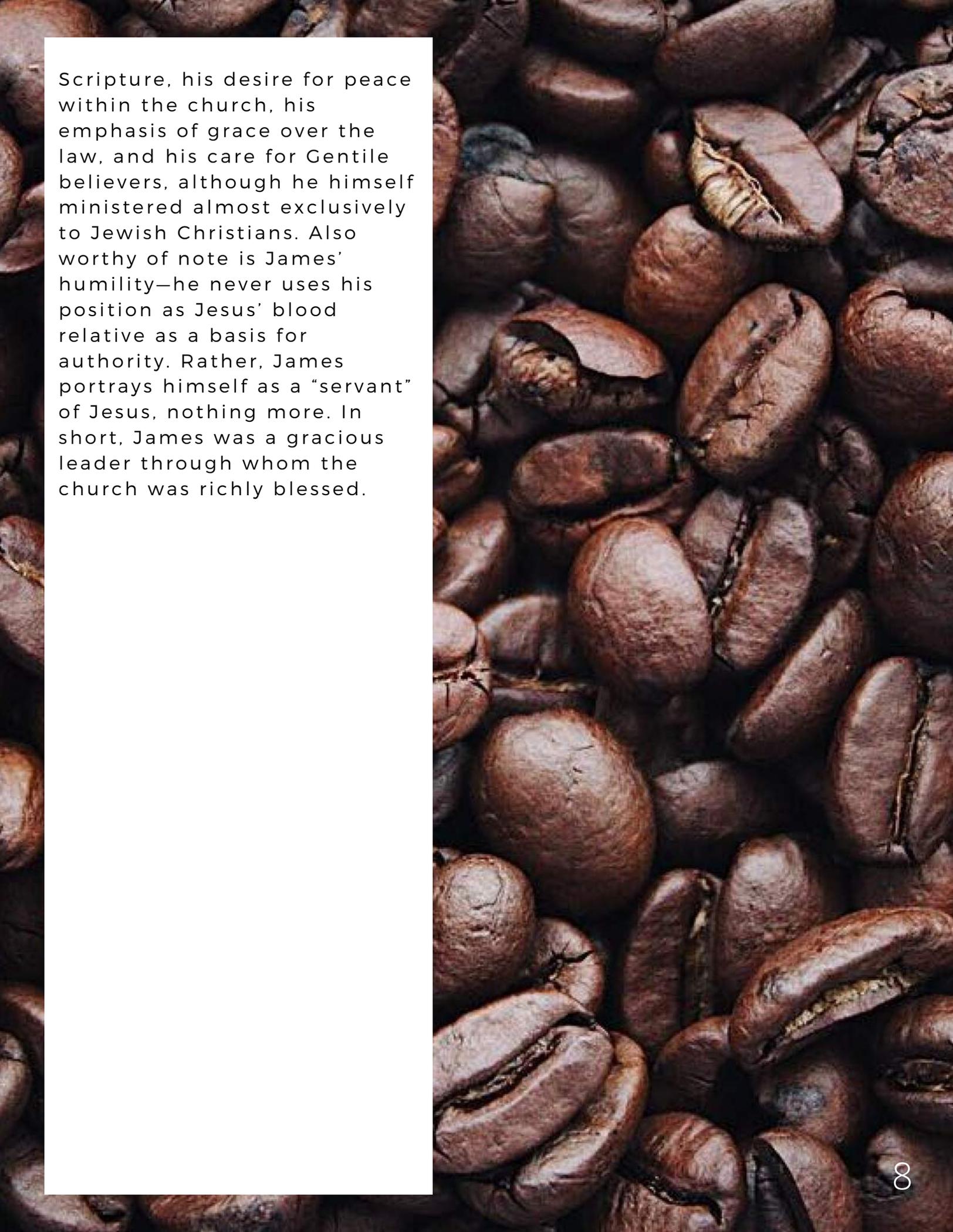
James was a son of Mary and Joseph and therefore a half-brother to Jesus and brother to Joseph, Simon, Judas, and their sisters (Matthew 13:55). In the Gospels, James is mentioned a couple of times, but at that time he misunderstood Jesus' ministry and was not a believer (John 7:2-5). James becomes one of the earliest witnesses of Jesus' resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:7). He then stays in Jerusalem and forms part of the group of believers who pray in the upper room (Acts 1:14). From that time forward, James' status within the Jerusalem church begins to grow.

James is still in Jerusalem when the recently converted Saul arrives to meet with him and Peter (Galatians 1:19). Several years later, when Peter escapes from prison, he reports to James about the miraculous manner of the escape (Acts 12:17). When the

Jerusalem Council convenes, James is the apparent chairman (Acts 15:13, 19). He is also an elder of the church, called a "pillar" in Galatians 2:9. Later, James again presides over a meeting in Jerusalem, this time after Paul's third missionary journey. It is believed that James was martyred about A.D. 62, although there is no biblical record of his death.

James is the author of the epistle of James, which he wrote somewhere between A.D. 50 and A.D. 60. James identifies himself by name but simply describes himself as "a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ" (James 1:1). His letter deals more with Christian ethics than Christian theology. Its theme is the outworking of faith—the external evidence of internal conversion.

A study of James' life provides some important lessons for us. His conversion gives testimony to the overwhelming power that came from being a witness of Jesus' resurrection: James turned from being a skeptic to a leader in the church based on his meeting the resurrected Christ. James' speech at the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15:14-21 reveals his reliance on



Scripture, his desire for peace within the church, his emphasis of grace over the law, and his care for Gentile believers, although he himself ministered almost exclusively to Jewish Christians. Also worthy of note is James' humility—he never uses his position as Jesus' blood relative as a basis for authority. Rather, James portrays himself as a “servant” of Jesus, nothing more. In short, James was a gracious leader through whom the church was richly blessed.

A H Y M N A D A Y K E E P S
Y O U H U M M I N G A L L T H E
W A Y



**LORD, KEEP MY HEART OPEN
AND SOFT TOWARD YOU**

Lord, keep my heart open and soft toward You.
Lord, draw my eyes to see nothing else but You.

Whatever may happen,
I know You want to gain my heart.
Though I may not understand,
Just keep dispensing into my every part.

Make me a believer
By looking at You.
Standing on Your Word,
Faithful and true.

BIBLE CHALLENGE

GOAL: TO READ THE ENTIRE NEW TESTAMENT IN ONE YEAR

5 CHAPTERS A WEEK

WEEK ONE (9/5-9/10)

MONDAY: EPHESIANS 3

https://text.recoveryversion.bible/49_Ephesians_3.htm#Eph3

TUESDAY: EPHESIANS 4

https://text.recoveryversion.bible/49_Ephesians_4.htm#Eph4

WEDNESDAY: EPHESIANS 5

https://text.recoveryversion.bible/49_Ephesians_5.htm#Eph5

THURSDAY: EPHESIANS 6

https://text.recoveryversion.bible/49_Ephesians_6.htm#Eph6

FRIDAY: PHILIPPIANS 1

https://text.recoveryversion.bible/50_Philippians_1.htm

B I B L E C H A L L E N G E

GOAL: TO READ THE ENTIRE NEW TESTAMENT IN ONE YEAR

5 CHAPTERS A WEEK

WEEK TWO(9/12-9/17)

MONDAY: PHILIPPIANS 2

https://text.recoveryversion.bible/50_Philippians_2.htm#Phi2

TUESDAY: PHILIPPIANS 3

https://text.recoveryversion.bible/50_Philippians_3.htm#Phi3

WEDNESDAY: PHILIPPIANS 4

https://text.recoveryversion.bible/50_Philippians_4.htm#Phi4

THURSDAY: COLOSSIANS 1

https://text.recoveryversion.bible/51_Colossians_1.htm

FRIDAY: COLOSSIANS 2

https://text.recoveryversion.bible/51_Colossians_2.htm#Col2