

James (Lesson 28)

TEXT: James 5:19-20

INTRO: Known as “the man behind the man at the throttle”, S. Kip Farrington, Jr. describes the train dispatcher. “Every minute of his eight-hour trick, the dispatcher is called upon to make instant and one hundred per cent correct decisions. There can be no hesitation, no appeal to someone else, no hedging or uncertainty. Never can he falter or withhold judgment; never can he err.”

I. (vs. 19a) “Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth”

A. James addresses *brethren* referring to believers.

1. There’s a danger that we could as some do “err from the truth”.

B. To wander or stray from the truth is extremely serious and dangerous!

NOTE: **πλανάω *Planao***: “to cause to stray, to lead astray, lead aside from the right way” Several times this word is translated *deceive* in the KJV. See I Cor. 6:9-10; I Cor. 15:33; 2 Tim. 3:13.

1. Beware of *backsliding*.

NOTE: “Backsliding is usually a gradual process. It is critical that we be like Enoch, who ‘walked with God’ (Gen. 5:22, 24).” *John Phillips*

C. The *truth* is not negotiable.

1. The fundamental truth (Word of God) of the Christian faith.

NOTE: “This man had erred from right acting because he had erred from right believing.”

Charles Spurgeon

II. (vs. 19b) “and one convert him”

A. Someone who knew the truth and influenced someone who had strayed.

NOTE: **ἐπιστρέφω *Epistrepho***: “to turn to, to cause to return, to bring back”

1. An appeal for repentance and restoration.

B. By personal application are you the “one”?

NOTE: As a community of believers we should be watchful and proactive.

2. Believers share in the responsibility for the spiritual welfare of the church.

NOTE: Heb. 3:12-13; Gal 6:1

III. (vs. 20) “Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall...”

A. “save a soul from death”

1. Physical death

NOTE: Sin leads to death, for the unsaved sin leads to eternal death. For the believer sin can lead to physical death. Rom. 6:14-18; I John 5:16-17

2. Examples

NOTE: Acts 5:1-11; I Cor. 11:29-32

B. “and shall hide a multitude of sins.”

NOTE: Ps. 32:1; 85:2 Greek word for *hide* is sometimes translated as *cover*. (I Pet. 4:8)