

I. Introduction

- A. Welcome to How to Be A Grown Up, part nine, which is our final part. If you have been following along, or if you haven't, our source is the Bible, because we believe it is God's message for us today. Specifically, within the Bible, we are looking at the Book of James.
- B. James is a pastor. His church is huge — it's a megachurch in ancient Jerusalem. As a pastor, James is committed to helping people find and follow God. In this book, it's all about following God through spiritual growth.
- C. Push back from the kiddie table, says James. Take your seat with the grownups at the feast of grace, because that's where the good stuff happens. Don't stay in spiritual babyhood. Don't stay immature. Grow deep. Grow strong. Grow up.
- D. As I mentioned, this is part 9. In each message, we have been putting together a list of important truths. We're calling the Royal Family Honor Code — also known as "things a grown up would say."
- E. I will review our first eight, and then we will add our final statement, RFHC number 9.
 1. EMOTIONAL OWNERSHIP: I take full ownership of my emotional state by the grace and power of God. (James 1:1-11)
 2. MORAL RESPONSIBILITY: I take full responsibility for my moral choices and their consequences, because I have been empowered by God to live in victory over every single temptation. (James 1:12-18)
 3. SPIRITUAL INTEGRATION: I create a life in which my inner world is aligned with my outer world and both are aligned with God's Word. (James 1:19-27)
 4. VIRTUE LOVE: I love the people around me from the virtue, maturity, and character in my own soul, not because of what they can give me or what I think they're worth. (James 2:1-13)
 5. REALITY CHECK: I embrace a core reality called salvation, and I live it out in word, thought, and deed everywhere and all the time. (James 2:14-26)
 6. GRACE OPERATING SYSTEM: My words, choices, relationships, and instincts express the grace and truth of God, as I rise above the devil's lies through the deeply embedded knowledge of God's Invincible Word. (James 3:1-18)
 7. DRAMA FREE ZONE: My relationships and psychology are so fortified by grace and truth that my life is a drama free zone, growing beyond the drama of my world, the deficits of my past, and the deceptions of the devil. (James 4:1-10)
 8. SUBMITTED SOVEREIGNTY: I rise to my fullest royalty when I surrender the unwinnable war to play God, and accept life's unchangeables with dignity, poise, and grace. (James 4:11-5:6)
 - a) And today, we will add RFHC number 9, which we will put together in a few minutes.
 9. *TRANSCENDENT ENDURANCE: I live everyday with both feet planted on earth, but an inner world rooted in heaven, so my future home in heaven gives me endurance and strength on earth. (James 5:7-20)*
 - a) It is transcendent because it is tied to heaven.
 - b) It is endurance because it is toughness and grit.
 - c) So let's work this out as we go verse by verse through the end of James.

II. Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain. You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door! (James 5:7-9)

- A. Remember, this is how to be a grown up. And apparently, being a grown up is tightly linked to be on the lookout for the second coming of Christ. You see it here three times in three verses.
 1. v. 7: the coming of the Lord.
 2. v. 8: the coming of the Lord is at hand.
 3. v. 9: the Judge is standing at the door — so final judgment is near
- B. So being a spiritual grown up is linked to the second coming of Christ. How is it linked?
- C. Patience, which is not quite the exact word we want. This is more about endurance than patience. One of the things that happens in your soul when you grow mature in Christ is this quality called endurance.
- D. A long distance runner develops physical stamina. A spiritually mature child of God develops spiritual stamina and emotional stamina — staying power — and it runs across the entire Royal Family Honor Code.
 1. You have stamina for emotional ownership, stamina for moral responsibility, stamina for virtue love, and on and on.
- E. When you are a baby Christian you're up and down. You do not have this endurance. You might get distracted. You might wear out. But when you are walking with the Lord, and growing in grace, you are steady and true — day after day, year after year, your whole life long.
- F. That is endurance, and endurance is linked to the second coming of Christ.
- G. Let's talk about that for a moment.
- H. If I were to ask you to point to heaven, you would probably point up. And that is a good direction to point. Shortly after Jesus died and rose again, he ascended to heaven. When he ascended to heaven, what direction did he go? Up. Through the clouds. Through the sky. In his physical body. To heaven.
- I. He is there right now, still today. And one day, do you know what he's going to do? He is coming again. He is coming back to earth. He is coming back to bring saved people to heaven. And he is coming to Judge everybody else.
- J. Until that day, what is he doing?
 1. The first thing he's doing is this: He is preparing heaven for your arrival. He is building you a mansion. He is piling up eternal rewards for you.

2. The second thing he's doing is this: He is dropping down daily bread. This means he is supplying everything you need every hour of every day.
3. The third thing he is doing up there in heaven, is just being himself as King of kings and Lord of lords. Yes, he is ruling heaven. And that means he is enjoying heaven — where the whole presence of the Trinity is manifest in a special and unique way.
- K. Do you have any idea how awesome heaven is? No you don't. Language can't describe it. Our minds can't fathom it. Just think of this one thing: heaven has its own laws of physics. What if thinking had power over gravity? What if speaking had power over the shape of the universe, and you could command an instant portal to another world? What if sounds had tastes and colors made music? And what if your heart were so healed, and so full of joy, that you could never even imagine what it means to feel sad or suffer loss. It is beyond words. It is beyond language. It is beyond comprehension. It is utterly, completely, eternally above and beyond all you could ever think, and the word for this is transcendence.
- L. This is your goal. This is your endgame. This is your destiny.
 1. 1. Transcendent Endurance means a psychological orientation to your eternal destiny that puts temporal things into a healthy and limited perspective.
- M. If all you've got is this life, every loss is a big deal.
- N. But if you've got a life to come, and if it glorious beyond description, you can handle loss with grace.
 1. This is the maturity that James is hoping for his readers.
- O. There is no such thing as bringing heaven to earth, but there is such a thing as bringing your mind and emotions to heaven. Living with the end in mind — which is exactly what's coming in verse 11.
- P. And here's the coolest thing of all: there is a direct correlation between your spiritual maturity on earth, and how much capacity you will have to enjoy the wonders of heaven.
- Q. And there is also a correlation between your maturity and your ability to keep faith with God when times are hard, i. e. , endurance.
- R. In verse 8 James says, "establish your heart." It means to stabilize your psychology — and wouldn't that be an answer to prayer!
- S. That bit about grumbling against one another? That's all about indirect, sideways, flesh dominated negativity toward other people. It's just your immaturity on parade.
- III. *My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience. Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord--that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful. (James 5:10, 11)*
 - A. Job was famous in the Old Testament for the intensity of his suffering, and for the unbreakableness of his faith. So, he's the perfect example of endurance.
 - B. What's the deeper truth here?
 - C. The deeper truth is that you can be doing everything right, and that still doesn't give you a magic off switch for the Giant Pain Machine.
 1. You will still hurt.
 2. You will still struggle.
 3. You will still shed tears.
 - a) We have seen this. We are living it. Our neighbors are living it up in Paradise.
 - D. Walking with God does not exempt you from trials. The pain machine is the pain machine, and opening your Bible isn't an off switch, and neither is prayer.
 1. Walking with God doesn't exempt you from trials.
 - E. But walking with God gives you strength in trials you could never have as a spiritual baby.
 - F. How so?
 - G. Because as you learn God's Word, and as you hide it in your heart, the Holy Spirit builds an edifice in your soul — a magnificent palace of who God is. It is a great God and his son shed his blood and paid an unspeakable price to reconcile you to God and to forgive your sins.
 - H. Maturity gives you a ready answer to the question, Who is God.
 1. He is very compassionate and merciful in good times.
 2. He is very compassionate and merciful in bad times.
 3. He is very compassionate and merciful because he is immutable, and the same yesterday, today and forever.
 - a) 2. Transcendent Endurance means never letting the Pain Machine make you call into question the love and grace of God.
 4. Let the devil spit and fume, it will not change my confidence in God.
 - I. So yes, there is a pain machine — but when you live with transcendent endurance, you are convinced that the grace machine is bigger than the pain machine and always wins in the end.
- IV. *But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath. But let your "Yes," be "Yes," and your "No," "No," lest you fall into judgment. (James 5:12)*
 - A. This is part of transcendent endurance.
 - B. Did you know that this verse has a place in American law? When you give testimony in a court, or when you are sworn into office, or as a juror, you don't have to swear and you don't have to give an oath.

1. When the clerk says, Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, you can say, “I so affirm.”
- C. Our laws use the term “by oath [which you swear] or affirmation [in which you don’t swear]” because mature Christians have a conscience against swearing and oath.
- D. Why? Two reasons:
 1. Because you’re not God, and you can’t control the future, and even if you mean to keep your word, circumstances may conspire against you, and you’ve got no power to change them.
 2. The second reason is because you don’t have to swear. An older generation would say, “My word is my bond,” or “My word is my oath.” Once you say yes, it’s as good as an oath. Once you say no, it’s as good as an oath. You don’t have to swear.
- E. This is hard, because have you ever said yes to something and then wish you hadn’t? You might say, “Well, I didn’t promise or anything.” Oh yes you did. The second you said yes.
- F. So...
 1. 3. Transcendent Endurance means fulfilling what you agreed to do even if it means unexpected sacrifice, because heaven’s riches outweigh earth’s inconveniences.
- G. You gave your word, and your life is your testimony. Yeah, I said I’d go with you to this thing, and I really regret saying it, because I’m tired, or I have work to do, or I got a better offer. But you know what? I’m going to keep my word, because heaven will make it up to me some day.
- H. A sense of transcendence in every day life.
- V. *Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms. (James 5:13)*
 - A. Okay, short verse, but rich in meaning. James points out the full spectrum from suffering to cheerfulness and everything in between.
 - B. And what are you supposed to do?
 - C. Reference everything to heaven.
 1. On the suffering end of the spectrum, pray.
 2. On the cheerful end of the spectrum, sing your praise.
 - D. When I was growing up in Chicago, the streets were filled with electric cable cars. These were full sized busses, run by electricity. The electricity was supplied by a network of wires strung over head on all the major streets. Two big poles stretched up and held onto the wires, and made the busses go. If the poles broke loose, the truck wouldn’t go.
 - E. So here you are on earth. Your power source is above. Way above. In heaven. You have two big poles to connect to the power: Spiritual Maturity and the Holy Spirit. We could break it down some more, but let’s not.
 - F. Your whole life is referencing the realm above, the realm of glory and eternity.
 - G. The most wonderful people I have known are senior saints whose faith has stood the test of time. Heaven is real to them — not because they’re close to going there — but because they’ve been connected to the power of heaven for a very long time.
 1. 4. Transcendent Endurance means referencing the power of heaven no matter what you’re facing on earth.
- VI. *Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. (James 5:14-16)*
 - A. The Roman Catholic Church has turned this verse into Extreme Unction, which people call Last Rites. As a person is dying, a priest must anoint them with oil, to prepare them for heaven.
 - B. The Eastern Orthodox Church calls this Holy Unction, and makes it a prayer for healing — closer to the truth. In the Eastern church, the ideal is to gather seven priests, and do seven readings from the epistles and gospels, and seven prayers, and seven anointing with oil specifically blessed for this purpose.
 - C. I don’t think James would recognize either of those practices.
 - D. What is going on here?
 - E. Let’s start with the word “sick.” It can mean to be sick and it can mean to be in any kind of weakened condition. This is a person who, one way or another, has been beaten down by the Pain Machine of this fallen world.
 - F. Is any one among you beaten down.
 1. This is despair.
 2. This is long term depression.
 3. This is a grief you cannot shake.
 4. This is addiction you cannot overcome.
 5. This is dysfunction that you’ve prayed a million times to rise above and failed.
 6. This is hopelessness and brokenness and helplessness rolled into one.
 7. I’m saying that the sickness here is not just physical.
 - G. Who are the elders?
 1. The elders are the pastors and the leaders of the church. We consider our pastors to be elders. In addition, we have a board of elders that oversees our church. I report to them.
 2. Elders have been called by God to be the spiritually mature shepherds of this flock on Loma Vista that we call Neighborhood.

3. When you are in a beaten down condition, emotionally or medically, you can call for the elders of the church. And we will pray for you. And we will do what James says to do: we will anoint you with oil in the name of the Lord.
 4. We use a little vial. We put some oil on your forehead, and we pray for you. We pray for your healing and wholeness and restoration.
 5. And look closely at what James says: is it the oil that delivers the weekend person? No. It is the prayer of faith. And let me say, if you have faith enough to pray, or if you have faith enough to ask elders to pray, you have faith enough.
 6. At our church, on every single weekend, when I invite you to visit our prayer team, you can ask to be anointed. We have a system in place. We will gather at least one elder in our church (we consider past elders to still have this position), and we have oil ready to go — we got it at Safeway, so no superstitions here — and we will anoint you with oil and pray for you in accordance with this verse.
- H. We are ready to do this today. We have our elders and pastors at every service in every auditorium to pray for you. By the way, only elders are permitted to do this in our church, because it's what the Bible says, and we're kind of finicky about that. Also, this is for people in our church — and if you go to another church, we have no magic powers here. I am sure your own elders will be happy to do this for you in your church. There are spiritual principles in play.
- I. And here's where it goes deeper: sometimes we are beaten down because of our own failures and sins. Not always. But sometimes for sure. And we feel guilty and trapped and don't know what to do.
- J. So look at what James promises:
1. "And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed."
- K. You may have never told anyone your struggle. You've been fighting alone for so long — and the flesh has you defeated. You don't have to stay in that defeat. Confess it to God. And if you like, share it with an elder today, and let us anoint you and pray for you, so you can step into the release and forgiveness that's been there for you on the basis of the Cross of Christ.
- L. We won't make a big deal about this, just know it's available.
- M. And this brings us to another lesson about transcendent endurance.
- N. What is so special about anointing with oil? Priests were anointed with oil, and you're a priest of God. Royalty was anointed with oil, and you are spiritual royalty. But that still doesn't answer the question. Why oil? Why not wine, or water, or chicken soup?
- O. Some people say the oil has to do with the Holy Spirit.
- P. Possibly.
- Q. But here's what I think. I think it's random. I think it's beyond explanation. And so here's definition number 5:
1. 5. Transcendent Endurance means faith when faith makes no sense.
- R. I mean it's olive oil. Are you going to have faith or not. What, you want more explanation? Nope. That's why it's transcendent.
- S. Okay, let's finish James.
- VII. *Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit. Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins. (James 5:17-20)*
- A. James ends abruptly.
- B. Anyone writing a novel would never put The End after these words.
- C. But that's James. He's a curmudgeon. He wants you to grow up. He has said what he has to say, and he's finished. The end.
- D. And what is the end?
- E. The end is that God uses ordinary people to do extraordinary things on the earth... people like Elijah. If you know the story of Elijah — (remember G. R. I. T.), it's awesome. He did amazing things. He also got totally depressed and borderline suicidal. Don't turn these people into super-heroes. They were of like passions as us.
- F. God uses ordinary people to do great things on earth — and the two greatest things are prayer and evangelism.
- G. James says so right here.
- H. So let us wrap up how to be a grown up with this idea of transcendent endurance:
1. 6. Transcendent Endurance means using supernatural means (prayer) for supernatural ends (evangelism) as a natural part of a mature Christian life.
- VIII. Conclusion
- A. So that is James. We didn't skip anything. We went verse by verse. This is called expository preaching. It is the strong meat for the church. Not all churches can handle it.
- B. I am proud of our church for this.
- C. When a famous pastor in London, back in the 1800s, took the pulpit of a large church, he was asked if he thought the people would tolerate his expository preaching, he said, "They have no choice. They will have to." And G. Campbell Morgan built a great church on expository preaching.
- D. James is begging you. Grow up. Follow the Grace Pathway. That's the hope and that's the prayer.
- IX. Final Memory Verse
- A. *You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. (James 5:8, NKJV).*