

INTRODUCTION.

TODAY, ~ BEGIN TO TAKE UP NEXT TOPIC

▶▶1:9-11, ~ subject of poverty and wealth.

THIS ¶ ~ 1st OF 3 PASSAGES IN THIS LETTER ~ ¶¶

THAT DEAL W/ THE ISSUE ~ OF RICH AND POOR.

▶▶2:5-7 and 5:1-6.

▶▶This brief paragraph, ~ 9-11, ~ deals with ~ poor Christians and rich Christians.

▷▷And what they should boast in.

▶▶⁹ Let the lowly brother boast ~ in his exaltation,

▶▶^{10a} and [let]~ the rich [believer] ~ [boast] ~ in his humiliation,

▷▷Why believer & boast.

↪↪Most natural meaning of the structure of the sentence in the Grk text.

▶▶[Why this exhortation to the rich] ~ ¶¶

▷▷^{10b} because like a flower of the grass he will pass away. ¶¶ 1/10

▶▶[Then James describes in more detail ~ the disappearance of the wild flower] ~ ¶¶

▷▷^{11a} For the sun rises with its scorching heat and withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beauty perishes.

▶▶[He then sums up the point of the comparison with a flower] ~ ¶¶

▷▷^{11b} So also will the rich man fade away in the midst of his pursuits.

TODAY, ~ WE'RE JUST GOING TO UNPACK VERSE 9.

▶▶James' exhortation to poor Christians.

VERSE 9, ~ LET THE LOWLY BROTHER BOAST ~ IN ~ OR ABOUT ~ HIS EXALTATION.

BROTHER.

▶▶The Grk. word for brother ~ is primarily used in the Bible for fellow believers.

▷▷"Brothers and sisters, ~ "fellow believers" or "fellow Christians."

▶▶A number of translations have therefore expressed this meaning directly in James 1:9.

▷▷E.g., ~ "those Christians who are poor," ~ "the believer who is lowly," ~ believers in humble circumstances, ~ and so on.

▶▶This distinction is important ~ to help clarify that James ~ does not ~ ¶¶

▷▷direct his exhortation to boast as applicable ~ to all poor people in general. ¶¶ 2/10

THE GRK WORD FOR "LOWLY" HERE ~ HAS THE BASIC MEANING OF ⇨⇨ "lowly," ~ "insignificant," ~ "weak," ~ "poor {i.e., ~ of poverty in worldly goods}."

▶▶ As we'll see, ~ this word ~ stands in parallel ~ to the word for rich in vs. 10.

▶▶ So it is best ~ to understand that the believer here in v. 9 ~ is one ~ who is literally poor.

▷▷ But not totally destitute.

▶▶ 2 Grk words

↳↳ ταπεινός does not refer to totally destitute.

↳↳ πτωχός ~ means ~ pertaining to being poor and destitute, ~ implying ~ ¶¶

→→ a continuous state (2: ~ 2, ~ 5, ~ 6; described further, ~ 15-16).

▶▶ The NIV has a good translation of the word James uses here in vs. 9, ~ in that ~ ¶¶

▷▷ it might give us a good picture ~ of what James is getting at.

▷▷ Believers in humble circumstances.

▷▷ Another way of saying it ~ would be, ~ believers of humble means.

▶▶ So it looks like James is not talking about ~ believers who are destitute.

▷▷ Rather, ~ he's talking about ones who are financially strapped.

↳↳ And that probably defines most of us here. ¶¶ 3/10

LET'S CONTINUE WITH VERSE 9.

LET BELIEVERS WHO ARE IN HUMBLE CIRCUMSTANCES ~ boast ~ in their exaltation.

▶▶ Focus on word "boast."

LET ... BOAST ~ IS A 3rd PERS IMPV.

▶▶ But the force ~ appears to be less than an actual demand like ~ "must boast."

▷▷ It's more like ~ the financially strapped believer ~ ought to boast, ~ or, ~ 77

↳↳ does well to boast, ~ or, ~ it is right that they boast.

▶▶ So the idea here ~ seems to be ~ boasting in their exaltation ~ 77

▷▷ is the right thing to do ~ for believers who are in humble circumstances.

▶▶ Later: ~ It is sin ~ to know what you ought to do ~ and then not do it (NLT).

▷▷ So even though it may not be a a strong command, ~ James gets his point across ~ 77

↳↳ that boasting in their exaltation ~ is something Christians are to do.

PRESENT TENSE OF LET ... BOAST ~ 77

▶▶ calls upon the believer ~ to adopt boasting in their exaltation ~ as their characteristic response.

▷▷ I.e., ~ boasting in our exaltation ~ is the right thing to do all the time. 77 4/10

CONTINUING OUR FOCUS ON THE WORD "BOAST," ~ ~ ¶¶

JAMES DECLARES ~ IT IS RIGHT ~ THAT THE BELIEVER OF HUMBLE MEANS ~ ¶¶

▶▶ should continually boast ~ in their exaltation.

▶▶ The word for boast ~ can be used in a good sense.

▷▷ In the sense of ~ "delight in, ~ be proud of, ~ rejoice over."

↳↳ Also trans ~~ rejoice, ~~ be glad, ~~ revel in.

▶▶ Or ~ boast can be used in a bad sense.

▷▷ "brag about."

▶▶ The determining factor ~ is whether the cause of the delight ~ is appropriate.

▶▶ E.g., ~ boasting in one's intelligence ~ is inappropriate.

▷▷ Why?

↳↳ Because it ~ takes delight ~ in the wrong things ~ ¶¶

→→ and takes glory away ~ from where it belongs. ⇔⇔ Further illus. 4:13-16

▶▶ Boasting about someone or something ~ is appropriate ~ ¶¶

▷▷ as long ~ as it promotes ~ rather than detracts ~ from God's glory. ¶¶ 5/10

▷▷ Some might say that it was wrong for Paul ~ ¶¶

↳↳ to boast about the Corinthian believers, ~ which he does in 2 Corinthians 9.

↳↳ But being proud of someone who is dear to you ~ does not necessarily ~ take glory from God.

↳↳ Consequently, ~ it is right for parents ~ to be proud of their children ~ ¶¶

→→ as long as it ~ promotes rather than detracts from ~ God's glory.

▷▷ Paul could rightly boast about his weaknesses ~ because ~ it promoted ~ ¶¶

↳↳ and drew attention to ~ God's glory. ⇔⇔ 2 Cor. 12

▶▶ Well, ~ obviously, ~ James uses it in the positive sense.

▷▷ He wants us to ~ boast about our exaltation.

↳↳ James says, ~ ¶¶

→→ It is right ~ for the believer in humble circumstances ~ to continually boast ~ in ~ their exaltation.

▷▷ This is appropriate for us to do, ~ because ~ ¶¶

↳↳ we are taking delight in the right things, ~ and ~ the glory goes to God.

ONE MORE POINT ~ ABOUT THE VERB FOR BOAST. ¶¶ 6/10

▶▶It encompasses the individual's ~ total reaction.

▷▷I.e., ~ both ~ their inward feeling ~ and ~ the outward expression of joy.

▶▶James says that ~ boasting about our exaltation, ~ which we'll explain in a minute, ~ ¶¶

▷▷is not to just ~ be lip service.

▷▷Outwardly ~ praise. ⇔⇔ Inwardly ~ doubting, ~ angry, ~ frustrated

↳↳ These people approach me with their speeches to honor me with lip-service—yet their hearts are far from me, and human rules direct their worship of me (Is. 29:13; CSB).

▶▶Furthermore, ~ James did not subscribe to the thinking ~ that a gloomy downcast attitude ~ ¶¶

▷▷is the normal and expected response of the believer ~ to economic hardship.

▷▷Not like Eeyore, ~ pessimistic, ~ gloomy, ~ depressed.

▷▷And not like Puddleglum, ~ pessimistic and gloomy.

▷▷The pessimist ~ is not ~ a representative of Christianity.

▷▷Should be the most optimistic

CONTINUING IN VERSE 9, ~ JAMES SAYS, ~ ¶¶

IT IS RIGHT ~ THAT BELIEVERS IN HUMBLE CIRCUMSTANCES ~ should continually boast about ~ their exaltation. ¶¶ 7/10

▶▶ Grk for "exaltation" means ~ a position of high status, ~ high position.

▶▶ This refers ~ not to any earthly position.

▷▷ Rather it is talking about ~ our exalted spiritual position ~ in the kingdom of God.

↪↪ This ~ is what James ~ is calling us to continually boast about.

→→ All not just poor.

OF COURSE, ~ WE DID NOT GAIN THIS EXALTED SPIRITUAL POSITION ON OUR OWN.

▶▶ Therefore, ~ it is not ~ a matter of rejoicing about what we've done.

▶▶ Our exalted spiritual position ~ was given to us by God ~ through ~ Jesus Christ our Lord.

▶▶ A number of places in the NT ~ show us ~ our exalted spiritual position ~ ¶¶

▷▷ and the fact ~ that we were given this as a gift.

▶▶ As Paul declares in Ephesians, ⇨⇨ God the Father has blessed us ~ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ (NLT).

▶▶ Gal. 4:4-7 ⇨⇨ Eph. 2:4-6

▶▶ In Colossians ~ Paul declares, ~ God the Father ~ ¶¶

▷▷ has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. ¶¶ 8/10

▶▶Col. 1:21-22. ⇔⇔ And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, ~ in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him.

IT IS RIGHT ~ JAMES SAYS, ~ ¶¶

▶▶for the believer of humble means ~ to continually boast about ~ the exalted spiritual position that we have been given.

▶▶Paul expresses the same point, ~ when he says, ~ If you want to boast, ~ boast only about the Lord.

▶▶This is appropriate for us to do, ~ because ~ ¶¶

▷▷we are promoting ~ rather than detracting from ~ God's glory.

▶▶So our boast here is this: ~ To God be the glory, ~ great things he has done!

TO THE FINANCIALLY STRAPPED BELIEVER, ~ AND ~ TO ALL BELIEVERS REALLY, ~ ¶¶

▶▶no matter our financial situation, ~ James calls us ~ ¶¶

▷▷to contemplate ~ our high position ~ in the kingdom and family of God.

▶▶James urges all believers, ~ poor, ~ rich, ~ or in between ~ to open our eyes ~ ¶¶

▷▷to the spiritual height ~ to which we have been lifted as a child of God.

▶▶We are seated with Jesus ~ in the heavenly realms.

▷▷Present & Future reality. ¶¶ 9/10

AS A BELIEVER, ~ WE MUST EVALUATE OUR PRESENT EARTHLY CIRCUMSTANCES ~ ¶¶

▶▶in light ~ of our wonderful standing before God ~ and of our assured blessed hope.

▷▷And i.e., ~ the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.

↪↪Our hope for the future ~ is to influence ~ our present evaluations.

→→What Paul was doing. ~~ 2 Cor. 4:16-18

WE SHOULD REJOICE OVER AND DELIGHT IN ~ WHAT WE HAVE BECOME AS A MEMBER
~ of God's family.

▶▶Instead of resenting our earthly financial state, ~~ let's remember ~ we are royalty.

▶▶As a child of the King, ~ we are an heir ~ to the future kingdom in glory.

▶▶We need not be disheartened ~ by our present earthly situation, ~ or regard it as an evil.

▶▶We are the possessors ~ of spiritual riches far more valuable ~ ¶¶

▷▷than all riches of the world combined.

AS THE HYMN WE SANG EARLIER SAYS, ~~ A tent or a cottage, ~ why should I care? ~~ ¶¶

▶▶They're building a palace for me over there; ~~ Though exiled from home, ~~ yet, ~ still I may sing: ~~ All glory to God, ~ I'm a child of the King.

▶▶My . . . , ~~ this is all ~ definitely something ~ to rejoice over and delight in. 10/10