

James 5:19-20

Restoring Those Who Stray

The final two verses of James conclude our study with an important final word. So far, the emphasis of James has been on personal holiness. These final verses turn our attention to the need for encouraging others on toward holiness as well.

- > Who is verse 19 concerned about and what does it say they have done? Someone among you who has wandered from the truth.
- > The idea of someone “wandering” here implies they have abandoned the truth of God, and it has become evident in some aspect of their life. Their actions reveal their error.
- > What is our goal in reaching out to those who have strayed? To see them restored, to “bring them back.”
- > What result will God, in His grace, have upon the individual who returns? Sins will be forgiven, spared from death (either from a sin that leads to death, or eternal death if salvation is needed).

Application

When we see someone in sin, it is easy to simply back off and allow the Holy Spirit to do His work. However, that is not the attitude God says to have. We cannot underestimate the work of the Holy Spirit in a person’s heart (that is essential!), but at the same time, we cannot forget the fact that God also desires to use us in the lives of those around us. These verses require a genuine care and concern on our part that is shown through action and boldness. Ask yourself:

- When I see someone in sin, how do I respond?
- Am I neglecting them or failing them in any way?
- How can I do more to encourage those around me?

Living life for God’s glory must be our priority, and we should encourage others to do the same. How well are you doing?

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