

JOE GRIFFIN, GRACE DOCTRINE CHURCH, ST. CHARLES MISSOURI

LESSON 242, TAUGHT THURSDAY, 5/27/2021. <http://joegriffin.org/media-archive/class-catalog/jas3-242/> (59 minutes)

Mary's notes:

The difference between Unalienable and Inalienable rights. 21st Century critics need to look at dictionaries available to our founding fathers.

Never, never, never, never quit.

We are endowed by our creator (the Lord Jesus Christ, Colossians 1:16-17) with unalienable (cannot be altered or transferred) rights (life, liberty, pursuit of happiness). Endowment is a gift bestowed by our creator).

Absolutes are being ignored, personal opinions are being aggrandized.

STUDY NOTES FOR LESSON 242**The Standards of Human Good**

1. Human good can only be defined in the context of what the individual perceives is good. Whatever his standards happen to be, then that is what he assumes is good.
2. What one person regards is a good thing to think, say, or do, may be quite different for another. Everyone is free to have his own opinion about what is good.
3. These opinions may or may not line up with cultural standards of society which themselves change over time. We are presently engaged in a national seminar about what ought to be perceived as good or bad.
4. The argument for some is the desire to impose on others their opinions of what is good; some of this ilk have the political power to impose their ideas on the commonwealth, but without the requisite power to do so.
5. Others orient to establishment standards that have been the ones accepted by the Founders and their progeny over the centuries but are now called into question by those who align themselves with personal opinions rather than the standards of past generations.
6. The debate does not move the conversation forward if one side argues for their personal opinions while others stand fast for establishment standards that have prevailed for millennia.
7. The Founders understood the pursuit of happiness to be the result of collectively agreed upon principles that reflect the experiences of the ages.
8. The Declaration's opening Statement established the foundational principle for how a free and functional society ought to order itself which requires a rational appeal to the intellect:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal ...

9. The egalitarians of our present day are prone to cite this sentence fragment by imputing a period after the word "equal." They do so without reading further, but rather leave the phrase, "created equal," to stand alone as if the entire document rests upon that nebulous statement.
10. However, the sentence does not stop there; instead, following the comma, it stipulates what "these truths" happen to be and with which all members of the nation may engage and enjoy:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.

11. What are the "self-evident truths" to which "all Men," who are "created equally," may "pursue"? The first is "Life," the privilege from "their Creator" to live their own lives as they see fit while doing so within the environment of "Liberty."



12. This refers to the Law of Liberty which allows everyone “equally” to “pursue their happiness” restrained only by the laws of the land.
13. “Equality” allows all citizens to function within the environment of “Liberty” in pursuit of those endeavors they trust will result in their “general happiness.” Some choose to pursue one path while others pursue another.
14. Those who take advantage of their “Liberty” remain free to make the “pursuit.” Some make good choices others not so much. However, this freedom allows each person to make good choices from a position of strength or, sadly, for others, to make poor choices from a position of weakness.
15. We are all equally responsible for our own decisions whether good or bad.
16. Finally, and most importantly, on what are these principles founded? The Statement clearly indicates that “all Men are created equal.” But by means of what resource?
17. The next phrase clearly states, “they are endowed by their Creator.” This clause reveals the Source of the endowment to be Jesus Christ Who is identified as our Creator in Colossians 1:16–17.
18. Our Lord is said to have endowed us with “certain unalienable Rights” of which some are cited: **(1) Life, (2) Liberty, and (3) the Pursuit of Happiness.**
19. The words “endow” and “endowment” are primarily defined in modern English dictionaries as a legal grant from a “dower” as the benefactor, to an individual or organization, in the form of funds or property.
20. However, in the 1700s, “endowment” had quite a different meaning and once observed gave important insight into Jefferson’s choice of words:

Endowment: That which is given or bestowed on the person or mind by the creator; gift of nature; any quality or faculty bestowed by the creator.¹

21. What Jefferson included in the divine endowment were, “unalienable Rights.” **Unalienable:** “that cannot be alienated; as *unalienable* rights.”²
The word group under “alien” in Webster’s 1828 dictionary provides the meanings associated with this noun: **Alienability:** The capacity of being transferred. **Alienable:** That may be sold or transferred to another. **Alienate:** To transfer title, property, or right to another. **Alienation:** A transfer of a legal conveyance of property to another.³
22. Some have made the assertion that Jefferson’s use of “unalienable” in the Declaration’s Statement is a misspelling and insist on spelling the word, “inalienable.” As noted above, Webster’s 1828 dictionary includes Jefferson’s spelling with the definition, “cannot be alienated.”
23. Many modern dictionaries cite “unalienable” but reference the reader to “inalienable.” Both spellings were in use in the early 1600s, so there is no need to adjust Jefferson’s spelling.
24. What Jefferson’s statement does is to certify the inflexibility of colonists’ belief that the crown was imposing upon them regulations that violate their “unalienable rights.”
25. Patrick Henry was opposed to Virginia’s ratification of the Constitution unless certain of these “unalienable rights” were amended into the Constitution so that some future tyrant could not deny them afresh.
26. Henry’s efforts resulted in an agreement that once the Constitution was ratified, at Congress’s first assembly, certain rights would be codified into the document. When the first ten Amendments were approved, they became known as the Bill of Rights.

¹ Noah Webster, *American Dictionary of the English Language* (New York: S. Converse, 1820), s.v. “endowment.”

² *Ibid.*, s.v. “unalienable.”

³ *Ibid.*, s.vv. “alienability,” “alienable,” “alienate,” “alienation.”



27. Article V of the Constitution requires that an Amendment may be proposed following a two-thirds vote by both houses of Congress, presently 67 votes in the Senate and 290 votes in the House. Then, three-fourths or presently 38 of the states, must vote yes for ratification.⁴
28. Recently, some governors have ordered the prohibition of certain unalienable rights by prohibiting free exercise of religion, of speech, of peaceable assembly, or bearing of arms, all of which are reserved “to the people.”
29. We are presently seeing daily examples of human good being enforced upon many citizens which violate our “unalienable rights.” Often these efforts are motivated by human good but have the danger of being converted into evil.
40. Underlying these motives is the undercurrent of fear which has been fomented by those currently in positions of authority to violate several constitutional rights and, so far, done so with impunity.
41. There is the sneaking suspicion that death from this virus gives credence to a hidden agenda: the destruction of the economy followed by massive unemployment, failure to pay mortgages, loans, and monthly bills, and the resultant inability to provide necessities for the family unit.
42. And never forget this: the attack of the coronavirus was in the divine decree in eternity past and it has now been allowed to invade client nation America. The loss of establishment and doctrinal thought over the past 100 years has resulted in the potential destruction of our way of life.
43. The prognostications of these circumstances were the subjects of three recent Shreveport Bible Conferences: **(1)** in 2012: *The Divine Decree* (<http://www.joegriffin.org/media-archive/our-class-catalog/sbc12/>), **(2)** in 2013: *Whirlwind: The Four-Generation Curse* (<http://www.joegriffin.org/media-archive/our-class-catalog/sbc13/>), and **(3)** in 2014: *Gospel’s Missionary Journey* <http://www.joegriffin.org/media-archive/our-class-catalog/sbc14/>.
44. The three links above take you to the audio streams of these studies. John Smith edited each of the three into small booklets under the same titles. They are available at the church or by mail order to: Joe Griffin Media Ministries, 1821 South River Road, St. Charles, MO 63303-4124.
45. Human good is on a rampage throughout the country. The problems within the souls of believers and collectively within the churches are what James has been assaulting in our studies since October 02, 2016 when we studied the first verse in *James: Chapter One*.
46. So far, we have spent 3 and one-half years of studying constant corrections by James about the way we think, the way we speak, and the way we live. It is the failure of the church that permits the human good and evil of the devil’s world to gain a foothold in a client nation.
47. We have just finished James’s diatribe on envy. In Chapter 4, James once again will point out our failures while offering some encouraging words along the way, yet he relentlessly keeps up the pressure.
48. The undercurrent remains the same: stop your merciless indulgence in mental attitude sins, sins of the tongue, and actions that are overtly sinful.
49. Returning now to our verse in James 3:17, we have been developing the “Six Honorable Virtues” and we now arrive at the last one on the list:
6. The **sixth** predicate adjective is ***ἄδικριτος* (*adiákritos*)** which is translated, “unwavering,” in the NASB translation. Other translations include, “without partiality” in the KJV and “impartial” in the NIV, and NET. Here is some commentary on how this word should be translated:

⁴ “The Constitution” in *Forty Proclamations: The Theology of Grace Doctrine Church* (St. Charles, MO: Joe Griffin Media Ministries, 2011), 70–71.



ἄδικριτος. Its only occurrence in the New Testament is at James 3:17. Here it is used of the wisdom which is from above. It means “without doubts and hypocrisy.” It expresses the distinctive assurance and resolution of faith, and also the reliability of Jesus Christ. The best rendering is perhaps “without wavering,” “unshakable.” “... a mind which is unshakable in patience.”⁵

1. The passage describes the character of a believer who is functioning under the Law of Freedom. He has an inventory of doctrine from which he permits others to hold their ideas and opinions freely.
2. His policy is to allow others the latitude to express themselves from their own inventories of ideas without prejudice while still holding fast to his own principles.
3. This is the execution of the Royal Law, which allows others to use their free will to express themselves from their souls’ inventories.
4. He likewise is also free to hold his own beliefs quite to the contrary, but under the doctrine of “love your neighbor,” he has doctrinal strength of character to remain unbiased toward those who disagree with his viewpoint.
5. The word “**unbiased**” is “more strongly the absence of all prejudice or prepossession and a disposition to be fair to all.”⁶
6. The final two words of the verse are, “without hypocrisy.” The Greek in just one word, another predicate adjective, **ἄνυπόκριτος (anupókritos)**.
7. This word is a summation of the adjectives that define wisdom throughout the verse. Thus, the summation of the presence of the believer’s possession of pure **σοφία (sophía)**: “wisdom” is **ἀνυπόκριτος**: “**authentic**.”

It is indeed true that the sense of sincerity or rectitude is implied in all these occurrences, especially in James 3:17, where wisdom is first of all qualified by pure ἁγνός (hagnós) [pure, perfect, holy] and finally by ἄδικριτος (adiákritos) : “unwavering” which also carries the idea of impartiality.

This text contrasts the wisdom that comes from above with wisdom that is terrestrial, diabolical (verse 15), and the eight characteristics listed are intended to define the true σοφία in terms of its essential components so that it can be distinguished from counterfeit. This amounts to conformity with the very nature of virtue, and ἀνυπόκριτος⁷ must be translated “authentic.”⁸

8. Verse 17 contains James’s counterpoint to all of the critiques he has addressed throughout the third chapter. The verse contains eight qualifiers for a believer to possess “**authenticity**.”

⁵ Friedrich Büchsel, “ἄδικριτος,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1965), 3>950–951.

⁶ *Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary* (1953), s.v., “fair”: synonym (2), “unbiased.”

⁷ *Υποκριτής (Hupokrités)* refers to the Greek actor, the comic player; hence Hippocrates: “Comedians and deceivers—say, in front of people who know them, certain things and have other things in mind. The first meaning of *anupókritos*: is this “not good at acting on stage, then: “one must be an honest person, without pretense” (Ceslas Spicq, “ἄνυπόκριτος,” in *Theological Lexicon of the New Testament*, trans. and ed. James D. Ernest (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994), 1:134).

⁸ *Ibid.*, 1:134–35).



9. Here is the expanded translation of:

James 3:17 But **wisdom** which contains divine viewpoint is from above which keeps on being first and foremost **pure**: unalloyed, then (1) **peaceable**: inner tranquility of the soul, (2) **gentle**: equitable, impartial (3) **reasonable**: affable, (4) **full of mercy**: compassionate, (5) **good fruits**: divine-good production, and (6) **unwavering**: unbiased, impartial, **without hypocrisy**: with authenticity. (EXT)

James 3:18 And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace. (NASB)

1. This verse is an excellent summation of verse 17, but the English translation above does not provide the clarity that the Greek presents. Ergo, we must exegete.
2. In this context, the noun “fruit” is *karpōj* (*karpós*) which usually refers to the produce (pró-dyüs)⁹ from plants or trees. However, it also has metaphorical meanings.
3. The one in this verse refers to the prophet or advantage that one acquires from the production of fruit. Therefore, the meaning of fruit in this verse is illustrated by produce (pró-dyüs), which describes the agricultural products from the growth of fruits and vegetables.
4. Therefore, fruit may be defined as the effect or consequence of an action or operation, either literally or metaphorically, i.e., when a believer grows in grace that growth results in the accumulation of fruit, of divine thought from the Word of God.
5. The possession of doctrine in the soul becomes the soul’s capital for the exchange of ideas. Ergo, doctrine is the believer’s spiritual “coin of the realm.”¹⁰
6. The accumulation of a believer’s spiritual coin of the realm constructs, over time, an edification complex of the soul.

Edify: to instruct or improve spiritually; to erect a house; to instruct and improve especially in moral and religious knowledge: enlighten, inform. Edification: the process of edifying.¹¹

7. Therefore, doctrine is pródüce that accumulates in the soul which results in an ever-increasing harvest of divine viewpoint that is classified by James as *dikaioúnh* (*dikaioúnē*): “righteousness.”

Principles on the Development of Capacity Righteousness in the Soul

1. Capacity righteousness becomes available when the believer expresses faith alone in Christ alone. It is not operational at that point, but it is present in the soul for the purpose of its advancement.
2. The development of a believer’s capacity to acquire and retain the righteous standards of Scripture is accomplished by a system that includes this process:
 - (1) Confession alone to God alone of one’s personal sins.
 - (2) This results in the filling of the Holy Spirit Who is able to assist the believer in recalling his sins so they may be confessed to the Father Who forgives him of those sins.

⁹ Produce (pró-dyüs): “Homograph: one of two or more words spelled alike but different in meaning or pronunciation” (*Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed. [2014], s.v. “produce.”)

¹⁰ Ibid., “Coin of the realm. 1: the legal money of a country. 2: Something valued or used as if it were money in a particular sphere <information is the *coin of the realm* in the capital> (*Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, 11th ed.).

¹¹ Ibid., s.vv. “edify,” “edification.”



- (3) At this point the believer is qualified to listen to or study the Word of God under the Spirit's teaching ministry.
 - (4) When consistently practiced, the believer's soul is enlarged with an increasing inventory of biblical ideas that are gradually enlarged into eleven categories of systematic theology.
 - (5) As one's doctrinal inventory enlarges, the capacity he possesses to retain and apply the Word of God to his life and circumstances occurs.
 - (6) This system, over time, results in the development of an advanced spiritual IQ and possession of capacity righteousness.
 - (7) Capacity righteousness is retained in the soul's stream of consciousness in concert with construction of one's edification complex of the soul.
3. The spiritual impact of capacity righteousness is emphasized by the ability to manage one's relationship with other believers as well as unbelievers.
 4. The mental attitude that is developed results in a relaxed mental attitude toward others with whom one is always fair, objective, tolerant, and respectful.
 5. Capacity righteousness is the expression of one's unconditional love toward others. Righteousness is one of the three components of one's love for others.
 6. Righteousness refers to the doctrinal inventory in the soul where immutable principles are located for recall and application.
 7. Justice is a divine attribute, but for the believer it is incorporated into the soul as one's conscience. The Greek word is *sune...dhsij (suneidēsis)*: The mental faculty by which one distinguishes between right and wrong. For the believer, it is the mental faculty that determines the quality of one's thoughts, intentions, decisions, and actions.
 8. These concepts in the soul of the believer must originate from the inculcation of Bible doctrine and retained in its norms and standards. In concert with one's volition, the believer transforms his decision-making process by allowing doctrine to reject previously held worldly ideas and replacing them with divine standards from Scripture.
 9. As one's doctrinal vocabulary develops, the norms and standards of the soul are gradually altered by expunging negative ideas while aggrandizing positive ones.
 10. This process is why I refer to the conscience as the Soul's Police Department. No believer is ever able to reach the level of absolute perfection in his decision making—that is why we have the problem-solving device of rebound.
 11. Yet, as one's spiritual inventory advances, the stream of consciousness more efficiently selects doctrinal applications instead of cosmic ones.
 12. As this process moves forward during one's spiritual growth, he eventually advances to the summum bonum of wisdom.
 13. I would like to illustrate this advance by borrowing a phrase from James 2:8, "... the royal law according to Scripture, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'"
 14. James points out that the Royal Law is dependent upon Scripture. And the primary Scripture he cites is, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."
 15. The verb "love" is the imperatival future active indicative of *ἀγαπήσω (agapāō)*. The future tense of this verb refers to a system of thinking which has to be developed over time by the refurbishment of the soul. "Love" gradually replaces human-, cosmic-, and egocentric-viewpoint with divine viewpoint.
 16. Observe that *agapāō* is an imperatival future tense, thus a command to begin a process during which the soul is reorganized to emphasize grace-oriented standards from an inventory of doctrinal integrity.



17. This is a process by which the believer takes on the obligation to think externally rather than internally; to transform the soul away from being egocentric over to becoming altruistic.
18. The key doctrine to illustrate this transformation is to compare the process to that which eternally defines the mentality of God, i.e., His divine integrity.
19. The integrity of God is the love of God; the love of God is the integrity of God. His integrity consists of His righteousness which is inflexible and eternal. His standards are never altered and thus dependable, trustworthy, and therefore reliable.
20. In James's quote of Moses in James 2:8, he uses the phrase "love your neighbor." Again, it is an imperatival future that points the believer to a system that must be adopted, enhanced, practiced, and pursued to the point of achieving its intended objective which is wisdom.
21. Along the way through this process, the believer must maintain the policy of teachability. He must be willing to inhibit wheel-tracks of wickedness by replacing them through facilitation of wheel-tracks of righteousness.
22. Since we are fallen, with functional sin natures, and functioning in a fallen environment, we must also aggrandize our integrity with a police department, i.e., the principle of justice which for man is the invisible asset of a conscience.
23. When circumstances dictate, the believer must recall doctrinal principles, evaluate the idea from the conscience in light of the situation, and then apply the biblical solution.
24. It is this process that ultimately enables the believer to systematically apply the Royal Law: "to love your neighbor as yourself." "The verb *agapáō* is a mental attitude based on righteous standards in the stream of consciousness while the conscience critiques the idea from its inventory of norms and standards.
25. The end result is that one's decisions influenced by personal integrity in his stream of consciousness is certified by the norms and standards of his conscience.
26. This fulfills the obligations associated with the Royal Law: "You are to function with integrity toward others from the resources of divine viewpoint resident in the soul."
27. From this system, the believer advances in his capacity to apply righteous standards from his *kardia*. Consistent spiritual growth enlarges one's inventory of divine viewpoint under the supervision of the soul's conscience which functions as its justice department.
28. When applied toward others, this is referred to as the Royal Law.

(End JAS3-97. See JAS3-98 for continuation of study at p. 431.)

