

Paul and James: A Contradiction? Case Study: Sin and Righteousness

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Introduction

Protestants begin with faith, not doubt. We come to Scripture as believers. God gave His Word just the way He wanted it to come. His purpose is to communicate. Let's be honest: if He cannot facilitate effective understanding, His plan to reveal truth via the Bible is a failed project.

God's Word is His law. Too quickly we dismiss the value of His precepts. The writer of Psalm 119:93 says by the precepts of God's word, "He revived me." The goal of the law is Christ (Romans 10:4). God reveals Himself to reveal to the image of Himself--the human individual--what he is to be and what he is to live. God reveals Himself so that we may understand ourselves. He gave His Word to help and heal.

Martin Luther studied diligently. The Holy Spirit led his mind. Heaven showed Luther the Bible path and he forged ahead in earnest. Layers of myth and allegorical interpretation were scraped aside.

For 1,000 years that approach had obscured God's Word. God used Luther to bring the Church back to a more literal, straightforward approach. Much was opened to Luther's mind but somehow, the bright light shining from the book of James remained confusing to him. James, which had stood sixth in New Testament book order (Matthew, Mark, Luke John, Acts, James), was sent further toward the back in Luther's New Testament, after Hebrews.

According to Luther,

"St. James' Epistle is really an epistle of straw, for it has nothing of the nature of the Gospel about it."

Roman Catholics have gleefully skewered Protestants with Luther's statement. James, they claim, is as good, godly, and important as any other book of the Bible. On this count they are right.

My presentations look at two areas. In particular we will compare James with Paul on sin and righteousness, and, on faith and works. These are urgent, core topics, particularly if we are committed to Sola Scriptura. Do James and Paul agree or disagree with each other? What Protestant answer can we give?

Author, Date, Purpose

Who is the author of James and when was the book written? Scholars have laid out their theories. The evidence is persuasive that the author of James was Jesus' older half-brother, the eldest son of Joseph who was later converted. In Matthew 1:16 Joseph's father is Jacob. It was common to name one's firstborn son after his father. James, as you may know, is an English name overlaying actual the name in the Greek: Jacob. (See Matthew 13:55; 27:56; 12:46.) Jesus appeared to James/Jacob after the resurrection but before His ascension (1 Corinthians 15:7). In Acts 1:14 Jesus' brothers are present along with Mary in the Upper room.

Peter was probably the first leader in the Jerusalem church. But after Peter was imprisoned and then after, forced into hiding, in due course James became a prominent leader. Remember, Saul/Paul had been a force in the early persecution of the church (Acts 7:58; 8:1), and all were scattered except the apostles. Peter reported to the church at Jerusalem; he wasn't leading the church there.

And what about Paul? He spent time in Arabia and only later returned to Jerusalem. There he met with Peter and James (Galatians 1:18-19). Fourteen years later Paul cycles through Jerusalem again and speaks with the same leaders (Galatians 2:7-9).

The James who became the preeminent leader in Jerusalem could not be James the brother of John who suffered early martyrdom (Acts 12:2). After Peter's arrest and deliverance, Peter commands, "report these things to James and the brethren" (Acts 12:17). The Jerusalem Council is organized by the leading apostles and elders (Acts 15:2), and in *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 194, Ellen White agrees James is the leader who reads the decision (Acts 15:13, 19, 22). In Acts 21:18 James is the leader in Jerusalem.

This epistle was very early. David P. Scaer suggests it is the first writing of the New Testament, and places its composition shortly after the persecution recorded in Acts 8 but before Peter's preaching to Cornelius in Acts 10. I like a strong case built firmly on internal evidence.

Some have said the Greek of James was too good to have been written by a Palestinian Jew, but this is not a problem if Hellenization was further advanced than commonly understood.

James is written to provide pastoral encouragement to the very early Church which is being persecuted and scattered. It is still a 99% Jewish Church, and the context fits this situation.

Sin and Righteousness

Do Paul and James have the same ideas about sin and righteousness, or different? If the Author

(capitol "A") of Scripture is the Holy Spirit, and Paul and James are His penmen not His pen, then the Bible will contain the divine idea of sin and of righteousness, presented in the Spirit-guided ideas of the penmen. God's ideas are communicated by His Bible writers in men's words-- a combination not called the word of God and men, but the "Word of God" (1 thessalonians 2:13).

Because the Bible has one Author, but many writers, it is a harmony. Ellen White describes the phenomenon:

Written in different ages, by men who differed widely in rank and occupation, and in mental and spiritual endowments, the books of the Bible present a wide contrast in style, as well as a diversity in the nature of the subjects unfolded. Different forms of expression are employed by different writers; often the same truth is more strikingly presented by one than by another. And as several writers present a subject under varied aspects and relations, there may appear, to the superficial, careless, or prejudiced reader, to be discrepancy or contradiction, where the thoughtful, reverent student, with clearer insight, discerns the underlying harmony (*The Great Controversy*, p. vi).

We anticipate agreement. For example, compare what James writes in this passage:

Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing (James 1:2-4).

To what Paul writes in this passage:

Brethren, my heart's desire and my prayer to God for them is for their salvation. For I testify about them that they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge. For not knowing knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the goal of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes (Romans 10:1-4).

James speaks about trials that come in the course of believing. Passing through these challenges tests our faith and activates our belief. As with muscles so with faith: exercise increases their strength. The result of the continuing exercise of faith is a matured faith, a full-power faith.

Paul also speaks of end-results but describes Israel following an erroneous path. Israel has succumbed to the trap of merit-based relationship. They offer God their own works when what they need is God's righteousness. Christ is the end, or goal of the law for righteousness. He is the living demonstration, the very example of encountering trials and tests and passing through all to finish perfect and complete.

Paul continues, contrasting a wrong application of Leviticus 18:5 ("So you shall keep my statutes and My judgments, by which a man may live if he does them; I am the Lord") with a sound application of Dueteronomy 30:6ff, God circumcising the heart, His follower serving out of a love-based obedience giving God a whole heart that turns to Him fully. This kind of experience is not a distant and far away impossibility, but a present hope, "very near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (Dueteronomy 30:14).

God has not rejected Israel, but their endeavor to relate to God through impersonal obedience leaves them beaten and self-bruised. James and Paul both see God building believers through trials. They see Him bringing the believer to maturity, even perfection. Because some among us become queasy with that word is no reason to abandon it.

The original Greek here interests us. James 1:4 says, "Let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing." TELEION describes work being brought to full development, so that the believer may be perfect and have all of the fullness of perfection. James uses the same language in 3:2, speaking of the perfect man who is able to control his speaking, and in 1:17 he insists that every perfect gift comes from the Father. In 1:25 he speaks of God's perfect law.

Paul will use the same words. We are called to be demonstrators of God's perfect will (Romans 12:2). Paul prays that followers of Jesus will "be made complete" (2 Corinthians 13:11), becoming perfect or mature persons, "to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ."

Paul and James agree that in God's strength one may live a life pleasing to God. One may be complete, forgiven for past sin, and not acting in present sin. James on Abraham: "that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works faith was perfected." No contradictions.

On Sin

James' and Paul's description of what sin is is very important. Many craft an understanding of sin built on misreadings of David's Psalm 51 and Paul's Romans five. But all understanding of sin should really begin at its first major descriptive Old Testament passage: Genesis 4:1-7. Hear verses 6 and 7:

A fallen human is on the edge of choosing to do murder, and God intervenes. God comes down to him. God talks to him. He wants Cain to rethink. Cain is wrong. Cain's anger is unjustified.

Then the Lord said to Cain, 'Why are you angry and why has your countenance fallen? If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it.'

If you do well, he is reminded, you'll be fine. Sin or righteousness always enters into the world in what we do. Doing righteousness or doing sin is an active choice. We choose which impulse we will follow.

Consider our passage. God comes to a fallen human, a man in whom the right relation between desire, intellect, will, and morality, has been upended. And to that man, even with his outward-to-inward-turned relation to his world, God calls him to overcome the negative inclination: "You must master it."

This is the very important idea of the YETZER HA TOV and the YETZER HA RA, or, the inclination to the good and the inclination to the evil. The *Oxford Reference to Judaism* describes it this way:

‘The good inclination and the evil inclination.’ In the typical Rabbinic doctrine, with far-reaching consequences in Jewish religious thought, every human being has two inclinations or instincts, one pulling upwards, the other downwards. These are the ‘good inclination’--ha-tov--and the ‘evil inclination’--yetzer ha-ra. . . . Although it is called the ‘evil inclination’, because it can easily lead to wrongdoing, it really denotes more the propensity towards evil rather than something evil in itself (*Oxford Reference*, "Yetzer Ha-Tov and Yetzer Ha-Ra," <http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803125333955>).

This is true of us all. We all have the inclination, or propensity, to good and the inclination to the bad. We are not born guilty but disordered. We have an inclination Adam did not have.

Where believers in Judaism may hold that man was born with both impulses, Christians recognize that actually when man was created he was part of a "very good" (Genesis 1:31) creation. He had at that time free choice but no negative impulse. His inclination to right was uninformed by long experience however. There remained the possibility of distrust and of being deceived and choosing wrongly. God makes no robots. When humanity fell there was a change. Ellen White describes it straightforwardly:

Humanity has no power to regenerate itself. It does not tend upward, toward the divine, but downward, toward the satanic. Christ is our only hope (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 73).

And

It is the grace that Christ implants in the soul which creates in man enmity against Satan. Without this converting grace and renewing power, man would continue the captive of Satan, a servant ever ready to do his bidding. But the new principle in the soul creates conflict where hitherto had been peace. The power which Christ imparts enables man to resist the tyrant and usurper. Whoever is seen to abhor sin instead of loving it, whoever resists and conquers those passions that have held sway within, displays the operation of a principle wholly from above (*The Great Controversy*, p. 506).

If we feed the tendency to evil, it will strengthen with use and almost instantly we will act out sin.

James on Sin

James is clear; God doesn't tempt. Let's focus in particular now on James' description of sin in 1:12-18:

Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. Let no one say when he is tempted, 'I am being tempted by God,' for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.

If one of the main things in James' mind is writing to early pastors and elders to encourage them

in the face of persecution, this appeal makes sense. They need to endure. Endurance is the critical thing. Commenting on this verse, the *Etz Hayim* in its Midrashic Commentary on Genesis 4:6-7 says, "The primary punishment for sin is that it makes another sin more likely" (p. 25). We should strive to prevail at the first step of temptation. If not, the whole path is downward. James here describes the descent from temptation into actual sin.

The person who is tempted is enticed by his own desire. An object is presented to him and something in him wants it. Wanting it, he engages in thoughts about obtaining it. He persuades himself even more that he wants it. He carries himself away in his own lust.

James' image is pregnancy. A human baby takes nine months to come to birth; sin is much faster. From conception to birth there is still a possibility that the thing conceived will not attain to independent existence. But when sin is born, even then, because of the mercy of God, death is deferred and heaven engages in rescue operations attempting to influence and persuade the rebel to accept God's gift of repentance and return. But if the sin-process attains to completion, sin ends inevitably in death.

James continues:

Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow. In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures.

God gives His children victory over sin. The source for this victory is God Himself. He is not two-minded. He brought us forth by the word of truth. The idea "He brought us forth" is in the Greek aorist--it looks at the whole in one picture; it is a video of the whole bringing forth, not a snapshot of it.

In contrast to the process of sin taking a person from life to death, God is in the process of taking from death to life. He makes us new creatures. We are born again.

James has more to say about sin. To show partiality In James 2:9 is to commit sin. Again, sin is active doing, something one does. And again we have James 4:13-17.

James gives the example of entrepreneurs planning to go to a city and engage in business. They are planning to work for a year and make a good profit. But James has a warning--they do not know the future. Life passes quickly. Any number of things could happen to disrupt their plans or even end their lives while in a situation of spiritual unpreparedness.

They should instead conduct themselves so that they make God's will the preeminent concern. They should say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that." He faults them for boasting in their arrogance, and declares that all such boasting is evil. All life lived through unbelieving eyes is evil, arrogant boasting. God is our source of life. Life lived as though there is no God, is human boasting in human desire for autonomy. James concludes:

Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin.

If one knows right from wrong, and then exercises his choice not doing right, he does wrong. Sin

is not only the active doing of wrong, but the active rejection of doing right. To know what a believer should do, and not do it, is to do sin.

Every person makes decisions within a context. There is an underlying situation within which one is acting. Good and evil is forever operative in every place. That is, there are morally right and wrong choice options to be made in what we do in every place.

Paul on Sin

Let's pivot now to Paul. What is Paul's teaching about sin? Sin is a very prominent theme in his writings. We'll consider his important statements chronologically.

Galatians 3:22; Romans 3:23

Our first stop is Galatians 3:22. "The Scripture has shut up everyone under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe." This statement comes in the midst of a discussion comparing trying to be saved by obedience with being saved on the basis of God's promised gift of faith in Jesus.

Jesus dies for us. He took the curse our choices to disobey had attached to us, and in place of the curse, He identifies us as children of Abraham by faith. That is, sin is a human universal. In Romans 3:23 Paul will also teach that all have sinned and placed themselves in a situation of irrecoverable deficit toward God. To choose to sin places oneself in a hole with no bottom and no ladder out. To sin is to dig a deep, hopeless hole and fling ourselves in.

Without Jesus we are hopeless; in particular we are hopeless because of sin. All choose rebellion and no, Jews don't dig smaller holes. *All* are shut up under sin because all choose to indulge self.

2 Corinthians 5:21

Second Corinthians 5:21 says, "He [God the Father] made Him who knew no sin [Jesus] to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him [Jesus]."

Jesus takes our sin, our actual sin, and is actually punished for our actual sins. That is, I intentionally, with eyes open, chose rebellion. But by God's mercy I at a later time accept His gift of repentance and His promise of transformation. Jesus who is transforming me steps up and receives the punishment due me. He also gifts to me His perfect life. This is no trick or fiction. When He forgives He speaks and when He speaks, creative power is released into my life. His creative power makes the forgiven one actually righteous.

Sin in Romans

In Romans, Paul works extensively with the question of sin. In the last half of chapter one, Gentiles are condemned for intentionally suppressing God's truth. In the first half of two, the Jews are condemned for hypocrisy. In the first 20 verses of chapter three, Paul says all are under the condemnation of sin. And so before Romans 3:9 he's already argued that all have sinned. But he wants to say even more, so he continues in 10-18 adding a half-dozen quotations (Psalm 14:1-3; 53:1-3; 5:9; 140:3; 10:7; 36:1; Isaiah 59:7f), none of which make sin a birth state, and all of

which refer not only to wicked people but also to righteous people somewhere else nearby in the text, usually in contrast to the wicked.

Humans turn aside, we become corrupt, we are born with weaknesses and tendencies to evil. We are birthed ready, as soon as morally accountable, to choose to indulge self, all aware we are acting in violent rejection of God's ways. We come into being strongly equipped to rebel, and, in due course, we intentionally do. We choose to sin, we become sinners.

In 5:12 Paul argues that all fall under condemnation "because all sinned." Here, and mostly throughout the chapter, The Greek Aorist, or "undefined" verb is used. Usually its reference is to something in broad terms; for example, not to a single event in a vacation, but to the vacation as a whole.

In 5:16, 18, and 19 Paul links the sins of many with the sins of one, Adam. But he's quite careful in how he does it. In 16 and 18 he uses the preposition *eis*, meaning "motion into." The NASB translates this with the phrase "resulting in." In other words, there are two directions of potential movement at each testing point. One pathway follows the fallen tendency and repeats the first Adam's sin. The other pathway is to respond to God by receiving His gift of repentance. We go instead in the pathway of Jesus, the second Adam, and "it is written." It is really a choice, every time, between "I will write" and "It is written." It is a choice between corrupted human inclination, and regenerate inclination. Many are "made" sinners in potential through the weakness inherited from the first Adam. Then by free choice we turn that potential into sad reality. But God is ready to empower every man to choose to live in the strength of the Holy Spirit, and to embrace the reality of the second Adam. Everyone in this hall right now is harmonizing right now with the sin of the first Adam or the righteousness of the second. Some fight the fallen inclination; some hold on to it.

Nineteen says "as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous." The failure of the first Adam is contrasted with the victory of Jesus. If we live in subjection to our fallen humanity, we will fail; if we live in subjection to the Holy Spirit, we will be victorious (Romans 8:5-17).

Chapter six tells us more. The Christian is to understand himself as being dead to sin and alive to God. Moreover, the power of sin is rendered powerless (Romans 6:6 in us), and "sin shall not be master [kurieusei] over you." Finally, in Romans 6:22 we have been set free from sin. God has freed the believer.

Romans 14:23

Romans 14:23 says, "he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because his eating is not from faith; and whatever is not from faith is sin." This reminds us of James 1:6 admonishing the believer, "but he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind." We act in faith. We should not act against our own conscience. Our actions need to be acted-out in our faith toward God.

Ephesians 2

In Ephesians, sin is still what you do, active choice by the person. Verse one, why were they dead? By reason of their trespasses and sins in which they had walked, sins which they had acted-out. Verse three says they were "by nature" "children of wrath." But also that they were "indulging" the desires of the flesh and of the mind. This is active choosing. Sin is a choice; if we persist in living unconverted, all we have is the power of an unrenewed heart. How will that turn out?

We learn something when we compare this with a similar passage by Paul in Colossians 1:21-23. there, he says, "And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, yet has he now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach--if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard..."

We choose what we do and so we choose what become. Faith is that acting out.

Righteousness

James on Righteousness

James speaks about trials that come to the believer in the course of believing. Passing through these challenges tests our faith and activates our belief. As with muscles so with faith: exercise increases their strength. The result of the continuing exercise of trust in God is a maturing, full-power faith.

Paul describes Israel following an erroneous path. There is a trap of merit-based relationship and the people of God sometimes fall into it. They need God's righteousness but they offer Him their own works. Christ is the end, or goal of the law for righteousness. He is the living demonstration, the very example of how to encounter trials and tests and pass through to finish perfect and complete.

Paul contrasts a wrong application of Leviticus 18:5 ("So you shall keep my statutes and My judgments, by which a man may live if he does them; I am the Lord"), with a sound application of Deuteronomy 30:6ff: God circumcising the heart, His follower serving out of a love-based obedience giving God a whole heart turned fully to Him. This kind of experience is not a far off impossibility, but a present hope, "very near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (Deuteronomy 30:14).

God has not rejected Israel, but their stubborn attempt to relate to Him through an impersonal kind of obedience leaves them self-bruised and self-beaten. James and Paul agree God builds believers through trials.

The phrase "the righteousness of God" appears both in Paul and James. James writes, "the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God" (1:20).

In context (James 1:12-27), James is describing the person who is blessed while under trial. He

knows that God is not tempting him but that the enemy of souls is tempting him. He resists the impulse to serve self. He knows that God is allowing the temptation as a gift to develop oneness with God, righteousness. He knows that God's Word is the great cleaver of truth, cutting away self-serving habits and tendencies. He places himself under God's pruning knife again and again and again and again. The human bits are taken off because they are really inhuman bits; they are not what God ever designed for humanity. New spiritual growth comes in at every wound, and that growth will make us more actually human for it is the growth intended by the Designer.

In 19, James reminds his hearers what they know: we need to be quick to hear God and slow to speak. We listen for God's still small voice and respond patiently, not in anger. Remember James' warning. Temptations left to fester develop into actual sin. If we respond passionately, we are almost guaranteed to act with an inappropriate anger, and inappropriate anger does not achieve the righteousness of God (v. 20).

Paul on Righteousness

There is a resolution issue going on here. We have much less text from James, like only a small number of pixels. James uses the word "righteousness" one time, whereas we come to Paul and he uses it many times so we are informed by much more content.

Paul uses the phrase the "righteousness of God" only after James has first used it.

In Romans 1:17 the righteousness of God is revealed when the humans live righteous lives by faith. In Romans 3:5 human unrighteousness highlights the righteousness of God. In 3:21 and 22 the righteousness of God is demonstrated throughout the Bible in the lives believers live through faith in Jesus. In Romans 10:3 Paul describes the embarrassing attempt by Israelites to make their human righteousness stand up as valid, utterly failing to be righteous as God is righteous. Finally, in 2 Corinthians 5:21 Jesus is made sin on our behalf so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

What Paul says agrees with James. James wants people to respond obediently to God's Word, and thus reveal His righteousness. Paul expands on this connection between God and humans made in His image. Paul is not ashamed of the gospel because it is the power of God to salvation for the believer.

It is in the gospel of God that the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith. As the believer in Jesus lives each day, believing in Jesus, receiving power through Jesus, his spiritual experience broadens and deepens. Faith increases from small to large. Because God works, faith works, the gospel works, and Paul is not ashamed of the gospel. The gospel reveals God's righteousness. The revelation is not impersonal or arbitrary or theoretical; it is life-changing.

There are many sad examples of the lives of believers failing to live up to the gospel reality, yet even then God's ways are still right. But God has His eye on the living examples, the humans who choose His ways, who demonstrate His righteousness in their otherwise empty-of-righteousness lives. The gospel is true whether men live it or not. But God's project in the great controversy war is to show through the lives of His believers that the gospel is all that He has claimed and that Satan's charges are false. Selfishness and selflessness are on trial and the gospel

is the final demonstration.

The remarkable statement in 2 Corinthians 5:21 should have our strong attention. We are to be reconciled to the Father. The Father made Jesus, who never sinned, to be sin for us. Jesus took our humanity and by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit He conquered sin in our kind of flesh. At every testing point He chose fealty to God. Voluntarily He took our sins and received our punishment. His pure and righteous life was His to give for us and He gave it for us.

But Heaven refused to stop there. All this was done so that we might be made [genometha, from ginomai, to be created, to come into existence, be born] the righteousness of God in Him. We are not made the righteousness of God independent of Him, but in Him. The Creator creates us new. A few verses before this, in 17, we are told, "if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold new things have come."

To be "in Christ" here does not mean any kind of fiction. It means to be remade. And so Ellen White writes,

Christ was treated as we deserve, that we might be treated as He deserves. He was condemned for our sins, in which He had no share, that we might be justified by His righteousness, in which we had no share. He suffered the death which was ours, that we might receive the life which was His. 'With His stripes we are healed.' (Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 25).

We should notice that being justified by His righteousness is not a fictional forgiveness, but that we receive the life which is His and that we are healed.

Which brings us back round' to James' statement that we should be quick to listen and slow to anger because the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God. Paul expands on this even as he agrees with James.

Conclusion

Do James and Paul disagree? Not on what sin is; not on what righteousness is; not on advancing to spiritual maturity in Christ. Rather, they tell the same story about what sin is, what the righteousness of God is, and what God's goal for the Christian is: the development of mature disciples who overcome through faith.

Is there a contradiction between James and Paul on the Bible teaching of what sin is and what righteousness is? No. The threat of liberal Protestantism, the Bible-minus, an awful threat to Sola Scriptura, if we go by the Bible itself, will not be an issue. All of James and all of Paul are in harmony. These topic headings provide one example of that. We can read our Bibles as Protestants with confidence.