

**THE WEEK OF
November 2nd, 2009**



**Jesus Vs. The Consuming Wrath
Part 2
James 1:19-20**

"So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath;
for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God."

James 1:19-20

Surely what a man does when he is taken off his guard is the best evidence for what sort of a man he is? Surely what pops out before the man has time to put on a disguise is the truth? If there are rats in a cellar you are most likely to see them if you go in very suddenly. But the suddenness does not create the rats: it only prevents them from hiding. In the same way the suddenness of the provocation does not make me an ill-tempered man; it only shows me what an ill-tempered man I am. The rats are always there in the cellar, but if you go in shouting and noisily they will have taken cover before you switch on the light.

-C. S. Lewis

As men, we don't like to be caught off-guard. Whether it's sudden danger or unexpected embarrassment, we often overreact to sudden change, news, etc. Think about what you would do if someone barged into your home. Would you just sit relaxed on the couch? No, you would jump into action; ready to defend your home and if you have one, your family. That would be an appropriate reaction. How about when someone barges into our life socially, in a way we find offensive and even wrong? Some examples might be: someone gossiping about you, saying something rude to you, or even making a not-so-nice hand gesture your way. Like with the home invasion, we may find ourselves rising up to defend ourselves. But what is it we're defending in these instances? Certainly it's not a life-preserving action. Most likely, we're reacting to save Pride. We don't like to lose face. So we naturally lash out at the one who offends us, and usually, we do it without regard to the fallout. This is what C.S. Lewis speaks of. It's not the offense that makes us ill-tempered, the offense simply reveals the temper that is already there. So here's a question. What are these provocations revealing within us? If wrath is boiling over, it didn't develop overnight, nor will it go away overnight. However, we can and need to change by the cleansing power of Jesus' blood. Our challenge, this week, is to ask Jesus to quickly switch on the light in our cellar and thus reveal the rats. Then, with His help and the help of our brothers - remove them.

**Read the Proverb and the section of Psalm 119 that corresponds with the calendar day example:
*If it's the 1st day of the month, read Proverbs 1 and Psalm 119:1-8 (Aleph)***

Daily Readings Related to Consuming Wrath

Mon: Put on the armor of God: Ephesians 6:13-18

Tue: Being a doer of the word: "...and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves." James 1:19-25

Wed: Don't fly off the handle: "A fool's wrath is known at once" Proverbs 12:16

Thu: Uncontrolled rightness: "But a fool rages and is self-confident" Proverbs 14:16

Fri: Losing control: "A fool vents all his feelings" Proverbs 29:11

Discussion Questions for Bible Café:

1. What do you see when Jesus switches the light on in your cellar? What changes, if any, do you need to make as a result?

2. How does our anger reflect on our God? Are we slower to anger when the other person knows we're Christians?

Prayer Requests of your Bible Café brothers (on back):