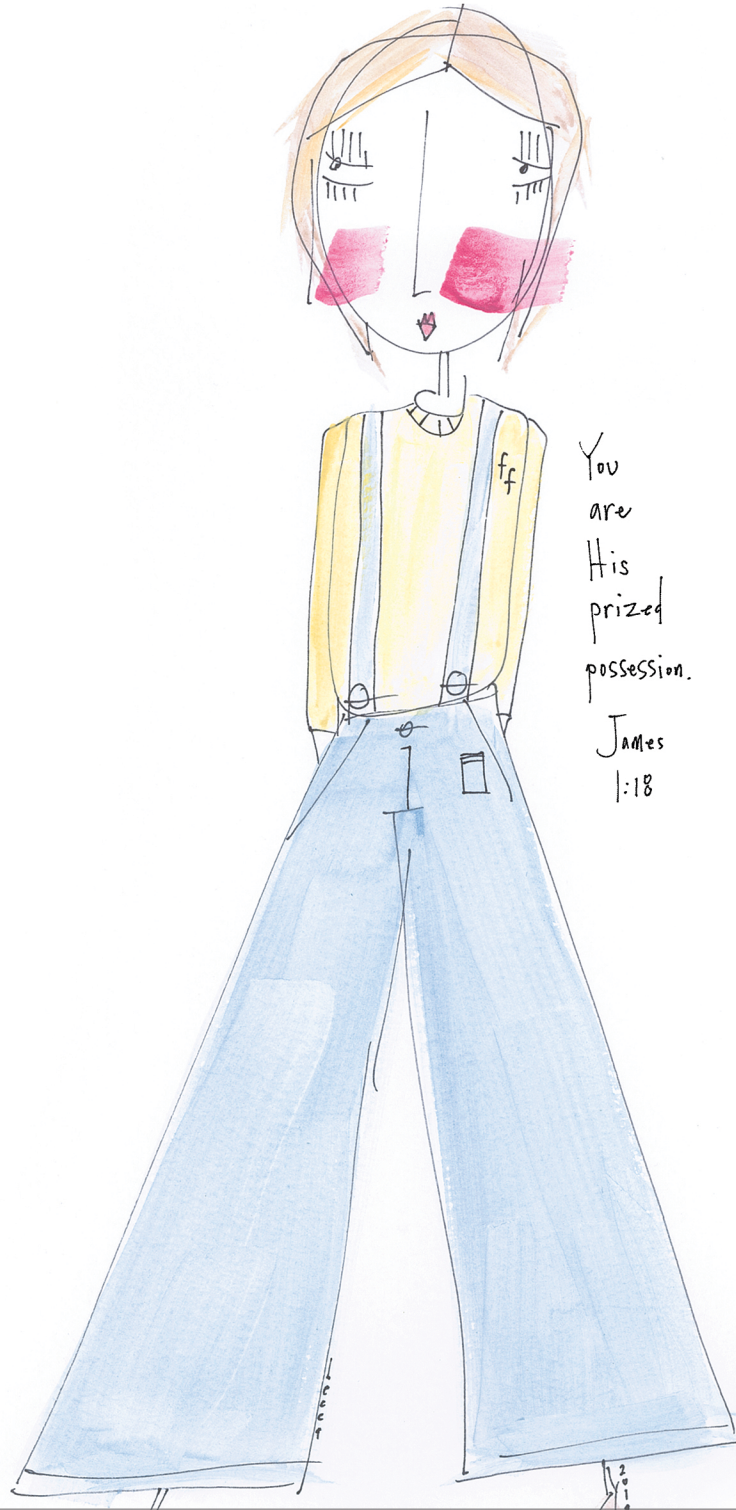


# FRESH FAITH JAMES SERIES



Fresh Faith Series  
James



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Fresh Faith Series  
James

## Getting Started

Learning how to study the Bible for ourselves is one of the most important skills we can acquire as Christians. This proficiency assists us in developing as true disciples of Christ, equipping us for life. Knowing God's Word and intentionally putting it into action gives us the ability to walk daily in *Fresh Faith* according to His will.

***26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.***

~John 14:26~

### Daily Homework:

Homework is designed to encourage approximately 15-20 minutes of study each day for five days of the week. (you can do it!) That's less time per day (by far) than the average person spends on social media.

### What you Will Need:

- **The Bible:** We will use the *New King James Version (NKJV)* for this study; however, we also recommend the *New Living Translation (NLT)*, *New American Standard Bible (NASB)*, and the *English Standard Version (ESV)* to aid in your understanding and comprehension.
- **Access to online Bible study helps:** [blueletterbible.org](http://blueletterbible.org), [preceptaustin.org](http://preceptaustin.org), [biblehub.com](http://biblehub.com), or [biblegateway.com](http://biblegateway.com) are all good study resources. To view a quick Blue Letter Bible tutorial, visit [www.youtube.com/reliancewomen](http://www.youtube.com/reliancewomen) "BLB Tutorial"
- **Prayer:** Pray before each lesson and ask God to reveal His truth through His Word and ask His help in understanding and applying it to your life.
- **Access to Teachings:** All the teachings are available at [www.youtube.com/reliancewomen](http://www.youtube.com/reliancewomen) "Fresh Faith Series"

### What you can expect:

The questions in this study were designed to aid you in learning how to study the Bible on your own. The questions are generally centered around observing, interpreting and applying the scriptures, but will not cover every theme, truth, or subject for each chapter. Allow the Holy

Spirit to guide you into all truth and take you where He chooses. My hope is that this study creates a hunger and thirst for God's Word that will inspire you to dig deeper.

**Note:** Unless otherwise noted all scripture references are in NKJV.

**Each chapter includes:**

- In A Nutshell
- The Text
- Days 1- 4: Questions centered on Observing, Interpreting, and Applying the scriptures
- Day 5: A Heart Motivation (a focus of the soul that week)
- The Finish Line: "The 54 Imperative 'Must Dos' of James"

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James

**Introduction to James**

James, or “James the Just,” describes himself as a bonds slave (*doulos in Greek*) of God and of Jesus Christ, writing to the “12 tribes which are scattered abroad”—the Jewish believers. A bonds slave is one who does not consider his own life precious but gives it up voluntarily to serve another, laying down his rights, titles, and ambitions completely for his master. The book of James is quite possibly the earliest of the New Testament epistles (letters) dating back as early as A.D. 45 (early view, written before Acts 15) and no later than A.D. 62 (late view, written after Acts 15). There are several reasons for this letter: (1) James desired to comfort persecuted believers (1:5), (2) he wished to commend “pure religion” (1:27), and (3) he wanted to convict mere “professors” of the faith who were not “doers” (2:14-26).

Persons called James in the Bible:

- |                   |   |  |
|-------------------|---|--|
| 1. James          | brother of John the apostle<br>sons of Zebedee/Sons of Thunder                                    | (Mark 1:19, Acts 12:2)                       |
| 2. James          | son of Alphaeus   | (Mark 3:18, Mt. 10:3)                        |
| 3. James the Less |   | (Mark 15:40)                                 |
| 4. James          | father of Judas (not Judas Iscariot)  | (Luke 6:16,, John 14:22)                     |
| 5. James          | the half-brother of Jesus<br>brother of Jude<br>the son of Mary and Joseph<br>the writer of James | (Mark 6:3; Mt. 13:55; Gal. 1:19)<br>(Jude 1) |

Interestingly, James did not become a believer until after the resurrection when Christ appeared to him (1 Corinthians 15:7; John 7:5; Acts 1:14;). He was considered a pillar in the Jerusalem church (Gal. 2:9) and presided at the Jerusalem council (Acts 15:13-19). Can you imagine the reunion these brothers had when James entered eternal life? Wisdom in Christ is the overarching theme of this letter (1:5); hence, the book of James is often referred to as the “Proverbs of the New Testament.” The key words and phrases include: brethren (19x), deed/work (15x), doer (4x), faith (15x), judge or judgement (8x), law (10x), sin (6x), and wisdom (4x). Furthermore, James, like Amos in the Old Testament, holds a deep concern for

the poor and places a strong emphasis on “good works” as a manifestation of our faith. The letter was thought by some to contradict the writings of Paul, but there was a failure to recognize that James’ teachings on works complemented—not contradicted—Paul’s teachings on faith. While Paul’s teachings concentrate on our justification with God, James teaches how our works demonstrate that justification. Therefore, it’s not faith plus works that equal justification, but rather faith which produces works. James encourages the Christian Jews to continue to grow by emphasizing that good actions will naturally flow from those who are filled by God’s Holy Spirit. The question arises however, whether one is truly saved if the fruits of the Spirit cannot be seen. The book of James is very practical and moral as opposed to doctrinal and theological. The author speaks of the need for “sound deeds” not just “sound doctrine”. There are over 50 imperatives or “must dos” stated in this epistle that instruct us how to be “doers of God’s Word” and not “hearers only.” In these five chapters, we will absorb the ultimate explanation of the relationship between faith and works that reflects a similar truth from Jesus’ own words in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5). If we are to have *Fresh Faith*, we must put His truth into action, and the only way this is possible, according to James, is through the living and active Word of God penetrating our hearts and lives. According to Josephus, James was martyred about A.D. 62, when he was pushed from the high point of the temple (which didn’t kill him) and then beaten on the ground causing his martyr’s death, even as he prayed for his attackers.

## Lesson One

### James I–In a Nutshell

There is an excitement in starting a new book of the Bible. We get highlighters, journals and commentaries out, we pray, and begin our journey to see what God might say to us. However, in this case, we quickly land upon James 1:2, “count it all joy when you fall into various trials” and it stops us cold! Twisting our heads like a dog hearing a high-pitched whistle, we wonder how “joy” and “trials” could possibly fit in the same sentence. Living life when trials and temptations surround us can be overwhelming and often leave us feeling exhausted and hopeless. As James will show, **navigating trials** and **resisting temptations** can only come by knowing, understanding, and acting upon God’s Word, the **Truth—our mirror for action**. That is James I in a nutshell.

### James I-The Text (NKJV)

I James, a bondservant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad: Greetings. 2 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. 4 But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. 5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. 6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. 7 For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; 8 *he is* a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways. 9 Let the lowly brother glory in his exaltation, 10 but the rich in his humiliation, because as a flower of the field he will pass away. 11 For no sooner has the sun risen with a burning heat than it withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beautiful appearance perishes. So, the rich man also will fade away in his pursuits. 12 Blessed *is* the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. 13 Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. 14 But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. 15 Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death. 16 Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. 17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with

whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. 18 Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of first fruits of His creatures. 19 So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; 20 for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God. 21 Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. 22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. 23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; 24 for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. 25 But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues *in it and* is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does. 26 If anyone among you thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion *is* useless. 27 Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, *and* to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

### **James I: Day One “Navigating Trials”**

Read James 1:1-12

1. James tells us that trials will produce fruit in our lives and that fruit brings joy and makes the trials and/or testing of our faith worth it. What fruit is produced by trials? (v.3)

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2. Results are promised when we let this work take place. What are these results? (v.4)

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3. In verses 5-8 we read that wisdom is indicated in this process. What do you observe about seeking “wisdom” from God?

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4. Look up one or two words from vs. 1-12 using a Bible dictionary and/or Strong's concordance. List the synonyms and antonyms for each word. Share your findings.

- \_\_\_\_\_

- Synonyms-

- Antonyms-

- \_\_\_\_\_

- Synonyms-

- Antonyms-

5. In verses 9-11 James switches to talk about riches. Why do you think this is important when discussing trials?

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6. What are the differences between the words "trials" (v.2), "temptation" (v.12) and "tempted" (v.13)? What do you discover?

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7. If you have breath, you have various trials. What current trials are you facing right now?

Personal: \_\_\_\_\_

Marital: \_\_\_\_\_

Children/family: \_\_\_\_\_

Financial: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationships with others: \_\_\_\_\_

Health: \_\_\_\_\_

Others:

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8. What wisdom can you apply today by finding verses that deal directly to your specific issues? For example, if you're having conflict with someone, do a word search on "conflict" and share what you learn; it will help other group members also.

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When we "count" (the sum of, to calculate, determining the total) a trial as joy it doesn't mean that the trial itself is joyful. We must remember that the term is like a dividend (profit, benefit, or reward). I can determine that the benefit of my trials will bring joy because God has promised it is of value when I come through the trial leaning on my faith and imparting wisdom from His Word into my everyday life.

### **James 1: Day Two "Navigating Trials"**

1. In James 1:12, what is the "crown of life?"

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Crowns are the rewards we are given as believers for our faithful work done here on earth. The crown—*stephanos in Greek*— is a mark of royal or exalted rank. It's a metaphor describing the eternal blessedness which will be given as a prize to the genuine servant of God.

Did you know that there is a crown for enduring trials, tribulation and severe suffering, even unto death (Rev. 2:10)?

2. Can you name the other "crowns" listed in the Bible and what they are given for?

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1. Crown of Life-enduring trials, tribulation and/or death for our faith. (James 1:12)

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

***9 Whenever the living beings give glory and honor and thanks to the one sitting on the throne (the one who lives forever and ever), 10 the twenty-four elders fall down and worship the one sitting on the throne (the one who lives forever and ever). And they lay their crowns before the throne and say, 11 “You are worthy, O Lord our God, to receive glory and honor and power. For you created all things, and they exist because you created what you pleased.”***

**~Revelation 4:9-11 NLT~**

Trials can come in many shapes and sizes. We know from our study they often make their appearance through situations out of our control showing up to test our faith. However, equally we bring trials on ourselves due to our own foolishness or sin which leads to the chastisement of the Lord. Lord, help us in our weakness!

3. Turn to Hebrews 12 and read verses 1-12. What stands out to you in these verses?

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4. Now look closely at vs.6 & 11 and share what you notice. How is the Lord speaking to you through them?

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6. Based on His promise to us that we will count our trials “joy,” list what you are, or will be, thankful for when your “trials” turn into joy, even if you’re not through them yet.

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### James I: Day Three “Resisting Temptation”

Read James 1:13-18

1. We are never to say that God tempts us or anyone else. Where do temptations come from? (v.14)

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2. What do these desires lead to or give birth to? What is the ultimate end?

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3. Look up the following words from v.14:

- Tempted-
- Entice-
- Lust-

4. Choose a word from above and find a cross-reference (another scripture) with a similar meaning. (Hint: do a Bible word search of the same word).

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5. Now find a scripture with the opposite meaning. (Hint: using an antonym of the word you chose do a Bible word search). Example: Antonym for “tempt” might be “warn, alert, offend, or hinder.” (Try “hinder.”)

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***13 No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.***

**~1 Corinthians 10:13~**

We live in a culture where “truth” has become obsolete. The very word and definition are under constant attack.

6.. What areas of society do you discern “truth” to be in the most prevalent danger and under the greatest attack, places where “truth” is no longer necessary for making decisions?

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7. It’s been said that when facing a controversial subject as a believer we can do one of three things: (1) Reject it outright, (2) Redeem it, or (3) Receive it wholly. Pick a topic from above and determine how the Lord might be leading you individually and the body of Christ corporately to respond? (some examples might be Halloween, attendance at a gay wedding, social media for kids, any hot topic will do and keep you talking for hours!). Does scripture support your decision?

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**James 1: Day Four “Truth, our Mirror for Action”**

Read James 1:19-26

1. James lists three actions required in response to trials and temptations. We are to be “swift” to hear, and “slow” to speak and wrath. What action is required in being “slow” to do something? How does this thought relate to verse 2?

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2. What does the “wrath of man” produce? \_\_\_\_\_

3. From verse 21, look up the definition of the word “implanted.” What are some ways God’s Word is “implanted” in us?

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4. Look again at vs. 22-25. What does “looking into the mirror” have to do with the truth? What does the mirror represent in this analogy?

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5. Personal: Do you spend time regularly in the Word of God? If not, what hinders you and what change can you make in your routine?

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## James 1: Day Five “A Heart Motivation–His Prized Possession”

On Day Five, each week we will focus on a heart motivation. This is something we can meditate on and ponder in the week to come.

***He gave Himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.***

~Titus 2:14~

God loves each of us with an everlasting love. He thinks about us all the time and prays for us constantly. The words He would use to describe the way He feels about us would be “treasured, precious, cherished, and beloved,” to name a few.

1. The gift of salvation is not earned by works or obedience, it is just that: a gift. In James 1:18, the New Living Translation says, *He chose to give birth to us by giving us his true word. And we, out of all creation, became his prized possession.* Look up the following verses to get a better understanding of what this means

- Ephesians 1:4-5
- Colossians 1:21–22
- 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14
- John 3:3-5
- John 3:16

2. What does it mean to you personally to be God’s “prized possession?” In your own words, write out how you would explain that to someone else:

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3. Take the time to write a letter from God to you. Pray and ask God to fill your paper with His words for you. You will be filled with joy as He whispers these truths into your heart. It may feel awkward at first but willingly sit in silence until you hear His voice and then write what He says.

Let this truth sink into our hearts and motivate our actions this week!

### **This Week's Finish Line**

Turn to page 78 and follow the directions for “The 54 Imperative ‘Must Dos’ of James”. We will complete a bit each week.



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**Lesson Two**

**James 2–In a Nutshell**

You've heard it said, "You cannot judge a book by its cover" and while it's true that words like "trials" and "joy" appropriately fit in the same sentence in chapter 1, here in chapter 2, faith and partiality will not (v.1). Our ***motives arise*** from the depths of our hearts and prove through our actions whether we are God-honoring or self-serving individuals. Can faith alone save? James claims, "***Faith without works is dead***, like a body without a spirit" (v.26). Faith–works–works–faith, how does it all link together and what are the concerns? James concludes that true faith is justified by works. That is James 2 in a nutshell.

**James 2–The Text**

1 My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, *the Lord of glory*, with partiality. 2 For if there should come into your assembly a man with gold rings, in fine apparel, and there should also come in a poor man in filthy clothes, 3 and you pay attention to the one wearing the fine clothes and say to him, "You sit here in a good place," and say to the poor man, "You stand there," or, "Sit here at my footstool," 4 have you not shown partiality among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts? 5 Listen, my beloved brethren: Has God not chosen the poor of this world *to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom* which He promised to those who love Him? 6 But you have dishonored the poor man. Do not the rich oppress you and drag you into the courts? 7 Do they not blaspheme that noble name by which you are called? 8 If you really fulfill *the royal law according to the Scripture*, "*You shall love your neighbor as yourself*," you do well; 9 but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors. 10 For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one *point*, he is guilty of all. 11 For He who said, "*Do not commit adultery*," also said, "*Do not murder*." Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. 12 So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty. 13 For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment. 14 What *does it profit*, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? 15 If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what *does it profit*? 17 Thus also faith by itself, if it does not

have works, is dead. 18 But someone will say, “You have faith, and I have works.” Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. 19 You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble! 20 But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? 21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? 22 Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? 23 And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, “*Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.*” And he was called the friend of God. 24 You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only. 25 Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent *them* out another way? 26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

## James 2: Day One “Motives Arise”

Read James 2:1-13

1. The first thing we must do in starting to study this chapter is define “partiality” (*prosōpolēmpsia* in Greek). In your own words, what do you think this means?

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2. Let’s unpack this word. Use a Bible dictionary or Strong’s concordance to get the Biblical meaning and list a few synonyms and antonyms, plus one cross-reference for an in-depth understanding.

- Partiality-
- Synonyms-
- Antonyms-

- Cross Reference-

4. What does James reveal about the heart of God in verse 5?

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When we give unfair, preferential treatment to one person or group at the expense of another, our actions quickly reveal troubles of the heart. These easily seen troubles lead straight to our ugly, impure motives, exposed for all to see. Partiality practiced according to outward appearances such as race, wealth, status, titles, positions of influence, or power is nothing new but is every bit as sinful today as it was the day James wrote these words. The heart of God is one of equality, unity, care and concern amongst all God's people and the heart of man is revealed in his conduct towards another person.

***10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.***

**~Galatians 6:10~**

5. Personal: What types of people or appearances (wealth, status, title, power, influence, or position) do you struggle with in showing favoritism or partiality? Try to pinpoint your motive for doing so.

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6. Personal: It's fairly simple to identify what types of people we show partiality towards, but what about when we display disinterest or we don't even recognize people based on another

category: poverty, poorly or dirtily dressed, insignificant, weak, incompetent, impaired, or disabled? Is this struggle real for you? Explain and try again to pinpoint your motives in doing so.

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***To favor the rich man over the poor man in the way James described shows a deep carnality among Christians. Their evil thoughts are evident by their partial actions.***

**~David Guzik~**

## **James 2: Day Two “Motives Arise”**

Read James 2:1-13 again.

*Motive*: something that causes a person to act in a certain way, do a certain thing, etc.; incentive.  
The goal or object of a person’s actions.

I. Look up the following verses to reveal what the Bible says about motives, and write your findings:

- Proverbs 20:27-
- Psalm 26:2-
- Proverbs 16:2-
- Jeremiah 17:10-

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- Proverbs 21:2-
- Galatians 1:10-

### The Right Motive

***4 But as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, even so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who tests our hearts.***

~1 Thessalonians 2:4~

2. Here are some specific questions we can ask ourselves to evaluate our motives for serving Christ:

- |   |     |    |
|---|-----|----|
| a. Do I serve God for the praise of others or how it makes me feel?         | Yes | No |
| b. If those whom I serve with never show me gratitude, will I still serve?  | Yes | No |
| c. If others criticize or misunderstand my actions, will I stop serving?    | Yes | No |
| d. If there is sacrifice, inconvenience, or suffering involved will I quit? | Yes | No |
| e. Would I joyfully take a lesser position to help the greater good?        | Yes | No |
| f. If I had to suffer to carry out God's call, would I?                     | Yes | No |
| g. Do I serve for an audience of one (Jesus), joyfully and sacrificially?   | Yes | No |

The only way to truly achieve “pure motives” is to walk in the Spirit. If we're honest, we often struggle with completely surrendering to God. Yielding to God is a minute-by-minute (second-by-second) decision-making process. If we are not filled with the Holy Spirit of God, saturated in His Word, and covered in prayer, daily, we have little hope of truly walking in the Spirit.

3. What is essential to truly walk in the Spirit? See Galatians 5:16; Romans 8:13; Luke 9:23; Matthew 16:24-27. How do these verses speak to you personally?

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***I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.***

**~Romans 12:1-2~.**

4. James wraps up this section in verses 12-13 when he talks about two thoughts, the “law of liberty” and “mercy triumphs over judgement.” What do these two phrases mean and do they have anything to do with one another?

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**James 2: Day Three “Faith without Works is Dead”**

Read James 2: 14-26

In this section we are posed a question—can faith alone save? We read in Ephesians 2: 8-9: “8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast”, and at first glance, there seems to be a contradiction between the Apostle Paul and James. Can faith alone provide salvation? Are works a sign or a byproduct of faith? Is my faith in Christ sufficient enough or must I do something else?



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1. Read David Guzik's commentary (or another commentary of your choice) for verses 14-26. List several observations, thoughts and/or conclusions here. See also Titus 3:4-8, Galatians 2:16, Romans 3:28.

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2. What is James' point in all of this? See Ephesians 2:10.

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Genuine faith will be accompanied by actions. Our works are a profession of faith, not the source of faith brought about by keeping the law. We are saved "by grace through faith" in Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection on the cross as payment for our sins. He died in our place, to free us from sin, to cleanse us from all unrighteousness, to forgive us and offer us eternal life in place of eternal separation from Him. He is a loving God and we are called to be His people. By the grace of God, we're redeemed!

If you're reading this today and you find yourself outside of a relationship with Jesus Christ and you have a desire to acknowledge Him as your Lord and Savior, you can change that right now. The Bible says in Romans 10:9-10, *9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.* Today, is the day of Salvation, and for this free offer of eternal life in Jesus Christ we say:

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***“Lord Jesus, I confess I’m a sinner in need of a Savior. I ask you today to forgive me of my sins, to cleanse me from all of my unrighteousness. I ask you to dwell in my heart forever. I believe you are the Christ, the Son of the living God, I believe you died on the Cross, in my place, and you shed your blood for the forgiveness of my sins. I believe you were buried, raised to life, and now seated at the right hand of the Father. I thank you for eternal life. I thank you for the forgiveness of my sins. I thank you for loving me, a sinner saved by Grace through faith. I commit my life to you today and forever-Amen”***

If you made that profession today, please let your group know so they can celebrate with you.

***8 “Or what woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? 9 And when she has found it, she calls her friends and neighbors together, saying, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece which I lost!’ 10 Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”***

***~Luke 15:8-10~***

Therefore, we work from salvation, not for salvation and we are thankful and grateful to the ONE who came to seek and save that which was lost–US! However, what James is conveying is that grace never leaves us where it finds us, and a genuine faith never seeds a barren work; it produces action.

3. Read verses 15-16 closely, then look up James 4:17. What does this verse reveal about a faith that can say, “Depart in peace, be warmed and filled?”

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4. In verses 20-22 James uses an example of the works of Abraham. What does James say about faith that partners together with works?

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**James 2: Day Four “Faith Without Works is Dead”**

In order to understand the heart of God where works are concerned, we must take into consideration the whole counsel of God’s Word. It’s never wise to look at one section of scripture and not investigate where else that same principle is taught to really grasp what the heart is behind each precept.

Turn to and read I Corinthians 13

1. In verse 2, what is another component of having faith and what are we apart from it?

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In the first verse of this chapter, we read that we are “clanging symbols” if we do not possess love, meaning we are just noise makers.

2. We can “do” all the right things for all the wrong reasons. Love is required. What does love “do” and “not do” according to verses 4-8

Love does...

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Love does not...

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3. Look up the word “love” in the Bible dictionary or Strong’s concordance? Which Greek word is used for “love?” What does that word mean?

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4. What are the other words used for “love” in the Bible and what do their usages tell us?

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5. Look again at 1 Corinthians 13:13. The verse tells us to “abide” in 3 things. What are they and which of these is the greatest? Why do you think it’s the greatest?

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6. In your own words, describe how faith, hope, and love work together. Think and discuss what each of these would look like standing alone without the other two abiding alongside. How do they relate to our works/action?

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**James 2: Day Five “A Heart Motivation–The Lowly Servant”**

On Day Five, each week we will focus on a heart motivation. This is something we can meditate on and ponder in the week to come.

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James

1. Read John 13:1-17. If you could sum up the heart of Jesus in one word, what would it be?  
Jesus has the heart of \_\_\_\_\_.

In Bible times, the dusty and dirty conditions of the region and the wearing of sandals necessitated foot-washing. Although the disciples most likely would have been happy to wash Jesus' feet, they could not conceive of washing each other's feet. This was because in the society at the time, foot-washing was reserved for the lowliest of servants. Peers did not wash one another's feet, except very rarely and as a mark of great love. Luke points out (22:24) that the disciples were arguing about who was the greatest among them, an attitude that precludes a willingness to stoop to wash feet. When Jesus moved to wash their feet, they were shocked. The foot-washing was an example, a pattern. To refuse to follow the example of Jesus is to exalt oneself above Him and to live in pride.

2. What does verse 15-16 mean to us corporately as a church and to you individually?

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3. Have you ever experienced washing another's feet? Explain how this experience changed you in some way. How did it changed the way you serve Christ in your serving of others?

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(Words I think of: vulnerable, humility, embarrassment (that's part of my pride), risk, willingness--what are yours?)

In verse 17 the Lord says, "If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them."

Let this truth sink into our hearts and motivate our actions this week!

### **This Week's Finish Line**

Turn to page 78 and follow the directions for “The 54 Imperative ‘Must Dos’ of James”. We will complete a bit each week.



## Lesson Three

### James 3–In a Nutshell

The tongue is small but fierce and has the opportunity to speak truth or lie, bless or curse, praise or criticize, reconcile or ruin, and these all at the same time! Is **taming the tongue** even possible? Talk is cheap and throughout this letter from James, his motto remains: “**Actions speak louder than words.**” Our actions, according to James, require **wisdom from above** and prove whether one is wise and understands God’s ways. God’s wisdom is first pure, peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. These wise indicators signal that we are following wisdom’s path. However, self-seeking and bitter envy are indications of evil; earthly, sensual, and demonic, and cause confusion. That’s James 3 in a nutshell.

### James 3-TheText (NKJV)

1 My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment. 2 For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body. 3 Indeed, we put bits in horses’ mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body. 4 Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires. 5 Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles! 6 And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell. 7 For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. 8 But no man can tame the tongue. *It is* an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. 9 With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God. 10 Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so. 11 Does a spring send forth fresh water and bitter from the same opening? 12 Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Thus, no spring yields both salt water and fresh. 13 Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct *that* his works are done in the meekness of wisdom. 14 But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the



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James

truth. 15 This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. 16 For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. 17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. 18 Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

### James 3: Day One “Taming the Tongue”

Read James 3:1-12

1. James starts the chapter warning that “not many should become teachers.” Why do you think being a “teacher” of God’s Word comes with “stricter judgement” in a person’s life? (See also 1 Corinthians 12:28, Ephesians 4:11-12).

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Being a sort of “Proverbs of the New Testament,” James shifts gears and spends several verses now on the tongue. He concludes “no man can tame the tongue” otherwise he would be perfect, and we know, no man is perfect. We use our tongues “to praise God and curse others” but “this not ought to be” according to James. He reminds us that taming the tongue is as difficult as bridling a stallion. Without restraint and coming under another’s submission, the horse is left wild and unruly. A ship is directed by a very small rudder, yes, because it is under the command and control of the pilot. Our tongues reveal our unruly and wild hearts, and our only hope in “taming” such a beast is to come under the command and control of the Holy Spirit, submitting to Him and allowing Him to transform our hearts.

2. What do the following verses advise us about our tongues?

- Proverbs 18:4–

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- Proverbs 18:21–
- I Peter 3:10-12–
- James 1:26–
- Proverbs 11:9–
- Proverbs 15:4–
- Psalm 34:13–
- Psalm 37:30–

3. Personal: Identify areas where you struggle “stumbling in word” (circle all that apply):

**I stumble in word–personally**

- I Boast
- I Exaggerate
- I Lie
- I Self-promote
- I use Self-pity for attention
- I Talk down about myself, hoping for compliments

**I stumble in word–towards others**

- I Gossip
- I Criticize
- I Antagonize
- I’m Cruel, Harsh, Unkind or Insulting
- I Slander
- I get Angry or Impatience
- I Flatter for personal gain
- I Condemn
- I Shame others into doing what I want them to do

4. Look up the word “tame” using the Bible dictionary and/or Strong’s Concordance. What do you notice about this word and how it relates to our text today? List a few synonyms and antonyms to give you a full understanding.

- Tame–
  - Synonyms–
  - Antonyms–

5. In James 3:3–4, we learn that a “bit” or “bridle” (v.3) and the “rudder” (v.4) offer a restraining force and directional guidance. What key factor can we conclude is needful for us to control our tongues based on what we glean from these two passages?

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6. Look at Matthew 12:33-37. Based on these verses, what do our words reveal about our maturity (ripeness) in Christ?

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7. Finish today out by praying these verses over your heart and mind and ask God to speak to you personally from them. Record what He says below. Psalm 51:10-12—*Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence and take not thy Holy Spirit from me, restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free spirit. (KJV)*

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***Five words cost Zacharias forty weeks' silence. Many are sorry they spoke, but few ever mourn that they held their tongue***

**~Charles Spurgeon~**

### **James 3: Day Two “Taming the Tongue”**

Our tongues form the things of life: religion, government, philosophies, morality, viewpoints, values, beliefs and the like. With our tongues the world takes its shape; cultures and individuals

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are fashioned by the use of words. Our words also reflect what's in our hearts; they reveal our beliefs about God and form the course of our lives personally: in our marriages, child rearing, friendships, work relationships, and in our communities and world.

***We might say less about other matters without loss, if we would say more about the  
Lord Jesus  
~Charles Spurgeon~***

Read James 3:7-12 again

Man can tame wild animals and every beast on earth and in the sea, but only God can tame the human tongue. In each example James gives, we notice that it's not the "bridle" or "bit" that turns the horse, it's the rider. Likewise, the "rudder" doesn't steer the ship, the captain does. Each of these examples share one thing in common: a master! The bit and rudder are simply tools in the master's hand.

1. What do John 13: 16-17, Matthew 10:24, and Luke 6:40 all have in common?

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2. Read Romans 6:13–18. How do these verses speak to you personally? Is there an area in your life where something other than our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, is master or dominate over you?

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(Consider: money, drugs, alcohol, career, food, exercise, prescription medication, hobby, leisure, pleasure, pornography, fantasy?)

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James

Scripture is filled with examples of servants who submitted themselves as unto the Lord for His use and over and over again we see the fruit of God produced in and through their lives.

3. Now read Galatians 5:22-24. What kind of fruit does the Holy Spirit of God produce in our lives? How does each relate to our tongues?

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If then, we are walking according to the Spirit, we will produce fruit from the Spirit.

***“The heart of the wise teaches his mouth, and adds learning to his lips”***

**~Proverbs 16:23~**

4. Read Romans 8:1-17. What are the indications of “walking in the Spirit” vs. “walking in the flesh”? Make a list below. How then does Colossians 1:9-10 encourage you today?

Walking in the Flesh

Walking in the Spirit

- Colossians 1:9-10-

5. What additional truths about walking in the Spirit vs. the flesh do you learn from reading Galatians 5:16-21?

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6. Finish today out by asking God the Spirit to reveal areas in your heart that you can't see but need attention. Pray Psalm 139:23-24- *Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties; 24 And see if there is any wicked way in me and lead me in the way everlasting.*

### **James 3: Day Three “Actions Speak Louder than Words”**

1. Read James 3:13. What shows that one is wise and understands God's ways?

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2. What is our attitude to be, and what is required to attain these things (verse 13)?

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3. Action requires wisdom, and wisdom, or lack of it, shapes our actions. This idea is not one of knowledge but of practical living. James is saying, “Show me how wise you are.” Right conduct comes from right thinking, and right thinking from right doctrine and our choice to believe it and then act upon it. How does Romans 12:2, Matthew 7:24-25, Philippians 1:27, 1 Timothy 4:12 explain this?

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***Wisdom is deduced from a man's life as lived not from his lips as proclaimed.***

**~Alistair Begg~**

4. According to Psalm 1, what do you notice about someone who is “wise?”

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As believers, have you discovered that others watch how you live? They take note of the places you go, the people you hang out with, and how you spend your time and money. They notice what’s really important to you and if your Christian walk lines up with your Christian talk. Why? Because this proves if you believe what you say you believe, and they want to know if your witness is true and if God can really change lives. Actions speak loud and clear.

Wisdom is knowledge skillfully applied and others can clearly see the difference between someone with knowledge and a life lived out in wisdom.

5. Personal: When speaking of actions, what does the way you spend your time and money say about what is important to you? Does God get the priority of your time? Does He get the priority of your money? (Priority: the fact or condition of being regarded or treated as more important).

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You’ve heard it said, “People don’t care how much you know, till they know how much you care,” but the truth is, people don’t care what you know until they see it in action! Even if you know everything and care for someone, if you don’t live it, it will fall short every time.

From time to time we need to evaluate our maturity in Christ, making sure we are continuing to grow in doctrine, mature in character, and improve our serving, which result from seeking God’s wisdom. In Hebrews 5:12-6:3, the author speaks of the problems with staying immature in these things.

Read Hebrews 5:12-6:3. Read it again in NLT.

6. There should be a progression to our walks with Christ. In verse 12 we see that “milk only” is for the “unskilled” described as a “baby.” Look closely at verse 14. What is required to attain the necessary skills to grow into maturity in Christ?

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Note: 1 Peter 2:2 tells us that true babes in Christ must seek after “sincere milk” for the purpose of maturing in Christ. However, to those who have been walking with the Lord for long time there should be a quality to our walks that matches the quantity of time we’ve belonged to Him.

7. Finish out today by asking God for wisdom in an area He has brought to your attention this week. Reflect on these prayers: Colossians 1:9-10– For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing *Him*, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; and James 1:5– If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

### **James 3: Day Four “Wisdom from Above”**

***All of the wisdom of this world is but a tiny raft upon which we must set sail when we leave this earth. If only there was a firmer foundation upon which to sail, perhaps some divine word.***

***~Socrates~***

The above quote is from a man with great “wisdom,” a philosopher who in all of his acquired education still missed the ultimate source of wisdom, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Read James 3:14-18



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James

If education (knowledge) alone could change our behavior many of us would live our lives differently. In order to be transformed spiritually we need spiritual wisdom, not just knowledge alone. Education doesn't change behavior, but God's wisdom through the power of the Holy Spirit can.

1. Proverbs 9:10 tells us *the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom*. What do you know about the "fear of the Lord?" Study on your own and share what you find on this subject.

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2. Look at James 3:14 and fill in the blanks. "But if you have \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ in your hearts, do not \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ against the truth." Are there any areas in your life where you experience "bitter envy" or "self-seeking?"

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2. Define "envy" and "self-seeking."

- Envy-
  
- Self-seeking-

3. In verse 17, we read of "*wisdom from above*." What are these qualities?

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4. Where do we get “wisdom” from? See James 1:5-6, Psalm 51:6, Proverbs 2:6, and Proverbs 3:5-6. Do you really believe God gives it that freely and it’s available upon request?

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5. Proverbs 4 (I suggest you read) gives us some wise advice, and we know from James if we ask for wisdom God gives it freely (1:5). We also know that out of the overflow of our hearts the mouth speaks. So, how do we change our hearts then? Find a scripture for each thought below:

- Praying-asking God for help, because He is the only one who can truly change us
  - Scripture:
- Confessing-keeping short accounts to renew a steadfast spirit in us
  - Scripture/s:
- Repenting-turning away from sin and turning towards God
  - Scripture/s:
- Guarding our hearts and minds:
  - Scripture/s:
- Being filled with the Holy Spirit-constant filling, “be being” filled
  - Scripture/s:
- Reading the Word of God-with intention and purpose.
  - Scripture/s:

Often one of the biggest obstacles in implementing Biblical wisdom is a failure, or refusal, to fully surrender to the Lordship of Christ. Many surrender their lives to the God of Salvation but stop short of allowing Him to become Lord or master of all.

6. What is the difference between surrendering to Salvation and surrendering to Lordship? Describe here.

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7. Finish out today by praying over the scriptures you found in question #5.

### **James 3: Day Five “A Heart Motivation–Preparing for Suffering”**

On Day Five, each week we will focus on a heart motivation. This is something we can meditate on and ponder in the week to come.

In his book *Suffering*, Paul Tripp says, “Our harsh realities of suffering are shaped by our thoughts, desires, dreams, expectations, cravings, fears, and assumptions of our hearts” He goes on to say, “Your responses to the situations in your life, whether physical, relational, or circumstantial are always more determined by what is inside you (your heart) than by the things you are facing.”<sup>1</sup>

1. We live out of our hearts. See Mark 7:14–23; and Luke 6:43–45.

- a. What “defiles” us and where does it come from?
  - b. The fruit that comes from us in suffering shows the condition of what?
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2. Paul Tripp goes on to describe 7 things we bring into our suffering that deepen the pain of that painful thing we are facing. Which resonate with you?

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<sup>1</sup> Tripp, P.D., *Suffering: gospel hope when life doesn’t make sense*, Crossway Publishing, Wheaton IL., 2018, pg. 31.

a. **Poor Theology**—If you have a wrong view or understanding of God and His word, you lose the ability to see God for who He is (good). Our hope comes from understanding scripture and prepares us for suffering with hope.

b. **Doubt of God**—suffering doesn't change our heart but exposes what's been there all along. Suffering exposes our true relationship with God.

c. **Unrealistic Expectations of Life**—often we have an expectation that what is will always be.

d. **Unrealistic Expectations of Others**—It never goes well when you expect a flawed human to be the source of your happiness.

e. **Pride**—we forget that we are completely dependent on God and instead pridefully rely on our own abilities, health, strength, sharp mind, social ability and successes. We forget even our natural abilities are a gift from God.

f. **Materialism**—When we look at physical things for our security, and those things fail or are taken away, we lose that fundamental sense of well-being that everyone longs for. Material things can never do for us what only God can do.

g. **Selfism**—the crisis of faith that accompanies suffering is the result of a collision between our will and God's will, our glory and God's glory.<sup>2</sup>

Suffering is like the old saying “You never know what's in a tea bag until it's in hot water.” Suffering has a way of releasing those things deep within our hearts where they can meet the grace of God and be redeemed for His glory.

How will you respond when your faith is tested beyond belief? Look to Job.

Let this truth sink into our hearts and motivate our actions this week!

### **This Week's Finish Line**

Turn to page 78 and follow the directions for “The 54 Imperative ‘Must Dos’ of James”. We will complete a bit each week.

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<sup>2</sup> Tripp, P.D., *Suffering: gospel hope when life doesn't make sense*, Crossway Publishing, Wheaton IL., 2018, pgs. 31–38.



## Lesson Four

### James 4—In a Nutshell

From time to time a biblical text asks a rhetorical question. Its purpose is to emphasize or deny a claim, gain agreement from a group or an individual, or generate a conclusion. Rhetorical questions are leading and do not require answers because the author has a specific response in mind, usually an obvious one. So here, no answer needed, we strive, fight, murder, covet, and war because we desire worldly pleasures more than godliness and thus, have become **a friend of the world**. The amount of time, money, and dedication we devote to someone or something reveals the depth of that relationship and James declares whoever wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. Since, **humility is the cure for worldliness** we are reminded that God resists the proud and gives grace to the humble. However, God guarantees if we draw near to Him, He will draw near to us. James ends the chapter by warning about **judging others** and summarizing that **life is a vapor**, it's here for a little while and then it's gone. That's James 4 in a nutshell.

### James 4—The Text (NKJV)

1 Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? 2 You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. 3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures. 4 Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. 5 Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, "The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously"? 6 But He gives more grace. Therefore, He says: "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble." 7 Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. 8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. 9 Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. 10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up. 11 Do not speak evil of one another, brethren. He who speaks evil of a brother and judges his brother, speaks evil of the law and judges the law. But if you judge the

law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge. 12 There is one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy. Who are you to judge another? 13 Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit”; 14 whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. 15 Instead you ought to say, “If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that.” 16 But now you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil. 17 Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.

### **James 4: Day One “A Friend of the World”**

Read James 4: 1–6

Revisiting the purpose of his letter, again James wants to convict those who merely “profess” faith and instead chose to live a carnal life. Carnality causes disputes within church communities and James lets us look square in the mirror when he asks, “Where do quarrels and fights come from among you?” Remember, he is talking to the group of believers when he explains, “fights” (plural) come from our desires for pleasure “within us” (singular). Our desires for pleasure individually then become problematic publicly, because whatever is within our hearts personally will be exposed in community. The Lord uses many different avenues to expose our sin: relationships, suffering, trials, tribulation, His Word, and here a community of believers (the congregation).

1. In verse 1, what is the word used in the KJV for “desires for pleasure?” What is the Greek word used and what English word do we get from this Greek word?

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2. Define “Hedonist,” then look up Luke 8:14. How is the Greek word *hedone* used and how does it correlate with verse 1 in our text?

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There are two different Greek words used for “lust” in these passages. The first, *hedone* (v.1) deals with wanting a hedonistic or self-indulgent lifestyle, meaning we are “in love” with the pleasures of this world. The second, *epithymeō* (v.2) is more in line with coveting. You “lust” after something someone else has. It comes from two root words: *epi* meaning “to come upon or towards” and *thymos* meaning “with passion, anger, or fierceness.” These “lusts” ruin our prayers and practice, two things James continues to stress are needed throughout his letter. Such self-seeking chokes out the Word of God (Luke 8:14) and draws our flesh into sin and away from God.

3. James indicates that one of the root causes of sin is lust. In I John 2:15-17, what are the three worldly temptations of sin? Describe what each of the them mean (read in NKJV, then NLT. See also Genesis 3:6).

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_

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Are you ever surprised by the amount of time we actually spend thinking about worldly pleasures? After all, we live in the world. These three temptations, *lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes and the pride of life*, visit our minds repeatedly and threaten to keep us sidetracked from what is important. Fortunately, by the grace of God, they will fade with the earth and so will our lust for them. Hallelujah! Setting our minds on Christ and not on the things of this world is what makes us a peculiar people to the unsaved because it’s an oddity to see anyone not focused on themselves or this present world.

***Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.***



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James

~Colossians 3:2~

4. Personal: In verse 3 it says, *You pray, and you don't receive because you ask with the motive to spend it on your selfish pleasures.* Circle some typical things you ask God for regularly. Are these “spiritual” or “carnal—for your own pleasure” pursuits?

wealth	salvation for loved ones	to fall asleep
health	healing	clarity/guidance
success	godly character	remove selfishness
spiritual growth	have favorite team win	to find a lost item
a new car	good marriage	promotion
safety	endurance	career/position
accomplishing errands	raising godly children	wisdom
a parking spot	strength	good weather
win at a game/competition	mercy	safe travels
a husband	material item	a bigger/better house
children's success	popularity/status	divine appointments

Note: Going through the list you might realize that many could either be a spiritual or carnal request depending on our motive for “spending.” For each one listed (and for any others you think of), ask: “Is my intention to spend this on my selfish pleasures (v.3) or in service to God?”

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5. James uses some strong language in verse 4. What does he say? Describe what “being a friend of the world and an enemy of God” looks like for you (v.4).

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James

James calls us “unfaithful” when we are friends with the world. As believers, that should wake us up and humble us. Humility cries, “God knows best,” while pride declares, “God didn’t give it to me, so I will get it myself.” Humility pronounces, “My life is brief, so I will do God’s will,” but pride shouts, “I’m in charge of my own life, so I will make my own plans.” Humility proclaims, “by God’s Grace,” while pride asserts, “by my will.”

6. Look at the prayer of the Pharisee vs. the tax collector in Luke 18:11–14. What do you notice? How many times does the Pharisee say “I”?

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***Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence***

**~Matthew 23:25~**

Worldly pursuits are often masqueraded as spiritual. The pursuit of carnality is often easily seen, but what about exalting yourself in the spiritual realm? You do “all the right things” with all the wrong motives. I guess in any scenario we must ask, “Who is being exalted?”

***And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. <sup>2</sup> I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able; <sup>3</sup> for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men?***

**~1 Corinthians 3:1-3~**

7. James makes it clear you can’t have both friendship with the world and God simultaneously. Look up the following verses and list how you can apply it to your life today.

- John 7:7–

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- John 15:19–
- Romans 8:7–

8. Read John 17:1–20. What do you notice about “being in the world but not of it” and how does it relate to “not being a friend of the world?” What’s the difference?

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9. The Holy Spirit dwells within every believer. What happens when we pursue worldliness according to James 4:5? What does He offer us in verse 6?

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God gives us the grace needed to humble ourselves and follow after Him, but pride says “no thank you” to that gift and continues to strive against humility. God resists that.

10. Personal: We invest in that which we love. Are you willing to invest in your spiritual growth, and practically (a word James loves) what are you doing to make that happen?

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**James 4: Day Two “Humility is the Cure for Worldliness”**

***Nothing exposes religion more to the reproach of its enemies than the worldliness and hard-heartedness of its professors.***

**~Matthew Henry~**

Read James 4:6–10

1. Use the Bible dictionary or Strong’s concordance to define “humble.” See also Matthew 11:29 and Romans 12:16.

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2. Look up these verses regarding “pride.” What does pride lead to?

- Proverbs 11:2–
- Proverbs 13:10–
- Proverbs 16:18–

3. If “grace” is “unmerited favor” then do we earn it? Is it available to *only* the humble? Do our motives have anything to do with receiving it or is it a gift? This will require some study and thought. Use scripture to support your findings.

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Grace is receiving something we don’t deserve; mercy is not receiving something we do deserve.

***For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ***

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~ John 1:17~

4. What does it mean to “submit to God” and “resist” the devil (v.7)?

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(Resist: “withstand the action or effect of, oppose, set against”)

In verse 7, we discover our submission to God is the outworking of a truly humble heart. The word “submission” (hypotasso) is a military term meaning to arrange under, to subordinate, or to be in subjection. David Guzik says in his commentary, “It isn’t as if our humility *earns* the grace of God. Humility merely puts us in a position to receive the gift He freely gives.”

Joe Fotch (Calvary Chapel Philadelphia) says, “If we don’t submit to our husbands, we won’t submit to God. If we don’t submit to our bosses, we won’t submit to God. If we don’t submit to our leaders, we won’t submit to God, and so on...” In other words, your submission here on earth is a direct reflection to your submission to God.<sup>3</sup>

6. Read David Guzik’s commentary on [www.blueletterbible.org](http://www.blueletterbible.org) for verses 6–10 and share one or two truths that really speak into your life this week.

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7. From verse 8, what are some practical ways we can “draw near to God?” Are you giving the Lord space in your life to meet with you?

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<sup>3</sup> Fotch, J. James 4. Retrieved from: <http://resources.ccp Philly.org/teachinglibrary.asp?Book=59> (2019).

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8. Finish up today by asking God to show you how to walk “humbly” before Him. Pray Micah 6:8—*He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.*

**James 4: Day Three “Judging Others”**

Read James 4:11–12

James now gives the solution to all strife: getting right with others.

1. We begin in verse 11 today and find another “do not” from this letter. We must never “speak evil” of or “judge” another. Why do you think there is such a temptation to speak evil of others?

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Let’s unpack what James is getting at here and discover where the boundaries are, how to confront another believer without judgement, and what it means to be “judgmental” vs. “making a judgement call.”

***Who art thou; what a sorry creature, a man, a worm, that thou shouldst lift up thyself into God’s place, and make thyself a judge of one not subject to thee!***

~Poole~

2. Personal: This one won’t be easy but let’s do the painful work of following God and invest some time and prayer into this question. Are there people in your life right now that you are “at odds” with or have something against? Name those you are having “issues” with currently (you do not have to share the list; it can just be between you and the Lord).

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3. Now, with each name above answer these questions:

- a. Have I prayed for them?
- b. Have I tried everything to reach out and ask forgiveness if needed?
- c. Have I reached out to let them know we still have unresolved issues and I desire to make it right?
- d. Do I talk poorly about them to others? (Gossip and/or slander)
- e. Is it possible I've misunderstood their motives?
- f. Is it possible they've misunderstood mine?
- g. Is it something I can just "let go" of and turn them over to God (without talking badly)
- h. Is it possible I'm wrong and need to repent?

4. Look up Matthew 18:15–17 and list the steps for confronting someone who sins against you:

Step 1:

Step 2:

Step 3:

Step 4:

I believe many of us succumb to the temptation of gossip or slander because we are afraid to confront someone biblically and lack the boldness to meet them face to face. It's not easy, so we "speak" out our frustrations to others.

The best thing we can do with an offense is let it go, but if we can't let go then we must deal with it biblically and in love. Likewise, when confronting another who is in sin, I usually ask myself three questions to help establish some healthy boundaries and protect from being "judgmental:" First, do I have authority over the person? Meaning am I their mentor, overseer, or boss? Second, has the person given me permission to speak into their life? Have they asked for accountability in this area? And third, is God telling me to confront this issue? Prayer is always required to discern the will of God. God might reveal things to us about another, just so

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we can pray, not necessarily act. Each situation requires careful assessment and when we go to extremes like “I should never confront another’s sin” or “I should always confront another’s sin,” I think we enter dangerous waters.

***for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God***  
**~Romans 3:23~**

5. Define “judges” from verse 11. See also Matthew 7:2, Luke 6:37.

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6. Ephesians 4:15 tells us to “speak the truth in love.” In your own words, why is “truth” and “love” important when confronting someone?

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Judgmental: relating to or concerning judgement; characterized by judging harshly. (hypercritical, condemnatory, negative, disapproving and disparaging).

Judgment call: the ability to make considered decisions or come to sensible conclusions (finding, ruling, conclusion, decision, and result).

Truth without love may be honest but it can be used as a weapon and is hurtful and unkind. It’s counterproductive and can cause deep wounds, it’s embarrassing if done in anger, and belittling for the hearer.

Love without truth might spare someone’s feelings but fail to confront some serious issues. It may flatter immediately, but it is really damaging.

Silence is a lack of truth and love.



*1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. 2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing. 4 Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; 5 does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; 6 does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; 7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 8 Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. 9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part. 10 But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away. 11 When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. 12 For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known. 13 And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.*

~1 Corinthians 13~

7. James tells us there is only “one law giver” and it’s better to be a “doer” of the law than the “judge.” Pray over today’s lesson and ask God if there is anybody you need to reach out to now, to make things right.

#### **James 4: Day Four “Life is a Vapor”**

Read James 4:13–17

James continues to warn the prideful person with an independent spirit throughout this chapter. Pride is problematic for any believer and demands self-reliance rather than submission to God. In action, pride says things like: I will go, do and say what I want, I will spend my time and money where I want, and then ask God to bless it and wonder where He is when He resists my plan. If James hasn’t given good enough reasons so far to completely surrender to

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God, now, in these last few verses, he proves once and for all that God is in control. God may allow us to choose to live carnally and pridefully, but there is one thing we cannot control: our death. Make no mistake, “God is the author and finisher of our faith” (Hebrews 12:2).

1. In James 4:13, who is James addressing? \_\_\_\_\_

2. What are some reasons James claims are foolish about us making our own plans (v.14)?

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James doesn't say the foolish to make plans; he says it's foolish to leave God out of our plans by making our own plans.

3. Personal: James describes this proud independence from God as “arrogant and evil.” Is there any part of your life that you live independent from God (career, finances, relationships, health, time, talents, giving, etc.)?

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***Notice, that these people, while they thought everything was at their disposal, used everything for worldly objects. What did they say? Did they determine with each other ‘We will to-day or to-morrow do such and such a thing for the glory of God, and for the extension of his kingdom’? Oh, no, there was not a word about God in it, from beginning to end!***

***~Spurgeon~***

4. Turn to Luke 12:13–22. What can you learn from this parable and how does it relate to the self-seeking, prideful person James is addressing in v.13 of his letter?

(Answer the question below for Luke 12:13–22)

a. What did God site as the source of this man’s issue (v.15)?

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b. The question “what shall I do” (vs.17-18) was quickly answered. What was his plan?  
(See also Proverbs 16:9)

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c. In verse 19, he says something alarming and dangerous. Why?

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d. How many times in this section does the rich fool say I, me, or mine? \_\_\_\_\_

e. What was the one thing in this story that the man could not control (20)? \_\_\_\_\_  
(also in James 4:14)

f. The Lord states a conclusion to this kind of living in verse 21. What is it?

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g. The Lord uses this as a teaching opportunity for His disciples. What is the fundamental lesson of this story?

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5. Look up Isaiah 14:12–15 to read about someone else who liked to make his own plans. How many times does he say, “I will?” \_\_\_\_\_

Pride always asks, “what shall I do?”

6. Life is fragile and can be taken at any time (v.14). When we think of this, we can see why boasting about what we will do tomorrow is absurd (v.16). How can we know what God has planned for our tomorrow? What is necessary for us to know the will of God and then depend on Him in our lives (v.15)? Some study is required.

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7. In Christianity there are sins of “commission” meaning we “commit” a sin. There are also sins of “omission” where we “omit” something we should’ve done. In verse 17, this is what James is talking about: we are accountable for what we know. What does each verse say to you on this subject?

- Matthew 12:36–37-
- Romans 14:13-
- I Peter 3:14-
- I Corinthians 10:31-

8. Close out today by praying and asking God to reveal HIS plans for your tomorrow.

#### **James 4: Day Five “A Heart Motivation–Grace”**

On Day Five, each week we will focus on a heart motivation. This is something we can meditate on and ponder in the week to come.

James holds no punches. He brings wisdom to our lives in a similar fashion to the Proverbs. The Bible instructs us in several different passages that we are to read “the whole counsel of God,” meaning we are to let scripture interpret scripture. While James is hitting us with some harsh realities in scripture there are also many scriptures speaking on the grace of God. I think it’s a good place in the study (before we consider ourselves completely useless before God) to contemplate and thank the Lord for His Grace.

***Doubt not his grace because of thy tribulation but believe that he loveth thee as much in seasons of trouble as in times of happiness.***

**~CH Spurgeon~**

1. How many different Greek and Hebrew words can you find for “grace” in the Word of God?  
Write out each word and its meaning.

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2. In your own words, explain the “grace of God:”

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3. Share a time when God extended incredible grace in your life.

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Let this truth sink into our hearts and motivate our actions this week!

**This Week’s Finish Line**

Turn to page 78 and follow the directions for “The 54 Imperative ‘Must Dos’ of James”. We will complete a bit each week.



## Lesson Five

### James 5—In a Nutshell

Last week at the end of the chapter, James emphasized our accountability in doing what we know to be right. Now, he has a sharp rebuke for “the rich,” especially those who are taking advantage of or cheating those less fortunate. Ill-gotten gain comes at a cost and James makes it clear when money is a god, big troubles stand at the door and knock. Money isn’t the evil, as James points out, but how we accumulate it and **what we do with our money matters**. James ends this letter where he began. James taught us in chapter one that the trials of our faith produce patience and patience has a work in our development, and when we become fully established, we will be perfect, lacking in nothing. The “rich man” in this chapter has been “weighed in the balances and found wanting” (Daniel 5:7), but we are encouraged to do the intentional work necessary to be found faithful, persevering in patience for the Lord’s coming, **waiting for the harvest to ripen**, holding on to **the power of prayer** while doing the work of **restoring the sinner**. That’s James 5 in a nutshell.

### James 5—The Text (NKJV)

1 Come now, *you* rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon *you*! 2 Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. 3 Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have heaped up treasure in the last days. 4 Indeed the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out; and the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. 5 You have lived on the earth in pleasure and luxury; you have fattened your hearts as in a day of slaughter. 6 You have condemned, you have murdered the just; he does not resist you. 7 Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. See *how* the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain. 8 You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. 9 Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door! 10 My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience. 11 Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end *intended* by the Lord—that the

Lord is very compassionate and merciful. 12 But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath. But let your “Yes” be “Yes,” and *your* “No,” “No,” lest you fall into judgment. 13 Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms. 14 Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. 15 And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. 16 Confess *your* trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. 17 Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. 18 And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit. 19 Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, 20 let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.

### **James 5: Day One “What we do with our money matters”**

Read James 5:1–6

Most commentators think James might be addressing the non-believers of his time and giving them a sharp rebuke about wrongly accumulating and distributing their wealth. At first glance, we may think we are off the hook. However, if this is his rebuke to the non-believing community then what does this say to us as believers where money is concerned? Both how we earn it and how we spend it seem very important to God. Being “rich in God” includes passing that richness on to those around us: our time, wisdom, knowledge, prayer, and yes, money. Anything we have we can use to build His kingdom and further His work here on earth. It’s all His anyway! And we are to steward our money as much as the other resources God provides. Generosity should be a character trait that marks every believer. Do we serve God with open hands?

I. Describe “generosity” in your own words:



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2. In verses 2–3, what consequences does James say will come from ill-gotten gain (acquired by illegal or unfair means)? What are some ways we personally accumulate money illegally or unfairly today?

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3. Galatians 6:10 says, *Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.* What do you think this verse means practically?

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4. Personal: Spend some time thinking about how you accumulate or earn money in your household. Is it legal and God honoring? Do you withhold any money that you should be paying out or giving to others?

***Wealth obtained by fraud dwindles,  
But the one who gathers by labor increases it.***

**~Proverbs 13:11 NLT~**

5. Look up the following verses about money and note how each speaks to your current situation.

- Luke 12:15-
- Matthew 6:24-

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- Psalm 37:21-
- I Timothy 6:17–19-
- Proverbs 11:24–25-

Not only does James address our accumulation of money, but how we allocate it is also a concern.

6. Read I Kings 17:7–16 and Mark 12: 41–44. What can we learn from these two accounts?

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There are several ways in which the Bible instructs us in financial giving, I will explain a few here:

**Tithing:** “Tithe” means a tenth or 10%. Typically, today the word “tithe” is used to describe supporting your place of worship where you get spiritually fed (Malachi 3:8-11, Mark 12:41–44, Genesis 14:19–20, 28:20–22, Numbers 18:21, 2 Chronicles 31:4–5, Matthew 23:23, Luke 18:9–14, Hebrews 7:1–2). Many will argue that tithing is an Old Testament practice alone, and you would be right that the New Testament says nothing about a mandatory giving of 10%.

However, if you pay close attention to the principles for giving throughout scripture and look at the practical needs of your current place of worship (operating/ministry costs), one might easily conclude that the members of the family of God should support the spiritual work in the house of God. We should give to that cheerfully (2 Corinthians 9:7)! Throughout the Bible we see the principles of giving regularly and proportionately (1 Corinthians 16:1–2). Unfortunately, People are willing to pay more for entertainment than to help sustain their place of worship.

**First Fruits:** In addition to tithing you can give *first fruits*. First fruits show gratitude and thankfulness. The farmer would take the first 10% of his harvest and bring it to the church, laying aside the first part of his crops. (Proverbs 3:9,10, Nehemiah 10:36) There are 31 references to first fruits in the Bible. For us today, this might be from the first of your income,

unexpected income, tax returns, gifts or blessings. Whatever “increase” God has blessed you with, you can give a portion back to God first.

**Seed:** Giving for a harvest. It might be a one-time investment or maybe sustained for a time. Possibly to birth a ministry, provide for outreaches, church building or other projects, church planting, missionary work, or para-church organization. Seed sown to “good ground” reaps a harvest (Mark 4:8). You may have heard the phrase “giving seed money,” otherwise known as starter funds.

**Alms:** Giving your “tithe” is fundamental, giving your “first fruits” shows your thankfulness, giving “seed” money births kingdom work, and now giving “alms” is giving to man. The motivation is compassion extended to those in need. Giving alms is to help people in and outside your local church (Matthew 6:1–4, Proverbs 19:17). Christ followers are generous givers.

Often God gives us the privilege to show someone His grace through giving, especially when the person doesn’t deserve it. Do we recognize these opportunities to extend grace financially?

When my husband and I were young believers and wanting to learn how to be generous givers but struggling to support our regularly attended church, not knowing where to start, a pastor suggested we increase our regular giving by 1% per year, or more if we could. Our desire was to reach 10% at the time and that proved to be great counsel. Later in our walks, that same pastor spoke into our lives again when he taught that he continued that practice beyond 10% because he and his wife wanted to be “more generous.” The Lord has taught us much about generosity over the years. There is much to learn about giving monetarily if our hearts and hands are open to it. However, many of us get frustrated and just give up because we just assume we have nothing to give. God’s not broke, and I believe if we have a heart to give, God will show us how to do it. The problem is, we usually don’t want to discover it. If you desire to be a generous giver, I guarantee the Lord will give you many opportunities to be big-hearted. Even if you are in debt and think there is no way to show generosity to others, He will do the work, if we just open our eyes and look at what He puts in our hands.

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***I never would have been able to tithe the first million dollars I ever made if I had not tithed my first salary, which was \$1.50 per week.***

**~John D. Rockefeller~**

7. Personal: We all understand God is not broke and He doesn't need any of us to give. We get to be blessed and be a part of His work here on earth. In what ways has God prompted you to give? Maybe you can share with others (for learning purposes) how you have found ways to give generously. Especially share unique ways when you don't have regular income at your disposal.

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8. Personal: Finish out today by asking God how you can increase your generosity or become, for the first time, a generous giver. Pray Isaiah 32:8— *But a generous man devises generous things, And by generosity he shall stand.*

### **James 5: Day Two “Waiting for the Harvest to Ripen”**

Read James 5:7–12

James calls attention to the coming of the Lord in light of seeing people live greedily and with no regard to His judgement. Even in times of trouble we are to patiently await His return and preserve our faith until He comes. Maranatha!

I. When a farmer plants his seeds it's in anticipation of a harvest, the fruit of his labor. What do these verses tell us about waiting for a harvest?

- Galatians 6:6–9-
- Matthew 9:37–38-
- Proverbs 10:5-

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- Hebrews 12:11-
- Psalm 130:5-
- Psalm 37:7-9-
- Philippians 3:20-

2. Waiting on God is never easy. We know God says “yes, no, or wait!” So, what should we do while waiting? Here are 7 things we can do. Reflect on each and note how we can practice each one realistically.

- a. Prepare our hearts-
- b. Learn by spending time in the Word-
- c. Watch for Him to move-
- d. Wait while actively serving-
- e. Listen for direction-
- f. Reflect on the past and deal with unforgiven sin or past hurts-
- g. Pray without ceasing-

3. Personal: what does it mean to you when the Lord says “wait?” Do you heed His voice or try to find another way to figure it out? Explain.

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4. Read Luke 19:11-27. This account certainly applies to “Day One: What we do with Our Money Matters,” but what lessons can we also learn about being active while waiting for the harvest to ripen?

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5. Luke 19:13 gives a key phrase, what is it? (use KJV and one other for context)

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6. In verses 7–12, how does James exhort us to “occupy till He comes?”

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7. God desires that “none should perish” (John 3:16) and we patiently wait for the harvest to ripen because people still need to turn to Jesus. Close out today by writing down the names of unsaved family and friends and pray John 14:6– *Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”* over their names and ask God to reveal Himself to them.

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### **James 5: Day Three “The Power of Prayer”**

Read James 5:13–18

Prayer is the most powerful weapon in our arsenal. When we pray we are addressing God, which offers the connection between God and man, communicating our deepest thoughts, needs, fears, hopes, giving Him our adoration, confessing our sins, thanking Him for all we have, and asking for His will to be done in our lives.

I. What does the Lord prescribe regarding prayer in the following verses?

- a. Suffering (v.13)-
- b. Cheerful (v.13)-
- c. Sick (v.14)-
- d. Confession (v.16)-

2. Read Ephesians 6:11–18. Verse 18 in particular talks about prayer; how does this verse speak to you in light of our lessons in James 5?

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3. Verse 16 says “we are to confess our trespasses to one another.” What does that mean and how is this accomplished? Do you practice this on a regular basis? (Use a commentary for help)

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4. There are two things that make prayer “effective;” according to verse 16, what are they?

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5. What does 1 John 1:9 say about confession?

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6. Read Psalm 5. Which verse stands out to you and why?

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7. Personal: If we understand that prayer is literally power being sent forth, what keeps us from praying fervently?

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8. Personal: Take time to pray about everything you can think to pray over. When you can't think of anything else, give time for silence and then pray for whatever God brings to your mind. Do this until you cannot think of anything else. Afterwards, answer the following: What was your experience like compared to other times of prayer? How did you feel when you were done? Did this help to increase your faith, relieve burdens, impart hope, etc.?

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***We have to keep our eyes on God, not on the difficulties.***

***~Oswald Chambers~***

9. Finish up today by praying Jonah's prayer in Jonah 2: 2-9

***2 And he said: "I cried out to the LORD because of my affliction, And He answered me. Out of the belly of Sheol I cried, And You heard my voice. 3 For You cast me into the deep, Into the heart of the seas, And the floods surrounded me; All Your billows and Your waves passed over me. 4 Then I said, 'I have been cast out of Your sight; Yet I will look again toward Your holy temple.' 5 The waters surrounded me, even to my soul; The deep closed around me; Weeds were wrapped around my head. 6 I went down to the moorings of the mountains; The earth with its bars closed behind me forever; Yet You have brought up my life from the pit, O LORD, my God. 7 When my soul fainted within me, I remembered the LORD; And my prayer went up to You, Into Your holy temple 8 Those who regard worthless idols Forsake their own Mercy. 9 But I will sacrifice to You With the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay what I have vowed. Salvation is of the LORD."***

***He who is too busy to pray, will be too busy to live a Holy life***

***~E.M. Bounds~***



### James 5: Day Four “Restoring the Sinner”

Read James 5: 19–20

James now turns to helping a brother or sister in sin. Here he is addressing believers and so this would lend itself to “backsliders.”

1. Who does God commission to “turn one back?”

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***Along this line, can we not say that when we refuse to make ourselves available to God’s service – weak and failing as we are – we in fact rob Him of some of His glory? He can glorify Himself through a weak vessel like you; you should let Him do it.***

**~David Guzik~**

2. What is the reward for turning a sinner back to God? \_\_\_\_\_

3. What are some things we should consider before confronting a brother or sister in sin?

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4. Read Galatians 6:1; what do you learn from this passage?

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5. It’s important to know how to treat someone after they have fallen and repented. Read 2 Corinthians 2: 5–7 in the NLT. What do you learn from these passages? This is especially important for the marriage relationship.

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6. Read 2 Corinthians 7:8–11. What does “godly sorrow” produce in the repentant? See also Proverbs 27:6. How do these two verses complement each other?

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7. Personal: Honestly, how do you respond to a rebuke when it lines up with scripture? Are you open and willing to ask God if there’s truth to it? Are you upset that someone had the nerve to confront? It’s a good practice to learn how to receive a rebuke. Discuss in group.

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8. Finish up today by praying for the chance to “restore a sinner,” asking God to give you a divine opportunity, praying fervently, and approaching humbly with wisdom to the one who needs grace. Pray Psalm 51:10–13 over your request:

***Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. 11 Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. 12 Restore to me the joy of Your salvation and uphold me by Your generous Spirit. 13 Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, and sinners shall be converted to You.***

Challenge: Be bold and share the Gospel with someone this week!

## James 5: Day Five. “A Heart Motivation–Agape”

Many times, over the past several weeks as I studied this epistle, I’ve questioned, “Why all the strict guidelines? Do this, don’t do that--is James legalistic? What is the real purpose of this letter, God? So many rules, all these expectations. Why?” He spoke one word to me: “Agape!” “What? Agape?” I didn’t comprehend. Then a revelation came, in visual form.

As parents we love our children, don’t we? We love them so much we would do anything to protect and provide for them because we truly love them unconditionally. Nothing they could do would ever change the way we feel about them. At the same time, we want them to prosper, to do well in this life, so we give them expectations to meet. In like fashion, the Lord speaks to us in Jeremiah 29:11, saying, *For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.* We spend our days and nights teaching our children about life: how to navigate difficult situations, how to obey the rules, anything and everything we can think of to help them follow Christ to the fullest. We explain, and teach, sometimes ad nauseum, because of our great love and hope for them now and in their future.

The Lord loves us unconditionally. He wants us to prosper. This precious letter James writes to us is valuable, because it’s inspired by Jesus. He is teaching and explaining the things that matter in this life, giving us expectations, guidelines, and instructions to follow, not to hurt or harm us, or to be legalistic, but to give us the best shot we have to flourish, to be rich in faith while on this earth.

At the opening of this letter, James tells us to “count it all joy when we face various trials” and then he devotes the rest of his letter giving us advice, counsel and instructions on how to face, walk through and eventually conquer each of life’s trials with “wisdom from above.” He is not just saying wisdom is from above, he is giving us wisdom from above.

The troubles of this life will someday cease; they are temporary. But Jesus loves us (agape) forever with an unconditional love. When we finally meet Him face to face, He will be standing

there having already paid the price for all our sins waiting to spend a lifetime with us, with Agape in His eyes; it's His gift to YOU!

Thank Him today for His unfailing love for you!

Let this truth sink into our hearts and motivate our actions this week!

### **This Week's Finish Line**

Turn to page 78 and follow the directions for "The 54 Imperative 'Must Dos' of James". We will complete a bit each week.



## “The 54 Imperative ‘Must Dos’ of James”

At the end of each lesson, look up the verses listed (below) for whatever chapter you’re studying that week. After each verse write out what we “must do” according to that verse. The imperative is marked in quotations. The first one is done as an example.

1. 1:2—“consider” or “count” -it joy when we fall into various trials.
2. 1:4—“let have”-
3. 1:5—“let him ask”-
4. 1:6—“let him ask”-
5. 1:7—“let suppose/think” (negated/prohibition)-
6. 1:9—“let boast”-
7. 1:13—“let say” (negated/prohibition)-
8. 1:16—“be deceived” (negated/prohibition)-
9. 1:19—“let be”-
10. 1:21—“receive”-
11. 1:22—“be/become”-
12. 2:1—“hold” (negated/prohibition)-  
2:3—“sit”/“stand”/“sit” (hypotheticals; w/subjunctive)-
13. 2:5—“listen”-
14. 2:12—“speak”-
15. 2:12—“act”-  
2:16—“go”/“be warmed”/“be filled” (hypotheticals; w/subjunctive)-
16. 2:18—“show”-
17. 3:1—“let be” (negated/prohibition)-
18. 3:4—“behold/look”-
19. 3:5—“behold/look”-
20. 3:13—“let him show”-
21. 3:14—“boast” (negated/prohibition)-
22. 3:14—“lie” (negated/prohibition)-
23. 4:7—“submit/subject yourselves”-

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24. 4:7—“resist” (cf. 1 Pet. 5:9)-
25. 4:8—“draw near”-
26. 4:8—“cleanse” (to free/strip: Mt. 8:2-3; 1 Jn. 1:7, 9)-
27. 4:8—“sanctify/purify” (cf. Jn. 11:55; 1 Pet. 1:22)-
28. 4:9—“lament/be grieved”-
29. 4:9—“mourn” (cf. Mt. 5:4)-
30. 4:9—“weep”-
31. 4:9—“let be turned”-
32. 4:10—“humble yourselves”-
33. 4:11—“speak against” (negated/prohibition)-
34. 4:13—“come now” (cf. “see now,” Mt. 26:65)-
35. 5:1—“come now” (purpose is to reprove; 4:13)-
36. 5:1—“weep” (w/“howling”—repentance; 4:9)-
37. 5:4—“behold/look”-
38. 5:7—“be patient” (cf. 2 Pet. 3:9)-
39. 5:7—“behold/look”-
40. 5:8—“be patient”-
41. 5:8—“strengthen”-
42. 5:9—“grumble” (negated/prohibition)-
43. 5:9—“behold/look”-
44. 5:10—“take”-
45. 5:11—“behold/look”-
46. 5:12—“swear” (negated/prohibition)-
47. 5:12—“let be”-
48. 5:13—“let him pray”-
49. 5:13—“let him sing praise”-
50. 5:14—“let him call”-
51. 5:14—“let them pray”-
52. 5:16—“confess”-
53. 5:16—“pray”-
54. 5:20—“let him know”-