

THE BOOK OF JAMES

Pastor Cliff Beveridge

Lost Pines Bible Church

A. Introduction

1. Authorship

a. Theories

1) Jewish Writings

a) Written in Jacob's name

b) Written to exiled Jews

c) "Adjusted" to be a book for Christians (vv. 1:1, 2:1)

2) Written in the name of the Lord's brother James

3) A teacher named James

a) James was a common name

b) An otherwise unknown individual

4) A sermon preached by the Lord's brother James

a) Recorded by someone else

b) Translated into Greek

c) "Dressed Up" for distribution

5) James, the son of Zebedee

6) The Lord's brother James

b. The Holy Spirit is the author

c. Disregard theories that ascribe random human involvement in the writing of Scripture

2. Date of Writing

a. According to Josephus, James died in 62 A.D.

b. No mention of Jerusalem Conference (48 - 50 A.D.) which James presided over

c. Estimated to be 45 - 48 A.D.

d. Likely earliest N.T. book written

3. Audience

a. Jews that have been dispersed among the nations

b. dispersal: **διασπορά** #1290 -- scattering abroad

c. Addressed to Hebrew Christians

d. Lessons for unbelieving Jews

4. Overview
 - a. Salutation (1:1)
 - b. Trials and Temptations (1:2-17)
 - c. Following God's Word (1:18-27)
 - d. Partiality (2:1-7)
 - e. The Royal Law (2:8-13)
 - f. Faith and Works (2:14-26)
 - g. The Tongue (3:1-12)
 - h. Wisdom (3:13-18)
 - i. Choosing Your Master (4:1-5)
 - j. Humility (4:6-10)
 - k. Being Judgmental (4:11-12)
 - l. Being Pretentious (4:13-16)
 - m. Summary (4:17)
 - n. Earthly Riches (5:1-6)
 - o. Endurance (5:7-11)
 - p. Honesty (5:12)
 - q. Prayer and Confession (5:13-18)
 - r. Repentance (5:19-20)

B. Salutation (1:1)

1. Introduction of Author
 - a. bond-servant **δοῦλος** #1401
 - 1) slave, servant, attendant
 - 2) one who gives himself up to another's will
 - 3) devoted to another to the disregard of one's own interests
 - 4) 125 occurrences in N.T.
 - b. NASB translates as bond-servant
 - 1) Paul (Romans 1:1; Titus 1:1; Gal 1:10)
 - 2) Peter (2 Peter 1:1)
 - 3) Jude (Jude 1)
 - 4) James (James 1:1)
 - 5) John (Rev 1:1)
 - 6) Jesus Christ (Phil 2:7)
 - 7) Moses (Rev 15:3)
 - 8) Epaphras (Col 1:7; 4:12)
 - 9) Tychicus (Col 4:7)
 - 10) The Lord's (2 Tim 2:24)

- c. NASB translates as bond-servants
 - 1) Paul and Timothy (Phil 1:1; 2 Cor 4:5)
 - 2) Peter and John (Acts 4:29)
 - 3) Paul and Silas (Act 16:17)
 - 4) The Lord's (Rev 2:20)

- d. NASB translates as slave
 - 1) Matt 10:24,25; 18:26,28; 20:27
 - 2) Matt 24:45,46,48 (ll Luke 12:43,45,47)
 - 3) Mark 10:24
 - 4) Luke 7:2; 14:21,22
 - 5) John 8:34,35; 13:16; 15:15,20
 - 6) 1 Cor 7:21,22_{x2}
 - 7) Gal 3:28; 4:7
 - 8) Eph 6:8
 - 9) Col 3:11
 - 10) Rev 6:15

2. Identification of Audience

- a. Jews who lived outside the Promised Land
- b. dispersal: **διασπορά** #1290
 - 1) Means scattering abroad
 - 2) The term Diaspora came into common use after the Babylonian Exile (586 B.C.)
- c. Frequent use of term brethren indicates audience was made up of believers (vv. 1:2,16,19; 2:1,5,14; 3:1,10,12; 4:11; 5:7,9,10,12,19)
- d. James highlights Law of Liberty vs. Mosaic Law
- e. Audience consisted of Jewish Christians in the Diaspora, perhaps those who were exiled to the East

3. Greetings

- a. greetings: **χαίρω** #5463 -- rejoice, be well, hail, greetings
 - 1) Only "stand alone" instance
 - 2) Equivalent to a simple "Hello" or "Welcome"
- b. Play on words with **χαρά** (joy) v. 2

C. Trials and Temptations (1:2-17)

1. A necessary part of every Christian's walk
2. How we handle them determines what we lay up for eternity

3. James 1:2

“Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials,”

a. Vocabulary

- 1) consider: **ἠγήσασθε** (hegesasthe)
 - a) v.2p.pl.mid.aor.imp. of **ἠγέομαι** (hegeomai) #2233
 - b) meaning: *consider, think, have an opinion, esteem, regard*
 - c) this is a thinking verb
 - d) given as an imperative
- 2) it all: **πᾶσαν** (pasan)
 - a) adj.fem.s.acc. of **πᾶς** (pas) #3956
 - b) meaning: *all, all things, every, everything*
 - c) all things - limited scope (1 Cor 9:12; Phil 2:14; 4:6,13; Col 3:22; 1 Tim 3:11; 4:8; 2 Tim 2:10; 4:5; Tit 2:7,9)
 - d) all things - unlimited scope (Rom 8:28; 11:36; 1 Cor 2:10; 3:21,22; 8:6; 11:12; 15:27,28; Eph 1:10,11,22; Col 1:16,17; Heb 2:10; 3:4; 1 John 3:20; Rev 4:11)
- 3) joy: **χαρὰν** (charan)
 - a) n.fem.s.acc. of **χαρά** (chara) #5479
 - b) meaning: *joy, cause or occasion of joy when viewed from the eternal perspective, every temporal experience is an occasion for joy*
- 4) brethren: **ἀδελφοί** (adelphoi)
 - a) n.mas.pl.voc. of **ἀδελφός** (adelphos) #80
 - b) meaning: *brother, countryman, fellow believer, brother in Christ*
- 5) when: **ὅταν** (hotan) #3752
 - a) conj.subord.temp.
 - b) meaning: *as soon as, when, whenever not if, but when*
- 6) encounter: **περιπέσητε** (peripesete)
 - a) v.2p.pl.aor.act.subj. of **περιπίπτω** (peripipto) #4045
 - b) meaning: *fall into, fall among (fig) be involved in, experience*
- 7) various: **ποικίλοις** (poikilois)
 - a) adj.m.pl.dat. of **ποικίλος** (poikilos) #4164
 - b) meaning: *diverse, manifold, various unspecified more than one in number*

- 8) trials: **πειρασμοῖς** (peirasmois)
- a) n.m.pl.dat. of **πειρασμός** (peirasmos) #3986
 - b) meaning: *trials, temptations, tests*
 - c) from **πειράζω** (peirazo) #3985
 - d) meaning: *assay, examine, tempt, try*
- b. Temporal Trials
- 1) Temptation (goal: failure)
 - a) never from God
(James 1:13 - **πειραζόμενος, πειράζομαι, ἀπείραστός, ειράζει**)
 - b) from within - old sin nature (James 1:14 - **πειράζεται**)
 - c) from the adversary (Mark 1:13 - **πειραζόμενος**; 1 Cor 7:5 - **πειράζει**; 1 Thess 3:5 - **ἐπείρασεν, πειράζων**)
 - d) God provides us the means to reach a successful end
(1 Cor 10:13 - **ἔκβασιν**)
 - (i) **ἔκβασις** (ekbasis) #1545
 - (ii) meaning: *exit, end, conclusion*
 - e) Jesus Christ comes to our aid (Heb 2:18 - **βοηθῆσαι**)
 - (i) from **βοηθέω** (boetheo) #997
 - (ii) meaning: *aid, help, relieve*
 - (iii) See also Heb 4:15,16
 - 2) Testing (goal: approval)
 - a) tribulation - **θλίψεσιν**
 - (i) from **θλίψις** (thlipsis) #2347
 - (ii) meaning: *tribulation, trouble*
 - (iii) Tribulation produces perseverance, proves character and results in hope (Rom 5:3,4)
 - (iv) Persevering in tribulation is part of the Christian walk (Rom 12:10-21)
 - b) affliction - **θλίψεως**
 - (i) Produces an eternal weight of glory (2 Cor 4:17)
 - (ii) God comforts us in our afflictions (2 Cor 1:3-7)
 - (iii) An eternal focus during affliction brings glory to Jesus Christ (2 Thess 1:3-12)
 - c) We should test ourselves (2 Cor 13:5)
 - d) In our testing we share the sufferings of Christ (1 Peter 4:13)

- 3) Discipline (goal: repentance)
 - a) Greek: **παιδεύω** (paideuo) #3811
 - b) Meaning: *chasten, cause one to learn*
 - c) Hebrew: **מוּצַר** (muwcar) #4148
 - d) Meaning: *correction, chastisement, discipline, instruction*
 - e) He disciplines us (His children) for our good; we are to be trained by it (Heb 12:5-11)
 - f) We are disciplined because He loves us (Prov 3:11,12; Rev 3:19)
 - g) We should be thankful for His discipline (Job 5:17,18)
 - h) We are disciplined to bring us back to our senses (Daniel 4:28-37)
- c. “Consider it all joy...”
 - 1) Happiness is a spectrum
Tranquility, Contentment <<< >>> Exhilaration, Jubilation
 - 2) True happiness (+H)
 - a) comes from God
(John 15:11; Rom 15:13)
 - b) comes through understanding
(Pr 3:13)
 - c) should be continual
(Acts 13:52; Ph 4:4; 1 Th 5:16)
 - 3) False happiness (-H)
 - a) comes from the things of this world
 - b) at best will be temporary
 - c) in the end is empty and futile
 - d) Ecc 2:1-11
 - 4) Tranquility and Contentment from God is a far greater happiness than Exhilaration and Jubilation apart from God
4. James 1:3
“knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.”
 - a. Vocabulary
 - 1) knowing: **γινώσκοντες**
 - a) v.pr.act.par.masc.pl.nom. of **γινώσκω** (ginosko) #1097
 - b) meaning: *come to know, get knowledge of*
 - 2) testing: **δοκίμιον**
 - a) n.neut.sing.nom. of **δοκίμιον** (dokimion) #1383
 - b) meaning: *a test, that by which something is proved*

- 3) faith: **πίστεως**
 - a) n.fem.sing.gen. of **πίστις** (pistis) #4102
 - b) meaning: *faith, belief, conviction of the truth*
- 4) produces: **κατεργάζεται**
 - a) v.3p.sing.pres.mid.ind. of **κατεργάζομαι** (katergazomai) #2716
 - b) meaning: *cause, accomplish, achieve*
- 5) endurance: **ὑπομονήν**
 - a) n.fem.sing.acc. of **ὑπομονή** (hupomone) #5281
 - b) meaning: *patience, steadfastness, endurance*
- b. Temporal trials help us to grow
- c. Our trust in God is tested
- d. Our dependence on God is tested
- e. Testing enables us to grow closer to Christ by sharing His suffering
- f. Testing is not always adversity; prosperity can be a test in itself
- g. We should rejoice in every trial
- h. Our focus must be eternal; our treasures are laid up in heaven
- i. How do we handle trials?
 - 1) Make sure we are in fellowship
 - 2) Spend time in the Word
 - 3) Speak to our Shepherd (prayer)
 - 4) Speak to our shepherd
 - 5) Pray with our brothers and sisters in Christ

5. James 1:4

“And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.”

- a. Vocabulary
 - 1) endurance **ὑπομονή**
 - a) n.fem.sing.nom. of **ὑπομονή** (hupomone) #5281
 - b) meaning: *patience, steadfastness, endurance*
 - 2) have **ἔχέτω**
 - a) v.3p.sing.pres.act.imp.of **ἔχω** (echo) #2192
 - b) meaning: *have, hold, keep*
 - 3) perfect **τέλειον**
 - a) adj.neu.sing.acc.of **τέλειος** (teleios) #5046
 - b) meaning: *perfect, complete, finished, brought to its end, mature*
 - 4) result **ἔργον**
 - a) noun.neu.sing.acc.of **ἔργον** (ergon) #2041
 - b) meaning: *work, act, deed, thing done*

- 5) so that **ἵνα**
 - a) conjunction: **ἵνα** (hina) #2443
 - b) meaning: *in order that, so that*
 - 6) perfect **τέλειοι**
 - a) adj.masc.pl.nom.of **τέλειος** (teleios) #5046
 - b) meaning: *perfect, complete, finished, brought to its end, mature*
 - 7) complete **όλόκληροι**
 - a) adj.masc.pl.nom.of **όλόκληρος** (holokleros) #3648
 - b) meaning: *complete, entire, whole*
 - 8) lacking **λειπόμενοι**
 - a) v.pr.pass.part.masc.pl.nom.of **λείπω** (leipo) #3007
 - b) meaning: *be without, lack, be in need of*
 - 9) (in) nothing **μηδενὶ**
 - a) adj.neu.sing.dat. of **μηδέν** (meden) #3367
 - b) meaning: *nobody, no one, nothing*
- b. Positional perspective
- 1) The moment we accept Christ as our savior, we are placed in union with Him and are immediately perfect and complete, lacking in nothing
 - 2) We cannot attain a higher position than to be in Christ
- c. Experiential perspective
- 1) The moment we accept Christ as our savior, we are fully equipped to set upon a spiritual journey that begins as a newborn baby and is expected to end as a growing, mature believer
 - 2) Enduring trials and temptations is part of this growth process from baby to mature believer learning God's Word is a part of this growth process from baby to mature believer
 - 3) Applying God's Word is a part of this growth process from baby to mature believer if this growth process were to reach its perfect end, it would result in a perfectly mature believer
 - 4) As we mature we will reach greater levels of fellowship with God (occupation with Christ), but our growth will never be complete; we will never be finished maturing (Ph 3:7-14; James 3:2)
 - 5) As we mature we become more stable (rooted, grounded) as we begin to understand the love of Christ and are able to make full use of His perfection (Eph 3:8-21; 4:11-16; Col 1:28,29)
- d. Conclusion
- 1) Experientially we will be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing when our spiritual growth has fully prepared us in time for the works God prepared for us before time (Eph 2:10; Ph 1:6; 2 Tim 3:16,17)

6. James 1:5

“But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.”

a. Vocabulary

1) lacks **λείπεται**

a) v.3p.sing.pres.pass.ind. of **λείπω** (leipo) #3007

b) meaning: *be without, lack, be in need of*

2) wisdom **σοφίας**

a) n.fem.sing.gen. of **σοφία** (sophia) #4678

b) meaning: *wisdom, broad and full knowledge*

3) ask **αίτείω**

a) v.3p.sing.pres.act.imp. of **αίτέω** (aiteo) #154

b) meaning: *ask, ask for, call for*

4) gives **διδόντος**

a) v.pres.act.part.masc.sing.gen. of **δίδωμι** (didomi) #1325

b) meaning: *give, grant, deliver*

5) all **πᾶσιν**

a) adj.masc.pl.dat. of **πᾶς** (pas) #3956

b) meaning: *all, everyone, whosoever*

6) generously **ἀπλῶς**

a) adv: **ἀπλῶς** (haplos) #574

b) meaning: *wholeheartedly, generously, without reserve*

7) reproach **ὀνειδίζοντος**

a) v.pres.act.part.masc.sing.gen. of **ὀνειδίζω** (oneidizo) #3679

b) meaning: *insult, reprimand, reproach*

b. God will provide us with the wisdom we need to do the work He has given to us (Ex 31:1-6; 36:1,2)

c. When we desire to be obedient to God’s work assignment, but lack the wisdom for the task, all we must do is ask and He will give us that wisdom... and more (1 Kings 3:5-13; 2 Chr 1:10-12)

d. When we ask for something according to God’s Will, He is faithful to answer our prayers (1 John 3:21,22; 5:14,15)

e. We do not need to “be careful what you wish for” when we ask God for something that we know will please Him (Matt 7:7-11)

f. God does not withhold any good thing from those who walk worthy (Ps 34:9,10; 84:11,12)

g. God’s wisdom will lead us down the correct paths in life (Pr 3:5-7; Ps 23:3; 32:8)

- h. When we seek to follow Christ in our daily walk, we may receive the reproach of men, but not of God (Matt 5:11,12 || Luke 6:22,23; 1 Pet 4:14)
- i. Biblical terms for knowledge
 - 1) **γνῶσις** (gnosis) #1108 - *general knowledge*
 - 2) **ἐπίγνωσις** (epignosis) #1922 - *precise or true knowledge*
 - 3) **σοφία** (sophia) #4678 - *wisdom, broad and full knowledge*
 - 4) **σύνεσις** (sunesis) #4907 - *intelligence*
 - 5) **φρόνησις** (phronesis) #5428 - *insight, prudence*

7. James 1:6

“But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind.”

a. Vocabulary

- 1) ask **αἰτέῖω**
 - a) v.3p.sing.pres.act.imp. of **αἰτέω** (aiteo) #154
 - b) meaning: *ask, ask for, call for*
- 2) in faith **ἐν πίστει**
 - a) n.fem.sing.dat. of **πίστις** (pistis) #4102
 - b) meaning: *faith, belief, conviction of the truth*
- 3) without any doubting **μηδὲν διακρινόμενος**
 - a) adj.neu.sing.acc. of **μηδέν** (meden) #3367
 - b) meaning: *none, not once*
 - c) v.pres.mid.part.sing.nom. of **διακρίνω** (diakrino) #1252
 - d) meaning: *discern, judge, waver, doubt*
- 4) surf of the sea **κλύδωνι θαλάσσης**
 - a) n.masc.sing.dat. of **κλύδων** (kludon) #2830
 - b) meaning: *surging, violent agitation*
 - c) n.fem.sing.gen. of **θάλασσα** (thalassa) #2281
 - d) meaning: *large body of water, sea*
- 5) driven and tossed by the wind **ἀνεμιζομένῳ καὶ ῥιπιζομένῳ**
 - a) v.pres.pass.part.masc.sing.dat. of **ἀνεμίζω** (anemizo) #416
 - b) meaning: *moved by the wind*
 - c) v.pres.pass.part.masc.sing.dat. of **ῥιπίζω** (ripizo) #4494
 - d) meaning: *blown here and there*
- b. Anything not done in faith is sin (Rom 14:23)
- c. Questioning God’s faithfulness shows that we are still children, not yet fully equipped for our work of service (Eph 4:11-14)
- d. We should ask without a second thought because God is faithful (Heb 10:23)

- e. “like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind”
(Isa 57:20; 2 Pet 2:17; Ju 12,13)

8. James 1:7,8

“For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.”

a. Vocabulary

1) that man ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἐκεῖνος

a) n.masc.sing.nom. ἄνθρωπος (anthropos) #444

b) meaning: *human being, man*

c) pron.adj.dem.masc.sing.nom. ἐκεῖνος (ekeinos) #1565

d) meaning: *that one, the preceding one*

2) ought not to expect μὴ οἰέσθω

a) particle.neg. μὴ (me) #3361

b) meaning: *not, lest*

c) v.3p.sing.pres.mid.imp. of οἶομαι (oiomai) #3633

d) meaning: *suppose, think*

3) receive λήμψεταιί

a) v.3p.sing.future.mid.ind. of λαμβάνω (lambano) #2983

b) meaning: *receive, acquire*

4) anything τι

a) pronoun.indef.neu.sing.acc. of τίς (tis) #5100

b) meaning: *something, anything*

5) from the Lord παρὰ τοῦ κυρίου

a) παρὰ plus the genitive form of κύριος (kurios) #2962

b) meaning: *lord, master*

6) double-minded δίψυχος

a) adj.masc.sing.nom of δίψυχος (dipsuchos) #1374

b) meaning: *wavering, uncertain, divided in interest*

7) unstable ἀκατάστατος

a) adj.masc.sing.nom of ἀκατάστατος (akatastatos) #182

b) meaning: *unstable, restless*

8) ways ὁδοῖς

a) n.fem.pl.dat. of ὁδός (hodos) #3598

b) meaning: *way of life, type of conduct*

- b. God does not respond when we offer prayer out of fellowship or with improper motives (Pr 15:8; 21:27; Isa 1:15; Ja 4:3)

- c. When our interests are divided, we are not wholly devoted to the Lord
(1 K 18:21; 2 K 17:33,41; 1 Chr 12:33; Ps 12:1-4; 119:113; Isa 29:13;
Matt 6:24 || Luke 16:13)
- d. God wants us to give our lives completely over to Him
(Rom 6:12-18;12:1;14:7-9; 1 Cor 3:23; 6:19,20; 10:31; 2 Cor 5:15; Ph 1:20; Col
3:17,23)
- e. If we are not grounded in the truth and are not under teaching, we will be easily
led astray and prone to distorting the Scriptures
(2 Pet 2:14; 3:16)

9. James 1:9,10

“But the brother of humble circumstances is to glory in his high position; and the rich man is to glory in his humiliation, because like flowering grass he will pass away.”

a. Vocabulary

- 1) brother of humble circumstances **ὁ ἀδελφὸς ὁ ταπεινὸς**
 - a) adj.masc.sing.nom. of **ταπεινὸς** (tapeinos) #5011
 - b) meaning: *low-flying; fig. lowly or unimportant*
- 2) glory in **καυχάσθω**
 - a) v.3p.sing.pres.mid.imp. of **καυχάομαι** (kauchaomai) #2744
 - b) meaning: *boast about, glory in*
- 3) high position **ὑψει**
 - a) n.neu.sing.dat. of **ὑψος** (hupsos) #5311
 - b) meaning: *height; metaph. rank, high station*
- 4) rich man **πλούσιος**
 - a) adj.masc.sing.nom. of **πλούσιος** (plousios) #4145
 - b) meaning: *wealthy, well-to-do*
- 5) humiliation **ταπεινώσει**
 - a) n.fem.sing.dat. of **ταπείνωσις** (tapeinosis) #5014
 - b) meaning: *humiliation, lowly state*
- 6) flowering grass **ἄνθος χόρτου**
 - a) n.neu.sing.nom. of **ἄνθος** (anthos) #438
 - b) meaning: *blossom, flower*
 - c) n.masc.sing.gen. of **χόρτος** (chortos) #5528
 - d) meaning: *grass, hay*
- 7) pass away **παρελεύσεται**
 - a) v.3p.sing.fut.mid.ind. of **παρέρχομαι** (parerchomai) #3928
 - b) meaning: *pass by; fig. pass away, perish, disappear, be left unfulfilled*

10. James 1:11

“For the sun rises with a scorching wind and withers the grass; and its flower falls off and the beauty of its appearance is destroyed; so too the rich man in the midst of his pursuits will fade away.”

a. Vocabulary

1) scorching wind **καύσωνι**

a) n.masc.sing.dat. of **καύσων** (kauson) #2742

b) meaning: *burning heat, scorching heat*

2) wither **ἐξήρανεν**

a) v.3p.sing.pres.mid.imp. of **ξηραίνω** (xeraino) #3583

b) meaning: *shrivel, wither, become useless*

3) appearance **προσώπου**

a) n.neu.sing.gen. of **πρόσωπον** (prosopon) #4383

b) meaning: *face, outward appearance*

4) destroy **ἀπώλετο**

a) v.3p.sing.aor.mid.ind. of **ἀπόλλυμι** (apollumi) #622

b) meaning: *destroy, bring to nothing*

5) pursuits **πορείαις**

a) n.fem.pl.dat. of **πορεία** (poreia) #4197

b) meaning: *journeys, undertakings, way of life*

b. Poor and rich believers are both being admonished here

c. A poor believer must not dwell on what he perceives that he does not have, but instead should realize how much he has in Christ (1 Cor 3:21-23; 2 Cor 8:9)

d. A rich believer must not become focused on earthly treasures (Matt 6:19,20; Luke 18:18-30; 1 Tim 6:17-19)

e. Whatever our lot in life, we must recognize that everything we have is ours only by the grace of God (Jn 1:16; Rom 10:12; 1 Cor 4:7)

f. If all God had given us was the precious gift of salvation, that in and of itself would make us immeasurably wealthy (2 Cor 8:9)

g. The Word of God is a treasure (2 Tim 1:13,14)

h. God knows what we need and will provide for us; our focus should be on His kingdom and His righteousness (Matt 6:25-33 || Luke 12:22-32)

11. James 1:12

“Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.”

a. Vocabulary

1) approved **δόκιμος**

a) adj.masc.sing.nom. of **δόκιμος** (dokimos) #1384

b) meaning: *approved, accepted*

2) life **ζωῆς**

a) n.fem.sing.gen. of **ζωή** (zoe) #2222

b) meaning: *life, eternal life*

b. The crown of life is an eternal reward given to those who endure in their walk (Ja 1:12; Rev 2:10)

c. Do not confuse this crown of life with our salvation which is based on our faith in Christ alone

d. Even if we arrive at the Judgment Seat of Christ with no crowns, we are still saved (1 Cor 3:15)

e. Any crowns given to us by God can be lost if we turn away from Him (Rev 3:11)

f. “crowns” in the N.T.

1) imperishable (1 Cor 9:25)

2) righteousness (2 Tim 4:8)

3) life (Ja 1:12; Rev 2:10)

4) unfading glory (1 Pet 5:4)

5) rejoicing (1 Thess 2:19)

g. If we receive eternal rewards we will have the privilege of offering them to the Lord for His glory (Rev 4:9-11)

12. James 1:13,14

“Let no one say when he is tempted, ‘I am being tempted by God’; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust.”

a. Vocabulary

1) say **λεγέτω**

a) v.3p.sing.pres.act.imp. of **λέγω** (lego) #3004

b) meaning: *say, speak*

2) carried away **ἐξελκόμενος**

a) v.pres.pass.part.masc.sing.nom. of **ἐξέλκω** (exelko) #1828

b) meaning: *draw away; metaph. lure away from a hiding place (hunting)*

- 3) his own lust **ἰδίας ἐπιθυμίας**
 - a) adj.fem.sing.gen. of **ἴδιος** (idios) #2398
 - b) meaning: *belonging to a particular person*
 - c) n.fem.sing.gen. of **ἐπιθυμία** (epithumia) #1939
 - d) meaning: *strong, unrestrained desire*
- b. God cannot be tempted by evil (Ps 5:4; 92:15)
- c. God is not the source of our temptations (1 Jn 2:16)
- d. We are tempted by our own sin nature (Rom 6:12; Eph 4:22)
- e. God has equipped us to resist any temptations we encounter (Rom 6:5-7; 8:5-13; Eph 6:10-17; 1 Pet 1:13-16; 4:1,2)

13. James 1:15

“Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.”

- a. Our sin nature cannot give birth to sin by itself
- b. The sin nature presents us with a temptation
- c. When our volition “joins together” with this temptation our sin nature conceives and gives birth to sin
- d. When the sin is accomplished we become experientially dead (out of fellowship with God)
- e. The temptation itself is not a sin
- f. Refer to the booklet on Spirituality vs. Carnality

14. James 1:16,17

“Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.”

- a. Vocabulary
 - 1) be deceived **πλανᾶσθε**
 - a) v.2p.pl.pres.pass.imp. of **πλανᾶω** (planao) #4105
 - b) meaning: *wander, go astray, roam about*
 - 2) thing given vs. gift
 - a) compare **δόσις** (dosis) #1394 to **δῶρημα** (dorema) #1434
 - b) **δόσις** emphasizes the act of giving whereas **δῶρημα** emphasizes the result of the gift having been given

- 3) shifting shadow τροπῆς ἀποσκίασμα
- a) n.fem.sing.gen. of τροπή (trope) #5157
 - b) meaning: *turning*
 - c) n.neu.sing.nom. of ἀποσκίασμα (aposkiasma) #644
 - d) meaning: *shadow*
- b. God gives generously and His gifts are perfect for us (Ps 85:12)
 - c. If what we receive is not from God, we have not received at all (Jn 3:27)
 - d. We are what we are only by the grace of God (1 Cor 15:10)
 - e. God created all types of light that exist in the universe
 - f. God's dealings with us will vary as we go about our wandering ways, but He never changes (1 Sam 15:29; Mal 3:6; Heb 13:8)

D. Following God's Word (1:18-27)

1. We must first receive God's Word
 2. We must then believe what we have heard and/or read
 3. We must then live according to what we have believed
4. James 1:18
 "In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures."
- a. Vocabulary
 - 1) brought us forth ἀπεκύησεν ἡμᾶς
 - a) v.3p.sing.aor.act.ind. of ἀποκυέω (apokueo) #616
 - b) meaning: *bring forth, give birth to*
 - c) pers.pro.1p.pl.acc. of ἡμᾶς (hemas) #2248
 - d) meaning: *we, us*
 - 2) first fruits ἀπαρχήν
 - a) n.fem.sing.acc. of ἀπαρχή (aparche) #536
 - b) meaning: *first fruits of the earth offered to God, first portion of the dough used to make sacred bread*
 - b. This birth is made in contrast with the birth of sin from verse 15
 - c. This is the birth of regeneration
 - d. This birth is the work of God in accordance with His Will (Eph 2:8-10, 2 Tim 1:9, 1 Pet 1:3)
 - e. The "word of truth" is the gospel (Eph 1:13; Col 1:5)
 - f. This birth comes about through the power of the truth of the gospel (Rom 1:16; Eph 1:13; 2 Thess 2:14; 2 Tim 3:15; 1 Pet 1:23)
 - g. His purpose was for us to be first fruits among His creatures

- h. The offering of first fruits was part of the Mosaic Law
(Ex 22:29; Lev 2:12; Num 18:12; Deut 18:4; 2 Chr 31:5; Pr 3:9)
 - i. First fruits in the N.T. (Rom 8:23; 11:16; 1 Cor 15:20,23;
1 Cor 16:15; Ja 1:18; Rev 14:4)
 - j. Jesus Christ is the first fruits of those who will be resurrected
 - k. These Jewish believers are the first fruits of the Church Age saints
 - l. Believers in Christ are the first fruits among all God's creatures, including the angelic realm
5. James 1:19,20
 "This you know, my beloved brethren. But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger; for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God."
- a. Vocabulary
 - 1) this you know ἵστε
 - a) v.2p.pl.perf.act.imp. of οἶδα -> εἶδω (eido) #1492
 - b) meaning: *know this*
 - 2) but δὲ
 - a) conj.coord.cont. δὲ (de) #1161
 - b) meaning: *but, and, also, moreover, now*
 - b. We must be ready to listen (Matt 11:15; 13:9; Mark 4:23; 7:16)
 - c. We must be slow to speak (Pr 10:19; 13:3; 17:27; 21:23; Ecc 5:1,2)
 - d. We must be slow to anger (Ps 37:8; Pr 14:17,29; 15:18; 16:32;
19:11,19; Ecc 7:8,9)
 - e. This passage does not say we must never be angry
 - f. There is a righteous anger that is not a sin (Eph 4:26)
 - g. We must be slow to anger so that we can be sure that our anger is in line with God's viewpoint
 - h. Vocabulary (cont.)
 - 1) achieve ἐργάζεται
 - a) v.3p.sing.pr.mid.ind. of ἐργάζομαι (ergazomai) #2038
 - b) meaning: *accomplish, bring about, work to produce*
 - i. "the anger of man" refers to anger from human viewpoint
 - j. Human viewpoint anger comes from self-righteousness
 - k. Our righteousness cannot work to produce the righteousness of God
(Job 15:14; Isa 64:6; Rom 3)

6. James 1:21

“Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls.”

a. Vocabulary

1) all that remains **περισσεΐαν**

a) n.fem.sing.acc. of **περισσεΐα** (perisseia) #4050

b) meaning: *superabundance, surplus, prevalence*

2) receive **δέξασθε**

a) v.2p.pl.aor.mid.imp. of **δέχομαι** (dechomai) #1209

b) meaning: *receive, accept, welcome, believe*

3) implanted **ἔμφυτον**

a) adj.masc.sing.acc. of **ἔμφυτος** (emphutos) #1721

b) meaning: *implanted, engrafted, put within*

4) able **δυνάμενον**

a) v.pres.pass.part.masc.sing.acc. of **δύναμαι** (dunamai) #1410

b) meaning: *be able, have power to*

5) save **σῶσαι**

a) v.aor.act.inf. of **σῶζω** (sozo) #4982

b) meaning: *save, deliver, rescue*

b. Our old ways (old self) were crucified with Christ (Rom 6:6)

c. We must choose to put away the things we knew before we were saved (Eph 4:22; Col 3:9)

d. This “saving of the soul” does not refer to salvation (James 5:20)

e. The Word of God performs its work and purifies our souls when we believe (1 Thess 2:13; 1 Pet 1:22)

7. James 1:22

“But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.”

a. Vocabulary

1) prove yourselves **γίνεσθε**

a) v.2p.pl.pres.mid.imp. of **γίνομαι** (ginomai) #1096

b) meaning: *become, begin to be*

c) implies a change of state

2) doer **ποιηταὶ**

a) n.masc.pl.nom. of **ποιητής** (poietes) #4163

b) meaning: *doer, maker, performer, observer*

- 3) hearer **ἀκροαταὶ**
- n.masc.pl.nom. of **ἀκροατής** (akroates) #202
 - meaning: *hearer (only)*
 - in contrast to one who acts on what he hears
- 4) delude **παραλογιζόμενοι**
- v.pres.mid.part.masc.pl.nom. of **παραλογίζομαι** (paralogizomai) #3884
 - meaning: *reckon falsely, deceive, delude by false reasoning*
- b. Faith without works is useless (James 2:14-20)
- c. Works without faith is useless (Matt 7:21-23)
- d. When we hear and observe the Word of God, we are blessed (Luke 11:28; James 1:25)
- e. When we practice the things we have learned, God will give us a peaceful soul (Phil 4:9)
- f. Keeping God's commandments is observable evidence that we have come to know Christ (1 Jn 2:3-6)
- g. If we ignore the Word of God, our pride will soon control us and we will deceive ourselves about what we truly are (Ob 3; 1 Cor 3:18; Gal 6:3; 1 Jn 1:8)
8. James 1:23,24
- “For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was.”
- a. Vocabulary
- look **κατανοοῦντι** (v. 23) **κατενόησεν** (v. 24)
 - from **κατανοέω** (katanoeo) #2657
 - meaning: *notice, perceive, study, examine*
 - natural face **πρόσωπον τῆς γενέσεως**
 - n.nuet.sing.acc. of **πρόσωπον** (prosopon) #4383
 - meaning: *face*
 - n.fem.sing.gen. of **γένεσις** (genesis) #1078
 - meaning: *origin, birth*
 - forgotten **ἐπελάθετο**
 - v.3p.sing.aor.mid.ind. of **ἐπιλανθάνομαι** (epilanthanomai) #1950
 - meaning: *forgotten, given over to oblivion*
- b. Just as the mirror reveals our true face, the Word of God reveals our true soul and spirit (Heb 4:12; Eph 5:13; Jn 3:20)

- c. We may choose to ignore what the mirror reveals to us and envision ourselves as we want to look
- d. Likewise, we may choose to ignore what the Word of God reveals to us and envision ourselves as the Christians we want to be
- e. When we embrace what the Word of God reveals, it will be reflected in what we do in our daily walk

9. James 1:25

“But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does.”

a. Vocabulary

1) looks intently **παρακύψας**

- a) v.aor.act.part.masc.sing.nom. of **παρακύπτω** (parakupto) #3879
- b) meaning: *to stoop down beside, to stoop over and look into*
- c) metaphorically: to inspect curiously
- d) Luke 24:12; John 20:5,11; 1 Pet 1:12

2) perfect **τέλειον**

- a) adj.masc.sing.acc. of **τέλειος** (teleios) #5046
- b) meaning: *perfect, complete, finished, brought to its end, mature*
- c) Matt 5:48; Rom 12:2; 1 Cor 13:10; Heb 9:12; Ja 1:4,17; 1 John 4:18

3) liberty **ἐλευθερίας**

- a) n.fem.sing.gen. of **ἐλευθερία** (eleutheria) #1657
- b) meaning: *freedom, liberty*
- c) 1 Cor 10:29; 2 Cor 3:17; Gal 2:4; Gal 5:1,13; 1 Pet 2:16; 2 Pet 2:19

4) abides by **παραμείνας**

- a) v.aor.act.part.masc.sing.nom. of **παραμένω** (parameno) #3887
- b) meaning: *to stay near, remain beside*
- c) Phil 1:25; Heb 7:23

5) effectual doer **ποιητῆς ἔργου**

- a) n.masc.sing.nom. of **ποιητής** (poietes) #4163
- b) meaning: *maker, doer*
- c) n.neu.sing.gen. of **ἔργον** (ergon) #2041
- d) meaning: *work*

b. All of God’s laws are perfect (Ps 19:7; 111:7; 119:142,160)

c. James is not saying this law is more perfect than any other, but is highlighting a new law, the law of liberty, which Christ established when He fulfilled the Mosaic Law

- d. Christ fulfilled, but did not abolish, the Mosaic Law (Matt 5:17)
- e. In Christ, the Mosaic Law is fulfilled in us (Rom 8:2-4)
- f. In Christ, we have been released from the Mosaic Law (Rom 7:4-6)
- g. Many Jews at that time were clinging to their way of life under the Mosaic Law (Gal 4:4,5,21)
- h. The Mosaic Law was given as a tutor to reveal our sins (Gal 3:19)
- i. The purpose of that tutor was to lead us to Christ (Gal 3:21-24)
- j. James wants his Jewish audience to understand the truth of the freedom they have under grace
- k. He wants them to abide in that truth and, in freedom, do the work that God has prepared for them
- l. One who freely does the work of God is blessed (John 13:17) and his toil is not in vain (1 Cor 15:58)
- m. This verse continues the lesson of the two previous verses and once again advises careful attention to the truth of God's Word
- n. James' audience struggled with legalism and needed to recognize the freedom we have under grace
- o. Paul's Corinthian audience had swung the freedom pendulum to the opposite extreme and needed to learn to the law of love
- p. Likewise, in chapter 2 James addresses the need for love and mercy to moderate liberty
- q. We can only abide in liberty and function in love when we are empowered by the Holy Spirit (2 Cor 3:17; Gal 5:22)

10. James 1:26

“If anyone thinks himself to be religious, and yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this man's religion is worthless.”

a. Vocabulary

1) religious **θρησκὸς**

- a) adj.masc.sing.nom. of **θρησκός** (threskos) #2357
- b) meaning: *fearing or worshipping God*
- c) emphasis on external observances

2) bridle **χαλιναγωγῶν**

- a) v.pres.act.part.masc.sing.nom. of **χαλιναγωγέω** (chalinagogeō) #5468
- b) meaning: *to lead with a bridle, hold in check, restrain*

3) deceives **ἀπατῶν**

- a) v.pres.act.part.masc.sing.nom. of **ἀπατάω** (apataō) #538
- b) meaning: *to cheat, beguile, deceive*

- 4) worthless **μάταιος**
 - a) adj.fem.sing.nom. of **μάταιος** (mataios) #3152
 - b) meaning: *devoid of force, truth or results*
- b. The phrase “does not bridle his tongue yet deceives his own heart” refers back to the point being made in verses 18 through 25
- c. In verse 19 we saw the need to restrain our tongue (Ps 39:1; 141:3; Eph 4:29; Col 4:6)
- d. Verses 22 through 24 taught us that if we hear God’s Word but do nothing we deceive ourselves
- e. Observing rituals and participating in ceremonies means nothing unless it is a response to the truth of God’s Word (Rom 2:25-29)
- f. We must hear God’s Word, believe what we have heard and then act upon what we have come to know
- g. True results in the Christian walk come from responding to God’s Word (Josh 1:8; Ps 1:1-3; Isa 3:10)
- h. Hearing God’s Word and not doing anything with that knowledge is nothing more than an academic pursuit and is worthless
- i. Doing “works” in the absence of proper motivation which comes from the hearing, learning and believing of God’s Word is nothing more than ritual without reality and is worthless

11. James 1:27

“Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.”

- a. Vocabulary
 - 1) pure **καθαρά**
 - a) adj.fem.sing.nom. of **καθαρός** (katharos) #2513
 - b) meaning: *clean, pure, free from corrupt desire*
 - 2) undefiled **ἀμίαντος**
 - a) adj.fem.sing.nom. of **ἀμίαντος** (amiantos) #283
 - b) meaning: *unsoiled, undefiled, free from that by which the nature of a thing is deformed or its force impaired*
 - 3) visit **πισκέπτεσθαι**
 - a) v.pres.mid.inf. of **ἐπισκέπτομαι** (episkeptomai) #1980
 - b) meaning: *to look upon in order to help or benefit, to look after, to provide for*
 - 4) unstained **ἄσπιλον**
 - a) adj.masc.sing.acc. of **ἄσπιλος** (aspilos) #784
 - b) meaning: *spotless, free from vice, unsullied*

- b. James presents a picture of what it means to truly walk the walk as a Christian should
- c. This description is not intended to be a comprehensive list of the activities God prepared for us
- d. We see in this description that we should do our work as unto the Lord and avoid sinful behavior
- e. Our work should include caring for orphans and widows (Deut 14:29; Job 31:16-23; Ps 146:9; Isa 1:17,23)
- f. Our focus on things eternal and the imminent return of our Lord should motivate us to remain unstained (1 Tim 6:14; 1 Pet 1:7; 2 Pet 3:14)
- g. In conclusion: when we learn God's Word, think God's Word and live God's Word, our walk is "pure" and "undefiled" in God's sight

E. Partiality and The "Royal" Law (2:1-13)

1. James 2:1

"My brethren, do not hold your faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ with *an attitude of personal favoritism*." (NASB)

a. Vocabulary

Ἀδελφοί μου, μὴ ἐν προσωπολημψίαις ἔχετε ... τῆς δόξης.

1) personal favoritism: **προσωπολημψίαις**

- a) n.dat.pl.fem. of **προσωπολημψία** #4382
- b) meaning: *respect of persons, partiality, favoritism*
- c) Rom 2:11; Eph 6:9; Col 3:25

2) hold: **ἔχετε**

- a) v.pres.act.imp.2p.pl. of **ἔχω** #2192
- b) meaning: *possess, have, own, hold on to, retain*

3) glorious: **δόξης**

- a) n.gen.fem.sing. of **δόξα** #1391
- b) meaning: *splendor, glory*

b. The attitude of partiality toward people is not divine viewpoint.

(Rom 2:11; Eph 6:9; Col 3:25)

c. Therefore, it is human viewpoint stemming from the old sin nature.

d. Our faith in Christ should not be held with any human viewpoint, including this attitude of personal favoritism.

e. The Lord Jesus Christ is inherently glorious. (John 1:14; 17:5)

f. The Lord Jesus Christ deserves to be glorified in all that we do, but showing partiality does not bring glory to Him.

2. James 2:2,3

“For if a man comes into your assembly with a gold ring and dressed in fine clothes, and there also comes in a poor man in dirty clothes, and you pay special attention to the one who is wearing the fine clothes, and say, ‘You sit here in a good place,’ and you say to the poor man, ‘You stand over there, or sit down by my footstool,’”
(NASB)

a. Vocabulary

1) in fine clothes: **λαμπρός** #2986

a) meaning: *bright, shining, sparkling, glamorous*

2) in dirty clothes: **ῥυπαρός** #4508

a) meaning: *dirty, filthy, shabby, grubby*

b. A specific illustration of how partiality might manifest itself in a local assembly is given here.

c. The text paints a vivid picture of the contrast between the outward appearances of the two men, but the principle applies to more subtle differences.

d. The rich man is given preferential seating – “down on the front row”.

e. The poor man is relegated to “standing room only” or asked to sit on the floor.

3. James 2:4

“have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil motives?” (NASB)

a. This question is constructed to lead the reader to a “yes” answer and could be rewritten, “you have judged among yourselves and have become judges with evil thought processes, haven’t you?”

b. Vocabulary

1) made distinctions: **διακρίνω** #1252

2) judges: **κριτής** #2923

3) motives: **διαλογισμός** #1261

a) meaning: *reasoning, content of ones thinking*

c. Making judgments based on superficial details such as appearance reveals a lack of divine viewpoint. (Zech 7:9; John 7:24)

d. This partiality is not a one-way street. Showing preference to the poor over the rich reveals poor judgment as well. (Lev 19:15)

4. James 2:5

“Listen, my beloved brethren: did not God choose the poor of this world *to be* rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him?” (NASB)

a. Similar construction to verse 4 expecting a “yes” answer.

b. Vocabulary

1) poor of this world: πτωχοὺς τῷ κόσμῳ

a) literally: “poor to the world”

b) meaning: *poor in the eyes of the world*

2) rich in faith: πλουσίους ἐν πίστει

a) meaning #1: *abundance of faith*

b) meaning #2: *rich because of their faith*

c. The words “to be” have been added by the translators.

d. A better addition would be “who are”.

e. On the basis of their faith they have been chosen and are heirs of the kingdom of God. (1 Thess 2:10-12)

f. These believers love God, not the things of this world.

5. James 2:6,7

“But you have dishonored the poor man. Is it not the rich who oppress you and personally drag you into court? Do they not blaspheme the fair name by which you have been called?” (NASB)

a. Similar construction to verses 4 and 5 expecting a “yes” answer.

b. The societies of that time placed much more importance on honor than our culture does today.

c. From verse 5 we know God’s view of these believers.

d. In dishonoring the poor they had adopted a similar viewpoint to the one held by the people who mistreated them.

e. They were blaspheming the very name by which they were called.

6. James 2:8

“If, however, you are fulfilling the royal law according to the Scripture, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself,’ you are doing well.” (NASB)

a. Vocabulary

1) royal law: νόμον βασιλικόν

a) βασιλικός #937

b) meaning: *of the king, royal*

b. The “royal” law was given in Lev 19:18 and quoted with emphasis by Jesus Christ. (Matt 22:39)

c. This picture of love is inconsistent with preferential treatment.

7. James 2:9-11

“But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all. For He who said, ‘Do not commit adultery,’ also said, ‘Do not commit murder.’ Now if you do not commit adultery, but do commit murder, you have become a transgressor of the law.”

- a. James makes it clear that showing partiality is sin.
- b. God’s Law shows no partiality.
- c. If you break even one commandment of the Law, you are guilty of breaking all commandments.
- d. In showing such partiality to the rich they were no better than adulterers or murderers.

8. James 2:12,13

“So speak and so act as those who are to be judged by the law of liberty. For judgment will be merciless to one who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment.” (NASB)

- a. Vocabulary
 - 1) to be judged: **μέλλοντες κρίνεσθαι**
 - a) literally: about to be judged
(Texan: fixin’ to be judged)
- b. They are living under grace and are exhorted to act accordingly.
- c. The one who shows no mercy will suffer. (Prov 21:13)
- d. Those who have been shown mercy should likewise show others mercy. (Matt 18:28-35)
- e. An attitude of mercy will be met with mercy. (Matt 5:7)
- f. An attitude of judgment will be met with judgment. (Matt 7:1,2)

F. Faith and Works

1. James 2:14

“What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but he has no works? Can that faith save him?” (NASB)

- a. The second question is constructed to lead the reader to a “no” answer and could be rewritten, “That faith can’t save him, can it?”
- b. Vocabulary
 - 1) what use is it: **Τί τὸ ὄφελος**
 - a) **ὄφελος** #3786
 - b) meaning: *an advantage derived from (something), benefit, good*

- 2) that faith: ἡ πίστις
 - a) literally: the faith
 - b) in context this is understood to be the supposed faith of the “someone” in the first question
 - c) meaning: *his faith, that faith*
- c. One of the keys to this passage is the phrase, “says he has faith”
 - 1) This phrase calls into question whether or not the person has truly placed his faith in Christ.
 - 2) If instead this verse said, “If someone has faith,” this passage would take on a different meaning.

2. James 2:15,16

“If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace, be warmed and be filled,’ and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that?” (NASB)

a. Vocabulary

1) daily food: ἐφημέρου τροφῆς

- a) ἐφήμερος #2184
- b) meaning: *lasting for a day*
- c) only occurrence in N.T.
- d) daily: καθ ἡμέραν

- b. The recipients of this letter should know what the Scriptures say about how God expects the needy and poor to be treated. (Deut 15:7-11)
- c. If the love of God abides in us we will do more than simply offer words to those that are in need. (1 John 3:16-18)
- d. “Go in peace” is a somewhat common expression in the Bible. (Ex 4:18; 2 Sam 15:9; Jdgs 18:6; Mark 5:34; Luke 8:48; Acts 16:36)

3. James 2:17

“Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself.” (NASB)

a. Vocabulary

1) is dead, *being* by itself: νεκρά ἐστὶν καθ ἑαυτήν

- a) κατά #2596 + accusative
- b) meaning: *according to*
- c) idiom: “by itself”

- b. If we don’t walk according to our faith, our walk is “dead”. (2 Pet 1:4-9)
- c. Faith working through love, not works of the Law, is meaningful production in this Age of Grace. (Gal 5:4-6)
- d. Trying to live a “Christian” life without faith will not find favor with God. (Matt 7:21-23; Heb 11:6)

4. James 2:18

“But someone may well say, ‘You have faith and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works.’” (NASB)

a. Vocabulary

1) may well say: ἐρεῖ

a) fut.act.ind. of λέγω #3004

b) meaning: *will say*

2) without the works: χωρὶς τῶν ἔργων

a) χωρὶς #5565

b) meaning: *apart from, without*

b. This hypothetical challenge points out that faith itself is unobservable.

c. Faith makes itself evident when it results in working a “labor of love”.
(1 Thess 1:3)

d. Faith does not have to result in works to be sufficient for salvation.
(Rom 3:20,21,28; 4:6; Eph 2:8,9)

e. God intends for our faith to result in work. (Eph 2:10; 1 Cor 15:58)

f. We cannot perform the “works of God” without faith in Christ. (Jn 6:27-29)

g. We “walk worthy” as a result of the Word of God working in us.
(1 Thess 2:12,13)

5. James 2:19

“You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder.”
(NASB)

a. There is uncertainty about whether or not the quote from verse 18 should encompass this verse as well.

b. This verse highlights that even the demons believe in God. (Matt 8:29;
Luke 4:33,34; Acts 19:15)

c. The point being made is that one can believe in God and yet be an enemy of God.

d. Once again the faith of the one who has no works is called into question.

6. James 2:20

“But are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow, that faith without works is useless?” (NASB)

a. Vocabulary

1) foolish: κενέ

a) κενός #2756

b) meaning: *empty, vain, fruitless*

b. This final statement drives home the point that we are empty (bear no fruit) if our faith does not result in works.

- c. If someone is without works, we cannot know if they have placed their faith in Christ. (1 Cor 2:11)
- d. Only God knows the hearts of men. (Acts 1:24; 15:8; Rom 8:27)
- e. Faith resulting in works is evident to all and brings glory to Jesus Christ (2 Thess 1:11,12)

7. Summing up James 2:14-20

- a. The word “save” in verse 14 refers to regeneration.
- b. The phrase “says he has faith” in v14 calls into question whether or not “someone” has genuinely placed his faith in Christ.
- c. Verse 19 recognizes that a belief in the one and only true God is good, but since demons believe in God that faith is not enough.
- d. When “coming alongside” calls for action, words alone fall short.
- e. Faith is considered “dead” when it bears no fruit.
- f. The hypothetical argument which begins in verse 18 should include the remainder of that verse (as in the NASB).
- g. Faith itself is unobservable.
- h. Works can show faith, but works can exist apart from faith.
- i. Lack of current works does not indicate an absence of faith, but if there is faith it is dormant and effectively “useless”.
- j. Paul teaches us that faith alone in Christ alone is all that is required for salvation.
- k. James points out that genuine faith in Christ will inevitably result in some fruit being borne.

8. James 2:21-25

“Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar? You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, faith was perfected; and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, ‘And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness,’ and he was called the friend of God. You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone. In the same way, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way?” (NASB)

a. Vocabulary

1) perfected: ἐτελειώθη

a) τελειόω #5048

b) meaning: *to complete, fulfill, make perfect*

2) fulfilled: ἐπληρώθη

a) πληρόω #4137

b) meaning: *to make full, complete, finish, fulfill*

- 3) justified: ἐδικαιώθη (vv21,25), δικαιούται (v24)
 - a) δικαιόω #1344
 - b) meaning: *to render a favorable verdict, prove to be righteous, vindicate, set free*
- 4) NASB translations of δικαιόω
 - a) “vindicate” in Matt 11:19 || Luke 7:35; 1 Tim 3:16
 - b) “justice” in Luke 7:29
 - c) “free” in Acts 13:39*; Rom 6:7
 - d) “acquit” in 1 Cor 4:4
 - e) “justify” in Matt 12:37; Luke 10:29; 16:15; 18:14; Rom 2:13; 3:4,20,24,26,28,30; 4:2,5; 5:1,9; 8:30,33; 1 Cor 6:11; Gal 2:16,17; 3:8,11,24; 5:4; Tit 3:7; James 2:21,24,25
- b. Justification
 - 1) Different ways the Bible says we are justified:
 - a) By your words (Matt 12:37)
 - b) By humility (Luke 18:14)
 - c) By faith, not by works of the Law (Rom 3:20,26–30; 4:2–6; 5:1; Gal 2:16; 3:8,11,24; 5:4,5)
 - d) By His grace (Rom 3:24; Tit 3:7)
 - e) By Christ’s blood (Rom 5:9)
 - f) In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God (1 Cor 6:11)
 - g) In Christ (Gal 2:17)
 - h) By God (Rom 8:33)
 - i) By works (James 2:21,24,25)
 - 2) Justification before men (Luke 10:29; 16:15)
- c. Is “justification by works” before God or men?
 - 1) James 1:27 makes it clear that the writer’s perspective is “in the sight of our God and Father”.
 - 2) Other Scriptures shows us that good deeds done before men as a work of faith can glorify God. (Matt 5:14–16; 1 Pet 2:11,12)
- d. Therefore, “justification by works” is before God and men alike.
- e. Paul recognized the importance of living according to our faith (Rom 2:13; 13:11–14; 14:10–12; 2 Cor 5:6–10; 1 Tim 5:8)
- f. The “good works” described in this passage, if done apart from faith in Christ, would simply be murder and treason.
- g. The justification described here is experiential justification through acts of faith, not the “good deeds” many ascribe to this today.
- h. These acts of faith must be done under the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, thereby proving our walk to be righteous in the sight of God and men. (Isa 64:6 cf. Acts 1:8 and Eph 6:18)

9. James 2:26

“For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.”
(NASB)

a. Vocabulary

1) body: **σῶμα**

a) **σῶμα** #4983

b) meaning: *the living body*

2) spirit: **πνεύματος**

a) **πνεῦμα** #4151

b) meaning: *wind, breath, spirit*

c) in this context: *the breath which gives life to the body*

b. This final verse of chapter 2 gives an even more vivid picture of “dead” faith.

c. The image of a lifeless body invokes a strong reaction and brings to mind many different aspects of the central theme of this passage.

G. The Tongue

1. James 3:1

“Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment.” (NASB)

a. Vocabulary

1) teachers: **διδάσκαλοι**

a) plural of **διδάσκαλος** #1320

b) meaning: *teachers*

c) in particular: *those who teach the Word of God to an assembly*

2) knowing that: **εἰδότες ὅτι**

a) perfect participle of **οἶδα** #1492

b) when followed by **ὅτι**: *recognition of a well-known fact that is generally accepted*

c) Matt 6:32; 9:6; 15:12; 20:25 (|| Mark 10:42); Luke 2:49; 8:53; John 4:25; Acts 2:30; 3:17

3) incur: **λημψόμεθα**

a) 1st person plural future middle indicative of **λαμβάνω** #2983

b) meaning: *we will receive*

- 4) stricter judgment: **μείζον κρίμα**
 - a) comparative form of **μέγας** #3173
 - b) meaning: *greater (intensification)*
 - c) **κρίμα** #2917
 - d) meaning: *judicial verdict*
 - e) in this context: *a guilty verdict, judgment, condemnation*
- b. James likely knew that his audience held great esteem for the Rabbis and was concerned that they would be tempted to aspire to be teachers in order to receive similar admiration.
- c. James delivers an admonition that those who endeavor to teach God's Word (including himself) are subject to intensified judgment.
- d. Teaching is a position of authority and those who are in such positions receive greater condemnation when they fail. (Matt 23:14; Mark 12:40 || Luke 20:47)
- e. Teachers can easily stray and teach contrary to the truth of God's Word. (1 Tim 1:6,7)
- f. James is not trying to discourage those that have the legitimate gift of teaching (Rom 12:7; 1 Cor 12:28), but is pointing out that a teaching ministry should not be entered into lightly.

2. James 3:2

"For we all stumble in many ways. If anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body as well." (NASB)

a. Vocabulary

1) stumble: **πταίομεν, πταίει**

- a) from **πταίω** #4417
- b) meaning: *to lose one's footing, stumble*
- c) figuratively: *to stumble in your walk (sin)*

2) in what he says: **ἐν λόγῳ**

- a) meaning: *in word*
- b) refers to speaking, using words

3) perfect: **τέλειος** #5046

- a) meaning: *perfect, complete, finished, brought to its end, mature*
- b) in this context: *mature*

4) bridle: **χαλιναγωγῆσαι**

- a) aorist infinitive of **χαλιναγωγέω** #5468
- b) meaning: *to lead with a bridle*
- c) figuratively: *to hold in check, control*

b. Word Study: stumble

- 1) כָּשַׁל (kaw-shal) #3782
 - a) meaning: *stagger, stumble*
 - b) Lev 26:37; Job 4:4; Ps 9:3; 27:2; 105:37; Prov 4:12,16,19; 24:16,17; Isa 3:8; 5:27; 8:15; 31:3; 59:10,14; 63:13; Jer 6:21; 18:15; 20:11; 31:9; 46:6,12,16; 50:32; Ezek 36:15; Dan 11:19,33-35; Hos 4:5(x2); 5:5(x2); 14:1,9; Nah 2:5; 3:3; Mal 2:8
- 2) מִכְשׁוֹל (mik-shole) #4383
 - a) meaning: *stumbling block*
 - b) Lev 19:14; Ps 119:165; Isa 8:14; Jer 6:21; Exek 3:20; 7:19; 14:3,4,7; 21:15; 44:12
- 3) נָגַף (naw-gaf) #5062
 - a) meaning: *to be stricken, to stumble*
 - b) Prov 3:23; Jer 13:16
- 4) צָלַע (tseh-lah) #6761
 - a) meaning: *limping, stumbling*
 - b) Ps 35:15
- 5) נָטָה (naw-taw) #5186
 - a) meaning: *incline, stretch out*
 - b) Ps 73:2
- 6) דָּהַר (deh-khee) #1762
 - a) meaning: *falling, stumbling*
 - b) Ps 56:14; 116:8
- 7) πρόσκομμα #4348, προσκόπτω #4350
 - a) literally: *act of stumbling, cause to stumble*
 - b) figuratively: *cause for a misstep, trip up*
 - c) John 11:9,10; Rom 9:32(x2),33; 14:13,20,21; 1 Cor 8:9; 1 Pet 2:8(x2)
- 8) σκανδαλίζω #4624, σκάνδαλον #4625
 - a) meaning: *to cause to sin, a cause of sin*
 - b) Rom 11:9; 1 Cor 8:13(x2); Rev 2:14
- 9) ἄπταιστος #679
 - a) meaning: *without sin*
 - b) Jude 24
- 10) πταίω #4417
 - a) meaning: *to fail, to sin*
 - b) Rom 11:11; James 3:2(x2)

3. James 3:3-6

“Now if we put the bits into the horses’ mouths so that they will obey us, we direct their entire body as well. Look at the ships also, though they are so great and are driven by strong winds, are still directed by a very small rudder wherever the inclination of the pilot desires. So also the tongue is a small part of the body, and yet it boasts of great things. See how great a forest is set aflame by such a small fire! And the tongue is a fire, the very world of iniquity; the tongue is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body, and sets on fire the course of our life, and is set on fire by hell.” (NASB)

a. Vocabulary

1) set aflame: **ἀνάπτει**

a) from **ἀνάπτω** #381

b) meaning: *to light up, kindle*

2) the very world of iniquity: **ὁ κόσμος τῆς ἀδικίας**

a) **κόσμος** #2889

b) **ἀδικία** #93

c) meaning: *the world of unrighteousness*

d) Uses of **κόσμος** in the book of James: 1:27; 2:5; 3:6; 4:4(x2)

e) The word “world” can mean a sphere, realm, domain, sum total or totality.

(i) Examples: *the world of dreams; the insect world.*

(ii) This usage dates back to Biblical times.

f) The phrase “the world” can mean a great deal.

(iii) Example: *I think the world of Terry.*

(iv) It is unlikely this idiom dates back to the first century.

g) Best translation: *the domain of unrighteousness*

3) is set: **καθίσταται**

a) from **καθίστημι** #2525

b) meaning: *to set apart, make ruler, put in charge*

4) members: **μέλεσιν**

a) plural of **μέλος** #3196

b) meaning: *a member of a body*

c) Matt 5:29,30; Rom 6:13; 7:23; 1 Cor 12:12-27; Eph 5:30; Col 3:5

5) set on fire: **φλογίζουσα, φλογιζομένη**

a) from **φλογίζω** #5394 (only two occurrences in N.T.)

b) meaning: *ignite, set on fire*

c) imagery: *kindling of a destructive influence*

- 6) the course of our life: τὸν τροχὸν τῆς γενέσεως
 - a) from τροχός #5164 (only occurrence in N.T.)
 - b) meaning: *wheel*
 - c) from γένεσις #1078
 - d) meaning: *birth, origin, existence*
 - e) meaning of idiom: *day-by-day way of life*
 - 7) hell: γέεννης
 - a) from γέεννα #1067
 - b) Gehenna: a ravine south of Jerusalem known as the Valley of the Sons of Hinnom where garbage and dead animals from the city were burned; a symbol of the future destruction of the unrighteous.
 - c) Matt 5:22,29,30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15,33; Mk 9:43,45,47; Lk 12:5
 - b. My translation of verses 5b and 6:
 - 1) verse 5b: “See how great a forest is ignited by such a small fire! And the tongue is a fire;”
 - 2) verse 6: “The tongue, the domain of unrighteousness, is set apart among the bodily members, that which defiles the whole body and sets on fire our day-by-day way of life and is itself set on fire by hell.”
 - c. Some verses that describe the power of the tongue: Ps 12:2-4; Pr 12:17-22; 15:1-7; 18:7-21; 26:18-28; Jer 9:3-8; Matt 15:7-20
 - d. The words we say reflect the state of our soul.
 - e. Our words can build one another up or tear one another down.
 - f. The phrase “set on fire by hell” is descriptive of the destructive influence of Satan and his minions (Gen 3:13; 1 Kgs 22:21,22; 1 Chr 21:1; Matt 4:3-11; 13:19; Acts 5:3; Eph 6:11-13; 1 Pet 5:8,9).
4. James 3:7,8
 “For every species of beasts and birds, of reptiles and creatures of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by the human race. But no one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison.” (NASB)
- a. Vocabulary
 - 1) species/race: φύσις, φύσει
 - a) forms of φύσις #5449
 - b) meaning: *the nature of things, order of nature, kind*
 - 2) restless: ἀκατάστατον
 - a) from ἀκατάστατος #182
 - b) meaning: *unstable, restless*
 - c) translated unstable in James 1:8

- 3) poison: **ἰοῦ**
 - a) from **ἰός** #2447
 - b) meaning: *poison, venom, corrosion, rust*
 - c) translated rust in James 5:3
 - b. The animal kingdom was given to man to be under his domain (Gen 1:26; 9:2).
 - c. A contrast is drawn here between the vastness of the animal kingdom which has been tamed and the tiny little tongue that no one can tame.
 - d. The destructive nature of the tongue is described as poison (Ps 140:3; Rom 3:13).
5. James 3:9-12
- “With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God; from the same mouth come both blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be this way. Does a fountain send out from the same opening both fresh and bitter water? Can a fig tree, my brethren, produce olives, or a vine produce figs? Nor can salt water produce fresh.” (NASB)
- a. Vocabulary
 - 1) bless: **εὐλογοῦμεν**
 - a) from **εὐλογέω** #2127
 - b) meaning: *speak well of, praise, extol*
 - c) English word eulogy
 - 2) our Lord and Father: **τὸν κύριον καὶ πατέρα**
 - a) literally: the Lord and Father
 - b) only time this title of God is used in the N.T.
 - 3) curse: **καταρώμεθα**
 - a) from **καταράομαι** #2672
 - b) meaning: *curse, execrate (denounce), wish evil upon*
 - 4) likeness: **ὁμοίωσιν**
 - a) from **ὁμοίωσις** #3669
 - b) meaning: *similitude, likeness*
 - c) only occurrence in N.T.
 - d) **תַּמְּ** (dem-ooth) in LXX: Gen 1:26; Ps 58:4; Ezek 1:10; 10:21; Dan 10:16
 - e) **תַּמְּ** (dem-aw) in LXX: Dan 7:5
 - 5) fresh: **γλυκὺ**
 - a) from **γλυκὺς** #1099
 - b) meaning: *sweet*
 - c) in contrast with bitter (**πικρός** #4089) and salt (**ἅλυκος** #252) connotes fresh water

- b. Man was created in the likeness (image) of God (Gen 1:26,27; 5:1; 9:6; 1 Cor 11:7; 15:49; 2 Cor 4:4; Eph 4:24; Col 3:10).
 - c. As in verse 7 James once again uses elements of nature to describe the nature of the tongue.
6. Closing thoughts on verses 1-12
- a. The tongue is the most difficult part of the body to control and it takes continued growth in the Word to gain mastery over it.
 - b. Our words, spoken and written, have tremendous power.
 - c. We can choose to use our words to glorify Christ or glorify ourselves.
 - d. When we disregard God's Word, our words will become filled with deceit, gossip and slander (Ps 50:16-20).
 - e. Even in the midst of persecution, we can choose to speak blessing rather than cursing (Rom 12:14; 1 Pet 3:9).
 - f. Speaking praises to God and then cursing His creatures makes about as much sense as a fig tree producing olives.
 - g. Teachers are held even more accountable and are subject to intensified judgment for the words they use.
 - h. Bottom Line: The words we use are powerful, so be slow to speak (James 1:19) and speak from the Spirit, not the flesh (Rom 8:6-8).
 - i. Quoting from The Bible Knowledge Commentary, "A key to right talk is right thought. The tongue is contained in a cage of teeth and lips, but it still escapes. It is not intelligence that keeps the lock on that cage; it is wisdom—a wisdom that is characterized by humility, grace, and peace."

H. Wisdom

1. James 3:13

"Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom." (NASB)

a. Vocabulary

1) wise/wisdom: σοφός, σοφίας

a) from σοφός #4680

b) meaning: *wise, skilled, learned / wisdom, skill*

2) understanding: ἐπιστήμων

a) ἐπιστήμων #1990

b) meaning: *intelligent, having the knowledge of an expert*

c) only occurrence in the N.T.

d) בִּינָה (bee-naw) in LXX: Deut 4:6

- 3) show: **δειξάτω**
 - a) from **δείκνυμι** #1166
 - b) meaning: *exhibit, prove*
- 4) behavior: **ἀναστροφῆς**
 - a) from **ἀναστροφή** #391
 - b) meaning: *way of life, conduct, behavior*
 - c) Gal 1:13; Eph 4:22; 1 Tim 4:12; Heb 13:7; 1 Pet 1:15,18; 2:12; 3:1,2,16; 2 Pet 2:7; 3:11
- 5) gentleness: **πραῦτητι**
 - a) from **πραῦτης** #4240
 - b) meaning: *gentleness, humility, consideration, meekness*
 - c) This is the quality of not being overly impressed by a sense of one's self-importance.
 - d) 1 Cor 4:21; 2 Cor 10:1; Gal 5:23; 6:1; Eph 4:2; Col 3:12; 2 Tim 2:25; Tit 3:2; James 1:21; 1 Pet 3:15*
- b. Wisdom and understanding: Deut 4:6; Job 28:12-28; Ps 111:10; 119:97-104; Pr 1:7; 3:1-35; 9:10; 15:33; Dan 2:20-23; Hosea 14:9
- c. When our actions reflect true humility and wisdom, we prove ourselves before God and men.

2. James 3:14-16

“But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth. This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing.” (NASB)

a. Vocabulary

1) bitter: **πικρὸν**

- a) from **πικρός** #4089
- b) meaning: *bitter, harsh, virulent*

2) jealousy: **ζῆλον** (v.14), **ζῆλος** (v.16)

- a) **ζῆλος** #2205
- b) meaning: *zeal, ardor (positive intensity), envy, jealousy (negative intensity)*

3) selfish ambition: **ἐριθείαν** (v.14), **ἐριθεία** (v.16)

- a) **ἐριθεία** #2052
- b) meaning: *strife, contentiousness, selfishness, self-ambition*
- c) before N.T. times denoted self-seeking pursuit of political office by unfair means

- 4) arrogant: **κατακαυχᾶσθε**
 - a) from **κατακαυχάομαι** #2620
 - b) meaning: *boast against, exult over*
 - c) James 2:13 – has a cause for boasting
- 5) lie: **ψεύδεσθε**
 - a) from **ψεύδομαι** #5574
 - b) meaning: *to tell a falsehood, to attempt to deceive by lying*
- 6) natural: **ψυχική**
 - a) from **ψυχικός** #5591
 - b) meaning: *natural, unspiritual, worldly*
 - c) in contrast with things of the **πνεῦμα**
- 7) disorder: **ἀκαταστασία**
 - a) **ἀκαταστασία** #181
 - b) meaning: *tumult, confusion, disorder, unruliness*
- 8) evil: **φαῦλον**
 - a) from **φαῦλος** #5337
 - b) meaning: *morally substandard, base, bad, evil*
 - c) John 3:20; 5:29; Rom 9:11; 2 Cor 5:10; Tit 2:8
- 9) thing: **πρᾶγμα**
 - a) **πρᾶγμα** #4229
 - b) meaning: *that which is accomplished, undertaking, matter, concern*
- b. Self-promotion is a product of arrogance.
- c. This is an arrogance that will place self interest ahead of truth itself.
- d. Example: many in the scientific community today.
- e. This so-called wisdom is not based in truth, but is of the adversary.
- f. Jealous, self-promoting arrogance led to the fall of Satan (Isa 14:13,14).
- g. Satanic wisdom is a domain of confusion and unruliness.
- h. Rivalry, jealousy and self-promotion foster an environment which produces all kinds of corrupt practices.

3. James 3:17

“But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy.” (NASB)

a. Vocabulary

1) first: **πρῶτον μὲν**

- a) meaning: *first (in a series), first of all, in the first place*
- b) Rom 1:8; 3:2; 1 Cor 11:18; Heb 7:2

- 2) pure: **ἀγνή**
 - a) from **ἀγνός** #53
 - b) meaning: *holy, pure from every fault, immaculate, chaste, clean*
 - 3) peaceable: **εἰρηνική**
 - a) from **εἰρηνικός** #1516
 - b) meaning: *conducive to a harmonious relationship, peaceable, peaceful*
 - 4) gentle: **ἐπιεικής**
 - a) **ἐπιεικής** #1933
 - b) meaning: *not insisting on every right of letter of law or custom, yielding, gentle, kind, courteous, tolerant*
 - 5) reasonable: **εὐπειθής**
 - a) **εὐπειθής** #2138
 - b) only occurrence in N.T.
 - c) meaning: *compliant, obedient*
 - 6) unwavering: **ἀδιάκριτος**
 - a) **ἀδιάκριτος** #87
 - b) meaning: *nonjudgmental, impartial, unwavering (single-minded)*
 - 7) without hypocrisy: **ἀνυπόκριτος**
 - a) **ἀνυπόκριτος** #505
 - b) meaning: *genuine, sincere, without hypocrisy*
 - c) 1 Pet 1:22; 1 Tim 1:5; 2 Tim 1:5
- b. The wisdom from God comes to us through His Word which we are to learn, dwell on, and practice in our daily lives (Phil 4:8,9).
 - c. Knowing the wisdom from God produces a hope in us and a desire to keep ourselves pure as He is (1 John 3:3).
 - d. We should endeavor to be at peace with men (Rom 12:18; Heb 12:14).
 - e. Living sensibly, righteously and godly (Tit 2:12) involves being obedient, peaceable, gentle and showing consideration for men (Tit 3:1,2).
 - f. Our study in James has taught us to be single-minded (James 1) and impartial (James 2).
 - g. His wisdom exposes the hypocrisy in us (Luke 12:1,2; John 1:47).
 - h. Our love should be genuine (2 Cor 6:6), without hypocrisy (Rom 12:9).

4. James 3:18

“And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.” (NASB)

a. Vocabulary

1) the seed whose fruit is righteousness: **καρπὸς δικαιοσύνης**

a) **καρπὸς** #2590

b) **δικαιοσύνη** #1343

c) meaning: *fruit of righteousness*

b. Fruit of righteousness: Pr 11:28,30; Amos 6:12; Phil 1:11

c. Sowing righteousness: Pr 11:18; Hos 10:12; Gal 6:7,8

d. If we sow God’s wisdom we reap the fruits of the Spirit (Gal 5:22,23).

e. The Lord Jesus Christ is the one who establishes peace (Isa 45:7) in us (John 14:27; Col 3:15; Eph 2:14) and between men (Eph 2:15).

I. Desires and Disputes

1. James 4:1a

“What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you?” (NASB)

a. Vocabulary

1) quarrels: **πόλεμοι** : nom. plural of **πόλεμος** #4171

meaning: *a state of hostility/antagonism*

2) conflicts: **μάχαι** : nom. plural of **μάχη** #3163

meaning: *fighting, strife, disputes*

b. The situation described here is an ongoing condition of animosity being expressed actively through bickering and fighting.

2. James 4:1b

“Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members?” (NASB)

a. Vocabulary

1) pleasures: **ἡδονῶν** : gen. plural of **ἡδονή** # 2237

meaning: *enjoyment, pleasure, delight*

2) wage war: **στρατευομένων** : part. of **στρατεύομαι** #4754

meaning: *serve in the army, wage battle*

3) members: **μέλεσιν** : dat. plural of **μέλος** #3196

meaning: *a member of the body*

b. The desires (sin nature) wage war in the members of our fallen bodies.

c. Gen 4:7; Rom 6:12-18; 7:5, 19-25; Gal 5:17; Col 3:5; Jas 1:14; 1 Pet 2:11; 1 John 2:15,16

d. Likewise, carnality can cause animosity and conflict within the “body” of a local church.

e. Rom 12:1-5, 10, 16, 18; 1 Co 1:10-12; 3:1-4; 12:12-27; 1 Pet 3:8, 9

3. James 4:2

“You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask.” (NASB)

a. Vocabulary

- 1) lust: **ἐπιθυμεῖτε** : 2p plural of **ἐπιθυμέω** #1937
meaning: *desire, long for*
- 2) have: **ἔχετε** : 2p plural of **ἔχω** #2192
meaning: *possess, experience, be in a state, ...*
- 3) commit murder: **φονεύετε** : 2p plural of **φονεύω** #5407
meaning: *commit murder*
- 4) envious: **ζηλοῦτε** : 2p plural of **ζηλόω** #2206
meaning: *intensely desire, be envious/jealous*
- 5) cannot: **δύνασθε** : 2p plural of **δύναμαι** #1410
meaning: *have power, be able*
- 6) obtain: **ἐπιτυχεῖν** : aor. infinitive of **ἐπιτυγχάνω** #2013
meaning: *obtain, attain to, reach*
- 7) fight: **μάχεσθε** : 2p plural of **μάχομαι** #3164
meaning: *fight, quarrel, dispute*
- 8) quarrel: **πολεμεῖτε** : 2p plural of **πολεμέω** #4170
meaning: *be hostile/antagonistic*
- 9) ask: **αἰτεῖσθαι** : pres. infinitive of **αἰτέω** #154
meaning: *ask for, demand*

b. The fighting and hostility are the result of the inability to satisfy their selfish desires.

c. These carnal desires will never be satisfied.

d. Pr 27:20; Ecc 1:8; Hab 2:5

e. In contrast, divine viewpoint is content with God’s faithful provision for all our needs.

f. 2 Cor 9:8; Ph 4:11; 1 Tim 6:6-10; Heb 13:5,6

g. If they had petitioned God, He would have provided for their needs... and even more.

h. Eph 3:20; Jas 1:5

4. James 4:3

“You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures.” (NASB)

a. Vocabulary

- 1) ask with wrong motives: **κακῶς αἰτεῖσθε** : literally to ask wrongly
 - a) **κακῶς** : adv. meaning: *badly, wrongly*
 - b) **αἰτεῖσθε** : 2p plural middle of **αἰτέω** #154

- 2) may spend: **δαπανήσητε** : 2p pl. aor. sbj. of **δαπανάω** #1159
meaning: *spend liberally, squander*
 - 3) pleasures: **ἡδοναῖς** : plural dative of **ἡδονή** #2237
meaning: *enjoyment, pleasure, delight*
 - b. Even when they did petition God it was out of pure self interest and not in faith for His glory.
 - c. Jas 1:6-8; 1 John 3:21,22; 5:14,15; John 14:13
5. James 4:4a
 “You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God?” (NASB)
- a. Vocabulary
 - 1) adulteresses: **μοιχαλίδες** : fem. pl. voc. of **μοιχαλῖς** #3428
meaning: *adulteresses*
 - 2) friendship: **φιλία** #5373 : meaning: *friendship/love*
 - 3) hostility: **ἔχθρα** #2189 : meaning: *enmity, ill will*
 - b. By referring to them as adulteresses, James is making reference to Israel’s unfaithfulness.
 - c. Jer 31:32; Ezek 16:32; Hos 3:1
 - d. The term friendship is used here to describe how we can be just as unfaithful today by valuing (idolizing) things of this world more than a right relationship with God.
6. James 4:4b
 “Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.” (NASB)
- a. Vocabulary
 - 1) friend: **φίλος** #5384 : meaning: *friend, beloved*
 - 2) makes himself: **καθίσταται** : 3p s. pres. pass. of **καθίστημι** #2525
meaning: *be set apart, be appointed*
 - 3) enemy: **ἐχθρὸς** #2190 : meaning: *enemy, foe*
 - b. The emphasis here is on relationships. If our relationship with the things of this world becomes too important, we find ourselves in an adversarial relationship with God.
 - c. We are no longer of this world and because of this the world will hate us.
 - d. John 15:19; 17:14
 - e. We are not to hate the world in return, but our relationship with God must never be compromised for the sake of worldly things.
 - f. 1 Kgs 18:21; Matt 6:24 || Luke 16:13

7. James 4:5

“Or do you think that the Scripture speaks to no purpose: ‘He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us?’” (NASB)

a. Difficulties in translating James 4:5

1) The quote in James 4:5b

- a) Is James 4:5b a quote? If so, this verse is not found anywhere in Scripture.
- b) Is James 4:5b a paraphrase? If so, what verses?
- c) Is James 4:5b neither a quote nor a paraphrase of Scripture? If not, what does 4.5a refer to?
- d) Is James 4.5b a statement or a question?

2) The phrase “jealously desires”

- a) The Greek word for “jealously” is **φθόνον**.
- b) This word is nowhere else used in a positive sense nor is it ever used in reference to God.
- c) Matt 27:18 || Mark 15:10; Rom 1:29; Gal 5:21; Ph 1:15; 1 Tim 6:4; Tit 3:3; 1 Pet 2:1

3) Is “the spirit” the subject or object of the verb?

- a) The Greek for “the spirit” is **τὸ πνεῦμα**.
- b) This is neuter gender and the subject form (nom) is identical to the object form (acc).
- c) Word order does not answer this for us.

4) Is “the spirit” the Holy Spirit or the human spirit?

5) Is “he” the subject of the verb **κατώκισεν** (caused to dwell) or is it “the spirit”?

b. My approach to translating this passage.

1) James 4:5b does not quote a passage of Scripture and it is a stretch to state that it is expressing the essence of OT passages (Ex 20:5; 30:14; Zech 8:2), so it should not be viewed as the Scripture referred to in the first half of the verse.

2) The phrase “the Scripture” in James 4:5a refers to Scripture in general and the passage quotation in James 4:6 in particular.

3) The verb **κατώκισεν** (caused to dwell) occurs only once in Scripture, but in other writings it typically takes an object, so it follows that “the spirit” is the object of that verb and “he” (referring to God the Father) is the subject.

4) We received the indwelling of the Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation. In contrast, our dead human spirit was “quicken” (**ζωοποιέω**). Since this passage describes an indwelling, not a “quicken”, **τὸ πνεῦμα** refers to the Holy Spirit.

5) The “or” that opens this passage connects it back to the preceding verses of this chapter which have been dealing with carnal desires, envy and hostility. James 4.5b poses an incredulous question asking if the Holy Spirit within us exhibits these desires.

- c. ἢ (or) δοκεῖτε (you think) ὅτι (that) κενῶς (in vain) ἡ γραφή (the Scripture) λέγει (speaks)
- d. πρὸς φθόνον (to envy) ἐπιποθεῖ (desires) τὸ πνεῦμα (the spirit) ὃ (which) κατώκισεν (he caused to dwell) ἐν ἡμῖν (in us)
- e. This translation has its problems as well. For example, questions like James 4.5b which expect a “no” answer are typically marked with the negative particle μή.
- f. James is admonishing these believers to recognize the importance of the lessons they have been taught from Scripture.
- g. He then demonstrates the sinfulness of their desires by asking if the Holy Spirit dwelling in them would have desires resulting in envy.
- h. We know God desires for us to have no other gods before Him (Ex 20:3), but His jealousy for our devotion to Him is not the carnal envy which these believers are caught up in.
- i. This verse leads right into verse 6 which explains that God will provide abundantly for them through His grace if they will set aside their prideful ways and humble themselves.

8. James 4:6a

“But He gives a greater grace.” (NASB)

a. Vocabulary

- 1) but: δέ : adversative or continuative particle

meaning: *and, now, also, then, moreover, so, that is, but, rather, nevertheless*

- 2) greater: μείζονα : comp. adj. from μέγας #3173

meaning: *greater*

- a) greater in size (larger): Matt 13:32; Luke 12:18
- b) greater in years (older): Rom 9:12
- c) more intense: John 15:13; 3 John 4
- d) more important: Matt 23:17,19; Mark 12:31
- e) more capable/powerful: John 4:12; 2 Pet 2:11
- f) superior: Matt 12:6; John 4:12; 1 John 5:9

- 3) A similar Greek word is the comparative form of the adjective πολὺς.

- a) Matt 12:41, 42 cp. Matt 12:6
- b) In slight contrast, this word often conveys the idea of “greater in amount or quantity”.
- c) John 4:1, 41; 15:2; Heb 3:3x2

- b. This passage tells us that God gives us grace which is superior to that of the world.

- c. God’s greater grace ...

- 1) ... sustains us in times of need: Heb 4:16.
- 2) ... empowers us: 1 Cor 15:10

- 3) ... is always enough: 2 Cor 12:9
- 4) ... abounds in us: John 1:16; Rom 5:17; 2 Cor 9:8; 1 Tim 1:14
- 5) ... encompasses surpassing riches: Eph 1:7; 2:7
- 6) ... is ours through Christ: 1 Cor 1:4; 2 Cor 8:9
- d. The quotation from Proverbs 3:34 in v4.6b provides the Scriptural answer which these believers should have been claiming by faith.
- e. Sadly, these believers in their carnality have no capacity for a proper orientation to grace.

J. Pride versus Humility

1. James 4:6b

“Therefore it says, ‘God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble.’”

- a. Throughout Scripture God specifies how we are to approach Him, but humility is always required of us.
- b. 2 Chr 7:14; 12:6,7,12; Ps 138:6; Isaiah 66:2; Matt 18:4; 23:12; Luke 1:46-52; 1 Pet 5:5,6

2. James 4:7a

“Submit therefore to God.” (NASB)

a. Vocabulary

- 1) submit: **ὑποτάγητε** : aor. pass. imp. **ὑποτάσσω** #5293
meaning: *be subjected, subject oneself*

- a) General uses of **ὑποτάσσω**: 1 Cor 15:27,28; Eph 1:22; Phil 3:21; Heb 2:5,8; 1 Pet 3:22
- b) Imperatives of **ὑποτάσσω**: Rom 13:1; 1 Cor 14:34; Col 3:18; 1 Pet 2:13; 5:5

- b. In humility, we can voluntarily submit to God, but even if we arrogantly resist, we will one day be brought under subjection.

- c. Isa 45:23; Rom 14:11; Phil 2:10

3. James 4:7b

“Resist the devil and he will flee from you.” (NASB)

a. Vocabulary

- 1) resist: **ἀντίστητε** : aor. act. imp. **ἀνθίστημι** #436
meaning: *take a stand against, oppose, resist*

- a) We cannot take a stand against the devil on our own. We need divine weaponry.

- b) 1 Pet 5:9; Eph 6:11,14

- 2) flee: **φεύξεται** : fut. mid. ind. **φεύγω** #5343
meaning: *to seek safety in flight, flee*

- b. The adversary is sent on the run when we call upon the power of God’s Word, but he does not stay away for long.
 - c. Mt 4:1-11 || Lk 4:1-13; 1 Pet 5:8
4. James 4:8a
 “Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.” (NASB)
- a. This “drawing near” speaks of the fellowship that we can have with God only when we humbly submit to Him.
 - b. We must draw near with all our heart, not merely give God “lip service” (Isa 29:13).
 - c. God is ever faithful to return to us when we return to Him (Isa 55:6, 7; Zech 1:3)
5. James 4:8b
 “Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.” (NASB)
- a. The commands to “cleanse” and “purify” would have reminded these Jewish believers of their temple worship (Heb 10:2; John 11:55).
 - b. Clean hands and a pure heart describe a believer who is righteous before God (2 Sam 2:21; Job 17:9 cp 31:7; Ps 24:4; 26:6).
 - c. James refers to them as double-minded sinners (cp. v1:8) who are clearly out of fellowship with God and need to confess their sins.
 - d. The phrase “purify your hearts” indicates that James desires more than simply restoration to fellowship (1 Pet 1:22; Ps 51:10; 119:9).
6. James 4:9
 “Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy to gloom.” (NASB)
- a. James is not wishing permanent misery on these believers, but rather a sorrow that leads to repentance (2 Cor 7:9, 10; Ps 119:71,136).
 - b. Restoration to fellowship is his desire, not sorrow to the point of excess (2 Cor 2:6, 7).
 - c. The joy and laughter of these believers who are too attached to the things of this world is that of fools (Ecc 7:3-6).
7. James 4:10
 “Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.” (NASB)
- a. Vocabulary
 - 1) exalt: ὑψώσει : 3ps fut. act. ind. ὑψώω #5312
 meaning: *lift up, raise high, exalt*
 - b. Mt 11:23; Lk 18:14; Jn 3:14; 8:28; 12:32,34; Acts 2:33; 5:31; 13:17; 1 Pet 5:6
 - c. God lifts up the humble (Job 5:11; 22:29).

- d. God sets down those that exalt themselves (Ps 75:7; 147:6; 1 Sam 2:7-9; Mt 23:12).

8. James 4:11

“Do not speak against one another, brethren. He who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks against the law and judges the law; but if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge *of it*.” (NASB)

a. Vocabulary

- 1) speak against: **καταλαλέω** #2635 – *speak against, slander*
 - a) Used also in 1 Pet 2:12; 3:16
 - b) Cognate noun **καταλαλιά** #2636 – *slander* is found in 2 Cor 12:20; 1 Pet 2:1
 - c) Cognate noun **κατάλαλος** #2637 – *slanderer* is found in Rom 1:30
 - d) The limited occurrences of this word in the New Testament do not describe debates, but rather false accusations or harsh criticisms.
 - e) This word is used in such a way that it could be thought of as “murder with words” in the sense of destroying someone’s reputation.
 - f) This may indicate that the murder mentioned in James 4:2 was not a literal killing, but rather a slaying via the tongue.
- 2) judge: **κρίνω** #2919 – *to consider, think about, make a selection, make a decision, pass judgment on, hand over judicial punishment*
 - a) The use of **κρίνω** (and the cognate noun **κριτής**) in vv11-12 does not make reference to thoughtfully considered judgments, but speaks instead of passing judgment upon other believers and the Law in the operational sphere of pride.
 - b) This helps us to further understand the nature of the hostility and fighting described at the beginning of the chapter.
 - c) A judgmental attitude, rooted in pride, which is allowed to blossom into gossip and/or outright public defamation and slander, will produce the fruit of bickering, hostility, conflict, fighting, etc.
- b. The overt act of “speaking against” reveals the heart attitude of pride that “passes judgment”.
- c. James pairs up the two words twice in v11, linking them together in the idea of judging for the remainder of v11 and in v12.
- d. The law James is speaking of here is the one he taught them about back in James 2:8.
- e. In judging their fellow believers, they have pronounced judgment upon God’s word and placed themselves above God’s authority.
- f. James makes it clear that by considering God’s law to be invalid they have failed to be doers of the word as he exhorted them to be in James 1:22.
- g. Related Scriptures: Ps 50:16-20; 101:1-5; Eph 4:30-32; 2 Tim 3:1-5; Titus 3:1-7

9. James 4:12

“There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the One who is able to save and to destroy; but who are you who judge your neighbor?”

a. Vocabulary

1) lawgiver: **νομοθέτης** #3350 – *lawgiver*

a) This is the only occurrence in the New Testament. (It occurs once in the LXX in Ps 9:20).

b) This word is a combination of **νόμος** and **τίθημι** and literally means “one who puts the law in place”.

c) This idea was expressed many times in the Old Testament: 2 Chr 7:19; Isa 33:22; Jer 9:13.

b. James reminds them that God is the One who gave man the truth of His word and He is the ultimate Judge of mankind.

c. God will Judge whom to save or destroy and He has the power to carry out His judgments.

d. Saving and destroying in this context specifically refers to God’s dealings with believers, but in a greater sense refers to God’s dealings with all of mankind.

e. James’ concluding statement sums up the thought: How arrogant must you be to consider God’s word invalid and take God’s place in judging your fellow believers?

f. Related Scriptures: Rom 2:1-3; 14:4, 10-12

10. James 4:13

“Come now, you who say, ‘Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit.’”

a. Vocabulary

1) come now: **ἄγε νῦν** – *come now*

a) Used only here and in James 5:1

b) Interjection meant to grab the reader’s attention.

2) engage in business: **ἐμπορεύομαι** #1710 – *carry on business*

a) Used only here and in 2 Pet 2:3.

b) Used here of typical buying and selling activities.

3) make a profit: **κερδαίνω** #2770 – *acquire by effort or investment, gain*

a) A plus in the parable of the talents: Mt 25:14-30.

b) Gain can come at too high a cost: Mt 16:26 || Mk 8:36 || Luke 9:25.

c) In reference to people: Mt 18:15; 1 Cor 9:19-22; 1 Pet 3:1

d) In reference to Christ Himself: Phil 3:8

b. Scriptures: Pr 27:1; Isa 56:12; Lk 12:17-20

11. James 4:14

“Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are *just* a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away.”

- a. οἵτινες (who) οὐκ (not) ἐπίστασθε (know) τὸ (what) τῆς αὐριον (tomorrow) ποία (of what sort) ἡ ζωὴ ὑμῶν (your life)
 - 1) ποία is interrogative, but it can be an indirect question
 - 2) Jn 12:33; 18:32; 21:19; Lk 9:55
- b. Vocabulary
 - 1) vapor: ἀτμός #822 - *vapor*
 - a) Used only here and in Acts 2:19 (Joel 2:30).
 - b) For ἀτμός here, think of steam rising from a pot.
 - 2) vanishes away: pass. of ἀφανίζω #853 – *be destroyed, perish, disappear*
 - a) Passive can express opposite of φαίνω (appear).
 - b) Active uses: Mt 6:16, 19, 20
 - c) Another passive use: Acts 13:41
- c. Scriptures: Ps 39:5; 144:4; Ecc 6:12; Jas 1:10; 1 Cor 7:29–31; 1 Pet 1:24; 1 Jn 2:17
- d. We must plan as though our lives will go on, but James is admonishing these believers to not arrogantly assume they will see tomorrow.
- e. When we focus on our eternal future, the length of our temporal future is insignificant.

12. James 4:15

“Instead, *you ought* to say, “If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that.”

- a. We may make plans, but God’s plans will stand forever (Pr 19:21 cf. Ps 33:11)
- b. We may issue commands, but only God’s commands have power (Lam 3:37; Mt 18:18)
- c. Scriptures: Acts 18:21; Rom 1:10; 15:32; 1 Cor 4:19; 16:7; Heb 6:3; 1 Pet 3:17

13. James 4:16

“But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil.”

- a. If we are to boast at all, our boasting should be in the Lord (1 Cor 1:31; 2 Cor 10:17)
- b. When we make bold assertions about tomorrow, we are boasting in arrogance (Pr 27:1)
- c. Such prideful boasting is evil and not from God (1 Cor 5:2–6; 1 Jn 2:16)

K. The Sin of Omission

1. James 4:17

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

- a. Vocabulary
 - 1) knows: **εἶδóτι** – participle of **οἶδα** #1492
– knowledge that comes from full understanding
 - 2) right thing: **καλὸν** – neut of **καλός** #2566
– literally “beautiful thing” or “good thing”
 - 3) does not do it: **μὴ ποιοῦντι** – **μὴ** + part of **ποιέω**
 - a) **ποιέω** #4160 – *do, bring about, accomplish*
 - b) Phrase emphasizes a lack of activity.
 - 4) to him: **αὐτῷ** – dative of **αὐτός**
 - a) Shift from 2nd person to 3rd person.
 - b) Indicative of a more general scope of application.
- b. This verse begins with therefore and provides a summary statement for this chapter with application to the entire letter and all of Scripture.
 - 1) Stand without wavering on God’s Word, full of joy even in the midst of trials and temptations.
 - 2) Serve one another in love and without favoritism.
 - 3) Speak carefully and thoughtfully in the sphere of love.
 - 4) Seek wisdom from God, not the wisdom of the world.
 - 5) Submit to God in every aspect of your life.
 - 6) In short, you have received the truth of God’s Word, now you are expected to live accordingly.
- c. Scriptures: Lev 5:17,18; Lk 17:10; John 13:17; 2 Pet 2:21
- d. Underlying Principle: Lk 12:47:48

L. The Unrighteous Rich

1. James 5:1

“Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries which are coming upon you.”

- a. Vocabulary
 - 1) come now: **Ἄγε νῦν** : exclamatory interjection used here and James 4:13 to grab the reader’s attention
 - 2) howl: **ὀλολύζοντες** : pr. act. part. of **ὀλολύζω** #3649
 - a) BDAG: *cry out with a loud voice*
 - b) Onomatopoeic similar to Hebrew **ללז**
 - c) Hapax – LXX uses: Isa 13:6; Amos 8:3
 - 3) miseries: **ταλαιπωρία** : from **ταλαιπωρία** #5004
 - a) BDAG: *misery, distress, trouble*
 - b) Only other N.T. use in Rom 3:16
 - c) LXX uses: Isa 59:7; Ps 12:5 – devastation

- b. Unrighteous rich people are admonished to repent just as the prideful had been back in James 4:8ff.

2. James 5:2

“Your riches have rotted and your garments have become moth-eaten.”

a. Vocabulary

1) rotted: **σέσηπεν** : perf. act. ind. of **σήπω** #4595

a) BDAG: *cause to rot/decay*

b) Hapax – LXX uses Ezek 17:9 – wither, Job 33:21 – waste away

c) Adj. **σαπρός** in Matt 12:33; Luke 6:43; Eph 4:29

b. The reference to "rotting riches" and "moth-eaten garments" highlights the temporary nature of earthly possessions which can be lost (Matt 6:19).

c. Job uses similarly descriptive text to describe his own mortality (Job 13:28).

d. Isaiah describes the fate of the unrighteous with related verbiage (Isa 50:9; 51:8).

e. Note the perfect tense used here after present tenses of **οἱ πλούσιοι** “you rich” and **ἐπέρχομαι** “are coming” in verse 1.

3. James 5:3a

“Your gold and your silver have rusted; and their rust will be a witness against you and will consume your flesh like fire.”

a. Vocabulary

1) rotted: **κατίωται** : perf. pass. ind. of **κατιόω** #2728

a) BDAG: *become rusted, tarnished, corroded*

b) Hapax – LXX use Sirach 12:11 – corrosion

b. Gold and silver are very resistive to oxidation (rust). Silver tarnishes when it combines with sulfur compounds to form Ag₂S.

c. Since gold and silver do not rust (nor do riches rot), this expression is a warning that their cherished assets can be taken away from them in ways they regard as impossible.

d. This loss of wealth will testify against them and expose the folly of their unrighteousness ways.

e. This loss of wealth will be devastating to them and the phrase "consume your flesh like fire" connects this verse back to the miseries and devastations promised in verse 1.

f. This manner in which you handle adversity will be on display before God, angels, and men (Job 1:1-22).

4. James 5:3b

“It is in the last days that you have stored up your treasure!”

a. Vocabulary

1) stored up: **ἐθησαυρίσατε** : aor. ind. of **θησαυρίζω** #2343

a) BDAG: *store up, gather, save*

b) Noun cognate **θησαυρός** is root of Thesaurus.

c) In this context is being used in the negative sense of hoarding.

b. The "last days" in this verse is a reference to the end times described as the "coming of the Lord" in verses 7 and 8.

c. The stored up treasure in view is the earthly possessions which are subject to decay (loss).

d. This sentence is exclamatory in nature and focuses on the urgency of the times and the foolishness of hoarding wealth.

5. James 5:1-3 Principles

a. While temporal wealth can be a blessing, money can easily become our idol (Matt 6:24).

b. Gold and silver are descriptive of material wealth which can be lost, but true, eternal treasures are to be found in wisdom from God (Job 28:12-19; Ps 119:72; Prov 3:13-15; 8:10,11,19; 16:16).

c. We already have spiritual blessings in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus (Eph 1:3).

d. Our spiritual inheritance is imperishable and will not fade away (1st Peter 1:4).

e. The gold and silver we should be concerned with are spiritual rewards which will become evident at the Judgment Seat of Christ (1st Corinthians 3:11, 12).

6. James 5:4a

“Behold, the pay of the laborers who mowed your fields, and which has been withheld by you, cries out against you;”

a. Vocabulary

1) mowed: **ἀμυσάντων** : aor. act. part. of **ἀμάω** #270

a) BDAG: *reap/mow*

b) Hapax – LXX uses Lev 25:11; Isa 37:30 – reap

2) which has been withheld by you: **ἀπεστερημένος** : perf. pass. part. of **ἀποστερέω** #650

a) BDAG: *steal, defraud, deprive*

b) Mk 10:19; 1 Cor 6:7, 8; 1 Tim 6:5; 1 Cor 7:5

b. We now see that the riches which these people have been hoarding were obtained through unscrupulous means.

- c. James uses the figurative expression that the money they obtained through fraud is “crying out” as a contrast to his call for them to weep and cry out in verse 1.

7. James 5:4b

“and the outcry of those who did the harvesting has reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.”

a. Vocabulary

- 1) outcry: **βοαὶ** : from **βοή** #995
 - a) BDAG: *outcry, shout*
 - b) Hapax – LXX use 2 Macc 4:22 – shoutings
 - c) Verb **βοάω** in Mk 15:34; Luke 18:7; Acts 25:24
- 2) Three different words used for “cry out”.
 - a) Participle of **ὀλολύζω** in verse 1.
 - b) Present active indicative of **κράζω** in verse 4.
 - c) Noun form of **βοάω** in verse 4.
- 3) These three different Greek words help to distinguish between the figurative crying out of the money, the literal crying out of the workers, and the crying out while weeping the rich should be doing.
- 4) Sabaoth: **Σαβαώθ** #4519
 - a) Transcription of **תְּשַׁבְּחָת** meaning armies or hosts.
 - b) This is from a title for the Lord **תְּשַׁבְּחָת הוהוּ** or Lord of Hosts, highlighting the Lord’s might.
 - c) Isa 1:9; 6:3; Rom 9:29

8. James 5:5a

“You have lived luxuriously on the earth and led a life of wanton pleasure;”

a. Vocabulary

- 1) luxuriously: **ἐτρυφήσατε** : from **τρυφάω** #5171
 - a) BDAG: *live for pleasure, revel, carouse*
 - b) Hapax – LXX uses Nehemiah 9:25 – revel, Isaiah 66:11 – be delighted
 - c) Noun **τρυφή** in Luke 7:25; 2nd Peter 2:13
 - d) Verb **ἐντρυφάω** in 2nd Peter 2:13
 - 2) wanton pleasure: **ἐσπαταλήσατε** : from **σπαταλάω** #4684
 - a) BDAG: *live luxuriously, voluptuously*
 - b) Only other N.T. use in 1st Timothy 5:6
- b. These vivid descriptions of the activities of these people help us to distinguish them from those who might have temporal wealth and yet live righteous lives before the Lord.

9. James 5:5b

“you have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter.”

a. Vocabulary

1) fattened: **ἐθρέψατε** : aor. act. ind. of **τρέφω** #5142

a) BDAG: *feed, nourish, support*

b) Matt 25:37; Luke 4:16; 12:24; Rev 12:6, 14

2) The heart is often used in the Bible to describe the emotional aspect of the soul (1 Sam 28:5; Neh 2:2; Ecc 7:9).

3) These unrighteous rich people are feeding their emotional revolt of the soul by seeking after the passing pleasures of the flesh.

4) slaughter: **σφαγῆς** : from **σφαγή** #4967

a) BDAG: *slaughter*

b) Acts 8:32 (Isa 53:7); Rom 8:36 (Ps 44:22)

b. The phrase “day of slaughter” would have brought to mind judgments proclaimed in Scripture (Isa 30:25; Jer 12:3; 25:34; 46:10; 50:27).

c. Although James uses language which would bring to mind fattened sheep being led to slaughter as a sacrifice, this message mocks their pleasure-seeking self-indulgent ways and warns them that the judgment described in verses 1-3 could happen that very day.

d. The second half of verse 5 exhibits the same sense as the second half of verse 3 and could just as easily have been punctuated with an exclamation mark by the translators.

10. James 5:6a

“You have condemned and put to death the righteous *man*;

a. Vocabulary

- 1) have condemned: **κατεδικάσατε** : aor. act. ind. of **καταδικάζω** #2613
 - a) BDAG: *pronounce guilty*
 - b) Matt 12:7; Acts 25:15
 - 2) put to death: **ἔφονεύσατε** : aor. act. ind. of **φονεύω** #5407
 - a) BDAG: *murder, kill*
 - b) Figurative use in James 4:2
 - 3) the righteous *man*: **τὸν δίκαιον** : sing. acc. of **δίκαιος** #1342
 - a) BDAG: *righteous, upright, innocent*
 - b) Can refer to a single individual.
 - c) In this context this is used in the abstract sense to refer to a whole class of people.
- b. Whether this refers to additional misconduct on the part of these rich people (James 2:6) or the abuse of the workers by fraudulently withholding their pay (v. 4), this passage declares that those who are pronouncing judgment are about to be judged (Luke 6:37).

11. James 5:6b

“he does not resist you.”

a. Vocabulary

1) resist: **ἀντιτάσσεται** : pr. mid. ind. of **ἀντιτάσσω** #498

a) BDAG: *oppose, resist*

b) Opposite of **τάσσω** which can have the meaning order/command.

c) James 4:6 (1 Pet 5:5); Acts 18:6; Rom 13:2

b. This little sentence is problematic.

c. Is it a question, “Does he not oppose you?”

d. “he” could refer to God (Lord of Sabaoth v. 4, James 4:6) or “the righteous man”.

e. This could be a future-present, “Will He not oppose you?”

f. My conclusion:

1) There are two constructions that make sense in the context...

a) The straightforward reading of the text as a statement with nearest antecedent “the righteous” as the subject (shown above).

b) “Will He not oppose you?”

2) The first option is more natural, is in harmony with Christ’s example (Isa 53:7; 1 Pet 2:23) and connects fairly well with the following verses.

3) The second option is fairly convoluted (far antecedent, future-present, question), but is consistent with James’ use of this verb (4:6) and makes perfect sense given the following verses.

4) I could not find a single translation that chose the second option.

5) Therefore, since the plain reading of the text makes sense (albeit anticlimactic), that is the best way to interpret this verse.

12. James 5:4-6 Principles

a. Prosperity can be the single most difficult test for the believer.

b. When wealth becomes your idol, the pursuit of wealth can become all consuming.

c. This over zealous pursuit of wealth can readily lead to unrighteous means of acquisition.

d. Humble believers may not raise any direct opposition to you, but your unrighteous ways will be judged by Almighty God above.

e. Temporal wealth, passing pleasures, emotional stimulation, and so on, will never produce true happiness.

f. Believers who humbly serve the Lord and wait on His judgment know true happiness.

M. A Call for Patience

1. Some commentaries highlight a change of tone in James' letter beginning in verse 7 and the use of the term "brethren" and assume that a different audience is in view.
2. It is my faith conviction that this call for patience applies to the unrighteous rich as well as the "righteous man" of verse 6.
3. The example of the righteous man's lack of opposition to the abuses of the rich teaches patient perseverance under duress.
4. The unrighteous rich need to cease their frantic accumulation of temporal wealth and instead have a patient mindset toward the coming of the Lord and eternal rewards.
5. As we develop this passage we will see that both groups are being addressed along with the interaction between the brethren.

6. James 5:7a

"Therefore be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord."

a. Vocabulary

- 1) be patient: **μακροθυμήσατε** : 2pl. aor. act. imp. of **μακροθυμέω** #3114
 - a) Compound of **μακρός** #3117 meaning *long* or *far* and **θυμός** #2372 meaning *anger* or *wrath*
 - b) BDAG: *remain tranquil while waiting*
 - c) Found 3x in vv. 7, 8 plus noun form in v. 10
 - d) Matt 18:26, 29; 1 Cor 13:4; 1 Thess 5:14; Heb 6:15; 2 Pet 3:9
- 2) coming: **παρουσίας** : sing. gen. of **παρουσία** #3952
 - a) BDAG: *presence, coming*
 - b) Reference to Rapture (1 Cor 15:23; 1 Thess 4:15) or 2nd Advent (Matt 24:3; 2 Thess 2:8)
 - c) Although James is writing to Church Age saints, the early date of this letter (45 – 48 A.D.) brings into question whether these believers had been taught the doctrine of the Rapture.
 - d) As Jewish believers, the recipients of this letter would have had teaching on the wrath to come.
 - e) The references to "last days" (v. 3) and "day of slaughter" (v. 5) point to a 2nd Advent perspective.

7. James 5:7b

"The farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains."

a. Vocabulary

- 1) farmer: **γεωργός** #1092
 - a) BDAG: *farmer, vine-dresser*
 - b) In this context, the owner of the farm.

- 2) waits for: **ἐκδέχεται** : 3s. pr. mid. ind. of **ἐκδέχομαι** #1551
 - a) Compound of **ἐκ** #1537 meaning *out of* or *from* and **δέχομαι** #1209 meaning *take* or *receive*
 - b) BDAG: *expect, wait for*
 - c) expect (1 Cor 16:11; Heb 11:10)
 - d) wait for (Acts 17:16; 1 Cor 11:33)
- 3) precious: **τίμιον** : sing. acc. of **τίμιος** #5093
 - a) BDAG: *of great value, costly, precious*
 - b) The emphasis on the “great value” of the produce ties this verse back to the previous section.
 - c) respected (Acts 5:34)
 - d) dear (Acts 20:24)
 - e) honor (Heb 13:4)
 - f) very costly (Rev 18:12; 21:11)
 - g) precious (1 Cor 3:12; 1 Pet 1:19; 2 Pet 1:4; Rev 17:4; 18:12, 16; 21:19)
- 4) produce: **καρπὸν** : sing. acc. of **καρπός** #2590
 - a) BDAG: *product of something, fruit, benefit/gain*
 - b) NASB translates 43 of 66 occurrences as “fruit”.
 - c) Can mean literal fruit, fruit of the womb, production in the Christian walk, etc.
- 5) being patient about it: **μακροθυμῶν** : pr. act. part. m. sing. nom. of **μακροθυμέω** #3114 + **ἐπ’ αὐτῷ**
 - a) BDAG: *have patience, wait* (pres. = cont.)
 - b) Preposition **ἐπί** + dative: *on, in*
- 6) until it gets: **ἕως + λάβῃ** : 3p. sing. aor. act. subj. of **λαμβάνω** #2983
 - a) BDAG: *receive, take, acquire*
 - b) Subjunctive used due to indefinite time
 - c) 3p. sing. could refer to the farmer, soil or produce
- 7) the early and late rains: **πρόϊμον** #4406 **καὶ ὄψιμον** #3797
 - a) No word for rain (**ὑετός** #5205) in the best MSS.
 - b) Both words are hapax – LXX uses these same two words in Deut 11:14 and Jer 5:24 (with **ὑετός**).
- 8) Israel receives rain from October to April.
 - a) The “early” rains are in October and November.
 - b) The “late” rains are in March and April.
 - c) O.T. refs to these rains: Deut 11:14; Job 29:23; Pr 16:15; Jer 5:24; Hos 6:3; Joel 2:23; Zech 10:1
 - d) The “late” rains were sometimes withheld when God was displeased with Israel (Deut 11:17; Jer 3:3)

8. James 5:8

“You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near.”

a. Vocabulary

- 1) be patient: This is the exact same Greek word (**μακροθυμήσατε**) that we saw in verse 7.
- 2) strengthen: **στηρίξατε** : 2pl. aor. act. imp. of **στηρίζω** #4741
 - a) BDAG: *fix firmly in place, cause to be inwardly firm*
 - b) Strong's: *make stable, strengthen, render constant*
 - c) Lk 9:51; 16:26; 22:32; Acts 18:23; Rom 1:11; 16:25; 1 Thess 3:2, 13; 2 Thess 2:17; 3:3; 1 Pet 5:10; 2 Pet 1:12; Rev 3:2
- 3) is near: **ἤγγικεν** : 3s. perf. act. ind. of **ἐγγίζω** #1448
 - a) BDAG: *draw near, approach*
 - b) Previous usage by James in v4:8
 - c) NT uses of **ἤγγικεν**: Mt 3:2; 4:17; 10:7; 26:45, 46; Mk 1:15; 14:42; Lk 10:9, 11; 21:8, 20; Rom 13:12; Jms 5:8; 1 Pet 4:7

9. James 5:7-8 Principles

- a. James exhorts these believers to wait patiently looking to the coming of the Lord.
- b. The farmer's patient anticipation of the early and late rains provides a wonderful example of faithful reliance upon the Lord's provision to produce the “fruit”.
- c. James reiterates his exhortation for patience adding a call for inner stability which can only come through growth in the Word.
- d. The reminder of the imminent coming of the Lord is intended to orient these believers to the proper perspective regarding temporal matters of any kind (wealth, suffering, etc.).

10. James 5:9a

“Do not complain, brethren, against one another, so that you yourselves may not be judged;”

a. Vocabulary

- 1) complain: **στενάξετε** : 2pl. pr. act. imp. of **στενάζω** #4727
 - a) BDAG: *express discontent, sigh, groan, complain*
 - b) Mk 7:34; Rom 8:(22,) 23; 2 Cor 5:2, 4; Heb 13:17
 - c) Noun cognate **στεναγμός** (Acts 7:34; Rom 8:26)
 - d) Usage suggests this is the expression of an intense feeling, but not necessarily in a negative sense.
 - e) Except for this occurrence in James 5:9, this word is found in Scripture without an object.
 - f) Here **στενάζω** is combined with **κατ' ἀλλήλων** where it clearly has a negative meaning.

- g) The prohibition here is given in the present tense rather than the aorist, which more often than not indicates a command to cease an ongoing activity.
- 2) you yourselves may not be judged: **κριθῆτε** : 2pl. aor. act. subj. of **κρίνω** #2919
 - a) BDAG: *pass (an unfavorable) judgment upon*
 - b) Subjunctive mood – could be true or false.

11. James 5:9b

“behold, the Judge is standing right at the door.”

- a. Vocabulary
 - 1) Judge: **κριτής** #2923
 - a) BDAG: *one who has the right to render a decision in legal matters, a judge*
 - b) In this context this is clearly the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - 2) is standing: **ἔστηκεν** : 3s. perf. act. ind. of **ἵστημι** #2476
 - a) BDAG: *to be at a place, stand, take a stand*
 - b) Acts 2:14
 - 3) right at the door: **πρὸ τῶν θυρῶν** : **πρὸ** #4253 + gen. pl. of **θύρα** #2374
 - a) BDAG: **πρὸ** - *in front of, before*
 - b) BDAG: **θύρα** - *entrance, door, gate*
- b. Matt 24:33 || Mark 13:29 (**ἐπὶ θύραις**)
- c. Calls to mind the image of Israel’s judges (Deut 16:18; 21:18, 19; Ruth 4:1-11; Amos 5:10-15)

12. James 5:9 Principles

- a. This admonishment against being judgmental reminds us of previous rebukes in 2:12, 13 and 4:11, 12.
- b. Jesus Christ taught against being judgmental during His earthly ministry (Matt 7:1-5).
- c. The description of the Judge standing at the gates once again highlights the imminent return of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- d. Paul also taught this principle with a view to the coming Judgment Seat (Rom 14:10-13).

13. James 5:10

“As an example, brethren, of suffering and patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.”

a. Vocabulary

- 1) suffering: **κακοπαθίας** : f. sg. gen. of **κακοπαθία** #2552
 - a) BDAG: *suffering, misfortune, misery*
 - b) From **κακός** (bad) and **πάθος** (suffering)
 - c) Hapax – LXX uses Mal 1:13 – tiresome; 2 Macc 2:26 – painful labor; 4 Macc 9:8 – evil treatment
 - d) Verb **κακοπαθέω** in 2 Tim 2:9; James 5:13
 - e) Verb **συγκακοπαθέω** #4777 – 2 Tim 1:8; 2:3
- b. Prophets often endured suffering: 2 Chr 36:16; Jer 20:8; Matt 5:12; 23:31-37; Acts 7:52; 1 Thess 2:15; Heb 11:32ff.

14. James 5:11

“We count those blessed who endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord’s dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful.”

a. Vocabulary

- 1) We count blessed: 1pl. pr. act. ind. of **μακαρίζω** #3106
 - a) BDAG: *call or consider one especially favored*
 - b) Only other N.T. use in Luke 1:48.
 - c) Noun form is **μακάριος** #3107 – *happy/blessed*
- 2) outcome of the Lord’s dealings: **τὸ τέλος κυρίου**
 - a) Literally translates as “the end of the Lord.”
 - b) Noun **τέλος** #5056 means *end, close, conclusion*
 - c) Can mean “end result”, “goal” or “outcome” (Matt 26:58; 1 Tim 1:5; 1 Pet 1:9; 4:17)
 - d) Job 42:10, 12
- 3) full of compassion: **πολύσπλαγχνος** #4184
 - a) BDAG: *sympathetic, compassionate*
 - b) From **πολύς** (many) and **σπλάγχνον** (compassion)
 - c) Hapax – A.F. uses Hm. 4,3,5 – exceedingly merciful; Hs. 5,7,4 – exceedingly compassionate
- 4) merciful: **οἰκτίρων** #3629
 - a) BDAG: *merciful, compassionate*
 - b) Only other N.T. use in Luke 6:36.

15. James 5:10-11 Principles

- a. James further develops his line of thought using two examples, one general (v. 10) and one specific (v. 11).
- b. James reminds these believers of the hardships suffered by the prophets of old and Job, and highlights their patient endurance in the midst of the suffering as a pattern to follow.
- c. James then revisits his exhortation that the Lord stands ready to judge us at any moment (v. 9) with an reminder of how compassionate and merciful Christ, our Judge, truly is.

16. James 5:12

“But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath; but your yes is to be yes, and your no, no, so that you may not fall under judgment.”

a. Vocabulary

1) above all: **πρὸ πάντων**

- a) Literally means “above all things”.
- b) Does not refer back to previous context.
- c) Similar use of this phrase in 1 Pet 4:8.

2) swear: 2pl. pr. act. imper. of **ὀμνύω** #3660

- a) BDAG: *take an oath, swear*

- b. O.T. Passages on Vows/Oaths: Gen 22:16-18; 26:3; Deut 10:20; Ex 20:7; Lev 19:12; Gen 26:28, 31; 1 Sam 20:3; 1 Kgs 17:1; Jdgs 11:10; Jer 5:2; 42:5; Mal 3:5
- c. N.T. Passages on Vows/Oaths: Matt 5:33-38; 23:16-22; 26:69-75; Rom 1:9; 2 Cor 1:23; Gal 1:20; Phil 1:8; 1 Thess 2:5
- d. James is clearly reminding these believers of Christ’s teaching on the taking of vows.
- e. The admonition to avoid making oaths is given to prevent possible judgment.
- f. As we have seen from the Scriptures, the judgment we incur when we vow falsely comes from the Lord.
- g. The fundamental message here is that you should establish a reputation that you will stand behind your word so that there is no need to take an oath.
- h. The same inner stability that produces patience in the midst of suffering manifests itself in a personal character of integrity.
- i. This message does not refer to changes which are out of our control (2 Cor 1:15-20).
- j. When Christians make wedding vows, take an oath in court, or take the oath of office, they are not violating this teaching, but they should recognize the seriousness of this activity.

N. Prayer and Restoration

1. James 5:13

“Is anyone among you suffering? Then he must pray. Is anyone cheerful? He is to sing praises.”

a. Vocabulary

- 1) suffering: **κακοπαθεῖ** : 3SPAI of **κακοπαθέω** #2553
Connects this new topic back to previous development (v. 10).
 - 2) pray: **προσευχέσθω** : 3SPDM of **προσεύχομαι** #4336
 - a) BDAG: *petition deity, pray*
 - b) Most common word for prayer in N.T.
 - 3) cheerful: **εὐθυμεῖ** : 3SPAI of **εὐθυμέω** #2114
 - a) BDAG: *be cheerful*
 - b) From noun **εὐθυμος** - **εὐ** (good) + **θυμός** (passion)
 - c) Verb: Acts 27:22, 25; Noun: Acts 27:36
 - d) Adverb: **εὐθύμως** Acts 24:10
 - e) Meaning: spiritually strong, of good spirits
 - 4) sing praises: **ψαλλέτω** : 3SPAM of **ψάλλω** #5567
 - a) BDAG: *sing a song of praise*
 - b) Other N.T. uses: Rom 15:9; 1 Cor 14:15; Eph 5:19
- b. Even when we are in the midst of suffering we should remain cheerful (James 1:2).
- c. Our inner joy comes through confident prayer to God knowing He will provide mercy and grace in time of need (Heb 4:16).
- d. Regardless of our experiential circumstances we should communicate with God through prayer and songs of praise.
- e. Ps 27:13, 14; 50:14, 15; Acts 16:25; 2 Cor 12:7-10; Eph 6:18; Phil 4:6-13

2. James 5:14

“Is anyone among you sick? Then he must call for the elders of the church and they are to pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord”

a. Vocabulary

- 1) sick: **ἀσθενεῖ** : 3SPAI of **ἀσθενέω** #770
 - a) BDAG: *be weak, be ill*
 - b) Sick: Matt 10:8; 25:36,39; Mark 6:56; Luke 4:40; John 5:3,7; 6:2; 11:1-3,6; Acts 9:37; 19:12; 20:35; Phil 2:26,27; 2 Tim 4:20
 - c) Weak: Rom 4:19; 8:3; 14:1,2; 1 Cor 8:11,12; 2 Cor 11:21,29; 12:10; 13:3,4,9

4. James 5:13-15 Principles

- a. Verse 13 describes the prayer and praise that should be the response of the believer to testing (suffering or prosperity).
- b. Verse 14 describes a believer who has fallen into spiritual weakness in the midst of testing.
- c. The call for the elders to come alongside is made possible by being part of an assembly.
- d. The smearing of oil is descriptive of providing someone who is weak with some refreshment.
- e. This may appear to be an extraneous activity, but is a simple act of kindness being done as part of the process of coming alongside.
- f. Both smearing with oil and prayer are done in the name of the Lord and for His glory.
- g. The purpose of these elders coming alongside is to encourage this believer to be restored.
- h. The restoration, whatever form might be needed, will be accomplished by the Lord.
- i. If (maybe yes, maybe no) the believer has been mired in a pattern of sin, the elders' rebuke and/or encouragement is intended to bring about repentance/confession/forgiveness.
- j. This process requires an openness concerning struggles with sin as we will see in verse 16.

5. James 5:16a

“Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed.”

a. Vocabulary

1) confess: **ἔξομολογεῖσθε** : 2PPMM of **ἔξομολογέω** #1843

a) BDAG: *consent, confess, acknowledge, praise*

b) Outwardly (**ἔξ**) confess (**ὁμολογέω**)

c) Mk 1:5; Lk 22:6; Acts 19:18; Rom 14:11; Ph 2:11

2) you may be healed: **ἰαθῆτε** : 2PAPS of **ἰάομαι** #2390

a) BDAG: *heal, cure, restore*

b) Physical: Matt 8:8, 13; Mk 5:29; Lk 17:15; John 5:13

c) Demons: Matt 15:28; Lk 6:18, 19; 9:42

d) Spiritual: Matt 13:15; John 12:40; Acts 10:38; Heb 12:13; 1 Pet 2:24

- b. When the aorist subjunctive of **ἰάομαι** is used with the conjunction **ὅπως** it carries the weight of a purpose clause and could be translated “in order to be restored” instead (see similar usage in Acts 9:17; Gal 1:4; Heb 2:9).

- c. This verse speaks of corporate prayer and the role it plays in the realm of spiritual restoration.
- d. Within the context of corporate prayer, it is necessary to acknowledge our struggles with sin so that others might join together with us in prayer concerning this spiritual struggle.

6. James 5:16b

“The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.”

a. Vocabulary

- 1) effective: **ἐνεργουμένη** : PMPNFS of **ἐνεργέω** #1754
 - a) BDAG: *be at work, be active, be effective*
 - b) The basic meaning of **ἐνεργουμένη** is “working”.
 - c) 2 Cor 1:6; Gal 5:6; Eph 3:20; Col 1:29
 - d) This participle is important because it highlights a distinction between effective & ineffective prayer.
- 2) prayer: **δέησις** #1162
 - a) BDAG: *urgent request to God, prayer, petition*
 - b) Verses with **δέησις** and **προσευχή**
Eph 6:18; Ph 4:6; 1 Tim 2:1; 5:5
- 3) can accomplish much: **πολὺ ἰσχύει** (**πολύς** #4183) (**ἰσχύω** #2480)
 - a) BDAG: **πολύς** : *many, much*
 - b) BDAG: **ἰσχύω** : *be able, have strength/means*
 - c) Basic meaning is to possess the ability to do something.
 - d) Luke 14:6; John 21:6; Acts 15:10; Phil 4:13

b. Principles

- 1) This verse differentiates between effective and ineffective petitions.
- 2) One measure of an effective petition is expressed here in terms of righteousness before God.
- 3) Another measure of an effective petition has already been expressed in James 1:6-8.
- 4) Another measure of an effective petition is that it expresses the will of God (1 John 5:14).
- 5) Effective petitions do indeed possess much ability, but only inasmuch as God in His Sovereignty grants them ability.
- 6) Just as we saw in verse 15, here again the Lord is the one accomplishing the results.

7. James 5:17-18

“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 earth for three years and six months. Then he prayed again, and the sky poured rain and the earth produced its fruit.”

a. 1 Kings 17:1; 18:1, 41-46 ; Luke 4:25

b. Vocabulary

1) **ὁμοιοπαθῆς** #3663 – with the same nature (Acts 14:15)

2) **προσευχῇ προσήύξατο** – lit. “prayed with prayer”

- Hebrew idiom used for intensification

c. This is the third O.T. example given in this chapter (see vv. 10, 11) all of which would be familiar to the recipients of this letter (v. 1:1).

d. Elijah is given here as an example of an ordinary man, just like us, who prayed a prayer in faith, expressing the will of God, and its effectiveness was evident.

e. Elijah did not pray long, drawn out, dramatic prayers. He prayed simple prayers with divine viewpoint.

f. When we know God’s word, we know His will, and we also can pray simple, yet effective prayers.

8. James 5:19-20

“My brethren, if any among you strays from the truth and one turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.”

a. Vocabulary

1) strays: **πλανηθῆ** : 3SAPS of **πλανάω** #4105

a) BDAG: *lead astray, cause to wander*

b) **ἐάν** + subjunctive forms third class conditional

c) Passive voice indicates subject is acted upon.

2) turns him back: **ἐπιστρέψῃ** : 3SAAS of **ἐπιστρέφω** #1994

a) BDAG: *turn around, return*

b) Same verb (different form) used again in verse 20.

c) Luke 1:16, 17

3) error: **πλάνης** : from **πλάνη** #4106

a) BDAG: *wandering from the truth, error, delusion*

b) Eph 4:14; 1 Thess 2:3; 2 Pet 3:17; 1 John 4:6

4) will save his soul from death – similar terminology to James 1:21 referring to salvation from operational death.

5) cover: **καλύψει** : 3SFAI of **καλύπτω** #2572

a) BDAG: *cover, hide, conceal, keep secret*

b) Hebraism meaning “to overlook” or forgive.

c) Pr 10:12; 1 Pet 4:8

- b. These verses highlight the spiritual victories that can be achieved when believers come alongside one another, pray together, restore those who are struggling, and build one another up in the faith.

9. James 5:13-20 Principles

- a. The power of prayer is emphasized here, first in the restoration of a brother in Christ and then with the example of Elijah.
- b. Corporate prayer is not only encouraged, but commanded (vv. 14, 16).
- c. Our prayers need not be fancy, but we should endeavor to pray effective prayers, offered in faith and in harmony with the will of God.
- d. Effective prayers can accomplish a lot because the results are not based upon the eloquence of the prayer, but upon God's perfect essence.
- e. Restoration of a believer gone astray has eternal consequences.
- f. Only as God's fellow workers can we turn a fellow believer around and rescue him from carnality... or even the sin unto death.
- g. My exhortation to you is this:
Love one another. Be kind to one another. Pray for/with one another. Build one another up in the faith. Do all these things in the name of the Lord and for His glorification.

UPDATED TRANSLATION OF THE BOOK OF JAMES

3:1

Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will **receive a greater** judgment.

3:2

For we all stumble in many ways. If anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a **mature** man, able to bridle the whole body as well.

3:3

Now if we put the bits into the horses' mouths so that they will obey us, we direct their entire body as well.

3:4

Look at the ships also, though they are so great and are driven by strong winds, are still directed by a very small rudder wherever the inclination of the pilot desires.

3:5

So also the tongue is a small part of the body, and yet it boasts of great things. See how great a forest is set aflame by such a small fire!

3:6

And the tongue is a fire, the **domain of unrighteousness**; the tongue is set **apart among the bodily members**, that which defiles the **whole** body and sets on fire **our day-by-day way of life**, and is **itself** set on fire by hell.

3:7,8

For every species of beasts and birds, of reptiles and creatures of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by the human race. But no one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison.

3:9,10

With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God; from the same mouth come both blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be this way.

3:11,12

Does a fountain send out from the same opening both fresh and bitter water? Can a fig tree, my brethren, produce olives, or a vine produce figs? Nor can salt water produce fresh.

3:13

Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the **humble** gentleness of wisdom.

3:14-16

But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth. This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing.

3:17

But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy.

3:18

And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

4:1

What is the source of **hostility** and **fighting** among you? Is not the source your **desires** that **are waging** war in your **bodily** members?

4:2

You **desire** and do not have; you commit murder **and** are envious and **are unable to** obtain; you fight and are **hostile**. You do not have because you do not ask.

4:3

You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may **squander** it on your **desires**.

4:4

Adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is **enmity** toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world **is set apart as** an enemy of God.

4:5

Or do you think that the Scripture speaks to no purpose? **Does** the Spirit which He **caused** to dwell in us desire **to the point of envy**?

4:6

Rather He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, 'God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble.'

4:7

Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

4:8

Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

4:9

Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy to gloom.

4:10

Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.

4:11

Do not speak against one another, brethren. He who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks against the law and judges the law; but if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge of it.

4:12

There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the One who is able to save and to destroy; but who are you who judge your neighbor?

4:13

Come now, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit.'

4:14

You who do not know what tomorrow will be or what your life will be like. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away.

4:15

Instead, you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that."

4:16

But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil.

4:17

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

5:1

Come now, you rich, weep and wail for your miseries/devastations which are coming upon you.

5:2

Your riches have wasted away and your garments have become moth-eaten.

5:3

Your gold and your silver have rusted; and their rust will be a witness against you and will consume your flesh like fire. It is in the last days that you have hoarded your treasure!

5:4

Behold, the pay of the laborers who have reaped your fields, that you have fraudulently deprived them of, cries out against you; and the outcry of those who did the harvesting has reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.

5:5

You have lived for self-indulgence on the earth and led a life of sensual pleasure; you have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter.

5:6

You have pronounced the righteous man guilty and have put him to death; he does not oppose you.

5:7

Therefore wait patiently, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer anticipates the valuable produce of the soil, patiently waiting on it, until he receives the early and late rains.

5:8

You too wait patiently; steady your hearts, for the coming of the Lord has drawn near.

5:9

Stop grumbling, brethren, against one another, so that you might not be judged; behold, the Judge has taken His stand in front of the gates.

5:10

As an example, brethren, of suffering hardship and patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

5:11

We **consider blessed** those who endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the **Lord's outcome**, that the Lord is **extremely compassionate** and merciful.

5:12

But **most especially**, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath; but your yes is to be yes, and your no, no, so that you may not fall under judgment.

5:13

Is anyone among you suffering? Then he must pray. Is anyone cheerful? He is to sing praises.

5:14

Is anyone among you **weak**? Then he must call for the elders of the church and, **after smearing him** with oil, they are to pray over him in the name of the Lord

5:15

and the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is **weary**, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has **been committing** sins, they will be forgiven him.

5:16

Therefore, **acknowledge** your sins to one another, and pray for one another **in order to be restored**. The effective **petition** of a righteous man can accomplish much.

5:17

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 earth for three years and six months.

5:18

Then he prayed again, and the sky poured rain and the earth produced its fruit.

5:19

My brethren, if any among you **is led astray** from the truth and one turns him back,

5:20

let him know that he who turns a sinner from the **straying** of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.