

James 4:11 - 17

New American Standard Bible (NASB)

1 ⁷ Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee
 2 from you. ⁸ Draw near to God and He will draw near to
 3 you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your
 4 hearts, you double-minded. ⁹ Be miserable and mourn and
 5 weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning and your
 6 joy to gloom. ¹⁰ Humble yourselves in the presence of the
 7 Lord, and He will exalt you.

8 ¹¹ Do not speak against one another, brethren. He who
 9 speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks
 10 against the law and judges the law; but if you judge the
 11 law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge of it. ¹² There
 12 is *only* one Lawgiver and Judge, the One who is able to
 13 save and to destroy; but who are you who judge your
 14 neighbor?

15 ¹³ Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go
 16 to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage
 17 in business and make a profit." ¹⁴ Yet you do not know
 18 what your life will be like tomorrow. You are *just* a vapor
 19 that appears for a little while and then vanishes away.
 20 ¹⁵ Instead, *you ought* to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live
 21 and also do this or that." ¹⁶ But as it is, you boast in your
 22 arrogance; all such boasting is evil. ¹⁷ Therefore, to one
 23 who knows *the* right thing to do and does not do it, to him
 24 it is sin.

25 ⁵ Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries
 26 which are coming upon you. ² Your riches have rotted and
 27 your garments have become moth-eaten. ³ Your gold and
 28 your silver have rusted; and their rust will be a witness
 29 against you and will consume your flesh like fire. It is in
 30 the last days that you have stored up your treasure!
 31 ⁴ Behold, the pay of the laborers who mowed your fields,
 32 *and* which has been withheld by you, cries out *against you*;
 33 and the outcry of those who did the harvesting has
 34 reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.

**Read the passage through completely
before looking at these questions.**

Observation (What does it say?):

Consider the observation questions on the back of this page. What do you notice in this passage?

- Repeated words or ideas?
- Comparisons or contrasts?
- Unusual or symbolic language?
- Commands or instructions?
- Conditional (if–then) statements?
- What else do you observe in this passage?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

After observing the passage:

- How might this passage relate to what James has said before? (See suggestions on the back of this sheet. Any others you think of?)
- What (if anything) do the two paragraphs (v. 11-12, v. 13-17) have in common?
- What are the different ways you might understand "speak against" another person? Gossip? Slander? Criticism? Evaluation? Others ways?
- What questions come to mind as you read?

Application (What does it mean for me?):

- Which paragraph (if either one) stirs you more to examining your own life?
- What would be different (attitudes, behavior) if God used this passage to change you?

For additional thought and discussion:

- ⁸ But no one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison. ⁹ With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God; ¹⁰ from the same mouth come both blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be this way. James 3:8-10
- What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members? James 4:1

For more suggested methods of study: <http://www.goodnotsafe.com/methodical-bible-study/>

For examples of inductive studies: <http://www.goodnotsafe.com/inductive-bible-study-examples-2/>

Inductive Bible Study

(A few general ideas)

Observation (What does it say?)

What facts do you **observe** about the passage that help bring out the writer's thought process?

- Who are the people involved?
- What action takes place?
- What type of literature is it (poetry, history, didactic, etc.)?
- What details are included or left out?
- Are any unusual words used?
- Is there symbolic language?
- What is the grammar of the passage (pronouns, prepositions, verb tenses)?
- Are words or ideas repeated?
- Any comparisons or contrasts?
- Any cause and effect?
- Are there indications of purpose ("in order that...")?
- Are there conclusions ("Therefore...")?
- Are there explanations?
- Does the passage logically break into sections?
- How would you summarize the passage?
- What would be a good "headline" for the passage?

Interpretation (What does it mean?)

What questions come to mind about the facts that would help you **interpret** the meaning?

- How would the original readers have understood the passage?
- What is the main emphasis?
- Why does the writer use repetition, or contrast, or unusual words?
- What does the grammar or structure of the passage reveal about the writer's thought pattern?
- Is there a logical sequence in the passage?
- How are different ideas in the passage connected?
- Are there any new ideas or concepts presented?
- Are there difficulties in the passage?

Application (What does it mean for me?)

What is the impact on your life? What **application** does the Holy Spirit want to show you?

- Is there a command to obey?
- Is there a promise to be thankful for?
- Is there an attribute of God to worship?
- Is there an example to follow?

**Read nothing into the Scriptures,
but draw everything from them,
and suffer nothing to remain
hidden that is really in them.
J.A. Bengel (1687-1752)**

For a much more detailed description of the methodology, see

Robert A. Traina, *Methodical Bible Study*. Wilmore, Kentucky: Asbury Theological Seminary, 1952.

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