

The Letter of James 5:7 – 12

Revised Standard Version (RSV)

1 5:1 Come now, you rich, weep and howl for the miseries
 2 that are coming upon you. ² Your riches have rotted and
 3 your garments are moth-eaten. ³ Your gold and silver have
 4 rusted, and their rust will be evidence against you and will
 5 eat your flesh like fire. You have laid up treasure for the
 6 last days. ⁴ Behold, the wages of the laborers who mowed
 7 your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out; and
 8 the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the
 9 Lord of hosts. ⁵ You have lived on the earth in luxury and
 10 in pleasure; you have fattened your hearts in a day of
 11 slaughter. ⁶ You have condemned, you have killed the
 12 righteous man; he does not resist you.

13 ⁷ Be patient, therefore, brethren, until the coming of the
 14 Lord. Behold, the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the
 15 earth, being patient over it until it receives the early and
 16 the late rain. ⁸ You also be patient. Establish your hearts,
 17 for the coming of the Lord is at hand. ⁹ Do not grumble,
 18 brethren, against one another, that you may not be
 19 judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the doors. ¹⁰ As an
 20 example of suffering and patience, brethren, take the
 21 prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. ¹¹ Behold, we
 22 call those happy who were steadfast. You have heard of
 23 the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of
 24 the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.

25 ¹² But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by
 26 heaven or by earth or with any other oath, but let your yes
 27 be yes and your no be no, that you may not fall under
 28 condemnation.

29 ¹³ Is any one among you suffering? Let him pray. Is any
 30 cheerful? Let him sing praise. ¹⁴ Is any among you sick?
 31 Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray
 32 over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord;

**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?
- Purpose or explanation?
- 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:

- What is the connection with the previous section? What is the “therefore” there for?
- What earlier themes does James come back to in this passage? Why do you think that is?
- How do the illustrations or examples James uses explain his points?
- How does James relate patience, steadfastness, and the purpose of the Lord?
- Why does James put so much emphasis on not swearing?
- What questions come to mind as you read?

Application (What does it mean for me?):

- How might thinking about the farmer or the prophets or Job help you with areas where you need patience?
- How would your speaking be different if you always “let your yes be yes, and your no be no”?

For additional thought and discussion:

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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