

James 1:19-27

English Standard Version (ESV)

1 ¹² Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for
2 when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of
3 life, which God has promised to those who love him. ¹³ Let
4 no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by
5 God,” for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself
6 tempts no one. ¹⁴ But each person is tempted when he is
7 lured and enticed by his own desire. ¹⁵ Then desire when it
8 has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully
9 grown brings forth death.

10 ¹⁶ Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers. ¹⁷ Every good
11 gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down
12 from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation
13 or shadow due to change. ¹⁸ Of his own will he brought us
14 forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of
15 firstfruits of his creatures.

16 ¹⁹ Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be
17 quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; ²⁰ for the anger
18 of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

19 ²¹ Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant
20 wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted
21 word, which is able to save your souls.

22 ²² But be doers of the word, and not hearers only,
23 deceiving yourselves. ²³ For if anyone is a hearer of the
24 word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at
25 his natural face in a mirror. ²⁴ For he looks at himself and
26 goes away and at once forgets what he was like. ²⁵ But the
27 one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and
28 perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who
29 acts, he will be blessed in his doing.

30 ²⁶ If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his
31 tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is
32 worthless. ²⁷ Religion that is pure and undefiled before
33 God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their
34 affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.

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?

- Connect repeated or related words or ideas.
- Underline commands or instructions.
- Does James use comparisons and contrasts?
- Does he give purposes or explanations?
- Does he use unusual or symbolic language?
- Does he use conditional (if-then) statements?
- What else do you observe in this passage?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

After observing the passage:

- How are hearing, speaking, and anger related?
- How might “deceiving” in this passage (v. 22) be similar to or different from “deceived” in v. 16?
- How does the phrase “law of liberty” explain “the perfect law” in v. 25? How is liberty related to perfection?
- How is care for afflicted (“pure religion”) an answer to not bridling the tongue (“worthless” religion)?
- How are the three paragraphs related (or are they)? (lines 16-21, 22-29, 30-34)
- What questions come to mind as you read?

Application (What does it mean for me?):

- What part of this passage is the most challenging for you to apply?

Observation – *What does it say?* **Interpretation** – *What does it mean?* **Application** – *What does it mean for me?*

For additional thought and discussion:

“Deceived”

- v. 16 “Do not be deceived” (πλανάω, *planaō*) to lead astray, cause to wander
- v. 22 “deceiving yourselves” (παρalogίζομαι, *paralogizomai*) to reason falsely, drawing an erroneous conclusion

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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