

# James 4:3-10

New International Version 1984/2011

## NIV 1984

1  
2 <sup>3</sup> When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with  
3 wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your  
4 pleasures. <sup>4</sup> You adulterous people, don't you know that  
5 friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone  
6 who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an  
7 enemy of God. <sup>5</sup> Or do you think Scripture says without  
8 reason that the spirit he caused to live in us envies  
9 intensely? <sup>6</sup> But he gives us more grace. That is why  
10 Scripture says:

11 "God opposes the proud  
12 but shows favor to the humble." [Proverbs 3:34]

13 <sup>7</sup> Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he  
14 will flee from you. <sup>8</sup> Come near to God and he will come  
15 near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify  
16 your hearts, you double-minded. <sup>9</sup> Grieve, mourn and wail.  
17 Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom.  
18 <sup>10</sup> Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you  
19 up.

## NIV 2011

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22 wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your  
23 pleasures. <sup>4</sup> You adulterous people, don't you know that  
24 friendship with the world means enmity against God?  
25 Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world  
26 becomes an enemy of God. <sup>5</sup> Or do you think Scripture  
27 says without reason that he jealously longs for the spirit he  
28 has caused to dwell in us? <sup>6</sup> But he gives us more grace.  
29 That is why Scripture says:

30 "God opposes the proud  
31 but shows favor to the humble." [Proverbs 3:34]

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33 will flee from you. <sup>8</sup> Come near to God and he will come  
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35 your hearts, you double-minded. <sup>9</sup> Grieve, mourn and wail.  
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38 up.

**Compare the two NIV translations of the passage. Both are valid translations of the Greek text. Differences are underlined. How do the differences affect the interpretation? Or do they?**

### Observation (What does it say?):

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

- What are the specific differences between the versions? Who or what is envying or longing?
- What general warnings does James give?
- What specific commands does he give?
- What else do you observe in this passage?

### Interpretation (What does it mean?):

After observing the passage:

- Read the passage skipping (temporarily!) verse 5. How would you summarize the majority of the passage that is unchanged?
- How does the passage explain the accusation of adultery in verse 4? Or does it?
- Why does he address his readers harshly (sinners and double-minded) when earlier he affectionately (beloved brothers; 1:16, 19, 2:5)? Are there two different groups?
- What questions come to mind as you read?

### Application (What does it mean for me?):

- Which of the long list of commands (v. 7-10) stir your heart the most? Which ones trouble you? What do you do with both of those reactions?

**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/>

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## 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)**

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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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