

James 4:10 – 5:6

English Standard Version (ESV)

1 ⁸ Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse
 2 your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you
 3 double-minded. ⁹ Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let
 4 your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to
 5 gloom. ¹⁰ Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will
 6 exalt you.

7 ¹¹ Do not speak evil against one another, brothers. The one
 8 who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks
 9 evil against the law and judges the law. But if you judge
 10 the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge. ¹² There
 11 is only one lawgiver and judge, he who is able to save and
 12 to destroy. But who are you to judge your neighbor?

13 ¹³ Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will
 14 go into such and such a town and spend a year there and
 15 trade and make a profit”— ¹⁴ yet you do not know what
 16 tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist
 17 that appears for a little time and then vanishes. ¹⁵ Instead
 18 you ought to say, “If the Lord wills, we will live and do
 19 this or that.” ¹⁶ As it is, you boast in your arrogance. All
 20 such boasting is evil. ¹⁷ So whoever knows the right thing
 21 to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.

22 ⁵ Come now, you rich, weep and howl for the miseries
 23 that are coming upon you. ² Your riches have rotted and
 24 your garments are moth-eaten. ³ Your gold and silver have
 25 corroded, and their corrosion will be evidence against you
 26 and will eat your flesh like fire. You have laid up treasure
 27 in the last days. ⁴ Behold, the wages of the laborers who
 28 mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, are
 29 crying out against you, and the cries of the harvesters have
 30 reached the ears of the Lord of hosts. ⁵ You have lived on
 31 the earth in luxury and in self-indulgence. You have
 32 fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter. ⁶ You have
 33 condemned and murdered the righteous person. He does
 34 not resist you.

The shaded area is from our earlier discussion. Use it as a refresher on how James moves into this week’s passage.

Observation (What does it say?):

Review the observation questions on the back of this page. What facts do you see about the text?

- Repeated or similar words or phrases
- Comparisons, metaphors, similarities
- Symbols, figures of speech

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

What point(s) is James making? What questions do you have from the text?

- What is James’s logic from “speak evil against one another” to “judge of the law” (v. 11)?
- What is the root problem in v. 13-16? What is James’s instruction to correct the problem? How does v. 17 follow from what James says?
- What is the root problem in 5:1-6? Why doesn’t James offer corrective instruction here? Why does he add “He does not resist you” at the end? What does that mean?

Application (What does it mean for me?):

What do you feel prompted to do because of this text?

- How can you avoid being a “judge of the law”?
- What would it be like to see your life as “a mist”? Would that be a good or bad thing?

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

For additional thought and discussion:

Lord of Hosts / LORD Sabaoth

(κυρίου σαβαώθ, 2x in NT; Romans 9:29 quoting Isaiah 1:9; James 5:4)

⁴⁵ Then David said to the Philistine, “You come to me with a sword and with a spear and with a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.

⁴⁶ This day the LORD will deliver you into my hand, and I will strike you down and cut off your head....
(1 Samuel 17:45-46, ESV)

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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