

James 4.11-17

Who Are You?

This Letter that would be HARD for the POST MAN to DELIVER

James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes in the Dispersion  
James 1.1

LOTS of RECEIPIENTS – Tribesmen of ISRAEL who put their FAITH in Jesus  
NOW Millions of Scattered NEW COVENANT Tribesmen incl. YOU & ME

Lots of guys Named JAMES in Early Church – 1<sup>st</sup> Martyred APOSTLE > James  
This JAMES stood out > Called CAMEL KNEES for his ZEAL Linger in Prayer  
SENIOR PASTOR of Church of Jerusalem – Leader of Council in Acts 15  
BROTHER of Jesus – HALF Brother – Same MOTHER, Different FATHER

James writes like HEBREW PROVERBS – One IDEA flows into ANOTHER  
Like PROVERBS – Catchy way of getting RIGHT INTO YOUR FACE!

Tells these Hebrew Christians have TOO BIG a View of THEMSELVES

What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you?  
James 4.1

James understands the THEOLOGY of the SEE-SAW or Teeter-Totter

Board on a PIVOT with Kids Sitting on the ENDS – One Goes Up / Other Down  
SIMPLE Truth – Only ONE Up at a Time > If YOU are UP, God goes DOWN

James: Better get SEESAW Sorted OUT > YOU go DOWN, God's gotta be UP!

Step into our TEXT – James 4 >> God SO FAR down, been REPLACED!

## 1. Playing God over Other People's Lives

a. Judge of Men v. 11 Do not speak evil against one another, brothers.

Have Lust for Slander - Fondly Exalting Selves by Tearing Down Others

Impose on Brethren Our Rule of Life > become LORD Over them by our Lips

James: We DARE NOT Stand High on our LADDER & TALK Down to Others

v. 12 But who are you to judge your neighbor?

JAMES – Jesus ½ Brother borrows from His BIG BROTHERS Great Sermons

“Judge not, that you be not judged... Matthew 7.1

Sin of “Judging” Putting YOURSELF Above Another, PRIDE, Self-Importance

Speaking Careless, Derogatory, Untrue Words about Person – *Sadly, I do this!*

Common Mistake: JUDGEMENT NOT Discernment, Should be DISCERNING

Jesus Continued SERMON on MOUNT 5 verses Later...

“Do not give dogs what is holy, and do not throw your pearls before pigs, lest they trample them underfoot and turn to attack you.” Matthew 7.6

NEED to DISCERN who is DOG – JUDGE between PEARL and a PIG

Told to EVALUATE > No way to Live HOLY Life w/o Discernment

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. 1 John 4.1

Helpful CRITICS Evaluate what is TRULY Good and Bad, Right or Wrong

Teachers – Lawyers – Business Decisions – Church Leaders – Parents

Learn to WALK in HUMILITY because it is the WAY of BLESSING

They FORGOT BELONG to ONE FATHER – LIVE IN SAME FAMILY

Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures. James 1.18

## b. Judging our Maker

See Saw so HIGH > Think TEETER-TOTTER Trumps HEAVEN'S THRONE

v. 11 The one who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks evil against the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge.

WORDS against your BROTHER are really AIMED at the BOSS

You shall not go around as a slanderer among your people, and you shall not stand up against the life of your neighbor: I am the LORD. Leviticus 19.16

Law? Jesus 2<sup>nd</sup> Command – Love your Neighbor as you Love Yourself

If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing well. James 2.8

Not DOING WELL – Attempted Coup de'ta AGAINST the KING

To take up the position of judge is to elbow God off the throne. Alec Motyer

v. 12 There is only one lawgiver and judge, he who is able to save and to destroy.

ONLY One who can MAKE the Laws and ENFORCE the Laws

When TRUE JUDGE comes and sees Mere Man trying to do His Job, Not Good!

SCARRY Words are Meant to be SAVING WORDS

God who could JUSTLY DESTROY us Sinners has had MERCY on Us

But you have NO MERCY on those who have made MINOR OFFENSE

Be like the SAMARITAN who KNOWS Everyone is his NEIGHBOR

## 2. Playing God in Our Own Life

James warns NOT going to See-Saw above God's LAW or God's CALENDAR

vs. 13,14 Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit"—yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring.

James speaks to BUSINESS People in the Church > Struggle w/ God & Mamon

1<sup>st</sup> C period of GREAT Commercial Activity

Today: SPEED Faster, DISTANCE btwn Markets Further – Bottom Line Same

PRAYERS are Mainly "Bless Me" Prayers – Give Me & My Family SUCCESS

STRONG Warning for SELF-Confident PLANNERS > NOT ALL About Them

James NOT telling you to be CARELESS, THOUGHTLESS, NO IDEAS, PLAN

God BELIEVES in Planning – Dozen Tedious Chptrs Tabernacle Plans Exodus

If James did NOT Believe in Planning would have NEVER WRITTEN LETTER

Not only did he WRITE It – Sent it by Faith to SCATTERED People of GOD

Because of his PLANS and PRAYERS – Letter Reached us Scattered in Beijing

Not Against SUCCESS or PLANNING > Against IGNORING God in our Plans

If in NYC last week for General Assembly of UNITED NATIONS

Seen Colorful Flags & Leaders from Many Countries, heard Plans for Peace

NEVER HEARD Anyone Lead in PRAYER – Not even a CHAPEL in the UN

BEST Businessman RECONS with ALL the FACTS in the Marketplace

YEARS do NOT Circle Round > Straight LINE from Eternity to ETERNITY

God's HISTORY is Not CYCLICAL > from CREATION to CONSUMATION

TIME is GIFT from God – will have an END --- v. 14 “What is your life?”

### a. Complexity of Life

v. 13 “Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit”—

“Today or tomorrow” DATES – we'll DO this Next Week, Next YEAR

“such and such a town” PLACES – Whole WORLD is their APPLE

“spend a year there” – Made ALL the RESERVATIONS, Got the BOOKINGS

“trade and make a profit” GOALS – TAOBAO WATCH OUT!! You're Coming!

Just because you PRAY About something NOT Mean its Going to HAPPEN

Circumstances are not designed to “give hints” about God's future sovereign will or about His moral will either. His sovereign will is hidden, and His moral will is already revealed in its entirety in the Bible.

Garry Friesen

“Decision Making & the Will of God”

b. Uncertainty of Life v. 14 you do not know what tomorrow will bring.

‘What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?’ And he said, ‘I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, “Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.”’ But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?’ So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.”

Luke 12.17-21

Man selling LIFE INSURANCE tells CUSTOMER

“If you don't want to BUY a Policy Now, Call Me Tomorrow, If U Wake UP!”

### c. Brevity of Life

v. 14 What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes.

Don't PRESUME that since Something is on your Schedule, you will DO IT

We write our Schedules in SAND – God writes his Schedule in STONE

What is your life?

For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes.

As WEATHER turns Cool we see FOG in Mornings – Burned Off by Rising Sun

MIST = PUFF of Smoke > BREVITY of Life > TIME IS RACING > GONE!

Before I knew it I have become Young Man trapped in Old Man's Body

All flesh is grass, and all its beauty is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades when the breath of the LORD blows on it; surely the people are grass. Isaiah 40.6,7

There is ONLY a HEART BEAT between us and DEATH

When CROWNED Byzantine Emperor – Stone Mason would make New Path

Beautiful Stones arranged to Make Walkway: "Chose best Stone for your Grave"

"My days are swifter than a runner; they flee away; they see no good. Job 9.25

So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom. Psalm 90.12

d. Frailty of Life v. 16 you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil

EVIL – Same word used in Bible for SATAN the EVIL ONE

Make BIG Plans – Weekend, Retirement, Kid's Education > NOT HAPPEN!

We CURSE God for LETTING US DOWN

Our Life is BRIEF as a PUFF of Smoke > Compared to ETERNAL GOD

Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring. Proverbs 27.1

Making PLANS without Seeking and Submitting to God is PRIDE

Can you, a dying man, do what you so confidently resolve to do? John Calvin

UNIFYING Theme > High View of THEMSELVES, LOW view of God

You're UP – Brothers are DOWN, God's Will is DOWN

e. Father of Life - We are Mere Men – He is our Mighty Maker

v. 15 Instead you ought to say, “If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that.”

But on taking leave of them Paul said, “I will return to you if God wills,” and he set sail from Ephesus. Acts 18.21

D.V. Deo Volente – IF GOD WILLS > write it across ALL your PLANS of Life

NOT a FORMULA – It is a MATTER of FAITH – GOD FIRST

Paul said COUPLE Times in Scripture > But NOT Always SLAVISHLY/Cliché

FIXED Principle – Would do NOTHING without Acknowledging GOD First

Saying “God Willing” or IN SHAH ALLAH – Can become EMPTY Slogan

Always saying “if the Lord will” can become Act of SUPERSTITION

If Businessman in Africa ended Agreement saying In Shah Allah: In TROUBLE

The counsel of the LORD stands forever, the plans of his heart to all generations.

Psalm 33.11

BROTHERS and SISTERS are in GOD'S HANDS

TIME and SUCCESS are in GOD'S HANDS

FIND LIFE and BLESSING – PUT YOURSELF in God's HANDS

I trust in you, O LORD; I say, “You are my God.” My times are in your hand

Psalm 31.14,15

f. Finality of Life

v. 17 So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.

James POKES, Some may think, “I should DO Something about it” But Don’t!  
NOT Taking Action when Prompted by God makes you GUILTY

Cannot CLAIM “I did Nothing Wrong” > Sin is Omission and Commission  
Wrong that we DO – AND the Good that we Should Do, but FAIL to DO!

1744 Louis 15 – Sick, Dying, France was in Terror and Fear > Prayed for KING  
So many Prayers “Louis the Well Loved” > HOPE for what he would DO!

1774 – 30 years of Reign – Most HATED Man in France – No Tears, Prayers  
What had he done? NOTHING – Nation Steadily DETERIORATED by Neglect

We may be able to avoid committing forbidden evil; but who can ever seize  
positively every opportunity of doing good? C.L. Mitton

Jesus: “And that servant who knew his master’s will but did not get ready or act  
according to his will, will receive a severe beating.” Luke 12.47

### 3. Praising God for Everlasting Life

HARD to See in our Verses > Pastor James was preacher of GOOD NEWS

LOOK Closer at our CHAPTER and See that CLEARLY...

But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, “God opposes the proud, but gives  
grace to the humble.” Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and  
he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. James 4.6-8

Make RIGHT USE of this LIFE in Order to Prepare for the NEXT

Occupy Self Now with what will Occupy us in the NEXT LIFE

JOY, WORSHIP, PRAISE, GLORY OF GOD, ZEAL FOR HIS HONOR

Do not CARE for this NOW – How utterly BORED would be in HEAVEN

Don’t Worry – if Not Focused on Great God Now – Will NOT be in HEAVEN



Context of James 4 > HUMILITY > HUMBLE Receive GRACE

NO Claim of MERIT – Nothing to OFFER God for our SALVATION

END > God gives GRACE to Humble SINNERS who Bow before Him

Life is MIST > BUT your DESTINY is an ETERNITY w/ or w/out GOD

James puts GOD where HE BELONGS – At CENTER, On the THRONE!

PAUL ‘How is Salvation EXPERIENCED?’ by FAITH ALONE

JAMES ‘How is Salvation EVIDENCED?’ by FAITH that is NOT ALONE

PAUL – Saving Faith is to be UNITED to Christ who Died & Rose for Us

JAMES – Being UNITED to Christ means we will BEAR FRUIT in Him

Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

1 Corinthians 15.58

James 4.<sup>11</sup>Do not speak evil against one another, brothers. The one who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks evil against the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge. <sup>12</sup>There is only one lawgiver and judge, he who is able to save and to destroy. But who are you to judge your neighbor? <sup>13</sup>Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit”— <sup>14</sup>yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. <sup>15</sup>Instead you ought to say, “If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that.” <sup>16</sup>As it is, you boast in

your arrogance. All such boasting is evil. <sup>17</sup>So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.