



# A Study of James

**Week Five ⑧ 10/26 – 11/01: James 4 & 5:1-12**

**Faith Test: Winning the War**



## **EQUIP:**

- **Sing Together:**
  - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NoM0AT8fBvs>  
(“Hosanna” Hillsong)
  - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ld1cXry5nyM>  
(“I Give Myself Away” William McDowell/“Here I am to Worship”)
- **Read Together:**
  - Read James 4 and 5:1-12
- **Reading Questions:**

### **James 4**

1. What are the two main behaviors that James is criticizing in verses 2 and 3?
2. Read John 15:18-19. Why does being a friend of the world make you an enemy of God?
3. Read 1 John 2:15-16. What do you think happens if we try to love both God and the world?
4. Read Hebrews 4:16. How can this verse be an encouragement in the midst of quarrels and fights?

### **James 5:1-12**

1. What is God's perspective on wealth? What does He say about how we should view our material goods? See also, 1 Timothy 6:17-19.
2. What characterizes the unjust person? How does the unjust person view other people?
3. What does it mean to be patient? What does it mean to "be patient until the Lord's coming"?
4. What do the prophets and Job teach us about standing firm during trials?

### ● **Scripture Connections:**

#### **James 4**

1. What are some common conflicts that you see over and over in your life? What prevents that conflict from being totally resolved?
2. Think about the last conflict you had. Tell how one or both of the behaviors described in verses 2-3 were at its root. (See "Reading Question #1 above).)
3. Read Galatians 1:10. How would your week be different if you focused more on the things that God is focused on?
4. Selfishness and pride prevent us from offering forgiveness and reconciling. Who do you need to show grace and humility toward this week?

#### **James 5:1-12**

1. How are you sharing the material goods God has entrusted to your care?
2. What trial are you going through right now, and what encouragement can you receive from this passage for standing firm in the midst of that trial?

### ● **Pray Together:**

The following verses:

#### **Hebrews 4:16**

"Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need".

#### **1 Timothy 6:17-19**

"As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life".

● **Homework:**

**James 4**

1. There are many reasons why our prayers are hindered or go unanswered by God. The list below contains 12 different reasons. Read each verse and draw a line to the corresponding reason.

a. Proverbs 21:13	Pray to be heard by others
b. 1 Peter 3:7	Have spiritual pride
c. 1 John 5:14	Lack of persistence
d. Proverbs 28:9	Lack of faith
e. James 4:3-4	Refuse to forgive someone
f. Luke 18:1-8	Refuse to obey God's commands
g. Psalm 66:18	Have wrong value system
h. Matthew 5:23-24	Fail to show compassion on the poor
i. Luke 18:9-14	Fail to have a Godly home life
j. Mark 11:25	Refuse to let go of or confess a sin
k. Matthew 6:5	Ask for something outside of God's will
l. Mark 11:23-24	Refuse to right a wrong we have done
  
2. Can you identify any of the hindrances above you have had victory in when it comes to your prayer life? Are there one or two prayer hindrances you would like to work on in order to "clear up the line to God"? Take some time to talk to God about it.
  
3. None of us want to be known as the person who is blowing it and needs to "Knock It off"! Realizing that we are giving in to temptation can be quite humbling and frightening to admit. What hope and incentive do the following verses give us to take the needed steps to "Knock It Off," no matter how far off track we are?

**Proverbs 18:12, Isaiah 57:15, Hebrews 4:14-16, Ezekiel 36:24-30**
  
4. Continuing to walk in obedience can be challenging because each of us has a sin nature that encourages us to do things "our way" and not "God's way." We also have an enemy (the devil) who is called the "tempter" whose ultimate goal is to get us to disobey God (see Genesis 3). In the following verses, what do you see that can help us consistently "Win This War?"

**1 Corinthians 10:12-13, 1 John 1:8-2:2**
  
5. The Apostle Paul was consistently able to make decisions based on eternity despite facing many challenges and difficulties. What do you see in 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 that helps explain how he was able to consistently choose an eternal perspective in the face of those difficulties? What is most challenging to you about developing the long-term perspective found in this passage?
  
6. The Apostle Peter is a great case study on the use and abuse of words. Through his words he benefited many and, at other times, did some serious damage to himself and others. Read the following passages and make a note of any lessons you can learn from Peter's successes, failures and his teachings about our speech.

**Matthew 16:13-23, Matthew 26:69-75, Acts 2:36-41, 1 Peter 3:8-18**

  - a. How did Peter's awareness of the impact of his words change over time?
  - b. What hope does Peter's awareness give you?
  - c. What do you think it takes to become truly aware of the impact of our words?
  - d. Jesus exposed Peter's rough edges, restored him when he blew it and worked through him in many ways. When it comes to your speech and communication, are you aware of any rough edges or areas where you need to make some changes?

**James 5:1-12**

1. We are cautioned not be consumed by wealth and to trust God over money. What comfort could the following verses give to someone who has trouble trusting God in the area of finances?

**1 Chronicles 29:11-12, Matthew 6:25-26, Philippians 4:19**

2. Greed can easily be overlooked and is often not viewed to be as “bad” as other sins. What’s your response to God placing greed in the same category as the other sins in the following verses? Why do you think God considers greed as serious as the other sins?

**Romans 1:29-31, Ephesians 5:3, Colossians 3:5**

3. Many of us have a natural tendency to think acquiring more things will help us feel better and more complete. God frequently challenges this sort of thinking by challenging us to be content with what we have. How could the following verses help someone who finds themselves continuously thinking life would be better “if I only had \_\_\_\_\_?”

**Philippians 4:10-13, Hebrews 13:5, Matthew 6:33**

4. Many may be surprised that anger is actually an attribute of God, given to us for our benefit to help us protect others, ourselves, and bring about justice. Of course it can be distorted, as we so often see, causing undue damage in a variety of settings and relationships. How do the following verses help us evaluate if our anger is expressed in a way that pleases God (Ephesians 4:26)?

**James 1:19-20, Romans 12:17-19, 1 Peter 5:7-8**

5. This weekend we heard that being discouraged or angry doesn’t necessarily mean we’re not being patient. In fact, all too often we think we have to just be positive to show we’re remaining faithful. Psalm 77 shows how we can be real about what’s going on and what we think in the midst of a tough situation and still remain faithful and patient. After reading **Psalm 77**, jot down a few of your own thoughts and/or emotions about a tough season in your life or a test you’ve encountered. Also try to include anything you can think of that God has done for you.

6. One of the keys to keeping our effectiveness and patience is keeping our reputation and character intact. **Psalm 112** reads like a grocery list of the actions and character qualities of a righteous man or woman with the kind of character God calls us to have. As you read through this Psalm, use your own words to make a list of all the actions, character qualities, and blessings you can identify. Are there any you want to further develop and make sure you don’t forget?