

Hedonism is defined as the pursuit of pleasure; sensual self-indulgence. If you look around the world today, you see this everywhere. Mankind is out to seek nothing but his own pleasure even when that means trampling on the rights and freedoms of others.

James talks about the toll jealousy and selfish ambition will take. There will be disorder and every evil thing. James understood where man's evil heart will take him.

- Man's heart is deceitful and desperately sick. - Jeremiah 17:9**
- Man won't listen or obey, but walks in his own counsel and stubbornness of his evil heart, going backwards and not forward. - Jeremiah 7:24**
- He is a fool who says, "There is no God." He is corrupt and has committed abominable deeds. - Psalms 14:1-3; 53:1-3**

Last week, we saw the cure for this disease that plagues this world. It is God's unlimited power that reaches out to the spirit of man and changes him from within. As God brings us into the New Covenant, He changes our heart and puts His Spirit within us that causes us to fear God and walk in His ways. This brings us to a new life and makes us a new creature. As such we have died to the pleasures of the world. We can now submit to God and resist the devil. This is the newness of life we now walk in. - Romans 6:4

DAY ONE

1. Begin this new week by reading James 1-4. Carefully think through all that you have learned through each lesson. If necessary, go back and look at your notes when you have any questions about definition or interpretations. Record any questions you may still have at this time.

2. Read James 4:1-12. These are the verses that we studied last week. Take the rest of the time today to see what your commentaries have to say about James 4:1-12. Remember not to go any further than verse 12, but having a good grasp on these verses will give you solid footing for this week's study.

DAY TWO

Before you came to know Christ, truly know Him, who determined what your life should be? Who planned your future? Did you? Your parents? Was it determined by worldly influence and worldly wisdom? Did that change when you came to know Christ?

1. Read James 4:13-17. The phrase "come now, you who say," is a phrase of disapproval such as a parent scolding their child. This is an introduction to something else that is going on in the recipients' lives that needs to be addressed. What problem is he addressing in this passage?
2. Do you think there is a reason that he brings this up now? Can you see any way that this may be related to what he had discussed in 4:1-12?

3. You don't know what your life will be like tomorrow. You don't know what your length of days may be. We presume a lot when we make plans for our futures. Take a look at these verses and note what your life is likened to throughout God's Word. Record your answers.

a. James 4:14

b. James 1:10

c. I Samuel 20:3

d. Job 7:7

e. Psalm 102:11

f. Psalm 103:15-16

4. Who determines the your length of days?

a. Job 12:9-10

b. Job 14:5

c. Job 33:4

d. Job 34:14-15

e. Psalm 22:29

f. Psalm 31:15

g. Psalm 139:16

h. Revelation 1:18

5. Understanding that your life is limited, and that God is in control of your days, what should be your attitude toward life be?

a. Psalm 31:14-15

b. Psalm 39:4-5

c. Proverbs 27:1

6. Now read through James 4:13-17 one more time and write out what James teaches you about your life.

DAY THREE

1. Today you are going to read through Luke 12:13-53 twice.
2. Read through Luke 12:13-53 once again, this time recording the main topic that Luke covers. As you do this, watch for connections to James (but don't record them at this time. That will be the next step.)
3. Note any parallels you see between the teachings in Luke 12:13-53 and James. Record them, making sure to note chapter and verse in James.
4. Let's look at a little application. We tend to get so wrapped up in our plans for the future. We even become worried and anxious about it, like we have control over it! What does James and Luke teach us in respect to our future, our goals, and our plans?

5. Read what your commentaries have to say about James 4:13-17. Record any insights or applications you may glean.

DAY FOUR AND DAY FIVE

It is now time to move on to James 5. Take the next two days to complete a thorough observation or chapter study. This is the last chapter, so don't slack off, instead strive to finish strong. Next week will be our last week together and we will dig into the meat of the chapter together.