

Last week you had the opportunity to observe the book of James. What you attempted to do was get the big picture of the letter. You saw the key points (through the key words) the author was making. If you are someone who likes to do puzzles, you have found the corners and connected all the sides. You have completed the framework and all that James desires to communicate fits within that framework.

Now you begin to zoom in. This week you will look at the first chapter of James and see how that fits snugly into the framework. You are going to approach every chapter by completing a chapter study - overviewing the chapter. After that you can begin the process of investigating verse by verse and sometimes word by word as you dig into the depths of the book.

Be patient as we take this step by step. Inductive Bible study has three parts: observation, interpretation, application. If you are faithful to put the time into a thorough observation, then you will be able to come to a correct interpretation, and all along the way you will see the wonderful applications which can be applied to your life.

DAY ONE TO DAY THREE

Let's begin a chapter study on James chapter 1.

Follow these steps one by one. If you look down the whole list, it may become a little overwhelming. Just read step one and complete that step. When that is finished, go on to step two, and so on. You will soon be an expert! Are you ready to begin? Remember that you have three days to complete these steps, so take your time to think about what is being said and allowing God to work in your mind and your heart along the way.

1. Begin your time with prayer. Ask God to open your eyes of understanding and show you His truths and how to apply them to your life.
2. Just to refresh yourself on this letter, record who is writing and to whom he is writing. (Look back at what you recorded last week if necessary.)

3. Read through James 1 and make sure that you didn't miss any key words from your marking last week. If you didn't make lists of your key words last week, please do that now. Also look to see if there is a word repeated in this chapter only. If so you can mark it and write what you learn about it in the margins.
4. Read through James 1 again, this time marking the key words of God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit (if you didn't mark them last week). I mark God in a purple triangle, Jesus with a red cross, and the Holy Spirit with a purple dove. You can mark them anyway you wish. When you complete marking the Godhead in chapter 1, record what you learn about each Person of the Godhead on the pages of key words that you started last week.
5. Before moving on, what are the major subjects that are dealt with in chapter 1?
6. Read through James 1 once again. As you do look for the following (but be aware that you may not find one or any of these, but at least you looked).
 - a. Look for and mark geographical locations. I use a green compass over the place.
 - b. Look for and mark expressions of time. I use a blue clock. These could be mentions of feasts, day or evening, or words like when, then, after this, until, now, soon, etc.
 - c. Are there certain people other than the author and recipient that are mentioned in the chapter? If so, mark that person in a unique way.
7. Reading the chapter again, look for these.
 - a. Look for and mark instructions. I underline mine in orange. Look for specific "do this" commands. Then make a list of instructions on a separate paper.
 - b. Look for and mark warnings. I put my warnings in a black box. Make a list of the warnings you have marked. I put them on the opposite side of the paper as my instructions.

8. Read James 1 and look for contrasts, comparisons, and terms of conclusion. These are a little more difficult to find, but they are vital to the flow of the chapter. Give it some thought and read slowly and carefully looking for and marking the following.
 - a. **contrasts** - These show the differences between two words or concepts - opposites. I mark mine with a yellow lightening bolt through the word, then I put that lightning bolt on the side of the observation worksheet next to the verse and put the two words that are being contrasted on either side. Look for words like - but, however, yet, nevertheless, on the other hand.
 - b. **comparisons** - These show the similarities between two or more words or concepts. I mark mine with brown lines going in both directions over the word and then I draw a line to the two words that are being compared. Look for words like - like, as, such as, also, etc.
 - c. **terms of conclusion** - These are words like - wherefore, therefore, for, for this reason, finally, etc. The author has stated certain facts and then states that this is how you should respond, this is what you should do. I put the word in a red box and draw lines that tie the fact with the response.
9. In each chapter, there are several paragraphs. These paragraphs are distinguished by vertical lines separating two verses. Read through the chapter and summarize the paragraph by giving it a paragraph title. Follow the same procedure as you did for chapter titles last week.
10. Are you happy with the chapter title that you gave James last week? If not, you can change it now.
11. This is such a rich book, that you will want to carry these words with you wherever you go. The only way to do that is to memorize portions. Last week you were given the challenge to memorize James 1:2-8. Why don't you try adding verses 9-11 to that.

DAY FOUR

1. Read through James 1 refreshing your mind of all that you observed over the last three days.
2. Do you have any questions about the meaning of the text in James 1, after completing your chapter overview? If so write them down.
3. Has God shown you anything concerning your life from the overview of chapter 1? Write out a list of things you have learned, or write what you have learned in a form of a poem, a prayer, a song. If you are artistic maybe you want to draw a picture of what this chapter has taught you. Make this very personal for you. Allow God to speak to you as you prayerfully evaluate and meditate on this chapter.

DAY FIVE

This is going to be another day of reflection and meditation on this very rich chapter of James 1. Make sure you continue to start your time in prayer as you seek to allow God to renew your mind through the reading and understanding of His Word.

1. Read James 1 in a spirit of worship. John MacArthur likes to say that worship is understanding His worth-ship. It is looking at and recognizing another's worth. What kind of God do you have? How can He tell you to rejoice in your trials? Does God change? What kind of gifts does He bestow on you? Record what you learn about God as you read through chapter 1 and record why He is worth your worship. Allow God to speak to you as you think about this. Be still and know that He is God!

