



Word on Wednesday Bible Study

“Joy After the Spiritual Audit”

James 4

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James Theme: testing of faith, show what you say you believe.

Writer, *Norman L. Geisler* suggests that James moral emphasis is on **Orthopraxy (sound deeds)** and not **JUST Orthodoxy (Sound doctrine)**.

It's not Faith + Works = justification, but *rather your faith in God guides you to into works that = justification. This doesn't mean “faith doesn't matter.” It means faith that is alive produces life. If faith is real, it won't stay trapped.*

Essential statement from James: The same faith in Jesus that **led** you to salvation, should **move** you into a desire to demonstrate your faith through works.

In other words, the faith that saved you, should move you **BEYOND** the place where you were saved.

Here's the case that James presents for the audit using 5 key elements (Audit Framework/Model):

Criteria: It is measured by your witness, according to the words and works of Christ.

Condition: What/how you are actually living.

Cause: What's producing it **INSIDE** of you.

Effect/Consequence: What it costs you **SPRITUALLY**.

Recommendation: How God calls you to draw near to Him.

Thesis: When we don't understand that God wants to use test, trails and challenges for His glory, we miss the full meaning of His work. James assures us in the opening of his letter that these tests are from God, and they are designed to strengthen us and make us well rounded individuals (**Jas. 1:2-4,12**).

In other words: God uses faith's tests to expose what's real, heal what's broken, and produce joy-filled faith that shows up in our lives. James is not starting with the symptom. He's starting with the **root cause**. That's why this study is called a spiritual audit—because James refuses to stop at surface-level problems.

Condition/Cause for auditing: Self-interested (Jas. 4:1-3)

Prayer Busters:

1. **Praying without expectations:** Faithlessness (Matt. 21:22, John 11:20-24) (Acts 12:1-3, 12-17)
2. **Wrong motives:** (James 4:3, Matt 15:7-9,18)
3. **Unconfessed Sins:** (Lam 3:6-8, Isa 59:2, The Prophet Jonah)
4. **Unforgiving Spirit:** (Eph. 4:17-24, 31-32) (Col 3:1-2, 12-14)

Prayer Savers:

1. **Rely on the Holy Spirit:** (Romans 8:26-27)
2. **Look to Jesus for Help:** (John 11:40-42)
3. **Always Pray:** (1 Thess 5:16-17)

The Consequence (Effect) of the Audit: Spiritual Separation (Jas. 4:4-6)

- **Examples of adopting worldly living:** constantly coveting, picking fights, jealous, selfish in our ambition, boastful, deny truth when it's in our face, finding disorder.
- **Examples of fruitful living:** On the other hand, are we peacemakers, considerate, long suffering, show humility, utilize wisdom, merciful, Bear fruit, impartial and sincere.

James is suggesting **Faith that saves must also move toward works that demonstrate faith.** That's the "Joy After the Spiritual Audit" theme: when God corrects you, it doesn't just stop sin—it rebuilds your fellowship. **Joy isn't the absence of conviction. Joy is what comes after God's correction.**

Recommendation: Submit/Draw near to God (Jas. 4:7-17)

Thesis response:

These are not merely "temptations to avoid." They are tests that require prayer—because God uses difficulty to draw people back, keep them, and restore them. Therefore, James prays for the church to close his letter in **James 5:13-20**. Sighting, that it's never God's intent to push us away from Him, only closer. Echoing his judgement from Acts 15 that was mentioned earlier in the introduction. James says, "Don't make it difficult for those turning to God for salvation" (Acts 15:19).



Discussion Questions

1. What's one step of submission you can take this week that isn't just "more effort"—but "a new posture"?
2. Where do you tend to judge instead of seek correction and restoration?
3. What "right thing" have you been postponing because it's inconvenient?

Final Closing Challenge (Joy After the Spiritual Audit)

Make a simple 7-day commitment:

- **Confess** what's real.
- **Draw near** to God.
- **Forgive** as required.
- **Resist** with God's help.
- **Do right** when you have the chance.
- **Pray** with right motives.

"Lord Jesus, complete the audit You started. Bring me into fellowship, purify my heart, and teach me to live as Your obedient disciple. Make my faith visible. Receive my prayer oh God and King, in Jesus, Amen."