

HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE

THE LETTER OF JAMES



Chapter 4

Discussion Overview: In Chapter 4, we see James continue the theme of wisdom and speech from Chapter 3. In fact, some commentators would even keep 3:13-18 and 4:1-12 together as one passage. In James 4:13-17, James starts to unpack the final theme which is that of trials and temptations. As we practice the method of OIA, observation, interpretation, and application, make sure to discuss each section. Listen to what students come up with and help redirect their interpretation if it is off. It is easy to want to jump right to interpretation or application in the observation section so make sure to help students pause and make some basic observations about the text before diving into the rest.

Key Scripture James 4

Observations:

- Answer the 5 W's: who, what, why, when, where
- What words are repeated?
- What themes are reiterated in Chapter 4 that were brought up in the first three?
- Are there any lists?
- Are there words that contrast one thing against another?
- Cause and effect phrases?
- Any notable geographical locations?
- Encourage students to make at least 20 observations

*Discuss observations

Interpretation: What does this mean?

Pro Tip: Use the acronym **TIGHT** to help generate good questions: questions that are **text** dependent, **interesting**, promote **good** discussion, **highlight** the tension, and **tie** observations together

- What did the author intend to communicate to the original audience?
- What is the significance of _____?
- What is the tension in this text? What is bothering you?

*Discuss the interpretation of the text

Application: What does this passage mean to me?

- Is there a central truth I need to put into practice?
- Is there a promise, command, or example to follow or to avoid?
- How do I respond to what this chapter is saying?
- What are the next steps I need to take in order to apply this to my life?

*Discuss the application