

## **Dr. David Bauer, Inductive Bible Study, Session 17, James 1:5-15**

### **Resources from NotebookLM**

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

#### **1. Abstract of Bauer, Inductive Bible Study, Session 17, James 1:5-15, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL**

Dr. David Bauer's lecture on Inductive Bible Study analyzes James 1:5-15, focusing on the acquisition of wisdom through prayer and faith. He contrasts true wisdom from God with worldly wisdom, emphasizing the importance of a genuine relationship with God for answered prayer. The lecture further explores the connection between poverty/humility and faith, and the implications of wealth and its potential for exploitation. Finally, it examines the nature of trials and temptation, differentiating between God's testing and human susceptibility to sin, highlighting the responsibility individuals bear for their actions. The lecture uses the text of James to expound on theological concepts such as the character of God, the nature of prayer, and the relationship between faith, works, and God's judgment.

#### **2. 16 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Bauer, Inductive Bible Study, Session 17 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Introduction & Languages → Introductory Series → Inductive Bible Study).**



**Bauer\_IBS\_Session1  
7.mp3**

### 3. Briefing Document: Bauer, Inductive Bible Study, Session 17, James 1:5-15

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the main themes and ideas from the provided excerpts of Dr. David Bauer's lecture on James 1:5-15:

#### Briefing Document: Dr. David Bauer on James 1:5-15

##### Introduction

This document summarizes the key points from Dr. David Bauer's lecture on James 1:5-15, focusing on his analysis of the text's major themes. Bauer breaks down the passage into subunits, examining the relationship between trials, wisdom, prayer, the nature of God, faith, doubt, poverty, wealth, temptation, and sin. He emphasizes the importance of understanding the text in its broader context, including Old Testament connections, and with careful attention to the nuances of the Greek words used.

##### Main Themes & Ideas

#### 1. Wisdom as a Divine Gift

- **Response to Lack of Wisdom:** Following the discussion on rejoicing in trials (1:2-4), James turns to the issue of lacking wisdom. The correct response is to pray for it.
- **Acquisition through Prayer:** Wisdom is not inherent in humans, even Christians, nor does it come automatically with the Spirit. It's a divine gift that must be sought from God through prayer.
- *"It is a divine gift, not inherent in humans or even in Christians, but is supernatural and transcendent."*
- **Means to Fulfill Divine Demands:** Wisdom enables believers to meet trials with joy, stand firm in testing, and allow steadfastness to have its perfect work. It is not the *end* of the process described in verse 4, but a *means* to achieving it, and the *beginning* of the process.
- *"This divine gift set in the context of divine demand suggests that it is a divine gift that allows the divine demands or enables the divine demands to be realized."*

- **Not Worldly Wisdom:** This divine wisdom contrasts with worldly wisdom, which is self-centered and leads to jealousy and disorder. The former is meek and humble, the latter is proud and self-sufficient.
- *"This worldly wisdom emphasizes a sense of our own power, importance, and potential and is thus linked to selfishness and self-aggrandizement."*
- **Understanding Reality:** True wisdom allows one to see trials from God's perspective and act accordingly. It involves *knowing* reality and *acting* on it.
- *"The perception of and acting out of reality is the essence of wisdom."*

### 1. The Efficacy of Prayer

- **God as the Source:** Prayer for wisdom is directed towards God, who gives generously and without reproaching. This generosity is described as *haplos*, which can mean both *generous* in the sense of extent of giving, and *simply*, meaning wholeheartedly and without reservation.
- *"There is not a speck of reserve in God's desire to give."*
- **The Character of the Prayee (God):** God is described as one who gives generously and without complaint or any hint of disapproval.
- **Rejection of "Foxhole Faith":** Bauer argues against a transactional or bargaining approach to prayer. We do not have to haggle with God; He delights in our asking.
- *"We do not have to bargain with God. As a matter of fact, it's an affront to God... to even think about bargaining with God for the gifts that we need from him."*
- **The Character of the Prayer:** Prayer should be made in faith, without doubting. Doubt is equated to a lack of trust in God's goodness and willingness to give.
- *"This doubt points to a basic and essential distrust of God."*
- **Double-Mindedness:** Doubt is described as "double-mindedness," a condition of being out of tune with God. James expands on this concept in 4:8, connecting it to sin and enmity with God. This person is described as attempting to find security in both God and the world.
- *"The double-minded man then in context, is described as the enemy of God, not the friend of God, but the enemy of God, who attempts to find security in both the world and God..."*

- **Relationship is Key:** Prayer is not a magical or mechanical process but a dynamic relationship with God. It is based on faith that makes one a friend of God.

## 1. The Paradox of Poverty and Wealth

- **Exhortation to the Lowly:** The "lowly brother" (Christian poor) is called to boast in his exaltation, not in his poverty. This references a current, present, state, as well as a future one.
- **Exhortation to the Rich:** The rich are called to boast in their humiliation, recognizing that their wealth is fleeting and does not indicate value in God's kingdom. The term "rich" here refers to non-Christian oppressors, and the word is never used to describe a Christian in James.
- *"Throughout James, plutos rich is reserved for non-Christian oppressors, wealthy oppressors."*
- **Humility and Poverty:** There's a connection between poverty and humility, where poverty *tends* to lead to a lowly spirit, but the two are not identical. James primarily emphasizes a *state of humility*, not just poverty itself.
- *"James wants to emphasize loneliness and humility, and he relates loneliness and humility to material impoverishment, but he doesn't want to make an absolute identification between the two."*
- **Reversal of Values:** The passage emphasizes the radical reversal of values in the kingdom of God, where the poor are considered rich in faith and the rich are to recognize their lowliness.
- **Limits of the Present Age:** The wealthy are to recognize that they do not control their future, which is subject to God.
- **Care for the Poor:** True faith expresses itself in caring for the needs of the poor, addressing the root causes of poverty, not just by waiting for God to act.
- *"The implication, I think, is quite clear that one addresses the problem of poverty, expresses faith by addressing the problem of poverty, to be sure, by giving to the poor, which, of course, is what is mentioned here, but also by addressing and by meeting head-on those realities in society that produce poverty in the first place."*
- **Fleeting Nature of Wealth:** Wealth is compared to a flower that fades and withers, emphasizing its temporary and ultimately meaningless nature in the face of death and God's judgment.

## 1. Enduring Trials and the Nature of Temptation

- **Beatitude for Endurance:** Those who endure trials are blessed and will receive a "crown of life." This points to an eschatological reward.
- **Testing vs. Temptation:** James plays on the ambiguity of the Greek word *peirasmos*, which can mean both *trial* and *temptation*. God is the source of testing, which proves a person's character, but is not the source of temptation.
- *"Trials, in other words, may come from God and testing may come from God... but temptation, that is the drawing towards sin, God does not do."*
- **God's Untemptable Nature:** God is not tempted by evil, nor does He tempt anyone to sin. God cannot even be tempted to tempt.
- **Source of Temptation:** Temptation originates within a person's own desires.
- *"But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire."*
- **Jewish Theology:** James draws upon Jewish thought, particularly the concept of *yetzer hara*, or evil desire. This desire, if unchecked, leads to sin.
- **Process of Sin:** James outlines a chain of sin: desire lures and entices, which then conceives and gives birth to sin, and sin when fully grown brings forth death.
- **Lured:** The image of a fish being drawn by a line (lack of control).
- **Enticed:** The image of an animal being drawn to bait (immediate pleasure, blind to consequences).
- **Desire Conceives:** The image of a prostitute giving birth to an illegitimate child (sin).
- **Sin Brings Death:** Sin fully develops into ugliness and destruction, and itself births death.
- **Emphasis on Personal Responsibility:** The responsibility for sin rests solely on the individual, not on God or the devil.

## **Conclusion**

Dr. Bauer's lecture provides a detailed analysis of James 1:5-15, highlighting the key themes and ideas within the passage. He shows how James connects trials to the need for wisdom, emphasizes the importance of prayer in acquiring that wisdom, and underscores the need for humility and an understanding of God's reversed value system in the context of poverty and wealth. Finally, he carefully distinguishes between trials that come from God and temptations that come from within, emphasizing that God is never the source of temptation and that humans bear responsibility for their own sins. The whole section of James 1, as presented by Bauer, focuses on the necessity of understanding which process one is involved in, that of trials leading to steadfastness, or temptation leading to death. This requires the acquisition of divine wisdom, sought through faithful, believing prayer, in accordance with God's generosity.

## 4. Study Guide: Bauer, Inductive Bible Study, Session 17, James 1:5-15

### Inductive Bible Study: James 1:5-15 Study Guide

#### Quiz

**Instructions:** Answer each question in 2-3 complete sentences.

1. According to James 1:5, what should a person do if they lack wisdom, and what is a requirement of that action?
2. What is the relationship between wisdom and trials, according to Dr. Bauer?
3. How does James contrast worldly wisdom with Godly wisdom, and what characteristics define each?
4. What two characteristics of God does James use to encourage believers to pray for wisdom?
5. What is the meaning of "double-minded" as described by James, and how does it relate to faith?
6. How does James exhort the lowly brother, and how does this connect to eschatology?
7. According to Dr. Bauer, how does James use the word "rich," and who is James speaking to?
8. What does James say is the result of enduring trials and how does this differ from the reward discussed in verses 2-4?
9. Why does James clarify that God is not the source of temptation?
10. Explain the three-step process of temptation, according to James, using the different images he employs.

#### Quiz Answer Key

1. A person lacking wisdom should ask God for it in prayer. The person must ask in faith, without doubting or having an internal debate within their mind or heart.
2. Wisdom, a divine gift, enables one to meet trials with joy and steadfastness. It provides the understanding needed to perceive trials from a divine perspective and act accordingly.

3. Godly wisdom, acquired from God, is characterized by meekness and humility, contrasting with worldly wisdom that is self-centered, selfish, and linked to self-aggrandizement. Godly wisdom emphasizes trust in God, while worldly wisdom emphasizes a sense of one's own power.
4. James describes God as one who gives generously (or wholeheartedly) and without reproaching or demeaning the one asking. These characteristics emphasize God's total commitment to giving and encourages believers to approach Him with confidence and without suspicion.
5. A double-minded person is one who is conflicted, like a sinner who is an enemy of God; such a person does not truly trust God, attempting to find security in both the world and God, and they are in need of profound repentance. This relates to faith because true faith is unified and has no trace of doubt or divided loyalties.
6. James exhorts the lowly brother to boast in his exaltation, recognizing the radical reversal of values in the kingdom of God. This connects to eschatology because it points to a future reversal of fortunes and the eschatological perspective where the lowly are exalted in God's eyes, and to the present reality of the kingdom.
7. According to Dr. Bauer, James never uses the word "rich" (plutos) to describe Christians; he reserves it for non-Christian oppressors, and when James speaks of Christians who have means he uses different language. Therefore, James is speaking to the non-Christian wealthy.
8. James says that those who endure trials will receive a crown of life, which is a future, eternal reward, unlike the reward in verses 2-4, which speaks of the present benefits of steadfastness. This later reference focuses on the end-time, transcendent, reward.
9. James clarifies that God is not the source of temptation because God cannot be tempted with evil and does not tempt anyone. This places responsibility for sin on the individual and not on God.
10. The process begins with being lured by one's own desire (like a fish being hooked), then being enticed by desire with immediate pleasure (like an animal attracted to bait in a trap), and finally the desire, when conceived, gives birth to sin. Sin, when it reaches full development, brings forth death (like the birth of a monster).



## Essay Questions

1. Discuss the significance of the connection James draws between trials, wisdom, and prayer in James 1:5-8. How does James use the characteristics of God to encourage faithful prayer, and why is it essential for believers to approach God with unwavering faith?
2. Analyze James's contrasting portrayals of the lowly and the rich in James 1:9-11, particularly the idea that the lowly should boast in their exaltation and the rich in their humiliation. How does James use the image of a flower to illustrate the fleeting nature of wealth, and how does this connect to his overall message?
3. Explore James's teaching on the nature of temptation in James 1:13-15. How does James use the imagery of fishing, hunting, and prostitution to explain the process and consequences of temptation, and why is it crucial to understand the internal sources of temptation rather than blaming God?
4. How does Dr. Bauer's explanation of the different kinds of testing in James (dokimeon in v. 3 and dokimos in v. 12) contribute to an understanding of the role of trials in the life of a Christian, especially in light of the potential ambiguities and the dual nature of trials and temptation?
5. How does James use the literary devices of a chain of cause-and-effect to both negatively explain the origin and results of temptation and positively explain the importance of endurance in trials, and what does this teach about responsibility and consequences?

## Glossary of Key Terms

**Apocalyptic Tradition:** A Jewish literary genre that features symbolic visions of God's intervention into history.

**Dokimos:** A Greek word meaning "tested and approved," referring to the result of a test.

**Dokimeon:** A Greek word referring to the "process of testing."

**Double-minded:** A state of being internally divided, wavering between different loyalties or beliefs; in James, often equated with being a sinner and an enemy of God.

**Eschatology:** The study of the "last things," such as death, judgment, and the end of the world.

**Haplos:** A Greek word that can mean "generous" or "simple," or "wholeheartedly," relating to God's giving.

**Hupomeneo:** A Greek word meaning "endurance" or "steadfastness," used to describe one's proper response to trials.

**Intertestamental Period:** The period of time between the Old Testament and the New Testament.

**Lacking:** Refers to both a material lack and a lack of wisdom, highlighting the need for divine intervention.

**Lepita:** Greek word for "if one lacks."

**Makarios:** A Greek word translated as "blessed," often pointing to a future, eschatological reward.

**Meekness:** A quality of humility and gentleness, important in James as a sign of Godly wisdom.

**Peirasmos:** A Greek word translated as either "trial" or "temptation," based on context.

**Praus:** A Greek word often translated as "lowly" or "humble," describing the attitude of the poor in spirit.

**Prayee:** The person to whom a prayer is directed, in this case, God.

**Shema:** The Jewish creed expressing the fundamental concept of monotheism. It emphasizes that God is one and unified.

**Synergistic Model of Prayer:** A model of prayer that emphasizes the dynamic relationship between God and the person who prays, rather than a magical or mechanical ritual.

**Tapeinos:** A Greek word meaning "lowly" or "humble," often used to describe the state of the poor.

**Yetzer:** A Hebrew word referring to human desire, which in itself is neutral but must be controlled to avoid sin.

**Worldly Wisdom:** A perspective or understanding that emphasizes human self-sufficiency and is linked to selfishness and self-aggrandizement.

## 5. FAQs on Bauer, Inductive Bible Study, Session 17, James 1:5-15, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

### Frequently Asked Questions About James 1:5-15

1. **Why does James connect the topic of wisdom to the previous discussion of trials?** James uses the connecting word "lack" to bridge the discussion of trials with the need for wisdom. He suggests that the ability to face trials with joy, as previously mentioned, is facilitated by divine wisdom. This wisdom, acquired through prayer, empowers believers to understand and respond to trials appropriately, leading to steadfastness and spiritual maturity. In essence, wisdom is the key to navigating trials effectively.
2. **How is wisdom described in this passage, and how is it acquired?** Wisdom, according to James, is not an inherent human trait but a divine gift from God. It's acquired through prayer, a sincere and faith-filled request to God. This wisdom enables believers to perceive reality from a divine perspective, especially in the context of trials, allowing them to act on this understanding. It's a prerequisite, not an endpoint, for spiritual growth. It is important to note that this wisdom is not a guarantee that all prayers are answered, but is a means towards answered prayer.
3. **What does it mean to "ask in faith, not doubting," and why is this important?** Asking in faith without doubting means approaching God with complete trust and confidence in His goodness and willingness to give. It implies a deep relational connection with God and an absence of internal debate or distrust. Doubt, in this context, is seen as a fundamental distrust of God's character, His goodness, and His willingness to give generously. Such an attitude undermines the very basis of prayer and hinders receiving from God.
4. **What is the difference between "lowly" and "rich" in James 1:9-11 and how should each group respond?** The "lowly" refers to Christians who are impoverished, while the "rich" refers to non-believers who are wealthy. The "lowly" are encouraged to boast in their exaltation through their relationship with God and their future in the kingdom, not in their worldly status. The "rich" are urged to recognize their humiliation, that is, to recognize that worldly wealth is not of value in God's kingdom, to see that their riches are a source of humility, and to change their actions by ceasing the exploitation of the poor. Both groups

are called to view life through the lens of God's kingdom where values are reversed.

5. **Why does James use the image of a withering flower to describe the rich?** James uses the imagery of a withering flower to illustrate the fleeting and superficial nature of wealth and worldly possessions. Just as a flower blooms briefly and then fades, the riches of the wealthy are temporary and ultimately meaningless in the face of death. This imagery underscores the need for a long-term, kingdom-focused perspective. It serves as a reminder that wealth does not offer security or lasting joy, but rather that this comes only from God.
6. **What is the significance of enduring trials and what is the reward?** Enduring trials with steadfastness is viewed as a demonstration of faith and love for God. The one who endures trials and passes the test demonstrates their fitness for eternal reward. The reward is the "crown of life," a symbol of eternal life and victory, signifying a co-regency with Christ in the kingdom of God. This reward is not merely an outcome of enduring but represents the culmination of a life of faithful perseverance.
7. **How does James differentiate between trials and temptations, and who is responsible for temptation?** While trials and temptations can both be described by the same word in Greek, James distinguishes them based on their source and nature. Trials, which come from God, can test one's faith. Temptations are viewed as an internal pull toward sin, arising from one's own desires (yetzer or yetzer hara). James emphasizes that God is not the source of temptation or evil, and therefore, humans are held responsible for their choices and succumb to temptation. This contrasts with trials, which can be viewed as tests of faith from God.
8. **What is the "chain" that leads to sin and death, and how does it contrast with the process of spiritual growth discussed earlier in James 1?** The "chain" of sin, which is opposite the chain of spiritual growth in the earlier section, begins with being lured by one's own desires (like a fish on a hook or an animal in a trap). When desire is conceived it gives birth to sin. Sin, when fully developed (like a fully developed child), brings forth death, where death is a judgement. This chain highlights the progression from uncontrolled desire to sin and ultimately death. In contrast, the positive chain discussed earlier is a process where trials lead to steadfastness, which leads to completion, emphasizing the path of spiritual development through trials and faith.