



INSIDE

MINISTRY UPDATE

Ministry Leaders
Prepare to Launch
Bible Study Ministry
in Kenya..... 2

VERSE OF THE WEEK

James 1:2–4 3

FROM OUR FOUNDING FATHERS

Gouverneur Morris..... 5
Elias Boudinot..... 6

ABOUT

Capitol Ministries®..... 8



PUBLISHED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



Don't Derail God's Spiritual Growth Plan



The book of *James*, which was written A.D. 44–49, is the earliest book written in the New Testament (NT). In this little book—it's only five chapters—*James* addresses how we are to inculcate wisdom into our lives. Or, better, he reveals the basis and means by which God instills His wisdom. Think of wisdom as the skill of living life for His glory.

This week we take a look at how becoming spiritually mature leads to wisdom.

Ralph Drollinger

BIBLE STUDY
SPONSORS

SENATORS

Marsha Blackburn: *TN*
Bill Cassidy: *LA*
Kevin Cramer: *ND*
Steven Daines: *MT*
Joni Ernst: *IA*
William Hagerty: *TN*
Cindy Hyde-Smith: *MS*
James Lankford: *OK*
Mike Rounds: *SD*
Tim Scott: *SC*
John Thune: *SD*

REPRESENTATIVES

Robert Aderholt: *AL*
Rick Allen: *GA*
Don Bacon: *NE*
Michael Bost: *IL*
Ted Budd: *NC*
Michael Conaway: *TX*
Rick Crawford: *AR*
Ron Estes: *KA*
Louie Gohmert: *TX*
Tom Graves: *GA*
Glenn Grothman: *WI*
Kevin Hern: *OK*
Bill Huizenga: *MI*
Bill Johnson: *OH*
Dusty Johnson: *SD*
Jim Jordan: *OH*
Doug Lamborn: *CO*
Kevin McCarthy: *CA*
Gary Palmer: *AL*
Bill Posey: *FL*
Cathy McMorris Rodgers: *WA*
David Rouzer: *NC*
John Rutherford: *FL*
Glenn Thompson: *PA*
Tim Walberg: *MI*
Jackie Walorski: *IN*
Randy Weber: *TX*
Daniel Webster: *FL*
Bruce Westerman: *AR*
Roger Williams: *TX*
Joe Wilson: *SC*
Rob Wittman: *VA*
Steve Womack: *AR*
Rob Woodall: *GA*
Ted Yoho: *FL*

WEEKLY BIBLE STUDIES

Former Cabinet Members / White House Senior Staff: Wednesdays 7 am, Zoom.
Senate Members: Tuesdays 8 am, rotating offices, hot breakfast served.
House Members: Thursdays 8 am, The Capitol Hill Club, hot breakfast served.

The views expressed in each Bible study are those of the author, and do not necessarily reflect the position of any individual Bible Study Sponsor.



■ MINISTRY UPDATE

Ministry Leaders Prepare to Launch Bible Study Ministry in Kenya



Rev. Dr. Stephen and Dr. Rosemary Mbogo of Kenya, Africa successfully completed ministry leader training at the Capitol Ministries Fall Teaching and Training Conference in Washington, D.C. in September.

The couple is readying to launch a discipleship Bible study based ministry to national political leaders in Kenya.

Stephen serves as CEO for African Enterprise International. Rosemary is a professor of educational leadership and administration at Africa International University.

Stephen said the CapMin training had been “beyond expectations.” “The training sessions and interactions erased any fears we may have had,” he

Continued on page 4

Don't Derail God's Spiritual Growth Plan

I. INTRODUCTION

In chapter one of the NT book of *James*,¹ the author addresses the issue of how we are to inculcate wisdom into our lives, or better, he reveals the basis and means which God intends to use to instill His wisdom. Think of *wisdom* as “the skill of living life for His glory.”

God not only wants you to grow in the knowledge of His Word, but He desires you to apply that knowledge as well—to gain skill *in living your life to God's glory*. Take note from this passage that God has a definite strategy—and means—to appropriate the knowledge gained from Scripture. Chapter one of this epistle reveals God's way of doing exactly that!

How many followers of Christ do you know who are knowledgeable, but not very wise? I am saying not spiritually mature and lacking in applying to daily living the knowledge they have gained from God's Word. *Herein James presents the means by which God intends to accomplish growth in the life of the believer*. It only follows that this passage is of tantamount importance to a believer's understanding as to how God intends to sanctify him. Keep in mind that for God to be about growing-up His called-out ones is normative. The Apostle Paul states to the church at Philippi in this regard: *For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus* (Philippians 1:6).

Working through this passage will reveal how God intends to achieve spiritual growth in the life of the believer.

II. PRESUPPOSITIONS FOR OBTAINING GOD'S WISDOM (VV. 1–5)

What *James* is attempting to convey in this passage is the normalcy of and the

economy by which all believers are intended to grow in Christlikeness. Again, herein revealed is the means by which God has ordained to grow you and me in Christ. What follows are three preliminary thoughts in the first five verses that pertain to this God-ordained purpose and objective. To be ignorant or misunderstand any of the following three preliminary points is to hinder the development of God's wisdom (applied knowledge/spiritual growth) in your life.

A. GOD'S PEOPLE ARE IN NEED OF HIS WISDOM (V. 1)

James, a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad: Greetings.

James was the half-brother of Jesus Christ and the brother of the NT author Jude who were, among others, sons of Mary and Joseph² (cf. Mark 6:3; Matthew 12:46). Although not an apostle, *James* was an associate of the apostles (Galatians 1:19). *James* was a very prominent early leader in the church at Jerusalem; therefore, it follows that he would refer to himself as *a bond-servant of the Lord Jesus Christ*. He wrote this epistle with the authority of having personally seen the resurrected Christ (1 Corinthians 15:7).

James is writing to fellow followers of Christ regarding their need to embrace *trials* for the sake of spiritual growth. The *twelve tribes* refer to various believers who had been *dispersed* due to persecution under Herod Agrippa (cf. Acts 12; ca. A.D. 44). In support of *James'* addressing a Christian audience—a key factor in the proper interpretation of the epistle—note that *James* will soon call the recipients of his letter “my brethren” in verses 2 and 19. *Tribes*, therefore, is a descriptor for fellow brethren or believers. Accordingly, the instruction that follows regarding how God



grows someone in godliness is instruction intended for believers—an all-important premise for proper understanding of what the Word of God is teaching in this passage.

B. GOD HAS A WAY OF IMPARTING HIS WISDOM (VV. 2–4)

Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

In the Greek, *trials*, (*peripepto*) means “to fall into the midst of.” The word speaks of God’s sovereign orchestration. The word *when* in this text indicates that the believer will always encounter *various trials*. *When* indicates the normative nature of God-orchestrated events that are intended by Him for your betterment in the long-run. Notice the progression in this portion of *James* 1: *Trials* and *the testing of your faith* bring about the need for perseverance, or *endurance*, which is language synonymous with the end result of spiritual maturation, or heading toward becoming *perfect and complete, lacking in nothing*. *James* has this ultimate objective of the spiritual maturation process in mind as he writes to persecuted and dispersed *brethren*.

One way God uses to Grow His children is through *trials*.

It is important to add here that *trials* and *the testing of your faith* always have a view toward, in the mind of God, your maturation, i.e., you and I becoming more useful to God and bearing more fruit.³ Additionally, keep in mind God’s bigger purposes for your maturation: He is preparing a spotless bride to give to His

Son at the future marriage supper of the Lamb. At that eschatological future event, God the Father rewards God the Son by giving Him the saints, the Church, in all her perfection (cf. Revelations 19:7–14). All that explanation to say:

Your spiritual maturation is a very important matter in the eyes of God—and it has just as much to do with God’s honoring the second Member of the Trinity for paying the price for sin and enduring the agony of the cross, as it does you personally.

The Greek word for *testing* (*dokimion*) is used in the Septuagint⁴ when translating Proverbs 27:21: *The crucible is for silver and the furnace for gold, and each is tested by the praise accorded him*. The contextual usage reveals that the meaning of the word *testing* is *the process by which God refines our faith*. God intends for our lives to be refined by the crucible of *testing*, persecution, and suffering so that the dross and impurities of the old sin-laden nature, i.e., the pre-Christ nature, might be stripped away by the process. As a result, we become increasingly pure and valuable as we progress in and toward Christlikeness. This divine formula is worth underscoring: *James* is revealing to the *brethren* God’s way of purifying His chosen vessels, His called-out ones to *let* this process have its intended *perfect result*!

In a similar sense the author of Hebrews also speaks about God’s purpose for *trials*, expressed as being a form of discipline in His quest to mature His saints—to achieve His *perfect result*:

“MY SON, DO NOT REGARD LIGHTLY THE DISCIPLINE OF THE LORD, NOR FAINT

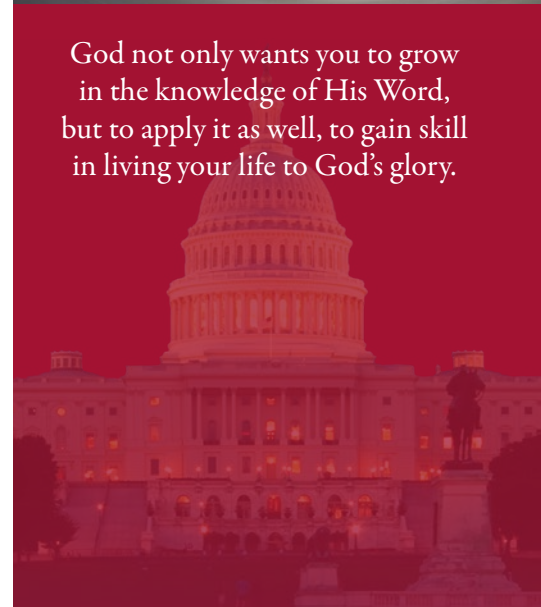
♥ VERSE OF THE WEEK

James 1:2–4

Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.



God not only wants you to grow in the knowledge of His Word, but to apply it as well, to gain skill in living your life to God’s glory.





Continued from page 2

said. "This connection has been Providential. It is clear that God is calling the church across Africa to do something different. As we go back, we will move from pastoral care to discipleship. If we can be used by the Lord to shift political leaders one percent, that impact will be huge. We thank the Lord for this and for everyone we met at the conference."



Downtown Nairobi



WHEN YOU ARE REPROVED BY HIM; FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE DISCIPLINES, AND HE SCOURGES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES." It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? (12:5–7).

If God's intended purpose for ***trials*** and ***discipline*** is His means of maturing His children to achieve His ***perfect result***, then it should come as no surprise that those who are saved by God's grace should ***consider various trials*** as ***all joy***. Why? They indicate God's love for you and His fatherly desire to grow you up into spiritual adulthood—becoming buff, spiritually speaking—to sanctify you.

Genesis 50:20 reveals Joseph's deep understanding of this heavenly economy for achieving spiritual growth; his godly reaction to those (his biological brothers) who brought all kinds of pain into his life is indicated by his response: ***"As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result..."*** What profound insight! Joseph gets what the first chapter of ***James*** teaches! Genesis 50:20 packs this principle in a personality! Adopt the reason why Joseph embraced ***trials*** in your own life! Here is a proper, ***joyous*** response to ***trials***—***trials*** allowed by God in the lives of all His children.

In chapter 1, verse 12, ***James*** will soon provide further motivation for the believer to respond in a godly fashion to ***trials***:

Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

The ***crown*** spoken of in this verse relates to the Bema Seat Judgment (cf. Romans 14:10–12 and 2 Corinthians 5:10) where-

in in the eschatological future:

Jesus will reward the believer for his faithfulness; in this case victoriously overcoming trials in his life.

What a great promise and motivation! ***James*** is coaching and coaxing us to succeed in our ***trials*** with a reward in view! Conversely, failing to learn and apply what God intends to teach us in a ***trial*** becomes tantamount to asking for the same testing all over again! Why go through an unpleasant experience three or four times before you learn your lessons? God will orchestrate similar situations in His continuing attempts to grow His called-out ones in a particular area where they are failing to grow.

I know some folks like this who continually face the same situations over and over because of their mule-like recalcitrance. Don't stunt your growth; understand and embrace what ***James***, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, is saying to you! Verses 2–4 have served to explain God's means of imparting His wisdom in your life. Notice next in the passage that God desires to ***accurately*** impart His wisdom in your life.

C. GOD DESIRES TO ACCURATELY IMPART HIS WISDOM (VV. 5)

But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

The third and last presupposition to spiritual growth that ***James*** states in this passage is that God wants to make sure you know exactly what He is attempting to get you to change in your life. The Greek word ***James*** is using for ***wisdom*** is ***sophias***,



which means “applied knowledge.” The promise of this great passage is that if you ask God (and He expects you to ask), He will show you specifically how to apply His Word to what you need to change. If you are unsure about what **God** is attempting to apply in your life, rest assured He will let you know! “*And it will be given to you*” is an unconditional promise!

States Proverbs 2:6a in parallel fashion, **For the Lord gives wisdom....** Further, Jesus said, “*Ask, and it will be given to you...*” (Matthew 7:7a). Some may think these passages are meant to underscore some kind of a mystical encounter with God through some kind of modern-day dream or vision. However, in keeping with the whole counsel of God on the matter including the closing of the canon in the books of Jude and Revelation, His illumination of His Word to your heart via your personal study, or through a biblically based sermon, or perhaps the counsel of a godly friend sharing Scriptures with you pertinent to your **trial**, He will show your inner spirit the purpose of the **trial**. “*It will be given to you*” is a promise of God via the context and conduit of His revealed Word!

Illumination is a wonderful biblical doctrine as expressed in Psalm 119:33–34; Luke 24:45; Ephesians 1:17, 18; Colossians 1:9–11; 1 John 2:20, 27, and **James** 1:21. *Illumination* is the foundational basis of how God imparts or **gives** His **wisdom to you**. Illumination is directly and categorically connected to the great doctrines of inspiration and revelation without violating them, i.e., God inspired His Word, He revealed His Word, and He is **faithful** to illumine His Word to our hearts. One of the ministries of God, the Holy Spirit, is to lead you into all truth (cf. Psalm 43:3).

Any other interpretation of “*it will be given to you*” leads to subjective mysti-

cism—the opposite of empirical revelation, which is finding out through principles revealed in the Word of God what it is that God is attempting to teach/impart to you.

What God is attempting to teach you through your trials must be founded in and by biblical truth!

Note further the importance of this understanding via the distinctiveness of the word **James** uses for **wisdom** (*sophias*), which is in contrast to other words common in NT usage. For instance, *sunesis* means “theoretical knowledge,” or the translation of *oidea* means “intuitive knowledge.” In using the word *sophias*, **James** is communicating that God is very personable with His children and will **give**, i.e., illuminate in an objective sense (in concert with Scripture) the correct and practical *application* of biblical knowledge to a person’s **trial** and **testing**. How is this to be understood from God’s perspective? God will let me know because this passage says He desires to accurately impart His **wisdom**.

The aforementioned are the three presuppositions for a believer’s obtaining **wisdom** in his life. In the progression of the chapter, **James** now lists three hindrances—ways to derail—personal maturation through God’s economy of **trials**.

III. THREE WAYS TO DERAIL SPIRITUAL GROWTH

A. DERAILEMENT VIA DOUBT (VV. 6–8)

But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, being a double-minded man,

Gouverneur Morris



Gouverneur Morris signs the Constitution.

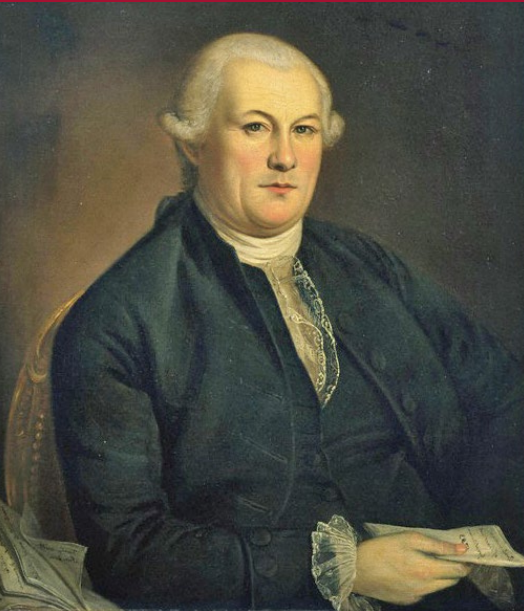
“Your good morals in the army give me sincere pleasure as it hath long been my fixed opinion that virtue and religion are the great sources of human happiness. More especially is it necessary in your profession firmly to rely upon the God of Battles for His guardianship and protection in the dreadful hour of trial. But of all these things you will and I hope in the merciful Lord.”

— Gouverneur Morris, Revolutionary War officer, member of the Continental Congress, signer of the Constitution, “Penman of the Constitution,” diplomat, U.S. senator.

Letters of Delegates to Congress: February 1, 1778–May 31, 1778, Paul H. Smith, editor (Washington DC: Library of Congress, 1982), Vol. 9, 729–730, Gouverneur Morris to General Anthony Wayne on May 21, 1778.



Elias Boudinot



“... without the almighty power of the Spirit of God enlightening your mind, subduing your will, and continually drawing you to Himself, you can do nothing ...”

— Elias Boudinot, President of Congress, signed the Peace Treaty to end the American Revolution, first attorney admitted to the U.S. Supreme Court Bar, framer of the Bill of Rights, Director of the U.S. Mint.

Elias Boudinot, *The Age of Revelation* (Philadelphia: Asbury Dickins, 1801), xii–xiv, from the prefatory remarks to his daughter, Susan, on October 30, 1782; see also *Letters of the Delegates to Congress: 1774–1789*, Paul H. Smith, editor (Washington, D. C.: Library of Congress, 1992), Vol. XIX, 325, from a letter of Elias Boudinot to his daughter, Susan Boudinot, on October 30, 1782; see also, Elias Boudinot, *The Life Public Services, Addresses, and Letters of Elias Boudinot* (Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin, and Company, 1896), Vol. I, 260–262.

unstable in all his ways.

Keep in mind that these following verses in *James* 1 relate directly to the revealed thesis and objective of the passage: *let[ting] the trial have its perfect result.* The first hindrance *James* lists relative to gaining the desired *result* of spiritual maturity is to be a *doubter, or double-minded* about the way in which God wants to accomplish His plan in a believer's life: *doubting* the very economy of *trials* being orchestrated by God in order to grow His child.

Many Christians in our country and in our capital community are in a headlong pursuit for personal satisfaction, significance, and importance with little regard, room, or consideration for God's formula for growth.

Hopefully, you and I are not among them! In their idolatry⁵ of self-pursuit, they hunger for various other desires such as fame and power, money, and personal glory, etc. They desire those fulfillments above God's *wisdom* and are attempting to crowd out the still, small voice of God via His Word in their hearts. In their *doubt* and *double mindedness*, they disregard all that is being taught by *James*.

Doubting, double-minded Christians are those who aren't really sure what their highest priorities are in life. They are like *wind-driven waves* that regularly change direction. They have one foot in and one foot out. As a result, they tend to view God's onslaught of *trials* with a questionable or jaded perspective, never quite learning from them, nor are they sure they want to. Subsequently:

By discounting God's plan for personal growth, a believer remains spiritually immature, unwise.

As a result, like newborns (cf. 1 Corinthians 3:1) they are *unstable in all* [their] *ways*. The first major derailment then of God's growth formula is this: *doubting* or being *double-minded* about *trials* being from God. Don't *doubt* for a second that God's superintended *trials* are His way of achieving growth in your life!

B. DERAILMENT VIA DODGING (VV. 9–11)

But the brother of humble circumstances is to glory in his high position; and the rich man is to glory in his humiliation, because like flowering grass he will pass away. For the sun rises with a scorching wind and withers the grass; and its flower falls off and the beauty of its appearance is destroyed; so too the rich man in the midst of his pursuits will fade away.

What is *James* communicating in this specific part of the passage? How does this antithesis relate to the previously established context of spiritual maturation? In Hebraic writing fashion, *James* herein is segueing into a further elaboration of the primary truth of verses 2 and 3 by relating the truths about *trials* first to a *humble* man, who possesses very little if any self-means, in contrast secondly to the *rich man* who possesses resources at his disposal, such as wealth, power, and connections. Keep in mind from the aforementioned that both the *rich man* and the *humble* man are believers;⁶ this Scripture passage is not a contrast between a *rich* unbeliever and a *humble* believer.

Why is *James* forging this contrast? A *brother of humble circumstances* is by definition and contextual intention, “one who is without the personal ability to



dodge a *trial*.” Such circumstances, as they relate to gaining from a *trial*, is termed a *high position* because this person is in the best *position* to learn from a *trial*! He should, per the point of the passage, *glory in his high position* for which he finds himself in this life!

Conversely, it is much easier for a wealthy and/or powerful believer to avoid the manifest purposes that God has sovereignly ordained through His orchestration of a *trial*. Obviously, the rich man is in a better *position* to avoid the *trial via his own resources*; he can defuse the intent of the *trial* much more easily than a believer who has few material or influential resources. The *rich man* can more easily dodge the lesson(s) and growth desired by God in and by His origination and orchestration of the attention-grabbing event(s). The following statement helps explain why in a practical sense:

Wealthy and powerful Christians are more apt to remain spiritually immature because they have the wherewithal to circumvent God’s growth mechanisms.

As a Christian legislator or a cabinet member you are a powerful, *rich* person. So, mark this word of caution: in trying times, turn first to God for direction and application of biblical precepts, rather than attempting to skirt problems with no reflection or regard for what God may be attempting to teach you! Devising a way out of a matter in and by one’s own power, resources, and resourcefulness is to miss out on God’s gift of a growth opportunity! Note Jeremiah 9:23–24 in regard to harboring thoughts of self-sufficiency:

Thus says the LORD, “Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the

mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches; but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me....”

Face God’s *trials* head on and be honest with Him! Ask, “God, what are You attempting to teach me through this?” Then be alert for His response. Don’t hinder God’s *trials* by dodging them with the use of personal resources. You’ll be more mature and Christ-like when you stand before Him as a result. Don’t buy God off and short circuit your spiritual growth!

C. DERAILMENT VIA DISPUTING (VV. 19–21)

This you know, my beloved brethren. But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger; for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God. Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls.

James continues on the same subject with yet another way we tend to derail God from having His perfect results in our lives. In this particular passage, the believer is disputing a *trial*. Again, the verbiage of verses 19–21 is not disjointed to the earlier subject of *trials*. *James* now makes this point: reacting angrily to *trials* is common but doing so is antithetical to *considering* a *trial* as *joyful* in a believer’s attitudinal response. Thus, the oft-quoted passage (*James* 1:19):

Be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger in its intended context and tightest definition is speaking of a proper and mature response to trials.

Accordingly, this glibly used passage takes

on a heightened, more specific meaning! Likened to Joseph, we need to learn to first be contemplative relative to the onslaught of various *trials* in our lives! We need to be *quick to hear* from God; we need to be *slow to speak* in terms of disputing the relevance of the *trial* to our life; and we need to see the *trial* for what it is through the lens of God’s sovereignty, versus becoming *angry* relative to what has befallen us. Again, listen with the attitude, “God, what are You trying to teach me through this?” rather than reacting harshly and complaining about perpetrators with others who are uninvolved or lashing out in some other form of outward *anger*.

How spiritually childish implies *James*! *Put* such responses *aside* and receive the *word*, i.e., the principles from Scripture that God wants to *implant* in your life. To *receive the word implanted* is a beautiful synonym that underscores and contextually bookends the meaning of becoming spiritual mature as a result of the *trial*. All is opposite to disputing the significance of a *trial*. Be contemplative versus reactive to *trials*, my friend.

You may note that verses 12–18 were skipped. Among other related matters, *James* speaks to the ancillary, parenthetical subject of whether or not the temptation in a *trial* is from God, which represents a different subject—a study in itself for another day.

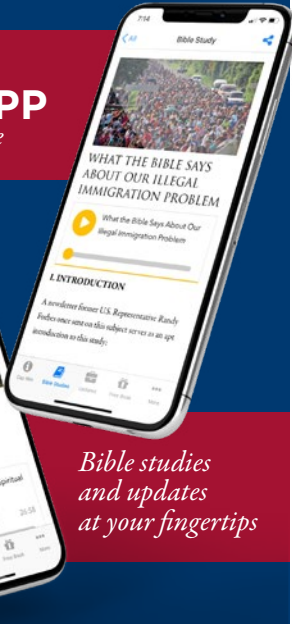
IV. CONCLUSION

The Apostle Paul provides much by way of additional insight into the internal thought processes and disciplines that the believer need cultivate to become spiritually mature in times of and through *trials*. He states in Philippians 4:6–9:

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with



Download our
FREE APP
at the App Store



*Bible studies
and updates
at your fingertips*



*Making Disciples of Jesus Christ
in the Political Arena
Throughout the World*



Capitol Ministries® provides Bible studies, evangelism and discipleship to political leaders. Founded in 1996, we have started ongoing ministries in over forty U.S. state capitols and dozens of foreign federal capitols.

Capitol Ministries®
Mail Processing Center
Post Office 30994
Phoenix, AZ 85046
661.288.2622
capmin.org

© 2022 Capitol Ministries®
All rights reserved.



/capitolministries

thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things. The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

Our natural immature response to *trials* is to be *slow* to *hear* from God, *quick* to *speak* to others about the injustice besieging us, and *quick* to *anger* in our emotions. Notice how the above Pauline passage from the book of Philippians contrasts with our all-to-human, fleshly, default responses. Paul's inner thoughts were to put off anxiety, knowing God is in sovereign control over the affairs of His called-out ones.

**In times of *trials*, don't doubt,
dodge, or dispute.**

Turn first to God in prayer and give thanks. Look for God's protection in your heart and mind, and then force yourself to dwell on what is *true, honorable, right, pure, lovely and of good repute*. He modeled this response for us, and we need to discipline our minds to respond maturely—increasingly so—in all of life's *trials* to achieve spiritual growth in our lives.

1. James is the earliest book written in the New Testament, circa AD 44–49.
2. Joseph and Mary had daughters as well.
3. Cf. the parable of the sower; Matthew 13:23.
4. The Septuagint is an early Greek translation of the Old Testament.
5. Idolatry is anything elevated in one's heart above the quest of God's revealed purposes.
6. There are four reasons why I believe this passage (James 1:9–11) is referring to wealthy believers versus unbelievers as it is sometimes interpreted to mean.
 - a. In verses 2 and 9, Paul is addressing this letter to believers.
 - b. He resumes his thesis of trials in verse 12 immediately following the conclusion of this section.
 - c. The syntactical conjunctions throughout chapter one connect all the thoughts and homogenize the context.
 - d. Theologically, Scripture elsewhere does not teach that wealth versus poverty is the determining factor in a person's salvation (a faulty dualism); accordingly, just because James labels someone rich and another humble is not synonymous with stating someone is not saved or saved.

MINISTRIES ESTABLISHED & BUILDING

UNITED STATES

Albany, *New York*
Annapolis, *Maryland*
Atlanta, *Georgia*
Augusta, *Maine*
Austin, *Texas*
Bismarck, *North Dakota*
Boise, *Idaho*
Boston, *Massachusetts*
Denver, *Colorado*
Dover, *Delaware*
Carson City, *Nevada*
Cheyenne, *Wyoming*
Columbia, *South Carolina*
Columbus, *Ohio*
Concord, *New Hampshire*
Des Moines, *Iowa*
Hartford, *Connecticut*
Harrisburg, *Pennsylvania*
Helena, *Montana*
Honolulu, *Hawaii*
Jefferson City, *Missouri*
Lansing, *Michigan*
Lincoln, *Nebraska*
Little Rock, *Arkansas*
Madison, *Wisconsin*
Montpelier, *Vermont*
Nashville, *Tennessee*
Oklahoma City, *Oklahoma*
Olympia, *Washington*
Phoenix, *Arizona*
Providence, *Rhode Island*
Raleigh, *North Carolina*
Richmond, *Virginia*
Sacramento, *California*
Salem, *Oregon*
Santa Fe, *New Mexico*
Springfield, *Illinois*
Topeka, *Kansas*
Trenton, *New Jersey*

INTERNATIONAL

Abuja, *Nigeria*
Accra, *Ghana*
Antananarivo, *Madagascar*
Asunción, *Paraguay*
Bangui, *Central African Republic*
Brasilia, *Brazil*
Bucharest, *Romania*
Bujumbura, *Burundi*
Dodoma, *Tanzania*
Freetown, *Sierra Leone*
Georgetown, *Guyana*
Kiev, *Ukraine*
Kigali, *Rwanda*
Kinshasa, *Democratic Republic of the Congo*
Libreville, *Gabon*
Lomé, *Togo*
Lusaka, *Zambia*
Malabo, *Equatorial Guinea*
Maputo, *Mozambique*
Mexico City, *Mexico*
Monrovia, *Liberia*
Montevideo, *Uruguay*
Nairobi, *Kenya*
N'Djamena, *Tchad*
Ouagadougou, *Burkina Faso*
Port Moresby, *Papua New Guinea*
Porto-Novo, *Benin*
Quito, *Ecuador*
Riga, *Latvia*
San Jose, *Costa Rica*
Suva, *Fiji*
Tegucigalpa, *Honduras*
Vilnius, *Lithuania*
Warsaw, *Poland*
Yamoussoukro, *Cote d'Ivoire*
Yaoundé, *Cameroun*