

James

Lesson #10, Chapter 3 Overview

The goal of this lesson is to teach you how to look at and begin to study a text of Scripture. *Observation* is a necessary part of Bible study, but can often be overlooked or rushed through. Observation begins with reading through the chapter and then reading and rereading it again and again! At this stage in our Bible study you're noticing and then recording what God has put into the chapter. You're not making any interpretations about what it means or how it applies to your life—that will come later. Don't rush through this lesson. Set aside time this week to peer into the living and abiding Word of God. You'll be glad you did!

I've included Chapter 3 at the end of this lesson so you can print it out and mark it up if you'd like. I find it helps me see items more easily if I'm marking and noting things as I go.

1. To begin, read through Chapter 3. Now, *summarize* the contents of Chapter 3. This is not the time to be super detailed; instead, think of trying to tell a 4th grader the contents of the chapter.
 - a. Summarize paragraph 1 (verses 1-12).

 - b. Summarize paragraph 2 (verses 13-18).

2. After reviewing the chapter and what you wrote for your summaries, ask yourself: What is the *main point* of this chapter? How do all these details and events reveal the main idea of the chapter? Record your answer below.

3. Next, look for a verse in the chapter that best summarizes the contents of the chapter. You might be tempted to choose your favorite verse here, but please don't do that. Instead, *consider which verse best sums up what's in the chapter*. Write down the verse you chose here.

4. Now you're ready to *title* your chapter. Your 3-5 word title should reflect the contents of the chapter. Remember, a title's purpose is to help you remember what is in each chapter.

5. List your observations about the *tongue* in this chapter. Be sure to note the verse references as well.

6. The word *tame/tamed* is used a bit in this chapter. List what you observe and where you found it.

7. What do you learn about *wisdom* in this chapter? Be sure to include the verse references with your answer.

8. Now make a list of any things that *control other things* like a "bridle." Be sure to cite where you found them.

9. Now, make a list of the kinds of illustrations James uses. You don't have to write down the whole illustration; just note what he uses to illustrate a point, like *horses*, for example. Be sure to include the verse references with your answer.

10. List what you learn about *earthly wisdom* in this chapter. Be sure to include the verse references with your answer.

11. Now, list what you learn about *God's wisdom*, along with where you found it.

There's more observations to be found to this chapter than what I've asked you here. If you're eager for more, try looking for and noting:

- *References to time*
- *Repeated words*
- *Transition words like "for," "therefore," "so," "finally."*
- *Commands*
- *Comparisons*
- *Contrasts*
- *Lists of words, phrases or related thoughts*

12. Write down *at least* one thing you thought was interesting from this chapter.

James Chapter 3

1 Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment.

2 For we all stumble in many ways. If anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body as well.

3 Now if we put the bits into the horses' mouths so that they will obey us, we direct their entire body as well.

4 Look at the ships also, though they are so great and are driven by strong winds, are still directed by a very small rudder wherever the inclination of the pilot desires.

5 So also the tongue is a small part of the body, and yet it boasts of great things. See how great a forest is set aflame by such a small fire!

6 And the tongue is a fire, the very world of iniquity; the tongue is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body, and sets on fire the course of our life, and is set on fire by hell.

7 For every species of beasts and birds, of reptiles and creatures of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by the human race.

8 But no one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison.

9 With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God;

10 from the same mouth come both blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be this way.

11 Does a fountain send out from the same opening both fresh and bitter water?

12 Can a fig tree, my brethren, produce olives, or a vine produce figs? Nor can salt water produce fresh.

13 Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom.

14 But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth.

15 This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic.

16 For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing.

17 But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy.

18 And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.