

HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE

THE LETTER OF JAMES



Chapter 3

Discussion Overview: In Chapter 2, James is talking about theme of poverty and riches and we see a hard turn in Chapter 3 to unpacking the theme of wisdom and obedience especially in the area of speech. 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 3

Observations:

- Answer the 5 W's: who, what, why, when, where
- What words are repeated?
- What themes are reiterated in Chapter 3 that were brought up in Chapter 2 or 1?
- 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
 - Examples: James uses a horse, ship, and fire illustration to explain the dangers of the tongue

*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