



CHRISTIANITY WITHOUT THE RELIGION

# BIBLE SURVEY

THE UN-DEVOTIONAL

JAMES, 2 PETER,  
& JUDE  
Week 2



# Righteous Rahab

## DAY 8

James 2:18-26

How would you compare Rahab's faith to that of Noah, Abraham or David? How did each demonstrate their faith?

**1.** What answer does James give those who want to oppose his statement of faith with an argument of works (vs.18-20)?

**2.** How is the life of Abraham an example of active faith (vs. 20-24)? How does his willingness to sacrifice Isaac, all due to the command of God, demonstrate active faith? See Genesis 22:1-19 and Hebrews 11:8-19, especially verses 17-19.

**3.** Consider Rahab's situation in Joshua 2 and 6:20-25. How did her actions to protect the spies demonstrate her faith in God (Jas 2:25)? See Hebrews 11:31.

**1.** How would you define faith? Is it simply knowledge of Jesus? Or is it *knowing* Jesus, and treating others as he would treat them? Is it produced by human initiative or is it a gift of God, active in our lives by his grace?

*James sets forth a case for dynamic **faith that produces works**—works that are the evidence that God has justified you by his grace through faith. This faith is dynamic and Christ-centered. It is a faith that produces good works in our lives because Christ lives his life in us. Thus, we are not justified by our works, but by faith, which is a gift of God. Abraham, at age 75, answered God's call (Ge 12:1-3). Abraham's faith in the promise of God was credited as righteousness (Ge 15:6). Abraham was not righteous because of his good works. He was righteous because he believed God, and his faith was "credited as righteousness" (Ro 4:5). His faith remained resolute when God called for the sacrifice of Isaac, the son of promise (Ge 22:1-19). James teaches that salvation is possible only by the grace of God.*

### OPENING

up to the Word

### DIGGING

into the Word

### LIVING

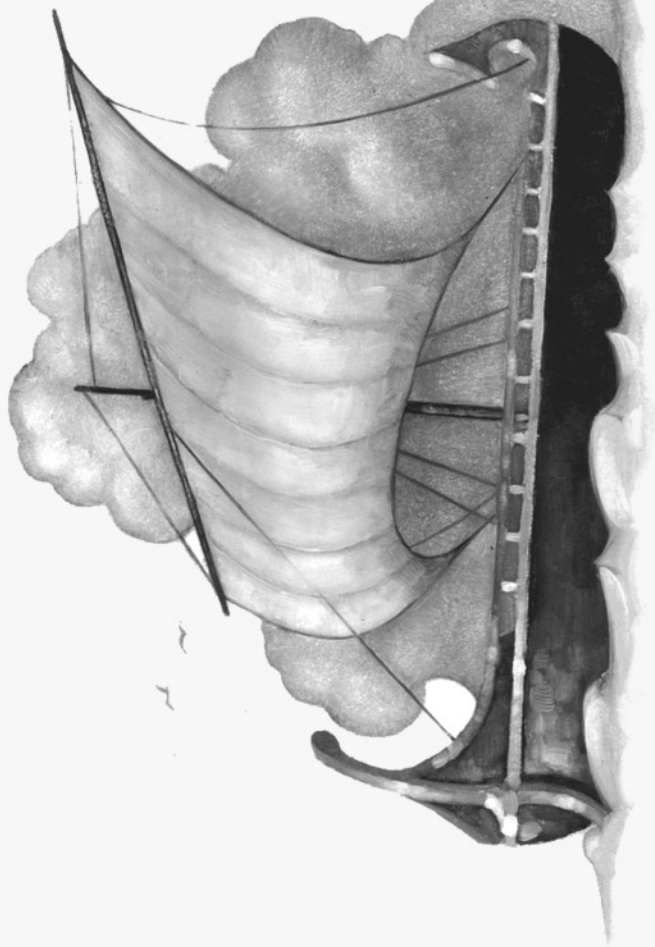
out the Word

### WINDOW

on the Word

*“Or take  
ships as an  
example.  
Although  
they are so  
large and are  
driven by  
strong winds,  
they are  
steered by a  
very small  
rudder  
wherever the  
pilot wants  
to go.”*

*James 3:4*



# Curb Your Tongue, Knave!

DAY 9

James 3:1-4

Who do you guess uses their tongues the most?

(a) preachers, (b) counselors, (c) politicians,  
(d) teenagers (e) teachers, (f) lawyers, (g)  
telemarketers.

**1.** How does control of the tongue demonstrate the ability to control the body (v. 2)?

**2.** What two analogies does James use to highlight the power of the tongue (vs. 3-4)?

**1.** Do you consider yourself a teacher? If so, what kind? (a) college professor, (b) high school teacher, (c) elementary teacher, (d) parent, (e) trainer, (f) by example.

**2.** What is your responsibility as a teacher?  
(a) truth, (b) faithful living, (c) discipline, (d) tell humorous stories, (e) crowd control.

**3.** Consider how you use your tongue. Do you need a bit in your mouth to control you? Or a rudder to turn you to God?

*In this passage James moves to examples that demonstrate **living faith**. People will face the judgment of God not just based on their knowledge and beliefs, but on their entire lives. As a horse is bridled to control its actions (v. 3), so anyone living a Christ-centered life will grow in God's grace, as they are empowered to govern their tongue (v. 2).*

## OPENING

up to the Word

## DIGGING

into the Word

## LIVING

out the Word

## WINDOW

on the Word

## Tongues of Fire

James 3:5-12

**OPENING**  
up to the Word

What creates the most damage in this world? (a) wind, (b) water, (c) air pollution, (d) the tongue.

**DIGGING**  
into the Word

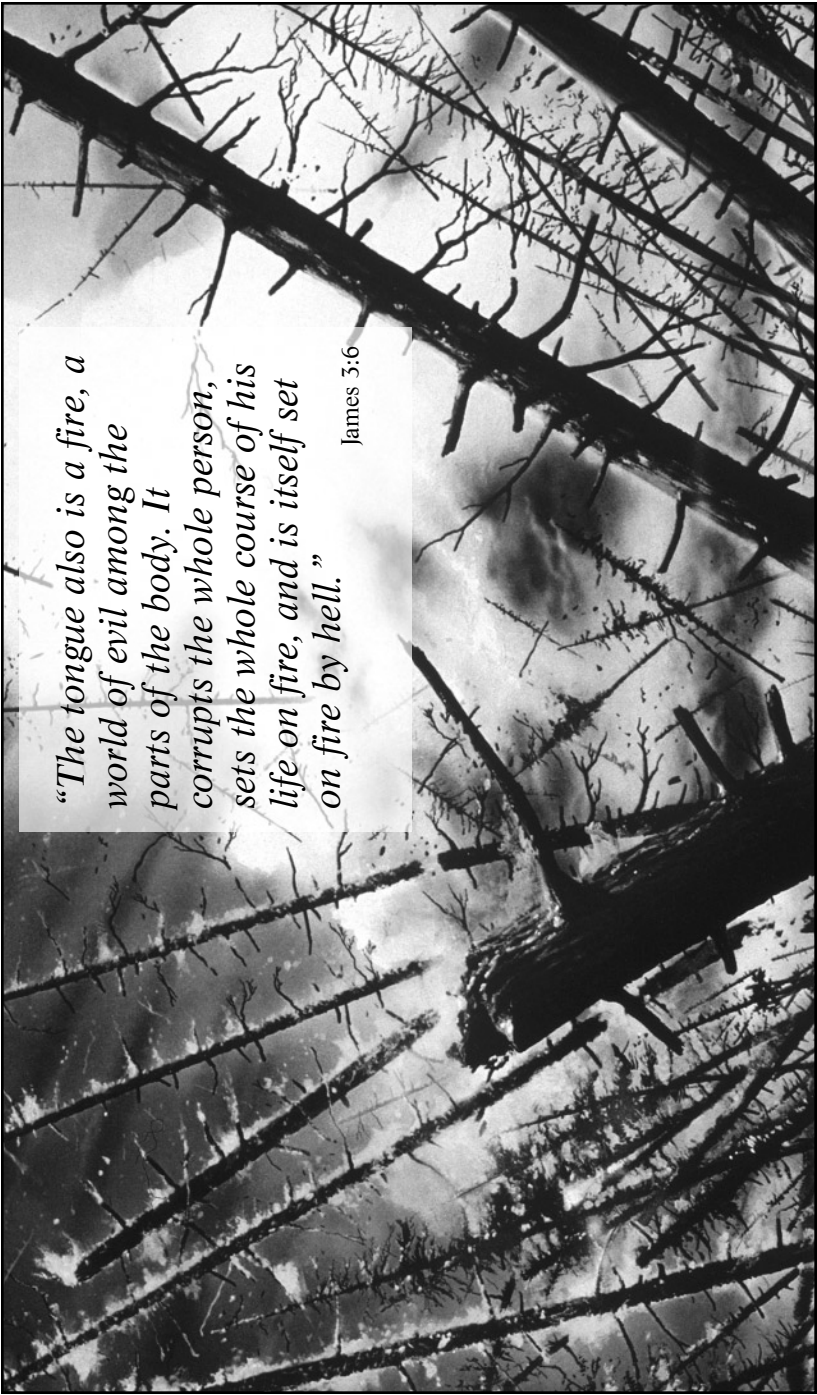
1. How does the tongue show immaturity (v. 5)? How is the tongue, when out of control, like a fire (v. 6)?
2. Why do you think God says it is easier to tame any wild animal than the tongue (vs. 7-8)?
3. What is God's purpose for the tongue (vs. 9-10)? How does the way we treat others show our faith? Review James 2:8.
4. What analogies help establish the purpose for the tongue (3:11-12)?

**LIVING**  
out the Word

1. Why is the tongue so hard to control? How can it be tamed?
2. When was the last time you regretted something you said? What do you *wish* you had said?
3. Today, yield to Christ in you so that you might be used to encourage others.

**WINDOW**  
on the Word

*James points out the self-contradictory nature of **praising God while cursing men** (v. 9), for human beings are made in the image of God (Ge 1:26, 27). Humans have been given power of reason to choose good over evil, and how we will treat others. The evidence of a Christ-follower's personal relationship with God will flow from God's grace, providing concern and care for others who are created in the image of God.*



*“The tongue also is a fire, a  
world of evil among the  
parts of the body. It  
corrupts the whole person,  
sets the whole course of his  
life on fire, and is itself set  
on fire by hell.”*

James 3:6

## Kingdom Wisdom

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James 3:13-18

### OPENING

up to the Word

Who is the wisest person you know? (a) your father, (b) your mother, (c) your grandparent, (d) the chief executive of your country, (e) your spouse, (f) your pastor. Is that person wise because of a “what” or a “who” or both?

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### DIGGING

into the Word

**1.** How does one show wisdom and understanding (v. 13)?

**2.** Can Christian hearts harbor bitterness (v. 14)? How does earthly wisdom reveal itself (vs. 15-16)? What is the source of this evil?

**3.** What are the results of wisdom from heaven (vs. 17-18)? How are these fruits of wisdom indicative of faith produced by our risen Lord?

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### LIVING

out the Word

**1.** Time for a heart exam. How is your heart doing? (a) ambitious; (b) bitter, (c) cheerful; (d) desperately wicked; (e) faithful; (f) some good, some evil.

**2.** Now, time for a wisdom check. List how many of the wonderful fruits from God you can see him producing in your life(vs. 17-18).

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### WINDOW

on the Word

*James continues to build on his theme of faith by comparing it with **wisdom**. Teachers must move beyond theoretical aspects of wisdom to apply wisdom to everyday actions (v. 13). Likewise, faith, when it actively bonds with God's true wisdom, results in a “harvest of righteousness” (v. 18), in contrast to the attitudes that lead elsewhere (1:20).*



# Wisdom

*Wisdom is the right use of knowledge. To know is not to be wise. Many men know a great deal, and are all the greater fools for it. To know how to use knowledge is to have wisdom.*

Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834-1892)

*Any man who understands his own foolishness is already a little wise.*

Jewish Proverb

*God never meant that man should scale the heavens by strides of human wisdom.*

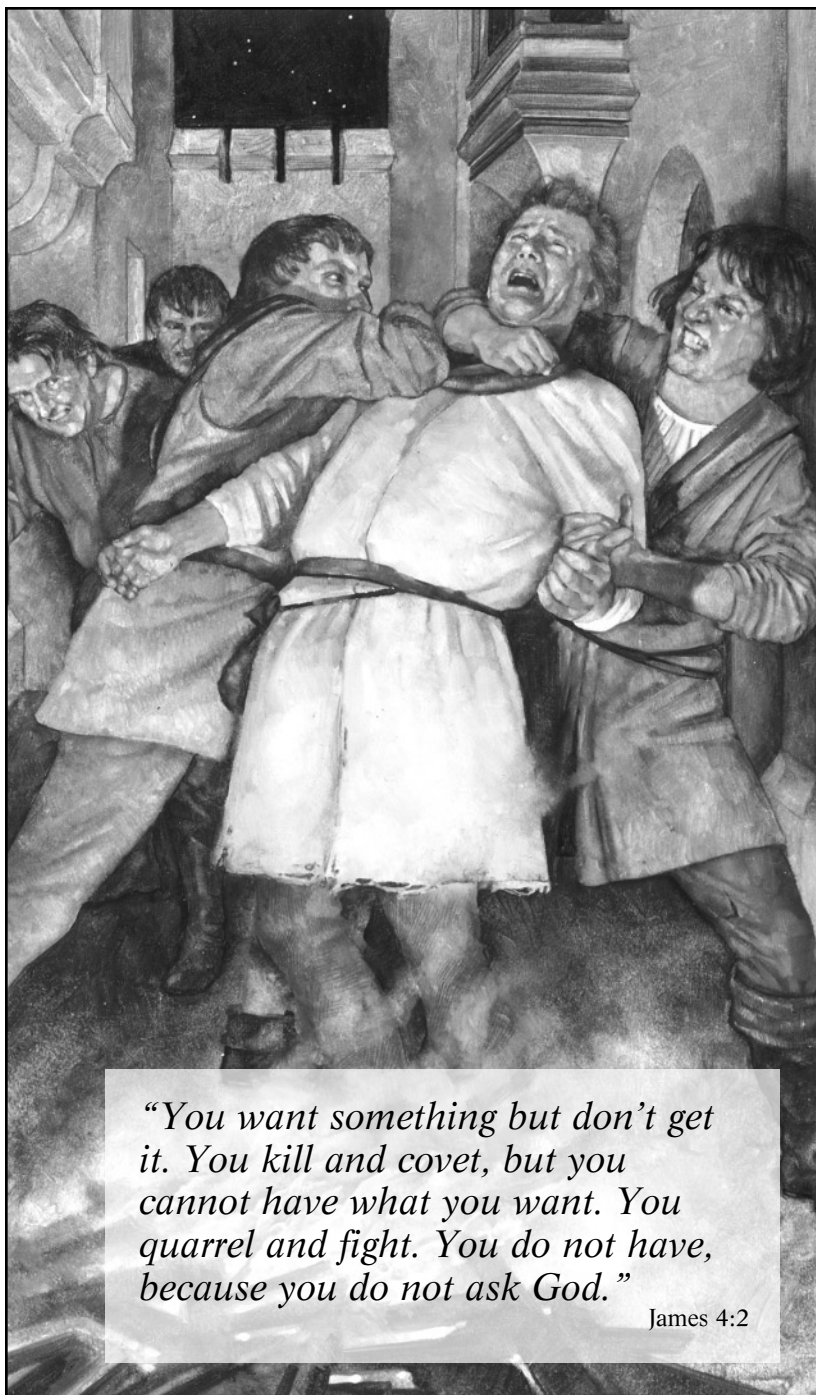
William Cowper  
(1731-1800)

*Wisdom does not inspect but behold. We must look a long time before we can see.*

Henry Thoreau  
(1817-1862)

*A wise man sees as much as he ought, not as much as he can.*

Michel Eyquem de Montaigne



*"You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God."*

James 4:2

### James 4:1-6

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With whom do you have your biggest fights?  
(a) strangers, (b) boss, (c) children, (d) spouse,  
(e) enemies, (f) friends.

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**1.** What causes fights and arguments (vs.1-2)? Did Jesus identify the same cause (Mk 7:20-23)?

**2.** What are the consequences of failing to surrender and yield to Jesus (Jas 4:3-6)?

**3.** What mistakes are made by contentious individuals who lack the wisdom of God (3:17-4:6)?

**4.** What do you think James means when he says that God gives us *more* grace (v. 6)?

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**1.** How many religious wars are being fought today? Perhaps better said, how many wars being fought do not have religious motivations?

**2.** Can you define *humble*? Why do you think God gives grace to the humble and not to the proud?

**3.** Why would God place an envious spirit in us (v. 5)?

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*While verse 5 in most translations speaks of God causing the spirit in us to **envy intensely**, the NIV has a footnote suggesting alternate renderings of "God jealously longs for the spirit he made to live in us" or "the Spirit he cause to live in us longs jealously." This seems to be the sense of verse 5, bearing in mind Old Testament passages that refer to God jealously desiring the love and devotion of his people.*

### OPENING

up to the Word

### DIGGING

into the Word

### LIVING

out the Word

### WINDOW

on the Word

# Submission of Believers

The New Testament calls believers to a lifestyle of submission to God (4:7) and to each other (Eph 5:21). To submit means to yield to the authority or will of another. Christians are therefore called to serve God and other human beings just as Christ did. The following scriptural examples of submission, when read in context, show that our submission to other human beings and institutions should always be in conformity to God's will as shown in his word.

Who Submits?	To Whom?	Text
Everyone (believers)	Governing authorities	Ro 13:1,5 Tit 3:1 1Pe 2:13
Master	Servant	Jn 13:13-16
Corinthian believers	Paul's coworkers	1Co 16:16
Believers	One another	Eph 5:21
Wives	Their husbands	Eph 5:22, 24 Tit 2:5 1Pe 3:1,5
The Church	Christ	Eph 5:24
Servants	Their masters	Tit 2:9 1Pe 2:18
Believers	God	Heb 12:9 Jas 4:7
Young people	Those who are older	1Pe 5:5

# Lift Me Up, Lord

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DAY 13

James 4:7-10

Recall the words to the hymn, *Nearer My God to Thee*. When we truly understand that God is not filled with wrath, but is best understood as being defined as love, why wouldn't anyone desire to be closer to him?

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**1.** James describes two choices for Christians and clearly states which choice they should make (v. 7). How can you submit to God and resist the devil in your everyday choices? Consider 2 Corinthians 10:2-5.

**2.** What active steps bring the Christian nearer to God (vs. 8-10)?

**3.** How does humility link the thought of submission (v. 7) and being lifted up by God (v. 10)?

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**1.** Consider the spiritual steps given here to draw nearer to God (vs. 8-10). How are you actively pursuing this process of spiritual growth?

**2.** Can laughter be an expression of Christian joy?

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*James personifies evil as demons (2:19) and the **devil** (4:7). He is contrasting the evil deeds of the kingdoms of this world with the goodness and righteousness of the kingdom of heaven.*

## OPENING

up to the Word

## DIGGING

into the Word

## LIVING

out the Word

## WINDOW

on the Word

## Here Comes the Judge!

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James 4:11-17

**OPENING**  
up to the Word

Have you ever heard the expression *carpe diem*? Of course it does not mean (a) eat fish today, (b) wait for tomorrow or (c) seize tomorrow, but rather it exhorts us to (d) seize the day. How can you seize the day?

**DIGGING**  
into the Word

1. How does slander become idolatry—exalting our own opinion above that of God (vs. 11-12)?
2. God ultimately may intervene to change even minor aspects of our lives (4:13-15). While we realize he might do so, does he, most of the time?

**LIVING**  
out the Word

1. How thankful for life are you? Do you take tomorrow for granted?
2. How do you understand God's will (v. 15)? Do you somewhat fatalistically believe God has predestined your ultimate destiny, or do you feel he invites you to respond to and determine an answer to his love and grace?

**WINDOW**  
on the Word

**The Christian worldview** is that God gives life, both physically and spiritually, and sustains it. James claims that God does not bring evil on us (see 1:13-14), and that our best intentions and efforts do not guarantee us tomorrow (4:14-15). So, although God brings eternal life to us (1:18), he does not guarantee that our physical life will extend beyond our next breath. Faith in God involves trusting in Christ and resting in Him.

*“Brothers, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against his brother or judges him speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgment on it.”*

James 4:11

