

4. These are three imperative moods expressed by the reversionist. We have been charting the imperative moods in the Book of James, but those that occur in quotes James assigns to individuals to expose their erroneous thoughts and expressions are being ignored. These three fall into this category.
5. “Go in peace” is not what this reversionist says. The verb “go” is the present active imperative of **ὑπάγω** (*hupágō*) and in context contains the idea of a repetitive statement.
6. What follows is the prepositional phrase, “in peace,” the preposition **ἐν** (*en*) plus the noun **εἰρήνη** (*eirēnē*): “in peace.” This phrase, “Go in peace” is a Jewish expression that has been used historically to wish someone goodbye. The Hebrew equivalent of this saying is, **הלך שלום** (*Halak shalom*): “Go in peace.”
7. This is the Jewish way of saying, “Have a great day.” Generally intended as a friendly wish and farewell, its use here is hypocritically used to “blow the couple off,” which is an English idiom meant, “to refuse to take notice of or to deal with; to ignore.”¹
8. This is said in the form of a command that is repeated for emphasis, “Go in peace. Go in peace.” A person who is cold and hungry does not have peace at the moment. Therefore, this is an insulting comment.
9. Remember, James is painting a picture to depict a believer who is in reversionism while dealing with an unbeliever who is destitute. If this couple is going to respond positively to this man, he must display compassion and benevolence to them.
10. Some believers who behave this way are referred to by unbelievers as hypocrites. This man is not a hypocrite. This word is defined as, “a person who acts in contradiction to his or her stated beliefs or feelings.”²
11. Instead, this man is a believer who is in reversionism. Without divine guidance from the Holy Spirit, the two people who are destitute cannot see his faith, but rather his reversionistic behavior. While in the cosmic systems, he expresses who he really is.
12. And he is not done yet. His next comment is the present passive imperative of the verb **θερμαίνω** (*thermaínō*): “be warm.” If two people who are in need of warm clothing are told by their hoped for benefactor to “be warn,” they are going to think he is either crazy or ridiculous.

¹ Meriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, 11th ed., s.v. “blow off.”

² Ibid., s.v. “hypocrite.”



13. The environment both are experiencing is cold and discomfort. They are in need, they approach a man of means to plead for his assistance and he tells them, “Be warm.”
14. Not that this man has any interest in evangelizing these two people, he could not even if he were to try. Cold people need to be warm in order to concentrate on the communication of supernatural information which he unable to communicate while in reversionism.
15. Principle: Unbelievers cannot concentrate on biblical subjects until their physical needs are met. Even then, only a few will respond to the gospel after these needs are met. The same may be said about those who are hungry.
16. This is the next thing the carnal believer has to say, the present passive imperative of the verb **χορτάζω (*chortázō*)**: “be filled.” This couple is obviously not starving to death, but they are malnourished and in need of food.
17. What the verse reveals in its second half is the failure of the reversionist to meet their current need for warmth and food. Therefore, the issue of evangelizing them is not top priority at the moment. Top priority is the provision of warm clothing and a nourishing meal.
18. This would be an expression of compassion and benevolence to which the man and woman would be most grateful. Their gratitude for such assistance would increase their chance of listening to their benefactor’s presentation of the gospel.
19. The gospel would obviously require the clear message of faith alone in Christ alone. What follows would be from the free wills of the couple: neither of them, one or the other, or both might respond. The additional information that they would be citizens of God’s family to whom the Father would provide their necessities would be the next biblical truth to follow.
20. Some might conclude from this sequence of events that one person is unable to provide these necessities for everyone which is true. However, it is not “all the needy” that are at issue, but just those the divine decree provides with the opportunity to engage.
21. The believer in this scenario is in reversionism. He cannot respond to this situation like a person who had grown in grace and learned the principle of loving unconditionally those in his periphery.
22. This circumstance presents the opportunity for grace to provide logistics with the hopeful denouement of winning their souls for Christ. Instead, this man fails the test of grace.



23. In the circumstance presented by James, the two unbelievers are not impressed with the man's thoughtless comments.
24. There are some principles that emerge from this example that apply to every believer in his advance in the grace plan of God. We will illustrate a few issues which we all face in the ongoing process of growing in grace.

Issues that Hinder Evangelism and Prevent Efficient Growth in Grace

1. Food is not a luxury, but a necessity for the sustenance of physical life. Those who are hungry because they are destitute do not have the physical or mental stability to concentrate on supernatural information for the salvation of their souls.
2. The unbeliever's top priority is food for the stomach's sake. His condition is not just the fact he is hungry, but the mental stress over his inability to consistently acquire necessities.
3. The Lord presented a dissertation on the necessities of life in:

Matthew 6:31 "Do not worry, then, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear for clothing?'

v. 32 "For the Gentiles eagerly keep on seeking all these things [**details of life**]; for your heavenly Father knows [**in the divine decree**] that you habitually need [**customary present active indicative of $\chi\rho\acute{\iota}\zeta\omega$ (*chrézō*)**] **all of these things.**

v. 33 "But seek first the kingdom of God [**through the study, retention, and application of His Word**] and His righteousness [**through the filling of the Holy Spirit**], and all these things [**logistical grace support**] will be supplied to you for your advantage.

v. 34 "So stop worrying about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself [**the principle of one day at a time**]. Each day has enough trouble of its own." (EXT)

4. So the key to the guarantee of divine logistics is to be a member of the Royal Family of God. Unbelievers have no access to that promise. To do so they must have some stability of thought for concentration on the solution which is the gospel.



5. There are several reasons some people are not mentally stable enough to take in the gospel, let alone doctrine. In the twenty-first century, an increasing number of our population is doing chemical damage to their ability to think rationally.
6. The principle to which all should subscribe is “all in moderation.” Excess is the issue, but excess leads inevitably to addiction, whether alcohol, drugs, or inhalants.
7. A person who is addicted to any of these semi-controlled substances is incapable of sustained concentration and comprehension of any category of instruction.
8. In the medical field, often patients are given legitimate drugs that are necessary for recovery, but they often hinder the ability to concentrate on the study of academic subjects.
9. Others have physical impairments such as deafness and blindness and require various external means for learning information.
10. So there are some reasons, some illegitimate and some legitimate, for being unable to comprehend the gospel or take in the Word of God.
11. Two reasons we find in our passage are sparse clothing and a hungry stomach. What they get from the reversionistic believer are empty words. In the vernacular of our day, he would tell them, “Have a great day. Warm up and eat food.”
12. The verse continues with James’s criticism of these comments.
 1. It begins with the adversative conjunction, **δέ (dé)**: “but.” This is a conjunction of contrast that introduces what James insists this believer should have done.
 2. It begins with the aorist active subjunctive of **δίδωμι (dídōmi)**: “to give, bestow, offer, present.” It refers to the act of one person who does something for someone else.
 3. However, this is accompanied by the negative conjunction **μή (mē)**: “not.” “But you did not give them,” followed by the direct objects of what should have been given, the plural noun **ἐπιτήδειος (epitēdeios)**: “made for an end or purpose, i.e., things needful for the body.”
 4. This is another hapax legomenon used by James, this one stressing what the believer should have done for the needful couple. Note for what these necessities are needed: **τοῦ + σώμα (τού + sōma)**: “the body.”



5. The reversionistic believer is approached by a couple that is in need of clothing and nourishment. He dismisses them with insulting remarks. He has not only left them in their status quo, he also left them with a negative opinion of him: unkind and uncompassionate.
6. If the man had been an advanced believer, he would have offered a helping hand. He could have done so without it harming him individually or economically. But he didn't.
7. He enjoyed comfortable clothing with a full stomach and as such he would have been able to go to Bible class with a sharp mind and willing ear to grow in grace. He had neither because he is a hearer, but not a doer.
8. So we have a couple who needed assistance with regard to the needs of the body who were left to survive in the devil's world. The believer enjoyed these same physical necessities, yet he was in the same position spiritually as they were.
9. He had placed his personal faith in Jesus Christ for salvation and eternal life. He had the opportunity to grow in grace and may have done so at some point in the past, but now his faith in Christ was all he had.
10. As James put it in verse 14, "Is faith alone able to evangelize his neighbor? No, it cannot."
11. What we otherwise discern from this verse is that the soul is located in the body and to function it must coordinate with the brain. For the advancing believer it is imperative that the body be physically able to sustain concentration on the teaching of Bible doctrine.
12. For the presentation of the gospel to be understood, it requires the unbeliever to have the mental clarity to process incoming information from which a decision can be reached.
13. Unbelievers are destitute spiritually. Some are destitute physically and mentally. This combination requires the latter situation to be resolved before the former can have a hope of being effectively addressed.
14. The intended effectiveness is for the unbeliever to have clarity of thought when hearing the gospel in order to make an objective decision. Some people will respond positively while others negatively.
15. This is the result of the Law of Freedom. The unbeliever is a free agent and has the option to accept or reject the gospel message.
16. The body can have a negative effect on the soul. When these circumstances occur, it can often lead to negative volition when the gospel is presented because the body's deficiencies are not addressed first.



17. So by commanding the couple to, “Go! Be warm! Be filled!” James concludes the verse by asking the question, “what use is that?” The word “use” is the noun **ὄφελος** (*óphelos*): “advantage.” Here is the expanded translation of the verse:

James 2:16 If a believer should say to a couple who are unbelievers, “Go in peace [**שלום** **הלך** *Halak shalom*]. Be warm and be filled,” but you do not provide for them what is necessary for the body, what advantage is that? (EXT)

The Problem of Operational Death

James 2:17 Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself. (NASB)

1. It is personal faith in the veracity of biblical principles that allows the Holy Spirit to retain biblical thought in the believer’s soul, specifically in his stream of consciousness.
2. However, doctrine retained does not become active unless it is made operational by personal volition. Those who know a lot of doctrine, but do not consistently apply it; suffer from periods of Operational Death.
3. It is the application of the Word of God that facilitates its principles into paths of least resistance. Applying biblical principles fulfills the proclamation found in Hebrews 4:12, “The Word of God is alive and powerful.”
4. All legitimate production in the Christian’s life is only possible by knowledge of doctrinal concepts applied under the enabling power of the Holy Spirit. All else is human good which can decline into evil.
5. Although the believer who functions under the Spirit’s power may produce divine good, the power is in the veracity of the Word not the physical energy of the believer.
6. The advanced believer, under the power of the Spirit, should consider himself a conduit of divine power released into the scrum of the Angelic Conflict.
7. We are warriors who are making the advance in the Lord’s phalanx. We are trained by the Holy Spirit. We learn to use the artillery contained in the divine armory of ideas.
8. The weapons found there are for personal internal and external application into the devil’s world. The Holy Spirit is the drill Sergeant; we are combatants in the Lord’s army.



9. The crisis that plagues Christendom today is the failure to function under the enabling power of the Holy Spirit through application of Bible doctrine resident in the souls of the saved.
10. This predicament has produced the problem of Operational Death due to a breakdown in the spiritual mechanics of believers. Failure to understand the doctrine—the basic doctrine—of the filling of the Holy Spirit is what allows this operation to occur.
11. Associated with this failure is the inability to process doctrine into the soul's *kardía*. Some know some doctrine, but its intrinsic power cannot be applied if the Holy Spirit is not the catalyst behind its application.
12. All production in the believer's life is dependent upon an inventory of biblical truth and its application under the enabling power of the Holy Spirit. Human energy, enthusiasm, and action are not proscribed by the absence of the Spirit's guidance and power.
13. Well-intentioned "good works" are neutralized by the fact that energy of the flesh can only produce human good and its protégé,³ evil.
14. This occurs when a believer is in the throes of emotional revolt, a subject eloquently discussed by R. B. Thieme, Jr., in his book, *Reversionism*:

Emotional activity is designed to operate in subordination to the absolutes of Bible doctrine that reside in the mentality of the soul. If the [*kardía*] contains doctrine, the emotional response is appreciation for truth and divine viewpoint. The result is capacity for life, love, happiness. However, if the [*kardía*] is controlled by the sin nature, the authority of doctrine is rejected and the emotions react with wide mood swings—irrationality, egocentricity, instability, imbalance.
(pp. 26–27)

Corrupted emotion is always the result of the sin nature's refluxing in one of three areas: the area of weakness, which produces personal sins; the lust pattern which produces trends toward legalism or antinomianism; or the area of strength, which produces human good.

Emotional revolt is tantamount to the emotion fornicating with the sin nature and with Satan's policy of good and evil.⁴ The true function of the emotion as responder is reversed.

³ "One who is protected or trained or whose career is furthered by a person of experience, prominence, or influence" (*Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* (2003), s.v. "protégé.")

⁴ In our study of *James: Chapter One*, we depicted emotion functioning as a pimp for the sin nature tempting the soul's volition. When volition responds to the temptation, the Holy Spirit exits the soul, causing resultant fornication to produce a ménage à trois: "When the lust pattern's agent provocateur copulates with free will, it creates a ménage à trois resulting in a pregnancy and, when sin gives birth, it delivers a child born dead" (James 1:15, EXT).



Once emotion assumes the role of aggressor, it becomes a tool of the sin nature. This answers a very pertinent question: Why are so many believers unable to apply doctrine even though they may take it in regularly? Emotional revolt! (p. 27)

As Bible doctrine is neglected or rejected, Christendom becomes increasingly heretical and controlled by emotionalism. The spiritual life must be based solely on the infallible Word of God; otherwise, it is merely “experience.” Christians minus doctrine think and act like unbelievers. They rely on the unreliable—*human experience and human viewpoint* (Jeremiah 17:5).⁵ (p. 28)

15. The problem James addresses in chapters one and two is those who are hearers of the Word, but not doers of it. This may be characterized as Operational Death.
16. To be a doer of the Word depends on facilitated doctrine in the *kardia* followed by application to life and circumstances. This is not what is happening in verse 17 as James continues his analysis of Operational Death.
17. The verse begins with demonstrative adverb: **οὕτως (houtōs)** and the conjunction **καί (kai)**: “Even so.” This is how the NASB translates these words whereas the NIV offers, “In the same way,” which is probably better since this phrase takes us back to the comments made by the man in verse 16.
18. This person’s failure is the expression of hollow words that when interpreted mean absolutely nothing and do not address the problems confronted by the cold and famished couple.
19. When a believer is in reversionism he is operationally dead. He may know some doctrine which he accumulated by faith, but he has blackout of the soul with regard to application. He functions on human viewpoint motivated by negative volition.
20. Rather than respond in a way that alleviates the suffering of the couple, he uses a vacuous and meaningless bromide: “Go in peace—*Halak shalom*. Be warm and be filled.” They would not have asked for clothing and food if they had possessed the means of acquiring them.
21. This leads James to follow the words, “Even so,” with the phrase “the faith”: the definite article **ἡ (hē)** + **πίστις (pístis)**. It is important to note the definite article since its use refers to the whole body of doctrine associated with faith. In this context, it refers to the application of doctrine to circumstances.

⁵ R. B. Thieme, Jr., *Reversionism*, 2d ed. (Houston: R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries, 2000), 26–27, 28.



πίστις: faith as fidelity to Christian teaching. This point of view calls for ἔργον (érgon⁶) as well as the kind of πίστις that represents only one side of true piety: James 2:14, 17, 18, 20, 22, 26.

That which is believed, body of faith / belief / teaching (an article of faith that was firm and unshakable). That which, according to God's will, is to be believed.⁷

22. From these excerpts, we learn that “the faith” is technical for Bible doctrine in the soul. In our context of James 2, we find the issue is not only doctrine in the soul, but also its application to the circumstances one engages in his Christian walk.
23. The man in verse 16 did not do. He had faith due to the fact he was a believer. He had some doctrine, but due to Operational Death he did not have the filling of the Holy Spirit, he had no recall of doctrine, and, therefore, did not apply it.
24. The end result is exposed by the phrase, **ἡ (hē) + πίστις (pístis)**: “the faith.” This indicates he had faith, but faith is useless if it does not have an object and the object of faith for a believer is the Word of God.
25. When salvation is in view, the object of one’s faith must be Jesus Christ. Faith in anything else is useless. Faith in one’s morality—useless. Faith in one’s financial contributions to a non-profit—useless. Faith in walking the aisle, feeling sorry for you sins, joining the church, getting baptized, tithing, giving your testimony, and faith in doing good works—useless. Faith in one’s accolades from others because of doing these things—useless.
26. It is interesting that James’s epistle is the first entry in the New Testament canon. His theme so far has to do with taking in the Word of God and applying it to life and circumstances.
27. At the same time he is arguing about those who hear the working object of their faith which is the Word of God taught by James, but not placing their faith in the Word resident in their souls as the working object for its application to others.
28. The absolute summum bonum of the Christian way of life is not just the hearing of the Word, but the application of the Word. The phrase, *hē pístis*: “the faith,” must have a working object from resident doctrine in the soul.

⁶ ἔργον: “Of works of faith, meaning springing from faith; with πίστις, of the faith, (James 2:14, 17–26 [cf. especially with vv. 22, 26])” (Spiros Zodhiates, ed. *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, rev. ed. [Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 1993], 651).

⁷ Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature*, 3d ed., rev. & ed. Frederick William Danker (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000), 820.



Summary of the phrase, ἡ (*hē*) + πίστις (*pístis*): “the faith”:

1. This term refers to what is believed and in Scripture it has two major applications: **(1)** the working object of faith is Jesus Christ for salvation and **(2)** the working object for spiritual growth is Bible doctrine.
2. There are two underlying principles that pertain to both of these objects: **(1)** the grace of God as opposed to human works and **(2)** the rejection of human merit or virtue.

Romans 4:16 For this reason it is by means of faith, in order that it might be in accordance with grace; that the promise of salvation might be valid to all humanity; not only to those from the law, but to those Gentiles from Abraham’s faith⁸; who is the pattern with reference to all of us.” (EXT)

3. Because the noun *pístis* and the verb form **πιστεύω** (*pisteúō*) are transitive and demand objects, then their function is associated with absolute grace.
4. Therefore, in the act of salvation, the object of one’s faith must be directed toward Jesus Christ for it to be efficacious. After salvation, the object of one’s faith must be directed toward Scripture for it to be efficacious in the spiritual life of the believer.
5. Therefore, the result of faith when directed toward these two objects is a nonmeritorious function. The one who places his faith in either of them receives no credit for the benefits derived but rather unmerited grace.
6. The spiritual growth of the believer is illustrated by the visual that goes by two titles, **(1)** Grace Apparatus for Perception and **(2)** Operation Z. Its diagram develops the process by which an unbeliever or a believer comprehends information from the infinite Word of God.
7. The unbeliever is able to understand the gospel of Jesus Christ by the common grace ministry of the Holy Spirit, Who serves as a human spirit in order to communicate the gospel message so the unbeliever can consider the divine process for obtaining eternal life.
8. The gospel must be communicated in such a way that the only object to which the unbeliever may direct his faith is Jesus Christ. The unbeliever must be allowed to exercise his Law of Freedom to decide whether he believes the gospel’s message or not.

(End JAS2-26. See JAS2-27 for continuation of study at p. 261.)

⁸ Abraham was saved when he was a Semitic Gentile, living in the third dynasty of Ur around the year of 2100 B.C. (Genesis 11:28, 31). He did not become a Jew until he was 99 years old (Genesis 17).

