

This brings us to verse 15 and the good advice about what they ought to say. Yet, what they ought to say was not resident in their inventory of ideas.

Principle: If you do not have resident divine guidance from an inventory of biblical absolutes, then your ability to make good decisions from a position of biblical power is unavailable.

This brings us to:

James 4:15 Instead, you ought to say, “If [ἐάν (*eán*)] the Lord wills [aorist active subjunctive of θέλω (*thélō*): “to desire, to intend, to design, to decree], we will live and also do this or that.” (NASB)

1. The phrase, “If the Lord wills” refers to two doctrines: (1) The Divine Decree and (2) Divine Guidance. The believer’s ability to make good decisions from a position of strength depends entirely on his knowledge, recall, facilitation, and application of Bible doctrine.
2. The two men in context have cooked up an idea to “make a profit” in free enterprise, but without any divine guidance and the strategy they concoct is based on loosely conceived ideas minus absolutes.
3. What they do not consider is divine approval. The plan they concocted in James 4, verse 13, is haram-scarum: careless, disorganized, and reckless.
4. They are free to execute their ill-conceived plan, but it is not one God would support. Therefore, James suggests they ought to consider asking if the Lord wills—would He desire, intend, design, or decree such a plan as theirs?
5. The situation concocted by these men has not resulted in them considering several doctrines. They have not considered whether their idea, as nebulous as it is, is contained in God’s Divine Decree or the Doctrine of Divine Guidance. Have they even given any thought to their own soul?
6. The human soul is imputed to the biological life of each individual at physical birth and includes the following essence:
 1. **Self-consciousness:** Man is aware of his own existence and is able to relate to both animate life and inanimate life (Acts 20:10).
 2. **Mentality:** Self-consciousness requires the thinking part of the human soul and is made up of two parts: (1) the mind: recollection, memory, feeling, perception, thinking, willing, and reasoning and (2) the heart: frame of reference, memory, vocabulary, categories, norms and standards, and application. (Matthew 22:37)



3. **Volition:** Man has the option to be positive or negative toward anything in life. Free will refers to the sovereignty of humans to make choices that are not determined by prior causes or by divine intervention. Therefore, human volition in the soul is independent and the central element in resolving the angelic conflict before the Divine Court of Appeals. (Galatians 3:26)
4. **Conscience.** This is the police department of the soul which evaluates information presently contained in the inventory of his soul's norms and standards. (Luke 24:16)

NOTE: Emotion is not part of soul essence but the result of the function of the human soul. The soul can produce good or bad emotions, the former from the stream of consciousness or the latter from the sin nature.

7. It is from the believer's soul essence that he is able, through spiritual growth, to develop a number of doctrines with which volition can apply. It is a slow process at first, but over time, the Holy Spirit will increase your inventory of divine guidance to consult for application.
8. This is the accumulation of divine guidance that may be referred to as the will of God or that which He has decreed. Here are some passages that illustrate this:

Isaiah 58:11 The Lord will continually lead you; He will feed you even in parched regions. He will give you renewed strength, and you will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring that continually produces water. (NET)

Proverbs 3:1 My child, do not forget my teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments,

v. 2 for they will provide a long and full life, and they will add well-being to you.

v. 3 Do not let truth [אֱמֶת ('emeth)] and mercy [חֶסֶד (*cheseth*): faithfulness] leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. (NET)

9. In verse 15, we have noted the phrase, "If the Lord has decreed, then we shall live ...," the future active indicative of ζῶω (*záoō*). The future tense is prophetic in the sense that, "If the Lord so decrees, then we shall remain alive."
10. This is followed by one of two things suggested and introduced by the future active indicative of the verb, ποιέω (*poiéō*): "do." What they will do in the future is not specified, just actions described as "this" or "that."



11. “This” is the object of the future active indicative of **ποιέω (poiéō)**: “do”

James 4:15 Instead, you ought to say, “**If** [**ἐάν (eán)**] **the Lord has decreed** [**aoist active subjunctive of θέλω (thélō)**: “to desire, to intend, to design], **we shall both live** [**gnomic aorist future active indicative of ζάω (záō)**: **prophetic**] **and in the future accomplish this** [**gnomic aorist future active indicative of ποιέω (poiéō)**: **prophetic**] **or accomplish that** [**ἐκεῖνος (ekeínos)**: **one far away**] **as mature believers.**” (EXT)

Principles on the Greek future tense in James 4:15:

1. The Greek future tense is primarily an indicative tense referring to reality so that the element of time in the future is emphasized.
2. The future also signifies the character of a verbal idea, but instead of presenting progress as the leading idea, it presents the general significance as being indefinite.
3. All future tenses are not as simple as the future tense in English which signifies something that will occur in the future often indicated by the word, “shall.”
4. In the Greek language, the future tense originates from the aorist subjunctive. Therefore, the force of the aorist subjunctive in Greek moves into the future tense and survives there.
5. This means we have a problem every time we come to a future tense in the Greek New Testament.
6. The aorist tense indicates a narrative event in past time. The future tense anticipates an event in future time. This requires us to inquire why this is important.
7. The two verbs we are addressing in James 4:15 are gnomic aorist futures and may be expressed this way:
... we shall both live [**gnomic aorist future active indicative of ζάω (záō)**: **prophetic**] **and in the future accomplish this** [**gnomic aorist future active indicative of ποιέω (poiéō)**: **prophetic**] **or accomplish that ...**
8. The expanded translation of the verse indicates that the believer who advances to spiritual maturity will experience and enjoy the benefits of the super grace life.



James 4:15 Instead, you ought to say, “If [*ἐάν* (*eán*)] the Lord has decreed [aorist active subjunctive of *θέλω* (*thélō*): “to desire, to intend, to design], we shall both live [gnomonic aorist future active indicative of *ζάω* (*záō*): prophetic] and in the future accomplish this [gnomonic aorist future active indicative of *ποιέω* (*poiéō*): prophetic] or accomplish that [*ἐκεῖνος* (*ekeínos*): one far away] as mature believers.” (EXT)

Details on the Super Grace Life: God’s Decree and the Believer’s Advance

1. God’s omnipotence knows all that is knowable from eternity past. He knows every person that places his personal faith in Jesus Christ for salvation and eternal life and all those who do not.
2. Believers have the opportunity to grow in grace and enjoy the earthly benefits of the sophisticated spiritual life—some advance partially, some fully, and some not much at all, yet all are saved.
3. In verse 15, James is emphasizing that the benefits of the super grace life are available to every believer, but each person must grow in grace to every level of the spiritual advance to enjoy the benefits available to those in spiritual maturity.
4. Therefore, the believer’s advance in the spiritual life is made possible by the grace of God. The benefits are available but contingent upon the believer’s advance in time.
5. Therefore, the sophisticated life is the product of God’s grace provision in concert with the believer’s advance in time. Doctrine is available. The Word is communicated by prepared pastors. Those who avail themselves to that system of teaching will grow in grace if positive. The advance to super grace results in fabulous blessings in time and eternity.
6. The blessings are available to every believer but only those who make the spiritual advance accrue the privileges associated with spiritual maturity.
7. However, many believers get to the point of salvation by grace but instead of the advance they opt for the lie and enter into the various stages of reversionism.
8. It is true that a reversionist can recover by confessing his sins and returning to serious study of Scripture under the teaching ministry of a qualified pastor-teacher and the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit.
9. Those who do not break free from reversionism’s downward spiral are destined to spend a great deal of time chopping cotton in the Millennial Kingdom’s back forty.



10. The opportunity for the spiritual environment and advance for every believer is available simply by making the decision to go positive, get doctrine in his soul, and grow in grace.

11. Those who opt out of this grace provision are illustrated by the two men that James describes in:

James 4:14 You two do not understand what kind of life ... yours tomorrow. You two are just a fleeting vapor trail which soon vanishes from view. (EXT)

12. This is the spiritual condition of those believers who are brought to task by James in his Letter. They are challenged to stop reverse process reversionism as a means of crawling out the chaos their volitional decisions have taken them in verse 15:

James 4:15 Instead, you ought to say, “If [ἐάν (*eán*)] the Lord has decreed [aorist active subjunctive of θέλω (*thélō*): “to desire, to intend, to design], we shall both live [gnomic aorist future active indicative of ζάω (*záō*): prophetic] and in the future accomplish this [gnomic aorist future active indicative of ποιέω (*poiéō*): prophetic] or accomplish that [ἐκεῖνος (*ekeínos*): one far away] as mature believers.” (EXT)

13. These two men are among the many who simply cannot extract themselves from the throes of cosmic addictions associated with reversionism. Yet verse 15 gives clear advice on how they could begin the process of reversion recovery.

14. The current spiritual situation in Jerusalem in general and at James’s church in particular remain status quo in the souls of those with locked-in reversionism, a summation that James address in his conclusion of James: Chapter Four, beginning with verse 16:

James 4:16 But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil. (NASB)

1. This is the option the reversionistic believer choses to pursue. The situation is addressed in the two closing verses. In verse 16, it is locked-in arrogance while in verse 17 it is the problem of negative volition.

2. Verse 16 begins with the adversative use of the particle **δέ** (*dé*), which sets up a contrast between reversion recovery, noted in verse 15, and the negative mentality of the reversionist.

3. This reversionistic attitude is described by negative-volition production and mental-attitude sins.



4. Back in James: Chapter Four, verse 5, the expanded translation reads this way:

James 4:5 “Do you presume that Scripture speaks to us for no purpose with regard to jealousy? (The Holy Spirit Who dwells permanently within us deeply loves us.”

v. 6 Moreover He gives amazing grace. Therefore, Scripture says,) “God is divinely deployed in order of battle against the arrogant, but gives grace to those who express reverence toward Him.” (EXT)

5. Chapter 4 is concluded in verses 16 and 17. As is the case throughout the book and this chapter, the subject being addressed is the darkness of soul characterized by the word “reversionism.”
6. Reversionism is defined by the opening paragraphs of the book *Reversionism* by R. B. Thieme, Jr.:

Can a Christian immerse himself in sin and evil and still be a Christian? Throughout the Church Age pastors and theologians have struggled to explain the paradox. Some contend that perpetually carnal believers were never genuinely saved. But the Bible emphatically states that once a person expresses faith alone in Christ alone, he is eternally saved (John 3:16, 36). Others assert that believers who continually sin can lose their salvation. But since every believer has an irrevocable position “in Christ” (2 Corinthians 5:17), neither sin nor evil, not even God Himself can separate the believer “from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus” (Romans 8:39). The believer is eternally secure, forever a son and heir of God (Galatians 4:5–7).

Although the believer can never lose his eternal life, he can be in danger of destroying his spiritual life and losing all the blessings that “God has prepared for those who love Him” (1 Corinthians 2:9). Without his spiritual life the believer returns to the lifestyle of the unbeliever. He thinks like an unbeliever, acts like an unbeliever, sins like an unbeliever. The Apostle Paul warns all believers of this persistent danger.

Ephesians 4:17b ... that you [**believer**] walk no longer just as the Gentiles [**unbelievers**] also walk, in the futility [**emptiness**] of their mind,



Ephesians 4:18 being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God [**spiritual life**], because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart. (NASB)¹

7. James, chapter 4, verses 16 and 17, concludes with further comment on the production of reversionism with emphasis on arrogance and negative volition as noted above:

James 4:16 But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil. (NASB)

Yet the translators of the King James Version provide us with this English translation:

James 4:16 But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil. (KJV)

The word, “rejoice,” as noted above, is the present middle indicative of the verb, **καυχάομαι** (*kaucháomai*): “to boast or to brag.” The KJV translation then goes on to make yet another mistake with the word, “boastings.” The Greek word here is the instrumental of the noun, **ἀλαζονεία** (*alazoneía*): “a boaster,” or better: “a braggart, a windbag, a blowhard.”

What is the best translation in this context is, “arrogant words.” Why? Because he is described as being in the act of speaking: *kaucháomai*: “boasting or bragging.” The word, *alazoneía*, refers to the source of his bragging: his inventory of ideas which reveals his advance into the various stages of reversionism.

8. The divine mandate, “Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18), is Peter’s imperatival signature at the end of his second epistle. This is the underlying foundation of the believer’s duty once saved.
9. Failure to begin this process and maintain it or once begun to stray away from its obligation places that individual in throes of reversionism.
10. The deviation from one’s spiritual advance is primarily due to arrogance. It is a mental attitude that is caused by numerous temptations, attitudes, or influences that culminate in the loss of thought.
11. The term, “loss of thought,” refers to the doctrine, once learned and facilitated, being gradually diminished so that ultimately, its recall is no longer possible.
12. Instead, one’s inventory of ideas is replaced by the accumulation of doctrines of demons consisting of cosmic concepts and ideas.

¹ R. B. Thieme, Jr., *Reversionism* (Houston: R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries, 2000), 1–2.



13. This conversion of one's inventory of doctrinal ideas is propagated by one's enrollment in and inculcation of the curriculum taught in the Satanic Academy of Cosmic Didactics.
14. This sets up the contrast between the believer's advance toward spiritual maturity and his subsequent decline through the throes of reversionism. This describes the term, "loss of thought" noted above.
15. This "loss of thought" is introduced at the beginning of the verse by the adverb of time, **νῦν (nún)**: "now." The sad state in which this man finds himself is the result of an ongoing process described above at the beginning of the verse.
16. In the NASB, the verse begins with the adverb, **νῦν (nún)**, but is translated, "But as it is," whereas the KJV simply starts the verse with the three-letter word, *nún*, translated, "Now."
17. This word indicates that in the past this man had advanced in his spiritual growth to the point of possessing an inventory of advanced doctrine. At some point he changed his mind about doctrine.
18. There are innumerable incidences that cause a person to spin away from truth and turn his attention toward the lie. He checks into the Satanic Academy and matriculates in its curriculum of Cosmic Didactics.
19. For whatever the reason, he became negative and over time lost the thought and bought the lie.
20. The result was the rapid decline into reversionism which Timothy describes in:

1 Timothy 4:1 The Holy Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits [the faculty of the Satanic Academy] and things taught by demons [the curriculum of Cosmic Didactics]. (NASB)
21. This situation recorded in 1 Timothy 4 is also addressed by James with this expanded translation in:

James 4:16a But presently you keep on boasting with arrogant words.
22. The verse continues with this phrase in the Greek: **πάς καύχησις τοιούτος (pás kaúchēsis toioutos)**: "all this kind of boasting." In the Greek text, these words are feminine. Why? Because those being addressed in this chapter are men but all of whom are in reversionism.
23. Overall, the fourth chapter is a diatribe by James against the male members of his audience. They once had made a significant spiritual advance, but by the time James writes this letter, they are deep into reversionism.



24. Let's take a look at the Greek text. First, my practice in presenting Hebrew and Greek texts is to use vocabulary spellings. If you are interested in looking up definitions in Hebrew or Greek dictionaries, you do that with their dictionaries.
25. On this occasion it is important to note that James is dealing with the gender of the words involved in his commentary.
26. The vocabulary words of the phrase, "all this kind of boasting," is what is presented above: **πᾶς καύχησης τοιοῦτος** (*pás kaúchēsis toioútos*): "all this kind of boasting."
27. However, the Greek words used in this context are all nominative singular feminine: **πᾶσα καύχησης τοιαύτη** (*pása kaúchēsis toioútē*): "all this kind of boasting." To amplify James's point in his Greek text, here is how the sentence reads:

James 4:16b ... **all** [nominative singular **feminine** of **πᾶσα** (*pása*)] **this kind** [nominative singular **feminine** of **καύχησης** (*kaúchēsis*)] **of boasting** [nominative singular **feminine** of **τοιαύτη** (*toioútē*)] **is** [present active indicative of the verb εἰμί (*eimí*)] **evil** [nominative singular **feminine** of **πονερά** (*ponerá*)]. (EXT)

28. Throughout the fourth chapter of James, the writer uses the feminine gender occasionally, but in his closing comments he directs the feminine gender to the reversionistic men in the passage.
29. Now I realize that we are living in the third decade of the twenty-first century, yet the Greek grammar of Scripture contains teaching aids designed to convey a cultural meaning to the target audience of the writer.
30. In this case, the teaching aid, "idiom," is defined thusly:

Idiom. 1 a: the language peculiar to a people or to a district, community, or class. 2 : an expression in the use of a language that is peculiar to itself either grammatically or in having a meaning that cannot be derived from the conjoined meanings of its elements. 3 : a style or form of artistic expression that is characteristic of the individual, a period or movement.²

31. Scripture reveals a system of authority among the human race. Adam was created first followed by Ishshah which resulted in the first marriage.

² Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11th edition (Springfield, Mass.: Merriam-Webster, Inc., 2014), s.v.: "idiom."



32. Adam was assigned the authority in the marriage and Ishshah was instructed to submit to his authority.
33. In the fall, it was the woman who first sinned by violating the divine mandate to not eat fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
34. Ishshah's rejection of the Lord's commandment established the subsequent system of authority in the human race.
35. The woman's lack of positive volition toward the Lord and His authority resulted in arrogance toward His teachings.
36. Ishshah's rejection of both Adam's and the Lord's authority set up a system of rebellion against divinely established authority, first toward her husband and secondly toward the Lord from which resulted in rejection of the Word.
37. It is from this "original sin" that a system of authority was necessary to maintain order among Homo sapiens.
38. The marriage is a divinely ordained system in which is found a system of order: the husband is the delegated authority over the household. He is responsible for its maintenance and order.
39. When new witnesses are produced, they are to be taught the system of order and held to the observance of its standards. Violations of those standards require appropriate discipline.
40. The father is held responsible for the restoration of order and may delegate some of its execution down to the mother. Children are held responsible to submit to their parents' disciplinary measures.
41. The principle is this: Homo sapiens are the functional entities that that are held responsible for maintaining order in society. This order first originates in the home.
42. Failure to organize the home as a place where order is maintained contributes to a breakdown of order in the commonwealth.
43. When order in the home occurs, its failure is blamed on the husband and father.
44. When this failure spreads throughout the population, the reason for it falls on the men and they are held responsible for it and must be dealt with accordingly.
45. Thus, within the commonwealth of a client nation, historical downtrends are dealt with by divine discipline on the man who contributed to the downfall.
46. Presently, it is the men of America who have collectively failed to do their due diligence as husbands, fathers, and even grandfathers. When men fail to develop order in their homes, the discipline falls on their shoulders.

(End JAS4-33. See JAS4-34 for continuation of study at p. 331.)

