

John 8:45 “But because I speak the truth
[*alétheia*], you do not believe Me.

The problem that James is addressing in his church in Jerusalem is the absence of truth in the souls of some and the rejection of truth in the souls of others. For this reason, the entirety of James, chapter three, addresses this issue which is expressed by sins of the tongue.

Since this is true, it means these believers have not developed an efficient inventory of doctrine because they have not made the personal effort to pursue truth. James is teaching the truth yet those in his congregation were not responding to it. Why?

Because they rejected truth, they failed to develop an edification complex of the soul. This refers to the system of spiritual growth which includes steady advance from basic, to secondary, and finally an advanced inventory of truth in the *kardía*.

This requires positive response to biblical instruction from a qualified pastor-teacher. This is the process by which spiritual maturity is attained and would resolve the situation James confronts in his church.

This doctrine amplifies the power biblical truth provides and with such an inventory, believers are able to not only continue their spiritual advance but encourage others to join them.

If what the Bible teaches is absolutely true and is the antidote for the lie, if knowing the truth enables the believer to build an inventory of truth by which he can make good decisions from a position of strength, then its system of learning needs to be reviewed before we engage the problems James addresses in chapter three.

Therefore, we now take up the doctrine of the Edification Complex of the Soul.

Doctrine of the Edification Complex of the Soul

Introduction: Definition of Terms.

1. Edify:

1. To build, construct (a dwelling, edifice). 2b. To work up or fashion materials into a building or structure. 2c. To build up, fashion, organize (a system, institution, or law, a moral quality), to establish or strengthen a person. 2e. To take form, grow; also, to prosper, achieve success. 3. In religious use: to build up (the church, the soul) in faith and holiness; to benefit spiritually; to strengthen, support.

3b. To inform, instruct; to improve in a moral sense.
4. To profit in a spiritual sense. 4b. To gain instruction generally.

1. Edification:

2. In religious use, after Greek οἰκοδομή in 1 Corinthians 14 [26–31]: the building up of the church, of the soul, in faith and holiness; the imparting of moral and spiritual ability and strength by suitable instruction and exhortation.

2. Complex:

Consisting of or comprehending various parts united or connected together; formed by combination of different elements; composite, compound. Said of things, ideas. To join, unite, attach. 2. To combine into a complex whole.⁸

3. Soul:

The human soul consists of four categories: (1) self-consciousness: the awareness of one's existence. (2) Mentality: the thinking part of man composed of the *noús* and *kardía*. (3) Volition: the ability to independently make positive or negative decisions. (4) Conscience: Power of evaluation and the area where norms and standards are contained.

1. These words combine to define the spiritual process by which a believer, under the filling and teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit, is enabled to grow spiritually with the ultimate objective of attaining spiritual maturity.
2. The world presents categories of truth as humans observe various phenomena: scientific research, discovery of mathematical formulae, studies in biology, and in various technical fields to name a few.
3. All these areas of human inquisitiveness plus many others have produced advances over the millennia. New discoveries improve man's understanding of a given discipline, but the necessity of continuing to do "research" confirms we have not exhausted all there is to know on a given discipline.

(End JAS3-01. See JAS3-02 for continuation of study at p. 11.)

⁸ *The Oxford English Dictionary* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), s.vv. "edify" "edification," "complex."



4. The Greek word for “edification” is the noun, οἰκοδομή (*oikodomḗ*):

The act of building as a process and that which is built; edification or advancement; edification for spiritual profit or advancement:

Ephesians 4:11 He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists [εὐαγγελιστής (*euangelistḗs*)] and some as pastors-teachers [ποιμήν (*poimḗn*)-διδάσκαλος (*didáskalos*): shepherds-teachers],

v. 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;

v. 16 ... from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

v. 29 Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification [οἰκοδομή (*oikodomḗ*)] according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear. (NASB)

5. The noun, *oikodomḗ*, refers to the accumulation of biblical truth through the system enabled by the filling and teaching ministries of the Holy Spirit.
6. Consistent attendance to the teaching of the Word by a qualified pastor-teacher results in the continued development of one’s biblical edification.
7. The uniqueness that defines divine edification has to do with the singularity of how this advance is accomplished. It is truly an academic exercise, but what makes it unique is the system by which divine thought is acquired in the soul of the believer.
8. In academia, a student shows up at class and a qualified professor instructs those assembled in the pertinent principles of the subject matter. The student learns from the professor without a middle man.
9. Over the course of the semester edification is built up as categories specific to the subject are communicated and hopefully retained by the students. Periodic tests reveal who among the group has become the most edified as opposed to those who are less so.



10. For the believer in Jesus Christ, his duty before the Lord is to “grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18a).
11. However, this growth process is accomplished in a significantly different way than academia. The Bible is acclaimed as “the Word of God.” Its revelations contain the thinking of God transmitted to us by means of a divine system of communication.
12. It is God’s desire that each believer advances to spiritual maturity. This is the meaning and the objective of edification:

1 Timothy 2:3 This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior,

v. 4 Who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge [ἐπίγνωσις (*epígnōsis*)] of the truth [ἀλήθεια (*alētheia*)].

13. The mechanics of how a believer achieves the attainment of this knowledge involves a system of divine didactics that incorporates a relationship between God the Father and selected members of the human race in both the Old and New Testaments.
14. The system transferred divine thought from the mind of God to selected men who then recorded the revelation into writing. The codifying of divine revelation is called inspiration.
15. **Revelation:** God’s direct, divine influence communicated truth to the minds of biblical writers. **Inspiration:** Direct divine influence insured their accurate transfer of truth into written languages.

The Old Testament is written mostly in Hebrew; the New Testament wholly in Greek. The parts of the Old Testament not in Hebrew are Ezra 4:8–6:18; 7:12–26; Jeremiah 10:11; and Daniel 2:4–7:28. These sections are written in Aramaic, a related Semitic dialect that, after the exilic period, gradually took the place of Hebrew as the common language of the Jews. New Testament Greek, so greatly illuminated by important papyri discoveries, particularly from Egypt, has been shown to be not a special sacred dialect, as was formerly thought, but the common Hellenistic speech of the first century A.D.

In no phase of its composition does the Bible show itself to be a book for the people more than in its use of the everyday language of the Greek-speaking world of the period.¹

16. Once the canon was completed in c. A.D. 96, the system relied on **Interpretation:** Pastors, guided by the Holy Spirit; discern through hermeneutics the meaning of Scripture.

One of the most important considerations of the Christian minister must be the right use of the Word of God.

The main concern is the right use of the Word of God is its proper interpretation. That theological discipline which takes as its goal the proper interpretation of Scripture is hermeneutics. A solid hermeneutics is the root of all good exegesis and exegesis is the foundation of all truly Biblical preaching. Therefore a sound hermeneutics is an absolute *desiderátum* [desire] for the minister of the Word of God.²

17. Once a passage is studied and developed, the pastor is prepared to present his findings to his congregation by the next phase in the system called **Communication:** Verbal conveyance of biblical doctrines to his assigned congregation.
18. At this point is where instruction in theology by a pastor to his congregation markedly differs from the academic classroom.
19. Both the pastor and all members of his congregation must be filled with the Holy Spirit, a status quo that is made possible by the application of:

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

20. The confession of our sins to the Father results in forgiveness. This is the end result of the imperative mood in:

Ephesians 5:18b ... be filled [present passive imperative of πληρόω (*plēróō*)] with the Spirit.

¹ Merrill F. Unger, *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary*, rev. ed., ed. R. K. Harrison (Chicago, The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago, 1988), 169.

² Bernard L. Ram, et al., "Biblical Interpretation," in *Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1971), 5–6.

The idea of the word is “control.” The indwelling Spirit of God is the one who should continually control and dominate the life of the believer. The present tense calls for a habitual and continuing action.

The passive voice could be permissive passive: “allow yourselves to be....” This is further supported by the imperative mood.³

21. This spiritual mechanic empowers the believer to comprehend infinite, divine thought which would otherwise be understood academically but not spiritually were it not for the filling of the Holy Spirit.
22. Jesus Christ issued the prophecy about this divinely imputed system of communication made available through the filling ministry of the Holy Spirit in:

John 14:26 “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, Whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.”

23. This is fulfilled in the Church Age and is confirmed in:

1 Corinthians 2:12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God,

v. 13 which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words.

2. The Authority of the Pastor-Teacher.

1. The spiritual gift of pastor-teacher is one of two communication gifts still functional. We have recently noted Ephesians 4:11 where four of these are mentioned: “apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastors-teachers.”
2. There were only 14 apostles, all of whom are dead. The New Testament canon is complete and thus sealed, therefore there is no additional revelation to be given meaning the gift of prophet is also retired.

³ Cleon L. Rogers and Cleon L. Rogers III, “Ephesians 5:18,” in *The New Linguistic and Exegetical Key to the Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1998), 444.