



LESSON 12 - JAMES 4:11-17 (STUDENT)

1. What changes did you make as a result of applying last week's lesson?
2. Read James 4:11-17. Summarize this section with one sentence.
3. What admonition is given to the believers in verse 11?
4. What truth does the admonition in verse 11 remind you of? (See 3:1-10).
5. The Greek word for "speak against" is (katalaleo=62635).¹ This word reflects the idea of backbiting, faultfinding, and criticizing. In what situation are you tempted to speak to someone in this manner?
6. When are you most tempted to speak to someone in this manner? For example, I am most tempted to speak evil about others who have offended me to my husband, family, or close friends.

¹ Swanson, James. *A Dictionary of Biblical Languages*. Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997.

7. To "speak against" is a negative command, is in the present tense, and indicates to 'stop' doing this. So, what should be the proper response when you are tempted to speak against someone? Look up Matthew 5:22-24 and Matthew 18:15-17 to help frame your answer. Why do you think this command is so hard to obey?

8. Another form of speaking (evil) against another person is slander. Define slander www.legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/slander. Then look up the following verses to see what God's thinks of it, and how He will deal with it.

Psalm 52:1-5

Proverbs 6:16-19

9. What two reasons does James give in verse 11 to refrain from speaking evil against brothers and sisters in the body of Christ?

10. What law is being spoken against and judged according to verse 11? Cross-reference with James 2:8 and Romans 13:8.
11. Think of a court room and the position the judge is in compared to everyone else. With that visual in mind, what word picture do you conjure up in your mind when a brother or sister is judging another? What attitude is being displayed?
12. According to verse 12, when we judge others and speak against others; whose position are we trying to usurp? Who alone is competent to judge others (see 1 Cor. 4:4-5)?
13. Unfortunately, it is not our *only* tendency to sin in the matter of judging others. What other sin straddles alongside our tendency to judge according to Romans 12:17-21?
14. What three reasons are given in verse 12 to remind us that it is seriously arrogant when we act as judge and speak against others?
- First, there is only one _____
- Second, there is only one _____
- Third, He is able to _____ and _____ (Deut 32:39).

15. In light of what you just learned, when someone offends you and you are tempted to "speak against" your neighbor (husband, friend, child, family member, church family); what would be the correct biblical response? How should you think and act according to God's Word (Matthew 7:1-4, 18:15-17; Galatians 6:1-2)?

16. What presumptuous statement is made in verse 13, what is the problem with it in verse 14, and what should be the response in verse 15?

The Presumptuous Statement (v. 13):

The Problem with the Presumptuous Statement (v. 14):

The Proper Response (v. 15).

17. Why is it foolish to disregard the Sovereign will of God and plan our future with a proud countenance? What is your attitude about making plans? What if those plans get changed? What is a recent plan you made that ended up different than you expected? How did you handle it? How is Proverbs 16:1 and 9 helpful?

18. If we made it a habit to say, "if the Lord wills" regularly, what might that remind us of? How can we guard against this phrase becoming too trivial (Acts 18:21; 1 Cor. 4:19; 16:7; Heb. 6:3)?

God is in complete c_____

We speak to p_____ God not man.

19. In verse 16, how does James summarize the actions of verses 13-15? What do Jeremiah and Paul have to say about this same problem in Jeremiah 9:23-24 and 2 Corinthians 10:16-17?

20. Read James 4:13-17 once again. Why do you think James closes with the statement that he does in verse 17? Now read Luke 12:16-21; are there areas in your own life where you are guilty of the same kind of presumption? Spend time in prayer and confession before the Lord.

APPLICATION What would our home and church look like if people didn't speak against one another, but took everything to the person who had offended them?

21. All Christians need to plan for the future but how can you do that with faith and submission to God's will? Write down some specific plans you have right

now? What is the difference between presumption in those plans and acknowledgement of the sovereignty of God?²

22. How can you remind yourself each day that life is like a vapor and make it your fondest ambition to be thankful and use each day for His glory?

² Adapted from Ellenburg, Christopher W. Morgan & B. Dale. *James: Wisdom for the community*. Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications, 2008.