

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 χρῆζω (chrēzō)**] **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.

