

**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, to decree ], we shall both live [ gnomic aorist future active indicative of ζάω (*záo*): 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)

### 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, to decree ], 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)<sup>1</sup>

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.

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

