

7. Who does qualify to ask and then receive? The believer who has advanced to the sophisticated spiritual life; the believer who is filled with the Holy Spirit and petitions the Father for a specific blessing.
8. Believers, who are filled with the Holy Spirit and have advanced to the sophisticated spiritual life, can ask the Father for a blessing and will receive it.
9. Advanced believers know how to pray from an inventory of advanced doctrines. Their prayers are focused on things that aggrandize their advance in the Invisible War.
10. This final sentence in verse 2 begins with the phrase, “You do not have.” It begins with the negative conjunction, **οὐκ (ouk)**: “not,” followed by the present active indicative of the verb, **ἔχω (échō)**: “have” and translated, “You do not have.”
11. The final phrase reads, “...because you do not ask.” It begins with the preposition of cause: **διὰ (diá)**: “because,” followed by the plural pronoun, **σὺ (sú)**: “y’all,” and the conjunction **μή (mē)**, translated, “not.” The verse ends with the present middle infinitive of the verb, **αἰτέω (aitéō)**: “to ask.”
12. This last sentence indicates that even if these people were filled with the Holy Spirit and functioning in the sophisticated spiritual life, they would not receive blessings because they would not pray for them. Here’s the expanded translation:

James 4:2 You keep on habitually lusting, but you continuously do not have that for which you lust; so you habitually commit homicide. You are in an ongoing state of envy, but consistently are unable to acquire; so you quarrel and engage in donnybrooks. Mature believers do not have because you do not ask. (EXT)

PRINCIPLES:

1. This passage refers to believers who have been in a prolonged state of reversionism, have engaged in the numerous behaviors such as system testing, and the frustrations and problems that are common to their lifestyles.
2. In contradistinction to the teachings of Scripture, these individuals cited by James are engaged in lust, homicide, and envy from the source of negative volition.
3. All efforts to receive benefit and satisfaction from their cosmic behavior patterns are frustrated due to their soul’s divorcement from the power and grace of the Word of God.



4. Even when some aspect of a desired effort should occur it does not result in the satisfaction, pleasure, or happiness that one pursued and experienced.
5. Jealousy is a mental-attitude sin that desires what another has and wishes to either acquire it for himself or deprive another of it.
6. This effort is also accomplished regarding nonmaterial objects possessed by others such as fame, authority, reputation, social standing, popularity, status, etc.
7. However, when a person functions in the stages of reversionism, he can never enjoy the possessions, accolades, attributes, and prestige he imagined, never appreciate the things he coveted, nor relish the happiness he anticipated.
8. In the final analysis, after having acquired the things for which he lusted, he discovers they do not bring him the happiness he expected and therefore fulfills the proclamation of Solomon's Preacher in Ecclesiastes.
9. In that book, Solomon related some of his experiences while he was in reversionism and his failure to find the happiness he pursued. His effort to do so was motivated by his possession of many personal attributes.
10. Solomon was smart, the king of Israel, handsome, and accomplished in various areas of function. However, he ultimately came to realize that all the while he was in pursuit of happiness, he only found emptiness. He expresses this discovery in:

Ecclesiastes 1:1 The words of the Preacher [קְהֹלֶת] (*qoheleth*): also, “Teacher”]: The son of David, king in Jerusalem.

v. 2 “Vanity [הֶבֶל] (*hevel*): emptiness, meaningless, futile] of vanities,” says the Preacher, “Vanity of vanities! All is [הַכֹּל] (*hakkol*)¹] vanity.” (NASB)

¹ “Although כֹּל (*kol*, “everything, all”) is often used in an absolute or comprehensive sense, it is frequently used ... for the specific, that is, its sense is limited contextually to the topic at hand. This is particularly true of הַכֹּל (*hakkol* [“all is”]) in which the article particularizes or limits the referent to the contextual or previously mentioned topic. Thus, “all” does not always mean “all” in an absolute sense or universally in comprehension. Thus, הַכֹּל [*hakkol*] refers only to what Qoheleth [Teacher] characterizes as “futile” (הֶבֶל [*hevel*): “vanity” [NASB]), in the context. Qoheleth [Teacher] does not mean that everything in an absolute, all-encompassing sense is futile [“vanity”]. For example, the sovereign work of God is not “futile”; fearing God is not “futile; and enjoying life as a righteous person under the blessing of God is not “futile.” Only those objects or issues that are contextually placed under כֹּל (*kol* [“all”]) are designated as “futile” (הֶבֶל [*hevel*]). The context of 1:3-15 suggests that 1:2 refers to the futility of secular human endeavor.” (Ecclesiastes 1:1-2 in *The NET Bible* [Dallas: Biblical Studies Press, 2005], s.v. 4tn1184).



11. The context of James 4:1–2 is referring to the actions of believers who are in reversionism, have lived in a soul of darkness for extended periods of time, and in doing so have desperately sought happiness for all the wrong reasons.
12. The translators note from the NET Bible gives an excellent synopsis of this condition of soul. All things are not all “vanity.” But all things sought for all the wrong reasons are best described by Solomon by the phrase, “All is vanity.”
13. The Hebrew noun, **הֶבֶל** (*hevel*), is translated into English Bibles by the noun “vanity,” which is fine, but the NET Bible selects the adjective, “futile.” The two words are noted together in the *Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary* (11th ed.), s.v. “futile,” as follows:

Futile may connote completeness of failure or unwisdom of undertaking. Vain implies simple failure to achieve a desired result.
14. The futility experienced by the believers in this verse was caused by their prolonged existence in the cosmic systems. Those who live in darkness are incapable of producing the desired effects of their souls’ imaginings.
15. The final sentence of verse 2 illustrates this. It indicates that even if these people decided to get out of the darkness through rebound, began a serious effort to rebuild their inventory of biblical ideas, and even achieve the level of the sophisticated spiritual life, they, even then, would not receive divine blessings because they would not ask.

PRINCIPLES:

1. Reversionists, who function in the advanced stages of reversionism, never acquire any divine blessings because they are never in fellowship. Yet the desire to assuage their lust patters is never accomplished resulting in frustration and bewilderment.
2. The lust may be for authority, but never able to acquire it, since they do not know how to lead and often become tyrants.
3. The objective may be for romance, yet even if discovered it results in disaster for all involved.
4. These disappointments, frustrations, and failures occasionally result in the realization that nothing sought for is ever realized. This can sometimes inspire reversion recovery.
5. There is really nothing that can prevent a recovery from reversionism except the retrogression of the individual. If he continues to pursue truth, then the doctrinal advance will gradually restore order.



6. The result is that blessings accrue for the subject and all he has to do is ask for them.
7. In reversionism, all sorts of objectives were pursued, but to no avail. Even if some are attained, it does not result in the anticipated happiness.
8. What can have interesting after affects is when a reversionist recovers he expects those things he pursues will occur. Some do, but there are phenomenal blessings available that only requires him to pray for them.
9. So the question arises, how then does a believer offer a prayer with confidence it will be answered? It has to do with the status of the person's soul when the prayer is offered. This brings us to our next verse:

James 4:3 You ask and you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motivations, so that you may spend it on your pleasures. (NASB)

1. This verse begins with the same verb that ended verse 2. Verse 2's last sentence reads, "You do not have because you do not ask: μή (*mē*): "not" and the present middle infinitive of the verb, αἰτέω (*aitēō*): "ask."
2. If this believer were in fellowship, he might ask for a blessing from God but since he does not petition the Father for it, then because of that oversight he does not receive anything.
3. James 4:3 begins with this same verb, "to ask": the present active indicative of αἰτέω (*aitēō*). Here the person does ask but he, too, is in reversionism. The present tense is iterative indicating that this is an event that *repeatedly* happens.
4. This person may pray until he grows hoarse, but there is no response from God. This is indicated by the present active indicative of the verb λαμβάνω (*lambánō*): "to receive." This is a customary present which is used to signal either an action that *regularly occurs* or an *ongoing state*.²
5. This person is living in habitual reversionism. The mature believer at the end of verse 2 does not receive anything from God because he does not ask God for it.
6. The conjunction that links the petition with the negative response is διότι (*dióti*): "because; for this reason."
7. The reversionist in verse 3 does pray for a blessing, but did not receive it because he asked, "with wrong motives." This is indicated by the word κακῶς (*kakōs*).

² Daniel B. Wallace, "Customary Present," in *Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 521.

