

4. At its foundation, religion is man seeking approbation from God on the basis of human works. In James 1:26, the word “religious” is the hapax legomenon, **θρησκός** (*thrēskos*) and means, “religious, pious, devout,” and is practiced overtly.
5. The works performed by the religious person are motivated by fear and are overt, whereas the works performed by the mature believer are motivated by grace. The word for the latter is the noun **χάρις** (*cháris*).
6. *Thrēskos* is oriented to works while *cháris* is oriented to gratitude.
7. Therefore, in verse 26, the motivation for the cosmic believer is external and therefore prone to commit sins of the tongue.
8. The noun form of *thrēskos*, “religious,” is **θρησκεία** (*thrēskeía*): “religion.”
Expression of devotion to transcendent beings, especially as it expresses itself in cultic rites. James contrasts empty, vain religion in v. 26 with the pure religion of v. 27.²
9. Lucifer could not successfully deny the existence of God since he obviously is in a protracted struggle against Him.
10. The counterattack he devised was to structure a system that mimics the end result of a believer growing in grace and producing good works from a resident inventory of divine thought and motivation.
11. Therefore, his concocted lie to heathen and uninformed Christians is that good works will result in receiving approbation from God.
12. In the Church Age, the divine system of communicating the Word of God is the local church. Nowhere in the New Testament can there be found a requirement for denominations nor is there ever an example of a human hierarchy that rules over a collective of churches.
13. The apostles had authority to establish churches and to train pastors to teach doctrine to their congregations.

² Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature*, 3d ed., rev. and ed. Frederick William Danker (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000), 459.

14. Once the canon was completed and the last apostle died, the responsibility for teaching the Word of God was left to evangelists and pastor-teachers.
15. Evangelists primarily work outside the church by evangelizing the lost and directing them to a local church for spiritual growth. There the authority to teach doctrine is assigned to the pastor-teacher.
16. Each local church is independent of any other and there is no legitimate roll for pastors to submit to a religious hierarchy.
17. The church's administrative responsibilities are to be managed by its Board of Deacons staffed by men only. The ministries of the church function under the aegis of spiritual gifts which involve both men and women.
18. This is the biblical system. One church with one pastor who teaches doctrine to those who assemble the predominance of whom are believers.
19. Unfortunately, the early church evolved into two spheres of influence. The Eastern areas had their headquarters in Constantinople which was previously named Byzantium when founded by the Greeks in 660 B.C. It became Constantinople in A.D. 33, which translated means Constantine's city, who chose the site for the new capital of the Eastern Roman or Byzantine Empire.
20. Constantinople was captured in 1453 by the Turks under Ottoman Sultan Mehmed \me-'met\ II. The city's name was changed to Istanbul in 1930.
21. So Byzantium became Constantinople and Constantinople became Istanbul. All of that is a mouthful and to assist Americans with the update Nat Simon and Jimmy Kennedy wrote this catchy and instructive tuneful ditty named, "Istanbul: (Not Constantinople)":

**Istanbul was Constantinople
Now it's Istanbul, not Constantinople,
Been a long time gone, Constantinople.
Now it's Turkish delight on a moonlit night.**

**Every gal in Constantinople
Lives in Istanbul, not Constantinople
So if you've a date in Constantinople
She'll be waiting in Istanbul.**



Even old New York was once New Amsterdam,
Why they changed it I can't say,
People just liked it better that way.

So, take me back to Constantinople,
No, you can't go back to Constantinople,
Been a long time gone, Constantinople.
Why did Constantinople get the works?
That's nobody's business but the Turks.

22. The western branch based its outfit in Rome in the Western Roman Empire where they invented the office of the Pope, sat him on a throne, and called him *Papa*.
23. The Catholic Church arrogated the apostle Peter as the first *Papa*. Peter would not have accepted the authority of individual power over all of Christendom.
24. Peter was given this title retrospective to April 1, A.D. 33, which date places his promotion prior to the crucifixion of Jesus. Peter “lost the seat” following his execution in Rome in A.D. 67.
25. The first real pope was *Papa* Linus who took charge in June 67 and the title has been passed on over two millennia presently held by *Papa* Francis who is the 266th to hold the designation.
26. It took about 300 years before the Roman Catholic Church successfully consolidated all the churches of Europe:

The reign of Constantine ushered in a new era in the life of the church. The Edict of Milan (313) recognized the church as a legal religion, and by the end of the 4th century Christianity was the state religion of the empire. Its privileged position allowed the church to flourish. Moreover, its location in the imperial capital enhanced the prestige of the See of Rome. During this period, the hierarchical structure of the church was further elaborated, and the foundations of Catholic theology were set by the Church Fathers, especially St. Augustine.³

27. The continued erosion of biblical authority became evident in the twelfth century with the emergence of the Sacred College of Cardinals, a group that was arrogated the power to choose succeeding *Papas*. This College now totals around 225 cardinals.

³ “Roman Catholicism,” in *The New Encyclopedia Britannica: Micropaedia* (2010), 10:149.

The Expanded Translation of James: Chapter One

James 1:1 [Introduction] James, a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes of Israel among the Diaspora outside Judea. Greetings.

James 1:2 [Paragraph 1] My Jewish brethren, after weighing all the facts, you must consider [IM #1] it nothing but unalloyed happiness whenever you encounter various categories of pressure,

v. 3 knowing through the process of spiritual growth that the testing of your faith for the purpose of approval habitually produces stamina and endurance.

v. 4 The stamina and endurance from the inner resource of doctrine must have [IM #2] its perfect production, so that you may choose to be spiritually mature and complete, deficient in the sphere of nothing while inside the bubble.

James 1:5 [Paragraph 2] If anyone of you is deficient of wisdom, and you are, then he must keep on asking [IM #3] from the immediate source from God, Who keeps on giving to all generously and without disparagement and it shall be given to him for his advantage.

v. 6 But he must keep on praying [IM #4] for wisdom by means of faith, doubting nothing, for the one who prays while doubting the integrity of God is like the atmospheric and oceanic forces of the sea, whose waves are constantly being agitated by various wind forces hurling them about to and fro.

v. 7 For such a man must stop the ongoing process of presuming [IM #5] that he will receive anything in the future from the Lord,

v. 8 being a double-souled man of the royal family of God although unstable, restless, vacillating, fickle, unsettled, and unsteady in all his ways.

James 1:9 [Paragraph 3] But the poor believer must keep on celebrating [IM #6: present active imperative of the verb *καυχάομαι* (*kaucháomai*)] in the sphere of exaltation in his high status of royal family of God;

v. 10 and the rich man must keep on celebrating [IM #7: present active imperative of the verb *καυχάομαι* (*kaucháomai*): ellipsis borrowed from v. 9] in his grace orientation, because like the flower of grass he and his earthly blessings will perish.

v. 11 The sun continuously rises past the eastern terminator with a scorching heat that withers the grass. The flower falls off and the beauty of its appearance decays. So, too, the rich man in his manner of life will fade away.

v. 12 [Paragraph 4] Happy is the advanced believer who continues to endure testing for the purpose of approval, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised in eternity past for those who have personal love for Him.

v. 13 No one may ever assert [IM #8] when he is tempted, “I am continuously being tempted from the ultimate source of God”; for God—not tempted by evil, and He never tempts anyone.

v. 14 But each one is reluctantly dragged away through temptation when he is enticed by his own sin nature’s lust pattern.

v. 15 When the lust pattern’s agent provocateur copulates with free will, it creates a ménage à trois resulting in a pregnancy and, when sin gives birth, it delivers a child born dead.

v. 16 Stop being deceived [IM #9], my beloved brethren.

v. 17 Every good-of-intrinsic-value act of giving and every completed gift keeps on being from above, coming down from the ultimate source of the Father of lights, with Whom there is no change or alteration or the occurrence of an eclipse.

James 1:18 Having been decreed in eternity past, He regenerated us by a spiritual birth by the word of truth, namely the gospel, for the purpose of being the first fruits of His creatures.

v. 19 [Paragraph 5] Know this [IM #10], my beloved brothers, everyone must keep on being swift for the purpose of hearing, slow for the purpose of talking, slow [IM#11] with reference to reacting with mental-attitude anger;

v. 20 for the mental-attitude anger of the nobleman does not produce righteous standards of divine good from the source of God.

v. 21 Therefore, put away from yourself mental attitude sins that pollute the soul and all the excesses of an evil habit of mind, you must receive with humility [IM #12] the implanted word, which is empowered to deliver your souls from danger.

v. 22 But keep on becoming [IM #13] doers of the implanted Word, and not only hearers who deceive themselves due to self-induced stupidity.

v. 23 For if, and it is true, anyone is a hearer of the Word in the *noús* and not a doer from the *kardía*, such a person, is like a nobleman who looks contemplatively at his facial features in a mirror;

v. 24 for once he had continued to contemplate himself intently in the mirror and departed, he has the existing result of immediately disregarding what kind of man he habitually and regularly was.

v. 25 But the one who looks with an earnest desire to absorb in detail the perfect law of freedom, and continues to live in close proximity to it, not having become a forgetful hearer only, but a doer, this man shall become happy by the production of divine good.

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is worthy of respect, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if something is excellent or praiseworthy, think about these things. (Philippians 4:8, NET)