

20. The present tense of *καυχάομαι* is futuristic indicating an event which has not yet occurred, but which is regarded as so certain that in thought it may be contemplated as already coming to pass.
21. The active voice means the believer with doctrine will produce the action of boasting while the imperative mood is a command to do so.
22. The NET Bible translates the verse as follows:  
**James 1:9** Now the believer of humble means should take pride in his high position.
23. “Should take pride” implies the mental attitude an advancing believer ought to have. This pride is considered laudatory since its object refers to his status quo in the royal family, his advance in the plan of God, and his grace orientation.
24. The King James Version translates *καυχάομαι* with the word “rejoice” while the NIV opts for “take pride” as does the NET. We use the NASB as our starting point and it chooses “glory.”
25. In the work we have already done regarding the translations of the previous imperative moods, we are going to continue with the force of direct command and begin with the NASB translation as we do: he “must glory.”
26. Here’s why. The individual in this context is not well off financially. Most of the people in the world make up this category. A few, on the other hand, are rich, noted in verse 10.
27. The poor man is to “glory” in his high position in Christ while the rich man is to glory “in his humiliation” (NASB).
28. In English, the word “glory” has the following synonyms:  
**Renown, fame, prestige, honor, distinction, kudos, eminence, acclaim, praise, celebrity, recognition, reputation.**<sup>3</sup>
29. Each of these words magnifies the individual who is attributed innate characteristics that sets him apart from others. In our context, the individual is commanded to do something that commemorates what is described as “his high position.”
30. This phrase is actually one word, the noun *ὑψος* (*húpsos*): “a position of high status.”

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<sup>3</sup> *Oxford American Writer’s Thesaurus*, 3d ed., comp. Christine A. Lindberg (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 382.

31. The man in question is economically poor and in the world is considered to occupy a position of “low status.” Due to his economic position he is not able to enjoy the finer things of life.
32. Such a person is viewed by those with human viewpoint to be among the poor, unrefined, and ill-educated *hoi polloi*.
33. The world’s assessment of this man assigns him to what is euphemistically described as “humble circumstances.” So what are some of the more crass terms the English language provides to describe a poor man? Here’s a few:

**Lowly, working-class, lower-class, undistinguished, low-born, plebian, underprivileged, common, ordinary, simple, inferior, unremarkable, insignificant, inconsequential.**<sup>4</sup>

34. How is this person to respond to this typical, but nevertheless judgmental, assessment? By basking in the glory of his membership in the royal family of God, being indwelt by all three members of the Trinity, and possessing in his soul an ever-enlarging inventory of divine thought.
35. This is the mental attitude required by the verb *καυχάομαι*. This verb commands that he “must glory” in his “high position” in the heavenly community.
36. This statement gives us the idea of what *καυχάομαι* means in this context:

**There is a glory of God which must be absolutely true and changeless. God’s opinion marks the true value of things as they appear to the eternal mind, and God’s favorable opinion is true glory.**<sup>5</sup>

37. As a believer grows in grace the buildup of doctrine informs the soul of divine viewpoint. It is this inventory that results in *καυχάομαι* indwelling the soul.
38. We have noted that the major English versions translate this verb differently: rejoice, glory, and pride, while the dictionaries and lexicons include “exult” and “boast.”
39. If we follow the translations, what exactly is the imperative mood requiring the poor believer to do? “He must rejoice, glory, have pride, or boast.” None of these satisfactorily fits under an imperative mood.

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 436.

<sup>5</sup> Spiros Zodhiates, ed., *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, rev. ed. (Chattanooga: AMG Publishers, 1993), 478.

40. Next we consult the standard work done in the vocabulary of Classical Greek:
- Καυχάομαι. Speak loud, be loud-tongued; boast, vaunt oneself. Boast of doing or being. A boaster, braggart; boast aloud.**<sup>6</sup>
41. It becomes clear that *καυχάομαι* is not to be interpreted negatively but positively. For example, note this verse:
- Jeremiah 9:23** The Lord says, “Wise people should not **boast** [ the Hithpael intensive, reflexive voice of the verb **לָלַחַ (halal)** ] that they are wise. Powerful people should not boast that they are powerful. Rich people should not boast that they are rich.
- v. 24** “If people want to boast, they should boast about this: They should boast that they understand and know Me. They should boast that they know and understand that, I, the Lord, act out of faithfulness, fairness, and justice in the earth and that I desire people to do these things,” says the Lord. (NET)
42. **לָלַחַ (halal)** means “hymn of praise” from which is derived the term “hallelujah,” a command to praise the Lord.
43. However, the reflexive form of the verb is often used to signify boasting, whether in a good object, “My soul will make its boast in the Lord; the humble will hear it and rejoice” (Psalm 34:2) or a bad object, “Even those who trust in their wealth and boast in the abundance of their riches, no man can by any means redeem his brother or give to God a ransom for him” (Psalm 49:6–7).
44. This excerpt helps clarify the dichotomy found in the word *halal* and *kaucháomai*:
- It becomes clear that “boasting” is not in itself always wrong; it is a matter of what it is that one is boasting in, or taking pride in. Christians, however difficult their circumstances in this world, can always take pride in their “high position,” or “exaltation.”**<sup>7</sup>
45. The dictionary definition of “exalt” and “exaltation” gives us a clue to the one word that sums up what *kaucháomai* means in the context James uses it:

<sup>6</sup> A *Greek-English Lexicon*, comp. Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, rev. Henry Stuart Jones (New York: Oxford University Press, 1940), 932.

<sup>7</sup> Douglas J. Moo, *The Letter of James* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2000), 65.

**Exalt: to elevate by praise or in estimation: glorify. To raise high.**

**Exaltation: An excessively intensified sense of well-being, power, or importance.<sup>8</sup>**

46. These definitions describe the spiritual status of the poor believer. His forward advance in the Word of God is transforming his soul with emphasis on grace orientation. This undergirds his progress toward the sophisticated levels of the plan of God.
47. The greater the acquisition of biblical truths the greater his development of a relaxed mental attitude. God exalts His Word to His glory.
48. The greater the accumulation of doctrine in the soul of the poor believer this same glory factor increases in his stream of consciousness.
49. This is described in the verse by the phrase, “his high position” referring to his status in the plan of God as an advancing believer.
50. As the growth process continues, he is stockpiling doctrine which develops into “glory.” But the idea is “exaltation” in the soul by the presence of biblical truth.
51. The greater the inventory of doctrine in this believer’s soul the greater his relaxed mental attitude. His social and economic status is diminished by the exaltation of his spiritual inventory.
52. Such an individual would have a mental attitude of “celebration” that magnifies the presence of divine thought. This is described as a “high position” spiritually.
53. This takes us back to the opening word of verse 9. The verb is the present tense, active voice, imperative mood of *kaucháomai*.
54. The progressive present indicates continuous action. The active voice means the poor believer is to continue the process of growing spiritually. The imperative mood is a command to do so.
55. With a relaxed mental attitude, this man is able to “celebrate” his life on this earth by means of doctrine in the soul.

**James 1:9** But the poor believer must keep on celebrating [ IM #6 ] in the sphere of exaltation in the royal family of God. (EXT)

**(End JAS1-15. See JAS1-16 for continuation of study at p. 151.)**

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<sup>8</sup> Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, 11th ed., s.vv. “exalt,” “exaltation.”

**James 1:10** ... and the rich man is to glory in his humiliation, because like flowering grass he will pass away.  
(NASB)

1. This verse emphasizes the details of life. The rich man is used to illustrate this. Because of his wealth, he is able to accumulate numerous things that add to his temporal happiness.
2. Many theologians who approach verses 9 and 10 assume the person in verse 9 is a believer because he is poor.
3. On the other hand, they conclude that the man in verse 10 is an unbeliever. There is an erroneous and judgmental attitude by many in Christianity that asserts that rich people are by definition unbelievers.
4. It is not a subject on which we should dwell, but numerous believers in the Scripture were wealthy as this excerpt demonstrates:

The possession of wealth is not regarded as sinful, but, on the contrary, was looked upon as a sign of the blessing of God (Ecclesiastes 5:19; 6:2). The doctrine of “blessed are the poor, and cursed are the rich” finds no countenance in the Scriptures, for Luke 6:20, 24 refers to concrete conditions. But while it is not sinful to be rich it is very dangerous, and certainly perilous to one’s salvation (Matthew 19:23 [The rich young man in vv. 16–26.]). It is because of the danger of losing the soul through the possession of wealth that so many exhortations are found in the Scriptures aimed especially at those who have an abundance of this world’s goods (1 Timothy 6:17; James 1:10–11; 5:1). That it is not impossible for men of wealth to be saved, however, is apparent from the narratives, in the Gospels, of such rich men as Nicodemus, and Joseph of Arimathaea (John 19:38–39; Matthew 27:57–60), and Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1–10). It may fairly be inferred from the Gospel records that James and John,<sup>1</sup> who were disciples of our Lord, were men of considerable means (Mark 1:19–20; John 19:27).<sup>2</sup>

5. The Tanakh identifies several wealthy biblical heroes including Abraham, Job, Joseph, David, Solomon, Jehoshaphat, and Hezekiah.
6. In the New Testament, several men are indicated as possessors of wealth: Joseph of Arimathaea, Nicodemus, Zacchaeus, Zebedee, and his sons, James and John.

<sup>1</sup> “Sons of Zebedee,” Luke 5:10 and John 21:2.

<sup>2</sup> William Evans, “Wealth,” in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia*, gen. ed. James Orr (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1956), 4:3076.