


## Day 1

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

Q1. Who wrote the Book of James?

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### James, son of Zebedee?

#### Matthew 4:21-22

Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James, son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them,<sup>22</sup> and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

#### Matthew 17:1-3

After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James, and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves.<sup>2</sup> There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light.<sup>3</sup> Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus...

#### Acts 12:1-2

It was about this time that King Herod arrested some who belonged to the church, intending to persecute them.<sup>2</sup> He had James, the brother of John, put to death with the sword. [approx. 44-AD]


### James, son of Alphaeus?

#### Matthew 10:2-4

These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (who is called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James, son of Zebedee, and his brother John;<sup>3</sup> Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James, son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus;<sup>4</sup> Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

#### Acts 1:13

When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James, and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James, son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas, son of James.

 Note: Acts 1:13 appears to be the last time James, son of Alphaeus is mentioned. Tradition says that James, son of Alphaeus was stoned to death by the Jews.

### James, son of Joseph?

#### Matthew 13:54-56

Coming to his hometown, he began teaching the people in their synagogue, and they were amazed. "Where did this man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers?" they asked.<sup>55</sup> "Isn't this the carpenter's son? Isn't his mother's name Mary, and aren't his brothers James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas?"<sup>56</sup> Aren't all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?"


#### Acts 15:12-13


The whole assembly became silent as they listened to Barnabas and Paul telling about the miraculous signs and wonders God had done among the Gentiles through them.<sup>13</sup> When they finished, James spoke up: "Brothers, listen to me.<sup>14</sup> Simon [Peter] has described to us how God at first showed his concern by taking from the Gentiles a people for himself..."

#### Galatians 1:18-20



[Paul wrote,] Then after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to get acquainted with Peter and stayed with him fifteen days.<sup>19</sup> I saw none of the other apostles — only James, the Lord's brother.<sup>20</sup> I assure you before God that what I am writing you is no lie.

### Summary:

 Author: "The writer of this [letter] has been identified with James the Just, first bishop of Jerusalem, the brother of our Lord." [©Charles John Ellicott, Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers, undated, and the Rev. E. G. Punchard, D D; <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/ellicott/james/1.htm>] Editorial: fascinating logic and process of elimination to identify the author as James, the step-brother of Jesus, the son of Joseph the carpenter.

 Date of the Epistle: "The Epistle has been called 'general' — that is, 'universal' — chiefly because it was addressed to no body of believers in one place in particular. The absence of all allusion to Gentile converts fairly proves an earlier date

than the circular letter preserved in Acts 15:24-29, that is, somewhere about the year A.D. 44. And, if such be correct, we must look on this as one of the oldest writings in the canon of the New Testament.” [ibid.]


-  Audience: Jewish Believers in Christ Jesus; “these remnants of the house of Israel . . . Scattered . . . ‘a by-word among all nations’ (Deuteronomy 28:37) . . . wherever the Lord had driven them.” [ibid.]
-  Death of James the Just: “the plain truth seems that James the Just was hurled from a pinnacle of the Temple, and finally despatched (sic) by stoning, as a believer in Jesus of Nazareth, about the year 69-A.D., immediately before the siege of Jerusalem by the Roman emperor Vespasian [in 70-A.D.]. Josephus accuses the high priest Ananus, a Sadducee, of the judicial murder, and declares that the ‘most equitable of the citizens, . . . were . . . most uneasy at the breach of the laws, disliked what was done,’ and complained to King Agrippa and Albinus the procurator, who, in consequence, removed Ananus from his office.” [ibid.] [Note: Josephus lived in the 1<sup>st</sup> century and provides independent, extra-Biblical corroboration of 1<sup>st</sup> century Jewish history]

*Greetings*

<sup>1</sup> James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes scattered among the nations: Greetings.

*Trials and Temptations*

<sup>2</sup> Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, <sup>3</sup> because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance.

-  Persevere: to persist in a state, enterprise, or undertaking in spite of counterinfluences, opposition, or discouragement. Steadfast. [<http://www.m-w.com/info/copyright.htm>]

Q2. Verses 1-2: Broadly speaking, to whom was James writing? [This is critical to understanding the Epistle of James.]

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Q3. Why do you think James would be writing primarily to these people?

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Q4. Verse 2: When we face a trial, how are we to face that trial?

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Q5. Is that easy to do? Is it the normal human reaction?

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Q6. How does a trial test your faith?

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Q7. How might “testing of your faith develops perseverance”?

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Day 2

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today’s study.

<sup>4</sup>Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

Q8. How does “perseverance” affect the Believer’s “maturity”?

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Q9. To what is James referring, when he states that we will “not [be] lacking anything”? Is James referring to food, for example? Or recreational equipment? Tools? Appliances? Friendships? Income? Or something else?

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<sup>5</sup>If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.

Q10. What are three promises in verse 5?

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Q11. How would you define wisdom?

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Q12. How does the Bible describe wisdom?

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**1 Corinthians 1:25**

For the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength.

**Proverbs 1:7, 20-33**

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline...

<sup>20</sup> Wisdom calls aloud in the street, she raises her voice in the public squares; <sup>21</sup> at the head of the noisy streets she cries out, in the gateways of the city she makes her speech: <sup>22</sup> "How long will you simple ones love your simple ways? How long will mockers delight in mockery and fools hate knowledge? <sup>23</sup> If you had responded to my rebuke, I would have poured out my heart to you and made my thoughts known to you. <sup>24</sup> But since you rejected me when I called and no one gave heed when I stretched out my hand, <sup>25</sup> since you ignored all my advice and would not accept my rebuke, <sup>26</sup> I in turn will laugh at your disaster; I will mock when calamity overtakes you – <sup>27</sup> when calamity overtakes you like a storm, when disaster sweeps over you like a whirlwind, when distress and trouble overwhelm you.

<sup>28</sup> "Then they will call to me but I will not answer; they will look for me but will not find me. <sup>29</sup> Since they hated knowledge and did not choose to fear the LORD, <sup>30</sup> since they would not accept my advice and spurned my rebuke, <sup>31</sup> they will eat the fruit of their ways and

be filled with the fruit of their schemes. <sup>32</sup> For the waywardness of the simple will kill them, and the complacency of fools will destroy them; <sup>33</sup> but whoever listens to me will live in safety and be at ease, without fear of harm."

<sup>6</sup> But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. <sup>7</sup> That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; <sup>8</sup> he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does.

Q13. Do you think of the Bible as simply another source of advice for you on issues of this world? If "yes", then do you consider God's instruction as something you can accept or reject. According to verse 6, how do you think God considers that kind of thinking?

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Q14. Do you think that God expects perfect and unwavering belief from Believers at all times and in all circumstances?

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**Mark 9:23-24**

"If you can?" said Jesus. "Everything is possible for him who believes." <sup>24</sup> Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!" [The boy was healed.]

Q15. How often are we to pray?

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**Acts 1:14**

They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.


**Ephesians 6:18**

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

**1 Timothy 2:1-4**

I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession, and thanksgiving be made for everyone – <sup>2</sup> for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. <sup>3</sup> This is good, and pleases God our Savior, <sup>4</sup> who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.

*Day 3*

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today’s study.

<sup>9</sup>The brother in humble circumstances ought to take pride in his high position.

Q16. Are “humble circumstances” the same as poor?

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Q17. Why would a person in “humble circumstances” be in a “high position”?

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Q18. Is “pride” ever good?

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<sup>10</sup>But the one who is rich should take pride in his low position, because he will pass away like a wild flower.

Q19. Our society admires the wealthy. And the wealthy person is always given preferential treatment. How does Scripture instruct the wealthy to act?

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<sup>11</sup>For the sun rises with scorching heat and withers the plant; its blossom falls and its beauty is destroyed. In the same way, the rich man will fade away even while he goes about his business.

Q20. This seems to say that the rich man as he conducts his business will wither and fade away. Why?

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<sup>12</sup>Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.

Q21. Why will the survivor of a trial, a test, “receive the crown of life”?

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Day 4

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today’s study.

<sup>13</sup> When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone;

Q22. What is ‘free will’ and do we have it?

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Q23. If God does not tempt anyone, then why am I tempted by sin? Gambling? Or pornography? Or alcohol? Or shoplifting? Or cheating? Or little white lies?

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Q24. If God is love, then why are some people afflicted by such terrible trials, hurts, illnesses, stress? What counsel would you give your neighbor?

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<sup>14</sup> but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. <sup>15</sup> Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

Q25. How would you explain the stages of temptation?

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**Proverbs 7:1-23**

My son, keep my words and store up my commands within you. <sup>2</sup> Keep my commands and you will live; guard my teachings as the apple of your eye. <sup>3</sup> Bind them on your fingers; write them on the tablet of your heart. <sup>4</sup> Say to wisdom, "You are my sister," and call understanding your kinsman; <sup>5</sup> they will keep you from the adulteress, from the wayward wife with her seductive words.

<sup>6</sup> At the window of my house I looked out through the lattice. <sup>7</sup> I saw among the simple, I noticed among the young men, a youth who lacked judgment. <sup>8</sup> He was going down the street near her corner, walking along in the direction of her house <sup>9</sup> at twilight, as the day was fading, as the dark of night set in.

<sup>10</sup> Then out came a woman to meet him, dressed like a prostitute and with crafty intent. <sup>11</sup> (She is loud and defiant, her feet never stay at home; <sup>12</sup> now in the street, now in the squares, at every corner she lurks.)

<sup>13</sup> She took hold of him and kissed him and with a brazen face she said: <sup>14</sup> "I have fellowship offerings at home; today I fulfilled my vows. <sup>15</sup> So, I came out to meet you; I looked for you and have found you! <sup>16</sup> I have covered my bed with colored linens from Egypt.

<sup>17</sup> I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon. <sup>18</sup> Come, let's drink deep of love till morning; let's enjoy ourselves with love!

<sup>19</sup> My husband is not at home; he has gone on a long journey. <sup>20</sup> He took his purse filled with money and will not be home till full moon."

<sup>21</sup> With persuasive words she led him astray; she seduced him with her smooth talk.

<sup>22</sup> All at once he followed her like an ox going to the slaughter, like a deer stepping into a noose <sup>23</sup> till an arrow pierces his liver, like a bird darting into a snare, little knowing it will cost him his life.

Q26. Referring to the Proverbs 7:1-23 passage, did the young man have only one chance (or multiple chances) to turn away?

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**1 Corinthians 10:13**

No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

<sup>16</sup>Don't be deceived, my dear brothers. <sup>17</sup>Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.

Q27. If I buy a new car... or purchase an expensive gift for my spouse, are those considered "gifts"?

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Q28. I purchased a gift with income I earned from my job, how can my gift be considered a "gift... from above"?

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Q29. What might change like "shifting shadows"? And how can we recognize it?

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**Day 5**

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

<sup>18</sup>He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all he created.

Q30. Who or What is the "Word of Truth"?

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**John 1:1-3, 14, 17-18**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was with God in the beginning. <sup>3</sup> Through him all things were made... <sup>14</sup> The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth... <sup>17</sup> For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. <sup>18</sup> No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known.

Q31. Referring to James 1:18, how does the "Word of Truth" "give us birth"?

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**2 Timothy 3:14-17**

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it,<sup>15</sup> and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.<sup>16</sup> All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness,<sup>17</sup> so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

**Romans 10:8-11**

But what does it say? "The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart," that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming:<sup>9</sup> That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.<sup>10</sup> For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. <sup>11</sup> As the Scripture says, "Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame."

**Romans 10:17**

Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.

Q32. How do you (or a dictionary) define 'consecrated'?


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Q33. Do you believe that God considers you and me (we who believe in the saving grace of Christ Jesus) "firstfruits"?

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 Firstfruits: According to the Levitical ceremonial, the first sheaf of the new crop, accompanied with sacrifice, was presented in the Temple on the day after the Passover Sabbath. No part of the harvest was permitted to be used for food until after this acknowledgment, that all had come from God and belonged to Him. A similar law applied to the first-born of men and of cattle. Both were regarded as in a special sense consecrated to and belonging to God. Now, in the New Testament, both these ideas of 'the first-born' and 'the first-fruits,' which run as you see parallel in some important aspects, are transferred to Jesus Christ... Thus, both these phrases are further transferred in the New Testament to Christian people. They are the 'first-fruits unto God and the Lamb'; [© Expositions Of Holy Scripture, Alexander MacLaren; <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/james/1-18.htm>]

***Listening and Doing***

<sup>19</sup> My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, <sup>20</sup> for man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires.

Q34. Is God then saying that we should never become angry?

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**Matthew 5:22**

"But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment..."

**1 Corinthians 13:4-5**

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. <sup>5</sup> It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.

**Ephesians 4:22-27**

You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires;<sup>23</sup> to be made new in the attitude of your minds;<sup>24</sup> and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. <sup>25</sup> Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body. <sup>26</sup> "In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry,<sup>27</sup> and do not give the devil a foothold.



**Ephesians 4:30-32**

And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. <sup>31</sup> Get rid of all bitterness, rage, and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. <sup>32</sup> Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

<sup>21</sup> Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.

Q35. How does a Believer in Christ Jesus “get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent”?

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Q36. How is the “Word planted in you”?

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**2 Timothy 3:16-17**

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

**Romans 10:17** [this is an incredibly important verse of Scripture and should be oft repeated]

Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.


Q37. Referring to the Romans 10:17 passage, is “hearing the message” more, less, or equally effective as reading Scripture silently or meditatively? Why? (Also consider the period of time in which this letter was written: printing presses?)

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**Day 6**

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today’s study.

<sup>22</sup> Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.

Q38. Who is Jesus’ hands, feet, and tongue in this world, today?

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Q39. What does James mean, when he writes, “Do what it says”?

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<sup>23</sup> Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror <sup>24</sup> and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like.

Q40. How would you explain these verses (23 & 24) to a new believer?

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<sup>25</sup> But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it — he will be blessed in what he does.

Q41. What is the “perfect law”?

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Q42. To whom does the “perfect law” apply?

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Q43. How does the “perfect law... [give] freedom”?

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Q44. Why does action, our action, as a result of what we have heard, seem to be so important in James’ teaching?

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<sup>26</sup> If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless.

Q45. What is the problem with our tongue? And why might my religion be worthless?


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**Matthew 15:17-20**

[Jesus taught,] "Don't you see that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and then out of the body? <sup>18</sup> But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart, and these make a man 'unclean.' <sup>19</sup> For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander. <sup>20</sup> These are what make a man 'unclean'..."

**1 Peter 3:9-11**

Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing. <sup>10</sup> For, "Whoever would love life and see good days must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from deceitful speech. <sup>11</sup> He must turn from evil and do good; he must seek peace and pursue it.

 Note: James 1:26 is a precursor to more in-depth teachings on the “tongue” in chapter 3.

<sup>27</sup> Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

Q46. Why does James encourage us “to look after orphans and widows in their distress”?

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Q47. How does a Believer “keep oneself from being polluted by the world”?

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