

God is pleased when we obey his word, but we do not earn his favor.
But rather we develop the capacity to receive the blessings He has already intended to graciously give us from eternity past.
Remember: receive the studies on marriage and how we are to treat each other, along with other doctrinal studies for meditation.

Concerning prayer, who do we address when we pray:
our petitions and supplications are addressed to God the Father; however we are praying in the name of Jesus Christ. We worship Jesus Christ sometimes in song but always according to doctrine and in obedience to accurate doctrine. Jesus said if you love me you will keep my word.

When James says to "count it all joy" in the first few verses he is setting up the tone for the entire epistle where he is basically going to tell us in the rest of the epistle all of the doctrinal skills and techniques that we need, in order to fulfill this opening mandate. He is going to continually come back to this theme of **endurance, testing and joy**, over and again.

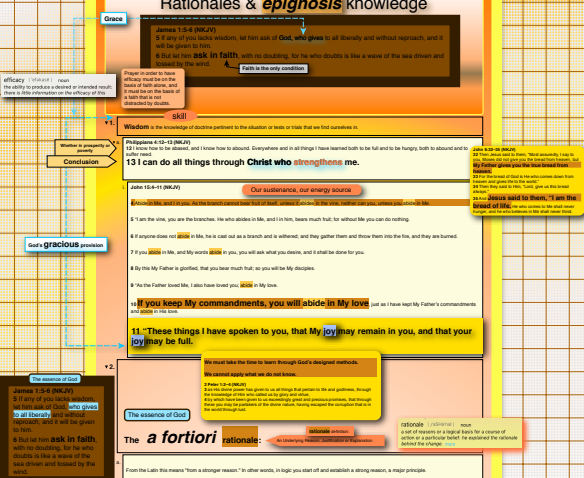
Our life is the product of our choices.
Whatever we do, whatever we become in life is the consequence of our **volition**. Right now we are determining what we will be in 15 or 20 years from now, in 30, 40, 50 years from now, yes **even the quality of our eternal existence**.
Our life, and eternal existence is and will be, the product and the outcome of **all of our choices**.
Our life will either be stable because we are implementing the problem solving methods James is going to communicate in the rest of his epistle, or we will be unstable because we have made the choice to live life on our own terms.
If we choose to live life on our own terms we will not only miss out on the abundant life for ourselves, but we will also not be able to assist others in achieving the abundant life and their greater eternal blessings.
A major part of our service and obedience to God's word is dependent on our personal determination to become aware of those things that **distract or tarnish** the undisturbed revelation of God's **pathos** for mankind / the Bible.

For most people confrontation is avoided.

Time:
James 4:14 (NKJV)
14 **For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.**
Jesus didn't say "if you love me you will keep my word, when you have time"
When Paul was teaching the Corinthians how to think about time and specifically the individual believer's life span, he illustrated his point with an athlete in preparation for the athletic games.
1 Corinthians 9:24-27 (NKJV)
24 Do you not know that those who compete in a race all abstain from everything? No they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown.
25 Therefore I run thus not with uncertainty. Thus I fight, not as one who beats the air.
26 But I subdue my body, bringing it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.
This isn't just a Sunday morning encouragement.
The intent is that the believer's thinking about how he spends his life would be radically transformed.

15, 20, 21, 26

Rationales



Promise of God

Explanation of previous verse

Paul argues from the greater, to the lesser
Romans 8:31-32 (NKJV)
31 What then shall we say to these things? **If God is for us, who can be against us?**
32 **He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?**
33 **Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.**
In order to use the **rationales** that underlie the promises of God, we must first have **epignōsis** knowledge in our souls

The character or essence of God rationale:
Psalm 89:14 (NKJV)
14 Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne, Mercy and truth go before Your face.

The sovereignty of God rationale: because God has created the universe and everything in it; therefore God has the right of complete control over my life.

1 Timothy 1:17 (NKJV)
17 Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, to God who alone is wise, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.
Isaiah 46:4 (NKJV)
4 "Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel, And His Redeemer, the Lord of hosts: I am the First and I am the Last; Besides Me there is no God.
Jude 25 (NKJV)
25 To God our Savior, Who alone is wise, Be glory and majesty, Dominion and power, Both now and forever. Amen.
Hebrews 11:27 (NKJV)
27 By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible

The omniscience of God rationale: because God knows everything past, present and future; he knows the solution to every problem I will ever face.

God is absolute truth rationale: Therefore we can have absolute confidence in God fulfilling his promises

John 14:8 (NKJV)
8 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.
John 14:18-17 (NKJV)
18 And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever--
17 The Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.
Deuteronomy 32:1 (NKJV)
4 He is the Rock, His work is perfect, For all His ways are justice, A God of truth and without injustice, Righteous and upright is He.
Romans 15:8 (NKJV)
8 Now I say that Jesus Christ has become a servant to the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made to the fathers,

The plan of God rationale: No matter how much we fail as a believer God still has a plan for our life

Romans 8:28-29 (NKJV)
28 **Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?** that tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?
29 As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."
37 Not in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.
38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.
3 Theorematized 3:12 (NKJV)
12 But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and union in the truth,
Titus 2:11-14 (NKJV)
11 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men,
12 teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age,
13 looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ,
14 who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.

3. 2 Corinthians 10:1-6 (NKJV)
1 Now I, Paul, myself am pleading with you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ—who in presence am lovely among you, but being absent am bold toward you.
2 But I beg you that when I am present I may not be bold with that confidence by which I intend to be bold against some, who think of us as if we walked according to the flesh.
3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh.
4 For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds,
5 casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,
6 and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.