

**James 4:17**  
Against the Light

*Without excuse ...*

I. A Definite Standard

- A. God's Word
- B. Knowledge
- C. Conscience

II. The Guilt of Negligence

- A. Sin
- B. Conflict
- C. Consequences

III. The Blessing of Obedience

- A. Prompted by Love
- B. Pleasing to God
- C. Propagating Joy

*... but not without grace.*

***Children, Listen ...***

1. What is Sin?
2. Where do you learn how to love and obey God?
3. Do you sometimes do things that you know are wrong?
4. If you do something you know is wrong, what should you do about it?
5. Will God help you obey Him if you ask Him to?

**Sin is Sin**

There is one standard that determines what is sin and what is not and that is the holiness of God. God has revealed to us what His holy standard for humanity is in His Word. While saints in Christ are forgiven of their sins it is not exactly a news flash that Christians still sin. We will battle indwelling sin until we are perfected in glory. Thankfully we do not battle alone but the Holy Spirit helps us in the process of sanctification. And God has provided us with direction by giving us His Word, filling us with the Holy Spirit, providing us with consciences that are useful (when in tune with the will of God) in helping us to make right choices, and even putting godly and wise people in our lives to help us stay on the right path. But sadly we often resist and even defy the God given guidance and help that is offered to us by our gracious Lord. In other words, we are well equipped with information regarding the right thing to do ... but for whatever unsanctified reason we often choose to suppress, ignore and even flat out rebel against the knowledge we have. Sin is sin, but the way James phrases it helps us to realize just how personal intentional disobedience is – there is no way to wiggle out of it – it is sin on a very personal level. That is not where we want to be. All sin offends God, harms others and robs us of joy, but willful sin is especially grievous because we are sinning against the light. May God grant us the wisdom to discern what is good and right and the will to do what is good and right – to His glory, the good of others and the great satisfaction of our own souls.