Several passages throughout Scripture seek to give the reader a correct view of themselves. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus shared how God took care of the sparrows, and then asked, “‘Are you not of more value than they?’” pointing out God’s value on every human life (Matt. 6:26). God sometimes directly asks about His listener’s identity to draw their attention to who they really are. In Isaiah, He asked His people, “‘Who are you that you should be afraid of a man who will die, and of the son of a man who will be made like grass?’” (Isa. 51:12). He appealed to their identity as His people to demonstrate the foolishness of fearing another human. These passages and others like them focus on the need to value oneself as a child of God and see oneself more valuable than one might think, based on what God says.

In this week’s passage, James has a parallel goal in mind. Instead of elevating one’s view of self, James encourages his listeners to lower it when it has become too high. “Who are you to judge another?” he asks, pointing out that their identity did not come with judgment credentials (James 4:12). “What is your life?” he asks, pointing out that no human is eternal nor omniscient (v. 14).

Though the earlier mentioned verses on the value of human life are possibly more encouraging outright, James’ words have the important function of providing a well-rounded view of oneself: every human is eternally valuable, loved, and cared for; at the same time, God is God and His creatures are just creatures after all. Understanding both enables a balanced view of oneself and of God.
Write out James 4:11–17 from the translation of your choice. If you’re pressed for time, write out James 4:11, 12. You may also rewrite the passage in your own words, or outline or mind-map it.
Go back to your scribed text and study the passage.

**Circle** repeated words/phrases/ideas

**Underline** words/phrases that are important and have meaning to you

Draw **Arrows** to connect words/phrases to other associated or related words/phrases

What special insights do your marks seem overall to point to?

Memorize your favorite verse in James 4:11–17. Write it out multiple times to help with memorization.

How have you judged the law in the past or recently?

How is James’s definition of sin revolutionary compared to how we sometimes treat sin?

Read more at www.inversebible.org/jam09-3
After looking at your scribed and annotated text, what special insights do your marks overall seem to point to?

What questions emerge after studying this passage? What parts are difficult?

What other principles and conclusions do you find?

Practically speaking, how can you involve God more in plans you’re currently carving out for the future?

Read more at www.inversebible.org/jam09-4
Review your memorized verse from James 4:11–17.

What relationship do the following verses have with the primary passage?

Matthew 6:25–34
Proverbs 19:21
Colossians 2:9, 10
1 Peter 2:9, 10
Jeremiah 31

What other verses come to mind in connection with James 4:11–17?
Where do you see Jesus in James 4:11–17?

What is He saying to you through these texts?

How have you seen Jesus be misunderstood as judgmental? How does that view line up with Scripture?

How do you see Jesus differently or see Him again?

Prayer: How do you respond to seeing Jesus in this way?

Read more at www.inversebible.org/jam09-6
Review the memory verse. How does it apply to your life this week?

After this week’s study of the passage, what are personal applications you are convicted of in your life?

What are practical applications you must make in your school, family, workplace, and church?

Read more inSight from the Spirit of Prophecy at www.inversebible.org/jam09-7
Share insights from this week’s memory verse and Bible study as well as any discoveries, observations, and questions with your Sabbath School class (or Bible study group). Consider these discussion questions with the rest of the group.

How much of a balanced view do you have of yourself? Of your value and importance in your place as a human? Explain.

How does Jesus help those who naturally have too low of an estimate of themselves, but also those who have too high of an estimate?

Are you more of a planner or more spontaneous? How can you express trust in Jesus more in both?

How does judging harm us?

What are some of your favorite verses that articulate our relation to God? What do you love about them?

How did Jesus balance being completely accepting but also not excusing sin?

What are practical ways to regularly meditate on God’s love?

You’re Not Who You Think You Are