

Jas19 – World’s Friend – God’s Enemy James 4:4-6

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Open your Bibles. The Holy Spirit moves by the living and powerful Word that is sharper than any two-edged sword that will absolutely discern the thoughts and intents of your heart. Title of the message, “World’s Friend – God’s Enemy.” James 4:4-6.

We started Chapter 4 last message with a clear revelation. The revelation was this, the quarrels and fighting and conflict in your life, are your fault. They come from the evil desires at war within you. That’s James’ powerful way of saying they come from your sin nature. James 4:1 says the cause of the conflicts in your life is your sin nature that is at war within you. Your sin nature is at war with everything good that God wants to bring into your life. James deals with it pretty directly and he isn’t done yet. He is going to talk this message about the war that is raging inside of us that we call the sin nature. This message we are talking about that same war, but a different focus, a different perspective. The focus is what happens when our sin nature draws us into the death trap of loving the world. What happens when our sin nature is wooed into having a love affair with the world? What happens then?

Let’s pray. *Father we want to know now, not then, we don’t want to look back and say “Oh we didn’t realize. We want you to tell us up front. If the bridge is out Lord, show us the sign. If we’re headed down the broad road of destruction we want to know now.” We just say right now, show us the end of the road that we are on. Give us a divine revelation and give us the courage and give us the power of your Holy Spirit to stop; to repent, to turn and to run from the destruction and to run to you. We pray you would give us that conviction right now, in Jesus’ name, amen.*

Jumping right in, James 4 verse 4 (a).

James 4:4(a) (ESV)

4 You adulterous people! . . .

Hello!! Did he just call *me* adulterous? Yeah he did!

Listen to the amplified Bible.

James 4:4(a) (AMP)

4 You [are like] unfaithful wives [having illicit love affairs with the world and breaking your marriage vow to God]! . . .

God's covenant with his people has always been described as a marriage vow (Old Testament – see Hosea and New Testament.) Paul makes it clear our marriages (as God designed them) are a picture of our relationship with Jesus as our Bride-Groom. And so when the amplified Bible says in 4:4 *You [are like] unfaithful wives [having illicit love affairs with the world and breaking your marriage vow to God]! . . .* The point is for you to put yourself physically in that place where someone you love is having an illicit love affair, and breaking their marriage vow. And you might start getting a feeling for how that would make you feel. And then you might say, “The way I feel, you feel something like that when I’m having a love affair with the world?” Yeah, he does. Verse 4 continues

James 4:4(a) (ESV)

4 You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? . . .

“Do you not know” is the attention getter. It’s like “Hey, hey hey. Certainly you know this.” It’s not so much rhetorical as it is “You’re kidding me, right? Certainly you know this.”

The amplified Bible says:

James 4:4(a) (AMP)

4 . . . Do you not know that being the world's friend is being God's enemy? . . .

When you want to get a point across, use fewer words. “Friendship with the world” means: *having affection (love) for the things of the world.* “The world” is not the planet earth we live on. “The world” – COSMOS – is referring to the sin-filled “system” that rules this age that we live in, of which Satan is the prince, the little “g” god of this world. When Satan tempted Jesus he offered him all the kingdoms of the world and Jesus didn’t deny the fact that he could give them. Because Adam gave rulership of this world to Satan and so when we say “the world” we mean this world system that Satan is at the helm of. And James says ***Do you not know this*** and the expected answer is “*Yeah, we know that.*”

And you and I also know that this “world system” has sin as its base and it is sin-filled. But are we ready to admit that we might be having a love affair with this world? And if we are, then we are making ourselves an enemy of God. The love of this world and the love of God *do not* and *cannot go together*. I cannot help but use the marriage analogy. If you have an affair, you cannot help but make yourself an enemy of your spouse. Don’t try it, believe me. If you have an affair on God you will make yourself an enemy of God.

The “world system” (with Satan at the helm) and God are at war. There is a war going on and it’s not about you. The universe isn’t about you. God doesn’t exist *for* you. Get off yourself. There is a war going on between unrighteousness and righteousness. It’s really not even between God and the devil because they are not equals. The devil and Jesus Christ aren’t equals. The devil is a created being. Adam gave him control of this world, and so the battle is between the sinfulness and unrighteousness of this world and the righteousness of God. Every single one of us is choosing which side of the war we are on. We choose sides by deciding who we show our allegiance to, by which side we love. Which side do we stand for.

1 John 2 lays out this battle so well and shows the results of which side we choose.

1 John 2:15 & 17 (NLT)

15 Do not love this world nor the things it offers you, for when you love the world, you do not have the love of the Father in you.

...

17 And this world is fading away, along with everything that people crave. But anyone who does what pleases God will live forever.

(1 Peter says this world is going to vaporize, it’s about to be burnt up.) What a perfect picture of this war and the results of which side we’re on. We choose our allegiance. We either stand with the world or we stand with God, and whichever side we choose, the other side becomes our enemy.

Look at how clear this is in the second half of James 4:4.

James 4:4(b) (ESV)

4 . . . Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

If we choose to be a friend (to love) the world they by that choice we make ourselves an enemy of God. Jesus said the same thing from his side of this war. If you have made your stand with Jesus Christ, then this is what he says to you.

John 15:18–19 (NLT)

18 “If the world hates you, remember that it hated me first.

19 The world would love you as one of its own if you belonged to it, but you are no longer part of the world. I chose you to come out of the world, so [the world] hates you.

We don’t like to be hated. But you need to understand if you stand with Jesus Christ the world is going to hate you. If you stand with the world you become an enemy of God.

This is the language of war. The war is not about you. But you still must choose a side. Get ready for the good news because it's coming. Here's the bad news first. You don't know how good the good news is until you know how bad the bad news is. That's why we have to explain to people they are sinners so they understand their need for Jesus Christ. Here's the bad news. You were born with a predisposition to the losing side. Unfortunately because of our sin nature by default we are on the side of the world. And the world was designed to destroy you. The "world system" with Satan at its helm is designed to draw you in to what Jesus called the broad road of destruction.

However, if you've been born again, you've switched sides. You were born into the losing side. If you've been born again, you've been born into the winning side. You have given your allegiance to Jesus Christ. You've been given a new nature. It puts you on the winning side. If you have committed your life to Jesus Christ then you stand in victory with Christ.

H O W E V E R, James is writing to Christians, to those who claim to have given their allegiance to God. Don't you know there are warnings in the Bible about your salvation so that you can be reassured of your salvation? Theologically, your salvation is secure in Christ. The question is, are you in Christ? Not whether your salvation is secure there, the question is, are you there? Or are you walking the fence or are you playing both sides? Or do you think that you were christened in some denominational church with some holy water or something you're good to go? Forget about it! James is talking to people who claim to have given their allegiance to Christ. Talking to brothers and sister who say they are believers.

And he is saying, "Hey, hey, hey! You guys are committing spiritual adultery. You entered a covenant of faith with Jesus, but now you're slipping out at night to have an affair with the world."

You are making yourself an enemy with God. And I know some of you would like to debate what that means. It means be afraid! Be very afraid! And get to repenting! Don't see how far away you can get from Christ and still slip in the back door. Get in there as close as you can to him, so that you know that you're in Christ. If you're committing adultery with the world it makes you an enemy of God.

And James says your adultery with the world is going to make you an enemy of the One who gave his life for you. In the Amplified Bible look at what James 4:4 says.

James 4:4(b) – (AMP)

4. . . whoever chooses to be a friend of the world takes his stand as an enemy of God

I am really hammering this verse. It's because we can talk ourselves out of anything. I have talked to way, way, way, way too many people who are messing around in their marriage. And every one of them justifies it. Every one. I have never had someone come to me just absolutely broken, in repentance and just destroyed because they are messing around outside their marriage. You know when people come to me? When they're about to get caught. That's awful. I know it's hard to hear that. Think about how God feels. When you're choosing to be a friend of the world you are taking your stand as an enemy of the One who gave his life for you. And Christ loves you enough to secure an inheritance for you that's reserved in heaven that is undefiled and does not fade away.

We make this so complicated, the Bible makes it so simple. We want to paint big grey areas so we can say we love God, but still have an affair with the world. But the Bible takes all those grey areas and paints them black and white. Friend of the world – enemy of God. In the Bible there is no grey area for you to justify your sin. You would have to kind of re-write some stuff.

Here is the good news – so far the wording here indicates a one-sided war. The wording here does not indicate that God becomes your enemy. It's implying that you become God's enemy. That's good news. God still loves you with an everlasting love. Even if you have taken your stand as his enemy because of your love for this world, he still loves you.

Why is it that our love for the world makes us an enemy of God? What's the big deal? It has to do with the intensity of God's love for us and his desire to have a holy, intimate relationship with us. Look at James 4:5.

James 4:5 (ESV)

5 Or do you suppose it is to no purpose (in vain) that the Scripture says, "He yearns jealously over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us"?

This sentence: "***He yearns jealously over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us***" is without question the hardest sentence in James to translate, period. Some believe it is one of the top ten hardest sentences in the New Testament to translate out of the Greek because the original was written in such a way that it is really tough to get an exact translation. So it has been translated a number of ways. But the thought (idea) that carries the most scholarly support is: *God has a jealous love for those who belong to him.* And if you don't belong to him you can today. God want to love you with this jealous love.

The word jealous strikes us wrong, doesn't it? We are so used to this word being used in the negative sense. We have seen the damage of sinful jealousy. Marriages torn apart by

control-freak jealousy. Guys “stalking” their wives, controlling their every move and then getting divorced because of their insane jealousy. That is not *God’s jealousy*. The Bible attributes to God as one of his character traits – divine jealousy.

Here is how godly (righteous) jealousy is defined:

A consuming single-minded pursuit of a good end . . . Used to denote God’s holy zeal for the honor of his name and the good of his people who are bound to him in the marriage covenant.

This is the divine jealousy God has for us. So with that understanding, let’s read James 4:5 again.

James 4:5 (ESV)

5 Or do you suppose it is to no purpose (in vain) that the Scripture says, “He yearns jealously over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us”?

This is a follow up question to verse 4: ***“Do you think it’s in VAIN that Scripture says God has a Divine Jealousy for you?”*** This is like us saying to our own kids, ***“Do you think I am talking to hear myself speak?”*** That is the attitude of this verse.

“You think God’s just exercising his JAW when he says he has a divine jealousy for your commitment to him?”

The first of the Ten Commandments says, ***“You shall have NO OTHER gods before me.”***

The second commandment says, ***“You shall not Worship ANY IDOL.”***

Then, God says in the next verse in Exodus 20:5:

Exodus 20:5 (NLT)

5 - You must not bow down to them or worship them (these other gods and idols), for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God who will not tolerate your affection for any other gods . . .

God has a divinely jealous love for you and he’s not okay with you having a love affair with the world. Remember, “The world” represents the governing system of this age that our sin nature loves to serve, the gods and idols of pride, lust, greed, envy and the things of this world that our sin nature loves to pursue.

Our sin nature is drawn to being friends with and being secretly in love with the world and in the first two commandments God says “Don’t do that, because I love you with a

jealous love and I won't stand for your spiritual adultery." James is giving us a chance this side of judgment to see which side of this war we are currently standing on, to whom we have given allegiance. He has given us an opportunity to wake up. Maybe because we are committing spiritual adultery. Maybe we are having a love affair with the world and maybe we are making ourselves an enemy of God.

We must recognize where you stand with God. It is the first step to being truly saved, restored and transformed. And God has provided a way. He has provided the only way. He is ready to save you from the clutches of the world. He is ready to receive you back to himself and to love you with an everlasting love.

God is ready right now to love you with: *a consuming single-minded pursuit of your ETERNAL GOOD.*

God is ready right now to love you with: *a holy zeal - for the honor of his name and for your good.*

And here is how he does it. The beginning of James 4:6 says:

James 4:6(a) (ESV)

6 But he gives more grace . . .

Here is God's answer! God is offering *you* his grace! He gives much more grace. The answer to you being saved by the destruction of your love affair with the world is God's grace. It's receiving God's grace. Where are you in this war today? How in love are you with the world today? How deep are the world's hooks in you today? God say he has more than enough grace... for you.

Please listen carefully right here – this is the Gospel message. Write these verses down in your margin.

Romans 5:10 (ESV)

10 . . . while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son . . .

Jesus Christ made you right with God while you were his enemy. Jesus died for you when you were in love with this world and when you were his enemy. That's grace.

Colossians 1:21–22 (NLT)

21 . . . You were his enemies, separated from him by your evil thoughts and actions.

22 Yet now he has reconciled you to himself through the death of Christ . . .

Listen, if you're breathing, there is still time for you to be restored to God. To enter into this true covenant. This intimate love to receive the jealous love of God. Jesus came to reconcile you to God, *when you were his enemy.*

Ephesians 2:2–5 (NLT)

2 You used to live in sin, just like the rest of the world, obeying the devil . . .

3 . . . By our very nature we were subject to God's anger, just like everyone else.

4 But God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so much,

5 that even though we were dead because of our sins, he gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God's grace that you have been saved!)

The best two words in the Bible are in verse 4. (The best prayer in the Bible is Peter when he says, "Lord save me.") The most powerful two words in the Bible: ***but God. But God!*** We were born sinners, but God. We chose sin, but God. We were far away from God, but God. God chases us. He hounds us. He draws us. He woos us. He loves us. And he saves us by his grace. That's the good news. You don't deserve to be saved any more now than when you were in the worst sin you were ever in. And you're never going to deserve to be saved. But God loves you. He is chasing you to save you.

It is only by God's grace that we are saved. By his grace we are saved from the destruction that comes from our love for the world. By his grace we are saved for an incredible joy-filled, eternal life with God.

James 4:6 says, ***God gives MORE GRACE***

More grace to pull you out of your love affair with the world. More grace to save you from the love affair you're having with the world. More grace to break the bondage that the world has you in. God gives more grace, and *grace changes everything*. It changes your relationship with God and it changes how you deal with others. *Grace changes everything*. It is amazing grace, unending grace. It is the grace flood from God. It is much more grace.

Please hear me. No matter where you are today, no matter where you've been. No matter how much you love or have loved the world, no matter how deep the hooks of the world are in you, God's grace will save you. God's grace will return you to a right relationship with him. God's grace can save you and restore you and give you true life for eternity.

BUT – hear this however! There is a condition. There absolutely is a condition.

The rest of James 4:6 says:

James 4:6(b) says (ESV)

6 . . . Therefore it says, “God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.”

The number one sin that separates us from God is pride. God OPPOSES the proud. He stands against the proud. Beware of pride, it is the number one sin and it has destroyed more people than any other sin. Pride got Lucifer thrown out of heaven and pride is the number one sin in mankind. Pride is your biggest enemy. It separates you from God more than anything else and James 4:6 says ***God opposes the proud***. That’s enough reason to be broken and humble, right there. Be afraid.

God opposes the proud but he gives grace to the humble. To the humble there is all the grace you need. To the broken there is all the grace you need. All you need to do is look at the people that Jesus healed and see the humility. And look at the people Jesus spoke judgment on, the Pharisees, and you see pride. You can judge your pride level by how often you are right in your own mind. The more you know you’re right, the more prideful you are. There is a simple test.

To the humble there is all the grace you need
To set you *free* from the *world’s bondage*
To set you *free* from *sin, and destruction and death*.

If you will humbly come to God and radically turn your back on your love affair with the world. God will give you more grace for you to return to the winning side of this war.

Turn from your pride.
Turn away from your love affair with the world.
Come to God in true humility.
He will save you.
He will love you with an everlasting love.

2 Peter 3:9–10 (NLT)

9 The Lord . . . is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent.

10 But the day of the Lord will come as unexpectedly as a thief . . . and the earth and everything on it will be found to deserve judgment.

God’s incredible love for you is patient, it is longsuffering. It means he suffers with your pride and your sin and your selfishness for a long time. But the day of God’s judgment will come as a thief in the night and then it will be too late.

What you think your affair with the world is giving you is false. It is designed by the devil to stop you from getting what you truly need. It's counterfeit. Stop being duped by it. True peace, joy and fulfillment in this life and for eternity are only found in Jesus Christ. He is the author of life. *IN HIM* life exists and without him there is no true life. Not in this world and not in the world to come.

Come humbly to God. Repent. Ask him to save you and he will. Break off your love affair with the world and make your allegiance to God clear.

Let's pray. *God our hearts are pierced. But God there is good news. You have much more grace for us God. We can't run to the end of your grace, God. We can't come to you and have your grace dry or empty. Your grace is a fountain, it's a flood, and it never ends. Your mercies are new every morning. And God we need to come to you and say Lord we've been duped by the world, we've been drawn away. Sin was crouching at the door. I didn't realize it, and it pounce on me and it's dragging me into the pit. Save me. I commit to turn from that sin, to turn from my love affair with the world. I come to you Lord and pray give me clean hands. Give me a clean heart. Restore me Lord, to yourself.*

(Pray with me, you don't have to repeat the exact words, but let me just lead you in prayer.) Dear Lord God, I'm sorry. I'm so sorry. Forgive me of my pride. Break my pride. Forgive me of my spiritual adultery. Create in me a clean heart and renew a right spirit in me. Draw me back into your presence and restore your Holy Spirit to me. I love you Lord, and I'm sorry that I've been drawn away. I turn my back on the world. I crucify the world, and I receive you afresh and anew. Please baptize me in your love, and in the presence of your Spirit. Draw me close to you each day. Convict me as my sin nature yearns back for the world and give me the power to daily crucify my flesh and walk in your Spirit.

(If you have never had Jesus come into your life, you are doing it right now. He is saving you right now. The recognition of your sin in your life and your repentance and your crying out to him to save you does it. He is coming to live in you, to empower you, to make you righteous before God the father. Rejoice in that. This is the day of your salvation. So pray again with me.)

Lord I commit to follow you every day forward every day for the rest of my life. In Jesus' name, amen.