

Salt Church
James 4:1-10
“Humble Yourselves”
September 6, 2026
The Fruit of Salvation

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Recap

James 3:13-18

- Last week was about “Godly wisdom”
- We learned that the beginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord
 - Meaning that it is a true fear of the Judge that we will all stand before someday.
- We learned that Godly wisdom is:

James 3:17-18

¹⁷ But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. ¹⁸ Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

- From all of this we learned that there is a tangible action that Godly wisdom produces in the child of God.

We leave James 3 and move into chapter 4 as James addresses issues within the early church, most of which will come as a surprise.

James 4:1-10 (ESV)

4 What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you?

- Couple of things to remember:
 - This letter is written to the church
 - Which means church life is not always perfect
 - How we deal with quarrels and fights will define us as children of God and as a church.
 - I am guessing many of us would describe our experience with church as “church hurt”
 - It is my hope that this will not be your experience here at Salt
 - But you need to know that we, your elders, will not compromise truth
 - Meaning people have left based upon our position on certain things within the Bible.
 - This is why it is so important that you read our church membership paperwork, before you sign it.
 - The second thing that I would bring to your attention is this:
 - At the heart of every conflict is pride.
 - Every war, fight, disagreement, and quarrel is pride.
 - Pride demands its way
 - Pride always goes before destruction!

4 What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you?

Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you?

- James agrees that pride goes before destruction but he describes pride as passions that war within you.
 - Isn't that an interesting way to see it?
 - The fact that there is a war within tells me that there is something inside of us that knows this is wrong.
 - Something within that says this is sin.

² You desire and do not have, so you murder.

- Murder?
- **phoneuó: To murder, to kill**
 - **Phonetic Spelling:** (fon-yoo'-o)

What in the world is going on within this early church?

- There is hate within this early church, for we remember the words of Jesus as He reminded us that murder always starts with hate.

You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel.

- The Greek word for covet
 - **zéloó:** To boil over with desire.
 - It's where we get the word zealous.
- I don't know what they are fighting over but passion is involved.
- Perhaps it's wealth, maybe it's the thermostat!

You do not have, because you do not ask.

- "You have not because you ask not"
 - This is one of those verses that I remember learning early on.

- The context of the verse is often misunderstood but I embraced it and began to ask for all kinds of things.
 - There is power in this verse as long as you apply verse (3) to it.

3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.

- We must remember who we are asking.
 - God knows our hearts and motives
 - What we do know is that when we ask according to God's will He will give it to us in the proper time.
- ***“to spend on your passions”*** feels like it was the pursuit of wealth.
 - This where we need to be reminded that ***“the love of money is the root of all evil.”***
 - Money is an excellent slave.
 - Money is a horrible master!

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

- **What in the world James!**
 - I really want to know what prompted this letter. (Don't you?)
- I don't believe that he had a church filled with people who were engaged in adultery against their spouses.
 - It does sound like they were engaged in spiritual adultery against Jesus.

- We must remember that the bride of Christ is the church and when the church chooses to turn its back on Christ it is committing adultery against Him.
- This would explain why James, through the power of the Holy Spirit, chose the feminine word “adulteress” for the church.

What do we know about Jesus and His commitment to the church?

- He died for her
- He rescued her even though she planned His murder and executed His murder.
 - So, when God says that He is a jealous God, we understand why.
 - He has entered into a covenant with His people that carries a heavy weight, more weight than the marriage covenant.
 - What am I trying to say?
 - God is “***all in***” and we should be as well.

Now according to James we cheat on Jesus when we become friendly to the world.

- Does this mean that we should not be friendly to the lost world?
 - No, “for God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son”.
 - **We were once part of the world** and part of making disciples is evangelism.
 - Loving, praying, and witnessing to the lost is part of evangelism.

- The issue is when we covet what the world offers

This is when “***friendship with the world becomes enmity with God***”

- **Enmity is hostility towards someone or something.**
 - This shows up in people who once were a part of a church but when it came time to walk away from sin they chose to walk away from the church and Jesus.
 - They usually say something like, ***church is filled with hypocrites!***
 - That is a true statement, but we must remind them that we all are in process and there is no such thing as a perfect church this side of Heaven.

In the end we must remember:

Jesus was very clear when He said that “a servant cannot serve two masters, you will love one and hate the other.”

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

- This is a major issue within the church as a whole today.
 - I believe that too many churches have adjusted their way of presenting the truth because **they are afraid of being offensive.**
 - They say things like “doctrine divides!” or “we need to be seeker friendly.”
 - Perhaps Christians should consider what Jesus said:

Luke 12:49-53

⁹ “I have come to set the world on fire, and I wish it were already burning! ⁵⁰ I have a terrible baptism of suffering ahead of me, and I am under a heavy burden until it is accomplished. ⁵¹ Do you think I have come to bring peace to the earth? No, I have come to divide people against each other! ⁵² From now on families will be split apart, three in favor of me, and two against—or two in favor and three against.

⁵³ ‘Father will be divided against son
and son against father;
mother against daughter
and daughter against mother;
and mother-in-law against daughter-in-law
and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.”

**It is time for the church to understand that the gospel is
offensive to anyone who is in love with the world and whose
master is Satan!**

- **And doctrine does divide because truth always separates itself from lies!**

So Christian, flirting with Satan and his worldly system is cheating on Jesus!

Back to James:

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

- What a beautiful reminder!
 - God has given a piece of Himself to every child of God.
 - The Holy Spirit lives within every believer
 - And we will spend a lifetime in spiritual formation meaning The Spirit of God will continue to shape and mold us into the likeness of Jesus until we take our last breath.
 - But here is the part we must understand:
 - When we stop yielding to the Spirit
 - When we allow our pride to take over and we take control, the Spirit waits until our pride drives us to failure.
 - Why?
 - Pride has no place within the heart of the child of God.

Now, listen to this next verse very carefully:

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

- Again, this is written to the church
 - Child of God do you hear what He is saying to you?
 - “I love you and there is more grace for you but as long as you think you are smarter than God, I will oppose you!”
 - But to the humble, there will be more grace!

- Did you hear that?
 - He doesn't say that we have to get it right all of the time but for those who humbly admit "I was wrong" there will be GRACE UPON GRACE!

What do we do James?

7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

- This is the plan for the child of God:
 - Turn from the sin and temptation that the Devil has brought before you.
 - Submit your life to God (everyday!)
- ***Guess what will happen when you follow His plan?***
 - The Devil will move on!
 - WHY?

8 Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you.

- Satan and his demons do not want to be in the presence of Jesus.
- When we draw near to God, this "nearing" acts as Satan repellent.
- ***The truth is this:***
 - The low hanging fruit is easier to deal with and when a child of God moves closer to God, they become high hanging fruit and more difficult to harvest.
- ***Satan is like the wolf and the lion.***
 - He doesn't attack when the shepherd is nearby.
 - He separates the lamb from the shepherd and the flock then he attacks and devours.

Before we move on, I feel the need to point out that this is a promise written by James through the power of the Holy Spirit.

- ***“Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you”***

- This is a promise that each of us can count on.

Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

- What is that all about?

- It is a call to repentance!

- Adultery, murder, theft, are committed with our hands, hearts, and minds.

- The call is to repent of our sin which means to turn away from our sins.

- It means that we must see sin for what it is

- **It is the cancer** that causes our death

- It is the very thing **that destroys** every good thing in our lives

- Therefore **we must change how we see it** and when we do this will be the result:

⁹ Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom.

- This is how the child of God feels about their sin.

- For far too long many who claim Christ say in their hearts that I have been saved and I have nothing to worry about.

- The problem with that way of thinking is there is no conviction.

- No sorrow over the grief inflicted upon God.

- This is why we are commanded to weep and mourn over our sin.

But God...

- God doesn't leave us in morning and weeping

¹⁰ Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.

- What a wonderful God we serve!
 - Humbling ourselves means we admit that God is right.
 - It means admitting that we are wrong
- When we do this God exalts us but what does that mean?
 - It means He raises us up to Him.
 - GOD IS GOOD!

I want to close today with the words of Jesus:

John 10:10

¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come so that they may have life, and may have it abundantly.

Church,

Jesus has come to set us free from sin, darkness, and depression.

If you are looking for an invitation, may I remind you that the message is the invitation. You need only to cry out to Jesus to be forgiven.

Admit you are wrong for:

“If we confess our sin, He is faithful and just to forgive us of our sin and cleanse us of all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9)

If you need someone to talk to, if you need prayer, or advice, the elders will linger after the service to be available to you.

[Close in prayer](#)