

*Where Do Fights Come From?*

*James 4:1-6*

*Pastor Jason Huffman*

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### **Discussion Questions**

1. Can you think of a recent disagreement you had with someone? Are you willing to share a little? Was it related to something you wanted or thought you needed?
2. What do you think is the difference between squandering or investing? Money, time, resources, etc.?
3. What can we learn and apply from the idea that God is like our husband, and we are like His bride?
4. What might be some differences between God's jealousy and our own human jealousy?
5. Why is humility important to receive grace? Why do some of us have a hard time receiving grace and walking in humility?

### **Teaching Notes**

Let's start with the big idea from last week...

**The quality of your wisdom is measured by...**

**...the achievement of your goals.**

**...Title: Where do fights come from?**

If peace and righteousness are your goals godly wisdom is best.

If confusion and evil things are your goals godless wisdom is best.

**Godless wisdom is earthly, sensual, and demonic...**

...or temporary, feelings based, and in rebellion against God.

...it is full of envy and self seeking...

**Godless wisdom also leads to wars, spiritual adultery, and warfare with the devil.**

**4:1 Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members?**

**War** is "armed conflict between different nations or states or different groups within a nation or state".

...**Fights** are related to strife and quarrels.

**So...Why do we have war and fights?**

...Big or small the reasons are similar.

**Top two reasons for war are economic and territorial gain.**

Other reasons: revenge, rebellion, religion and nationalism.

...James says it is their “desire for pleasure...”

- Russia and Ukraine is the largest conflict in Europe since WWII
- Russia wants more land and resources
- Putin wants a name for himself.
- Hundreds of thousands of people have died.
- Thousands of civilians raped, tortured and murdered.

**1 ...Money and power feel good for those that have it...**

**...but the way people get it often hurts other people.**

**Some people are armed with guns others with words.**

But we all can get into conflicts because of what we want.

**2 You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask.**

**2 When you want but don't ask, you get conflict.**

**So just try asking.**

People have a desire, and they don't have what they desire.

...So they do whatever it takes...kill, covet, fight, war.

**There are people walking around maimed and murdered...**

...because of harsh words and mean things said to them.

**There are divided families and wounded friends...**

...because of social tactics used against them.

When we don't have what we want or they don't do what we say-

**...We destroy them with sarcasm or low blows or silence...**

**They go to great lengths, but they won't just ask.**

**Fights result when you are trying to take something from someone without asking.**

**Marriage counseling years ago...**

They each came with a load of paperwork as “evidence.”

**3 You are not trying to make peace if you show up with a loaded gun and a pile of ammo.**

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**Some don't have what they want because they don't ask.**

**...But some don't ask correctly.**

**How do you ask "correctly"?**

Asking correctly, is not about your words...

...it is about your heart.

**3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend *it* on your pleasures.**

**"Spend" is a negative word that means to waste or squander.**

...They are not "buying" something they need...

...They are wasting something they have...

...by trying to get more than they need.

They are not asking because they **want to help someone.**

They are asking because **they are greedy, selfish and wasteful.**

**What fights/quarrels do we have because we just want more?**

Do we really need more \_\_\_\_\_?

...More time on the golf course, more shoes in the closet, a more expensive car in the drive way, more time for binging or scrolling?

We are not about the American dream of bigger and better...

**...We are about the Christian life of contentment and service.**

We have more clothes than we can wear.

We have more channels than we can watch.

We have more food than we can eat.

...We really have no business fighting for more.

**4 We should be fighting to give and serve more  
not fighting to get and have more.**

NOW...James gets into some pretty rough words...

**4 Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.**

**Context:**

## **God equates our relationship with Him with a marriage.**

It is a commitment of two people, in love and trust forever.

## **God is our Husband and we are His bride.**

He had a similar analogy with the Jews.

And when they were unfaithful to Him the prophets would say...

...They were like an unfaithful wife, looking to other lovers.

## **What about being at enmity with God? It is hostility/hatred**

The "world" is the way of living not submitted to God.

## **Paul says this in Ephesians 2:1-3**

*And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, 2 in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, 3 among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.*

We are all born without God.

We are all born sons of disobedience, children of wrath.

The prince of the power of the air is Satan.

## **5 Satan is at work in us...**

**...when we live according to our lustful, fleshly desires.**

## **So what James is saying is...**

...when we become friends with the world...

...when we engage in the world's wisdom and ways...

...we are following Satan as enemies of God.

## **When you live in your old ways...**

- It is like being married but going back to an old boyfriend or girlfriend.
- It is like being best friends with someone who wants to kill your spouse.
- It is like having someone stay at your house who is going to lie to you, steal from your family, and harm your kids.

## **Do you think anyone in their right mind would allow that?!?**

**5 Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, "The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously"?**

## **I used to have a problem with God being jealous.**

I didn't like jealous people.

I thought they were controlling and weak.

If you were jealous you were needy...

...So for God to be jealous, I didn't respect that.

**But then I grew up and had a real loving relationship.**

I realized that when someone truly loves jealously...

...it is because they care about their relationship.

**God is self sufficient and in need of no one and nothing.**

...**But** He loves us and He is jealous for us...

...**because** He knows knowing and loving Him is the best life.

**God's jealousy is not God being needy...**

**...and forcing or begging you to love Him...**

It is God knowing you need Him and wanting the best for you!

**I am jealous for my wife or my best friend or my business partner because I know the best life is trust and commitment.**

**There is no healthy way to live that includes unfaithfulness.**

Even thieves and liars don't like to be stole from and lied to.

**Fidelity is the best in any relationship.**

We are created for intimacy and trust, which takes vulnerability...

...That is the life of a child....child-like faith.

**Sometimes the cold, cruel world beats that out of us...**

...but God desires to restore that life to us...

...and He can because He is kind and good and strong.

...You can trust Him.

**6 God is jealous because He wants the best for you, and He is the best.**

He will discipline you.

He will confront you.

He will make you uncomfortable until you change.

**Plus God is not only jealous in a good way...**

**...but He is gracious in a godly way.**

**6 But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble."**

Let's dig in to this right here a little bit...

**First, God gives "more grace".**

God is overflowing with grace.

**There are always more opportunities to be right with Him.**

**However those opportunities are only for...**

**...a certain kind of person...humble.**

Arrogant, prideful, "I don't need help" people don't get grace...

**...God actually resists them.**

- God is not interested in being hired for your benefit.
- God is not a heavenly butler to serve you.
- God is not an über driver to bring you to your desired end.
- God is not your Geni to grant your wishes and dreams.

**The prideful get what they deserve because...**

**...that is what they want, which happens to be judgment.**

To enjoy the grace of God, humble yourself.

Lower yourself under God and God's word.

**7 If you want God's grace, humble yourself under God.**