

- I) V1 INTRO: Where do wars and fights come from among you Do they not come from James began this portion of his letter by addressing teachers in the church
- II) In ch 3:1 he warned the people not to casually attempt to teach
Misrepresenting God is a serious offense and God does not take it lightly
THERE ARE SPIRITUAL QUALIFICATIONS
- III) A genuine teachers words and life line up
He reveals by his life that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom (V13)
- IV) To develop this he contrasted **the false teacher** with **the true teacher**
FIRST
- V) The true teacher evidences the wisdom that is **from above**
He exhibits wisdom that is pure, peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy
IN CONTRAST
- VI) The inspiration of the false teacher is **earthly**, sensual, and demonic
- VII) The **foundation** of their teaching is not built on the wisdom of God
Their teachings are built on flesh, man's wisdom, and demonic deception
Col 2:8 See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on **human tradition** and the **elemental spiritual forces** (ABC'S) of this world rather than on Christ.
- VIII) He is filled with bitter **envy**, **self seeking**, **arrogance** and he **undermines** the truth
The fruit of their teaching is every **evil thing**, meaning confusion and the flesh
- IX) This produces a group of people who are **just like him**
Mt 23:15 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves.
- X) In V18 James closed with a final insight into **the fruit** of a teacher's ministry
The **true teacher** of the Word of God will **sow peace** into the hearts of the people
- XI) V18 The fruit of righteousness is sown **in peace** by those **who make peace**
The reason they sow peace is because **peace** is an essential part of the kingdom

- I) Ro 14:17 for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness **and peace** and joy in the Holy Spirit.
- II) With this in mind, true teachers are spoken of as **those who make peace**
FIRST
- III) **Peace makers** sow God's Word which, when received, results in **peace with God**
By proclaiming the gospel, people can come to faith in God and be saved
Ro 5:1 Therefore, having been justified by faith, **we have peace** with God through our Lord Jesus Christ
- IV) This peace is to rule, govern, preside over and control **our entire lives**
Col 3:15 And let the peace of God **rule in your hearts**, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.
- V) It calms every agitated part of our souls, and preserves our hearts and minds
Ps 56:3 **When I am afraid**, I will put my trust in You
1 Jn 4:18 There is **no fear** in love. But **perfect love drives out fear** because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love
- VI) When it rules in our hearts, peace is also something we can have with others
Ro 12:18 If it is possible, **as much as depends on you**, live peaceably with all men.
- VII) Peace is something that we as believers are to pursue
Ps 34:14 Depart from evil and do good; **Seek peace** and pursue it.
1 Pe 3:11 Turn away from evil and do good. **Search for peace**, and work to maintain it
- VIII) Because words can inflame, the true teacher encourages people **to live at peace**
- IX) This is his ministry: Sowing seeds of peace through the Message of the Cross
2 Co 5:20 We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, **be reconciled to God**.
- X) The reason that they sow **peace with God** is because they have **wisdom from above**
A rabbinic phrase: It is understood as a **peculiar inspiration** of the Almighty

AGAIN

- XI) The fruit of the insincere teacher will be division in the church
I) If purity, peace, gentleness, and willingness to yield are the fruit of good teaching
Then what is the origin of church wars

- II) James now begins to address discord in the church

BEGIN STUDY

- III) V1 Where do *wars* and *fights* come from among you?

Wars: A chronic state of war

Fights: The separate battles in the war

- IV) James is not referring to *wars between nations*, but church wars

FACT

- V) The same things that motivate wars between kings can be found in the church
Kingdoms went to war over coveting someone else's property, or goods
James is saying the church has the same mentality, fighting for territory

- VI) Instead of a climate of peace, they had an atmosphere of fights and quarrels
Difficulty in the church originates in the heart of the *individual members*
The failure to die to self and to walk in the Spirit results in tension in the church

HE ASKS

- VII) V1 Do they not come from *your desires* for pleasure that *war in your members*
Members: A reference to the principal of sin that resides in them, in *their flesh*
1 Pe 2:11 Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from *fleshly lusts*
which wage war against the soul.

- VIII) Jesus spoke of this principal in sin

Mk 7:21-23 For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile a man.

- IX) The flesh being openly expressed results in antagonism in the Church

- X) With this in mind James asks where do wars and fights come from?
He then gives the answer: They come from *your own desires* for pleasure

- XI) If you are serving your own interests the fruit will always be strife and division
It is impossible to serve God with *all of your hearts* and continue to remain selfish
- I) Lu 16:13 No servant can serve **two masters**: for either he will hate the one, and love the other or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon
- II) James made it clear that proper teaching **when applied** produces *peace* (3:18)
Sadly, the churches he is writing to are not experiencing this kind of peace
- III) Personal pleasure is the passion of their lives: Nothing is allowed to get in the way
Because this is true, the believers are in conflict
- IV) Division amongst Christians arises from the failure to recognize *flesh* for what it is
We almost always initially think that we are in the right, and the other is wrong
This is often the fruit of our sinful flesh, which we don't realize is so destructive
- V) The Christian message is: **We can** live together, united against *the real enemy*
This is made possible through making a decision to genuinely love others
- VI) The fruit of the Spirit is love, and love is **like a garment** that we decide to put on
Col 3:14 But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection
- VII) When we love one another, we put up with each other and receive one another
This enables us to cease being nit pickers and become accepting of others
Ro 15:7 Receive one another, just as Christ also received us, to the glory of God.
- VIII) When we accept one another, we learn to live in peace with one another
We cease demanding perfection and cease judging and begin accomodating
1 Pe 4:8 Above all things have fervent love for one another, for "love **will cover** a multitude of sins."
Covers: Does not look at something in a critical fashion; willingly forgives injuries
- IX) It is this kind of love that makes it possible to live at peace with others
- X) V2 You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight

James now names the principal sins that they are dealing with
He speaks of them as **lusting, murdering, coveting, fighting, and warring**

XI) Obviously these are not literal, but are figurative

I) **Thought:** With all of your bitter self-seeking and covetous attempts to acquire what you desire, you still can't obtain what you are willing to kill (ethically) someone for

II) These are the kinds of sins that divide churches and create terrible problems
Eager self seeking always destroys unity and love within the church family

III) Paul dealt with this in the church of Philippi

Two women leaders in the church were feuding, and Paul corrected them

Phil 4:2 I plead with Euodia and I plead with Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord.

IV) Church wars are destructive, undermining the testimony and work of the church

Gal 5:15-16 But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another! I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

FACT

V) The works of the flesh pollute everything about your walk with the Lord

When the flesh dominates, it infects your desires, your prayers, your fellowship

IN THEIR CASE

VI) Because these desires were overwhelming, their prayers were not being answered
This is because they were motivated by their selfish desires

VII) V3 You ask and do not receive because **you ask amiss that** you may spend it on
Sometimes you can pray for what you are **really trying** to gain by fleshly means

VIII) On the outside you appear to be righteous and to dependant upon God

It can be like the Pharisees who prayed on street corners, to appear righteous

IX) James is saying: You pray, but your prayers are not truly seeking God's will for you
You are simply praying for the things that your flesh craves

X) By doing this, you ask with wrong motives that you may spend it on your **pleasures**
Pleasures speaks of sensual gratification or what is called carnal appetite

THEY WERE PRAYING FOR BLESSINGS

- XI) They were not praying that God would give them their daily bread
They were praying for more money so they could live in luxury
They didn't want more so they could *give* more but that they might just *have* more
- I) They were praying that **their will** would be done on earth
These kinds of prayer were not pleasing to the Lord, and would go unanswered
Ps. 66:18 If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me
Pr 15:29 The LORD *is* far from the wicked, But He hears the prayer of the righteous.
- II) The heart of true prayer is "Not *my* will, but *yours* be done".
1 Jn 5:14-15 And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask any thing *according to His will*, He hears us: And if we know that He hear us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him.
- III) He now addresses the motivation of their prayers and their **church problems**
- IV) V4 **Adulterers** and **adulteresses**! Do you not know that friendship with the world is James rebukes **Christians** who claim to love God while playing with the world
- V) An adulterer/adulteress is one who stops loving their spouse to love someone else
In this context, he says they are neglecting God in order to satisfy themselves
POINT
- VI) You broke your marriage covenant with God by loving the world more than Him
In this case, instead of loving God completely they are misplacing their affections
KEY
- VII) He is writing to **Jewish believers** who would understand what he is saying
This reference is common in the OT to refer to Israel's unfaithfulness to God
- VIII) In the OT, **Israel** is referred to as the wife of Jehovah
Jer 3:14 Return O backsliding childrens says the Lord, for **I am married to you...**
Is 54:5 For your **Maker is your husband**, The LORD of hosts *is* His name; And your Redeemer *is* the Holy One of Israel; He is called the God of the whole earth.
- IX) Though God's wife, they became idolaters and were unfaithful to Him

Jer 9:2 Oh, that I had in the wilderness a lodging place for travelers; That I might leave my people, and go from them! For they are **all adulterers**, an assembly of treacherous men

JAMES IS SAYING

X) Spiritual adultery exists when compromising believers are friends with the world
To love the world is to be on the devil's side and at war with God

I) Mt 12:30 He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad.

II) Why would James say to enjoy friendship with the world is open hostility to God
This is because the world rejected Jesus, and put Him to humiliation and death

III) To be in love with the world is to openly reject Jesus
To be in love with the world system reveals a divided heart
Lu 16:13 No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

IV) John also spoke of this

1 Jn 2:15-17 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passes away, and the lust thereof: but he who does the will of God abides forever.

V) Demas is a great example of someone who knew the truth but chose the world
2 Ti 4:10 Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica—Crescens for Galatia, Titus for Dalmatia.

VI) Believers live **in** the world, but we are not to be **of** the world
We are salt and light, and do not let the world press us in to its mold
Ro 12:2 And do not be conformed **to this world**, but be transformed by the **renewing of your mind**, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

VII) Instead of receiving the admiration of the world, we can expect the opposite

This is because our life and message is in opposition to what is accepted

VIII) The result often is rejection, and sometimes even **physical persecution**

Jn 15:19 If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

IX) Believers make a decision concerning whom we will love and serve

I) You become friends with the world by deliberate, settled choices over time

II) V5 Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain the Spirit who dwells in us yearns
God is pictured as longing for His people, longing for us to be faithful to Him

III) He desires His own to love Him completely

Ex. 34:14 You shall worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God

Dt. 4:24 For the LORD your God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God.

TO BE A CHRISTIAN IS TO LOVE HIM COMPLETELY

IV) Christians who do not live for the Lord and love Him completely are adulterers

They give their love, devotion, honor and worship to the **one who hates God**

To love the world is to kiss the spear that was plunged into the side of Jesus V)

V) God's response to this is that He yearns jealously for them to love Him

THE CONSEQUENCES

VI) Their not walking in the Spirit gave rise to the division and fighting in the church

Gal 5:17 The flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.

VII) Abandoning God's grace leaves you with no power to conquer your evil nature

VIII) V6 But **He gives more grace** (which gives us the ability to overcome carnality)

God's grace gives the ability to withstand the temptations and appeal of the world

IX) If we understand our inclination to evil He gives us power to withstand and triumph

Ro 6:12-14 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life;

and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness. For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.