

James 4

Jesus

I learn more from the fire, hammer and chisel than from anything else in my Lord's workshop. [Spurgeon]

James 3:18 ... the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

God calls us to be people of peace in a world of turmoil
So why is there so much infighting among believers?

I. Pride Promotes Strife

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

- James speaking to Christians...

Why can't we all just get along?

- **Good Start:** Pre-sin Created in Image of God...

Genesis 1:27 ...God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

- **After Sin:** Image of God **and Image of Adam**

Genesis 5:3 ... Adam...begot a son in his own likeness after his image/named him Seth.

- **Daily Battle Within:** Choose to submit to Self or God

1. Image of Adam	vs	Image of God
2. Adamic Nature	vs	Godly Nature
3. Pleasing Self	vs	Serving God/others
4. Old Sinful Man	vs	New Creation

Galatians 5:17 ... [our] flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh...

- **Q.** Why does fighting occur? **A.** We don't get what we want

2 You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war.

- **Lust** Lord... my will not Yours
- **Murder** Angry: Others not catering to our desires. [Want them gone]
- **Covet** Insatiable greed leading to discontentment

Selfish, Angry and Discontent...Not quite the Abundant Life?

- **Mad?** You lust and do not have...

2b... Yet you do not have because you do not ask. **3** You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.

- You don't pray/if you do motive is **selfish gain...**

- | | | |
|-------------------|----|----------------------|
| 1. Remove person | vs | Help me forgive |
| 2. Give me money | vs | Help me trust in You |
| 3. Make me strong | vs | Be my strength |
| 4. Give me more | vs | Let me be content |

John 14:14 If you ask anything in My name, **I will do it.**

- **My Name:** Not tag; In line with My character, My will, My purpose, to **Glorify God**
God ignores a selfish/sinful/self-centered prayer...not Santa Clause

Psalms 66:18 If I regard iniquity in my heart...**The Lord will not hear.**

Fighting, Lusting, Murder, Greed? Straying from the One who loved you with His life!

4 Adulterers and adulteresses!

Bride of Christ found fornicating with the enemy her husband Jesus?
Finding Our Pleasure/Satisfaction in the things of the World

4b... 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.

Who do you want as your friend...God or the World? Can't have both

Romans 8:7 ... the carnal mind *is* enmity against **[hates] God...**

1 John 2:15 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the **love of the Father is not in him.**

2 Timothy 4:8 ... there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have **loved His appearing.**

**We should be looking forward to our Beloved's soon appearing to take us home
Jesus gave His life to save His Bride from the evil of this world**

Galatians 1:4 [Jesus] ... **gave Himself** for our sins that He might deliver us from **this present evil age...**

- Jesus watches His Bride pursue strange flesh
- Finding comfort/satisfaction apart from Him...

1. Substitutes	Sex, Drugs, Rock and Roll
2. Fame/Fortune	Desire to be recognized/admired
3. Compromising	Lying, Stealing, Cheating
4. World's approval	Counting the praise of God as worthless

You look just like the world...Breaks the Heart of God

5 Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, "The Spirit who dwells in

us yearns jealously”?

Isaiah 54:5 [To Israel] ...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.

- **Bride of Christ:** Indwelt w/God’s Spirit who desires our faithfulness to Jesus
- **NOTE:** Not a good idea to provoke God to Jealousy

Proverbs 6:34 ... jealousy is a husband’s fury...

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

- **More Grace:** God adds **Restoring Grace** to His **Saving Grace**

Sin seeks to enter, grace shuts the door; sin tries to get the mastery, but grace, which is stronger than sin, resists, and will not permit it. Sin gets us down at times, and puts its foot on our neck; grace comes to the rescue... Sin comes up like Noah’s flood, but grace rides over the tops of the mountains like the ark.” [Spurgeon]

God Resists the Proud...Give Grace to the Humble

Humility positions us to receive God’s Grace...Under the spout where blessings come out

Q. How do we humble ourselves before God?

A. By Humbling ourselves before those created in His image

- Opposite of warring/fighting/seeking own pleasure...

Matthew 25:40 [King’s answer] ... inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, **you did it to Me.**

1 Peter 5:5 ... all of you be submissive to one another, and be **clothed with humility**, for “God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.”

- It’s not all about us. It not about us at all.

Philippians 2:1 Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, [IOW If you’re a born-again believer] 2 fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. 3 Let **nothing be done through selfish ambition** or conceit, but in **lowliness of mind** let each **esteem others better than himself**. 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the **interests of others** 5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, **He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death**, even the death of the cross. 9 Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, 11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

- **God resists the Proud:** lit. Sets himself in battle array **against the proud**

**Who’s your friend today... Who’s your lover today?
Jesus or the World. It can’t be Both**

SUMMARY Pride Promotes Strife

II. Humility Cures Worldliness and Everything Else 7 Therefore...

- **Therefore:** Since God resists the proud/**gives grace to the humble**

7b... submit to God.

- **Submit:** Put yourself under authority

We all are either in submission to God or the Devil. None of us are masters of our own ship no matter what we think. [NJC]

7c... Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

James: [Context] Your pride/infighting is of the devil. Period.
Resist the Devil and he will flee...

- **Resist him how?**

Romans 13:14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make **no provision** for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.

1. **Resist the devil by not going to his favorite spots:** Saloon, Porn house, Internet, Gossiping friends, Your own mind...

- **Battlefield is the mind.**

Romans 12:2 ... 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.

Ephesians 4:23 ... be **renewed in the spirit of your mind**, 24 and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

2. **Resist the devil by agreeing with him?**

Matthew 5:25 Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are on the way with him, lest your adversary deliver you to the judge, the judge hand you over to the officer, and you be thrown into prison. 26 Assuredly, I say to you, you will by no means get out of there till you have paid the last penny.

- **Agree you are a sinner...**

Don't excuse your sin...Just stop

Look what it's doing to you, your family, friends and your witness for Christ

You say I can't. No... you just won't.

Are you a New Man or not? Are you a mere man or a Spirit filled superman?

Ephesians 4: 22 [Simply] ... **put off**, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, 23 and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and that you **put on** the new man which was created according to God, in true

righteousness and holiness. **25 [Put] away** lying, "Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor," for we are members of one another. **26** "Be angry, and do not sin": do not let the sun go down on your wrath, **27 nor give place to the devil.** **28 Let** him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with *his* hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need. **29 Let** no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. **30** And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. **31 Let** all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. **32** And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.

8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.

**You're move! I didn't move away... you did.
Draw near to God...Then, He will draw near to you!**

2 Chronicles 15:2b... The Lord is with you **while you are with Him.** If you seek Him, He will be found by you; but if you forsake Him, He will forsake you.

Zechariah 1:3b ... "Return to Me," says the Lord of hosts, "and I will return to you," says the Lord of hosts.

- **Draw near to God:**
 1. Worship/Prayer
 2. Fellowship/God's Word
 3. **Repentance...**

8b... Cleanse your hands, you sinners and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

- **Clean hands/Pure Hearts**

Psalms 24:3 Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord? Or who may stand in His holy place?
4 He who has **clean hands** and a pure heart...

- **Cleansed by Hearing** Word of God

John 15:3 You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.

- **Cleansed by Doing** Word of God

James 1:21 ... lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. **22** But **be doers of the word**, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

James's hearers are Double-Minded
He notices their eyes rolling/Looking at watch. **Wake up!**

9 Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom.

Ecclesiastes 7:2 Better to go to the **house of mourning** Than to go to the house of feasting, For that is the end of all men; And the living will take it to heart. **3** Sorrow is

better than laughter, For by a sad countenance the heart is made better. 4 The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, But the heart of fools is in the house of mirth.

Time to get Serious/Sober

1 Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

Persecution/Oppression are coming **but so is Jesus**

1 Thessalonians 5:5 You are all **sons of light** and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. 6 Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but **let us watch and be sober**. 7 For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. 8 But let **us who are of the day be sober**, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation. 9 For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him.

Titus 2:11 ... the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, 12 teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, **we should live soberly**, righteously, and godly in the present age, 13 looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ...

Time to get serious: Persecution/Oppression are coming **but so is Jesus**
We must decrease/He must increase...

10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and **He will lift you up.**

Q. How do we humble ourselves before God?

A. By Humbling ourselves before those created in His image

SUMMARY Humility Cures Worldliness and everything else

III. Do Not Judge a Brother

11 Do not **speak evil** of one another, brethren.

The cowards' way up is to put down others [NJC]

James is not finished with Dangers of the Tongue

- **Do not Speak Evil of one another...brethren**

1. Damage a Reputation w/Words
2. From rt. To Slander/Backbite; speak w/malicious intent

2 Corinthians 12:20 [I hope I don't see this *in the church* when I come] ... contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, **backbiting**, whisperings...

11b... He who speaks evil of a brother and judges his brother, speaks evil of the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law **but a judge.**

- **Logical Digression**

1. Speaking evil of a brother is judging his brother
2. Judging others reveals no regard for the Law [which says don't judge]
3. Disregarding the Law is **putting yourself above the Law**

Thus, speaking evil of a brother makes you a judge of both the Law/**Lawgiver God**

12 There is one Lawgiver [not us], who is able to save and to destroy.

Hebrews 10:30b... "The Lord will judge His people."

12b... Who are you to judge another?

- As if we don't all mess up?

Who art thou; what a sorry creature, a man, a worm, that thou shouldest lift up thyself into God's place, and make thyself a judge of one not subject to thee! [Poole]

Romans 7:1 "Judge [condemn] not, that you be not judged. ²For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you. ³And why do you look at the **speck** in your brother's eye, but do not consider the **plank** in your own eye? ⁴Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove the speck from your eye'; and look, a plank *is* in your own eye? ⁵Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

- Our brothers/sisters belong to Christ. They are **His servants not ours...**

Romans 14:4 Who are you to judge another's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. Indeed, he will be made to stand, for **God is able to make him stand.**

- We can always find fault...
 1. **So easy** to throw stones from sidelines without being in the game
 2. **So easy** to be in the game and look down on those injured on bench

Do not speak evil of one another...brethren

Revelation 12:10 [**Satan is**] ...**the accuser of [the] brethren**, who [accuses us] before our God day and night...

1 Peter 4:8 ... above all things have fervent love for one another, for "**love will cover a multitude of sins.**"

- **Uncovering sin** Puts us in same camp as Satan/The Accuser
- **Covering sin** Puts us in the same camp as God/Our Advocate

1 John 2 ... if anyone sins, we have an **Advocate** with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

Romans 8:34 ... Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also **makes intercession for us.**

1 Timothy 2:5 ... We have one God/one **Mediator** between God/men the Man Christ Jesus

Hebrews 7:25 [Jesus] is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since **He always lives to make intercession for them.**

- When we meet/eat together we have a choice.
 1. **Flesh** Uncover sin be aligned with Satan's agenda
 2. **Spirit** Cover/Intercede be aligned w/ God's heart
- Who's holding the reigns? Who is steering the ship that directs the rudder?

Do not speak evil of one another...Brethren. Period

SUMMARY Do Not Judge a Brother: Still speaking of Pride vs Humility

IV. Do Not Boast About Tomorrow Presumption

13 Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit"; 14 whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow.

James: Come here. Let's talk about the sin of **Presumption**

- Presuming you own your life after Jesus bought you w/His blood

1 Corinthians 6:19 ... do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and **you are not your own?** For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

14b... For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.

James: Are you seriously making plans without God's Guidance?
You say Lord, Lord but don't do what He says?

15 Instead you ought to say, "**If the Lord wills,** we shall live and do this or that."

Acts 18:21b ... "I will return again to you, **God willing.**"

1 Corinthians 4:19 ...I will come to you shortly, **if the Lord wills...**

- **Not my will:** With re. Everything
Father guide Me/Fill Me with Your Sprit/Let this count for Your Kingdom/Glory

16 But now you **boast in your arrogance.** All such boasting is evil.

- **Arrogant Boasting** about plans apart from God is evil

James: Maybe you didn't know that till now **...but now you know**

17 Therefore, **to him who knows to do good** and does not do it, to him **it is sin.**

- Know it's bad but do it anyway Sin of **Commission** Judged for doing wrong

- Know to do good but do not Sin of **Omission** Judged for not doing right

Luke 12:47 ... that servant who **knew his master's will**, and did not prepare *himself* or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many *stripes*. **48b...** For **everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required**; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.

John 9:41 If you were blind you would have no sin; but now you say, '**We see.**' [We understand] Therefore **your sin remains.**

2 Peter 2:21... it would have been better for them **not to have known the way** of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them.

Time to Stop Playing Church: Believers/Make-Believers?

2 Timothy 3:1 ...know this, that in the last days perilous [stressful] times will come: 2 For men will be **lovers of themselves**, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, 3 unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, 4 traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, 5 having a form of godliness but **denying its power**. And from such people turn away!

When we talk about the power of godliness, we often mean it in the sense of "power to give me what I want." But this is exactly opposite of what Paul meant here. The power of godliness that men will despise in the last days is the power it should have to guide their lives; **power in the sense of rightful authority** – and many, many, today deny that God has the power to tell them what to do through His Word. [Guzik]

Better to have not heard the Word than to hear/disregard the Word
Word today? Don't make plans without consulting the One we call Lord

SUMMARY Do Not Boast About Tomorrow