

James 4:1-10	Theme: _____
¹ <i>What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? (conflict with _____) Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members? (conflict within _____)</i> ² <i>You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask. ³You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures. ⁴You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. (conflict with _____)</i> ⁵ <i>Or do you think that the Scripture speaks to no purpose: "He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us"?</i>	The _____ (the problem behind conflict)
⁶ <i>But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, "GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE."</i> ⁷ <i>Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. ⁸Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. ⁹Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy to gloom. ¹⁰Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.</i>	The _____ (how to resolve conflict)

HOW TO DEAL WITH PERSONAL CONFLICT, PART 3

Step ①: Identify the true source of conflict (vv. 1-3): _____ desires

¹ <i>What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members?</i> ² <i>You lust</i> ↓ <i>and do not have;</i> ↓ <i>so you commit murder.</i> ↓ <i>You are envious & cannot obtain; so you fight & quarrel.</i>	We lust for something ↓ Somebody is in our way of getting it ↓ We get angry ↓ We fight and quarrel
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Every time we find ourselves in a quarrel or conflict, we should ask ourselves:
"What self-centered desire am I trying to protect by engaging in this argument?"

When we're involved in a quarrel or conflict, the true source of the conflict is not...
 (1) the _____ we are arguing about, or (2) the other _____ we are arguing with.
 The problem is _____ (specifically, the sinful desires within us)

Alec Motyer - *"Conflict is at root no more than the existence in each of us of a self-centered heart, a controlling spirit of self-interest. This is the militant cause of all disturbance."*

Q: Is it ever right to be in conflict with another Christian? If so, what would it look like?

A: Generally, it is appropriate, at _____, to be in conflict (or what appears to be conflict)

Q: When is it right for a Christian to be engaged in conflict with another Christian?

Q1: _____ are you fighting about?

A: Two biblically acceptable causes of conflict among Christians

(1) The practice of _____ (to keep the church pure)

- Matthew 18:15-20
 - Step 1: Warn and correct privately, seeking his/her repentance and restoration
 - Step 2: Bring 2 or 3 others to warn, correct, and call him/her to repentance
 - Step 3: Tell the church; each member is to personally call him/her to repentance
 - Step 4: Dismiss him/her from the church and treat them like an unbeliever
- Involving a church leader
 - 1 Timothy 5:19-21 - *Do not receive an accusation against an elder except on the basis of two or three witnesses. Those who continue in sin, rebuke in the presence of all, so that the rest also will be fearful of sinning. I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of His chosen angels, to maintain these principles without bias, doing nothing in the spirit of partiality.*
- Involving a factious person
 - Titus 3:10 - *Reject (Step 4) a factious man after the first (Step 1) and second (Step 2) warning, knowing that such a man is perverted and is sinning, being self-condemned.*

(2) In _____ of the faith

- 1 Tim. 1:18 - *Fight the good fight*
- 2 Tim. 2:3 - *Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus*
- Jude 3-4 - *³Beloved, while I was making every effort to write to you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all, handed down to the saints. ⁴For certain persons have crept in unnoticed... ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.*
- Gal. 2:4-5 (Paul engaged himself in conflict with false brethren); 11-14 (Paul confronted Peter)

Summary: We are commanded to engage in conflict when it involves the _____ of the church

→ To deal with _____

→ To defend the _____

Q2: _____ are you fighting?

A: Two biblically acceptable motives for engaging in conflict:

(1) For the _____ of _____ with the goal of obedience to God

(2) For the _____ of people

There have been times throughout church history when the cause was right and the motive was right, and yet, it still degenerated to sinful quarrels and conflict. So how do we know if we are engaged in a righteous fight, both in the cause and in the motive?

Q3: _____ are you fighting?

A: Eph. 4:31 - *Let all bitterness (internal resentment) and wrath (blow up) and anger (clam up) and clamor (yelling) and slander (name calling, attacking) be put away from you, along with all malice (hurt/harm).*

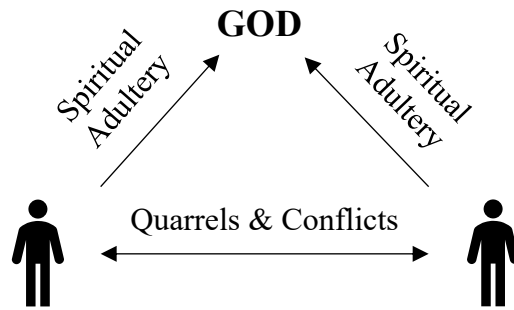
2 Tim. 4:2 - *...reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience*

Step ②: Identify the _____ sin behind the conflict (vv. 4-5): spiritual _____

v. 4 - ⁴*You adulteresses* (moichalis)...

- So far James has referred to his readers as “my brethren” (1:2; 2:1, 14; 3:1, 10, 12) or “my beloved brethren” (1:16, 19; 2:5)
- The word “adulteresses” has its root in the Old Testament
 - God pictures his relationship to Israel as that of a marriage
 - Isaiah 54:5-6 - *“For your husband is your Maker, whose name is the LORD of hosts; and your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel, who is called the God of all the earth. For the LORD has called you, like a wife...”*
 - When Israel was unfaithful to God, He accused her of adultery
 - Jeremiah 3:6-9 - *Then the LORD said to me in the days of Josiah the king, “Have you seen what faithless Israel did? She went up on every high hill and under every green tree, and she was a harlot there. I thought, ‘After she has done all these things she will return to Me’; but she did not return, and her treacherous sister Judah saw it. And I saw that for all the adulteries of faithless Israel, I had sent her away and given her a writ of divorce, yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear; but she went and was a harlot also. Because of the lightness of her harlotry, she polluted the land and committed adultery with stones and trees.*
 - The book of _____ - Gomer’s unfaithfulness to Hosea was a picture of Israel’s unfaithfulness to God
- Jesus often referred to the Jews of His time as “*an evil and adulterous generation*” (Matthew 12:39; 16:4; Mark 8:38)
- Paul called the church “the bride of Christ”
 - 2 Corinthians 11:2 - *For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, so that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin. But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.*
- We tend to downplay sinful quarreling and conflict by:
 - Blame shifting
 - Defending ourselves
 - Viewing other people’s sin as more serious than ours
 - Using non-biblical language like: “Our personalities clash” or “We have issues” (rather than calling it “sin”)

But if we are engaged in quarrels & conflicts, God sees it as spiritual adultery against Him



Q: How is spiritual adultery (unfaithfulness to God) the real sin behind quarrels and conflict?

A: When we pursue our sinful desires, we are living just like the _____ around us

v. 4 - *You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God?*

- *friendship* (philia) = “to love” or “to have affection for”
- *world* (kosmos) = a system of values, a mindset, a way of thinking (that is man-centered)
 - *friendship with the world* or “worldliness” is not:
 - Living in _____ from the world
 - Living by a list of _____ rules
 - *friendship with the world* or “worldliness” is a _____
(an attitude of what is going on in the heart)
 - Biblical definition of “worldliness”
 - Eagerly pursuing the same _____ pleasures the world pursues
 - i.e. forbidden pleasures
 - Living with the primary purpose pursuing _____ pleasures
 - i.e. they become more important to us than God
 - i.e. they are pursued in excess

Q: Why is friendship with the world hostility toward God?

A: The pursuit of sinful pleasure and the pursuit of God are diametrically opposed

- 2 Timothy 3:4 - [There are] *lovers of pleasure* [and there are] *lovers of God*
(you can’t be _____ at the same time)

v. 4a - *You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God?*

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

- **The point:**
 - If we choose to pursue our own sinful lusts (the same ones that the world pursues)
 - but someone gets in the way of getting what we want
 - we will get angry and fight with that person
 - then we are choosing to be a friend of the world

- Many people go to church but time reveals they weren't a genuine Christian to begin with
 - 2 Timothy 4:10 - *Demas, having loved this present world, has deserted me.*
- But this can happen to us as believers
 - 1 John 2:15-17 - ¹⁵*Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.* ¹⁶*For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.*

(1) *the lust of the flesh* (cravings to satisfy bodily appetites)

- The desire for personal _____

(2) *the lust of the eyes* (craving to have what the eye sees)

- The desire for personal _____

(3) *the boastful pride of life* (cravings for status and recognition)

- The desire for personal _____

¹⁷*The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.*

To support what James just said in v. 4, he quotes Scripture in v. 5:

Or do you think that the Scripture speaks to no purpose:

"He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us"? (NASB)

Q: Where exactly does Scripture say this?

A: It's a summary of truth expressed throughout the Old Testament

Q: What does this truth from Scripture mean?

A: *"There are wagon-loads of interpretations of this passage"* (Erasmus, 16th c. Dutch theologian)

KJV - *The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy*

NKJ - *the Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously*

NLT - *the spirit God has placed within us is filled with envy*

NIV - *the spirit he caused to dwell in us envies intensely*

ESV - *He yearns jealously over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us*

CSB - *The spirit he made to dwell in us envies intensely*

NET - *The spirit that God caused to live within us has an envious yearning*

RSV - *He yearns jealously over the spirit which he has made to dwell in us*

ASV - *Doth the spirit which he made to dwell in us long unto envying?*

Spirit (pneuma)

- Two problems
 - (1) *pneuma* can be the subject or the object of the sentence
 - (2) *pneuma* can be the Holy Spirit or the human spirit
- Two possible interpretations
 - (1) The human spirit constantly craves and envies
(NIV - *the spirit he caused to dwell in us envies intensely*)
 - Edmond Hiebert - *The human spirit, imparted at creation, longs perversely for the enjoyment of the world's pleasures, even to the point of envy.*
 - (2) God jealously desires us to belong _____ - _____ to Him
(NASB - *He (God) jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us*)
 - Douglas Moo - *What God requires of us is a total, unreserved, unwavering allegiance to Him, rather than to the world.*
 - 3:17 - *But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure*
 - *pure* = morally and devotionally pure
 - John Blanchard (on 3:17) - *"I believe that we would be capturing the spirit of what James meant by purity if we called it unmixed devotion, an undivided love for God burning in the human heart. Pure is being both undefiled and undivided."*

Q: How can we give God our total, unreserved, unwavering allegiance when our hearts are prone to wander and leave the God we love?

A: v. 6 - *But He gives a greater* _____

This provision of grace does not, in any way, lessen God's demand for our total allegiance because the command for our allegiance is based on His character. God is a _____ God:

- Exodus 20:5 - *You shall not worship them or serve them (other gods or idols); for I, the Lord your God am a jealous God.*
- Exodus 34:14 - *...for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God*
- Deuteronomy 4:23-24 - *Watch yourselves, that you do not forget the covenant of the LORD your God, which He made with you, and make for yourselves a graven image in the form of anything against which the LORD your God has commanded you. For the LORD your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.*
- Alec Motyer - *"Jealousy, properly considered, is an essential element of true love. It is an essential longing for the loved one's welfare."*
- John Blanchard - *"When the Bible uses "jealously" of God, it is not the jealousy of self-centered possessiveness or carnal desire, but a loving concern for the welfare of His people."*