



Closing the Gap: Perception and Reality

James 4:1-12 - August 31, 2025

James 4:1-12

⁴ What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? ² You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. ³ You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions. ⁴ You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. 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"? ⁶ But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." ⁷ Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸ Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. ⁹ Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. ¹⁰ Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you. ¹¹ Do not speak evil against one another, brothers. The one who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks evil against the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge. ¹² There is only one lawgiver and judge, he who is able to save and to destroy. But who are you to judge your neighbor?

Introduction

- Perception: There is something we should have that we are not getting

- So many influencers

- Perception as reality?

- Reality always wins

1. The Perception —> External conflict (vs/1-5)

- Perception of entitlement (1)

- Internal conflict (2)

- Wrong desires and prayers, no results (3)

- The temporal perspective (4)

- Connection to the world (5)

2. The Reality (vs/5-10)

- Jesus' jealousy desires *all* of me (5)

- Humility replaces entitlement (6)

- Submission, not works (7-8)

- Laughter to mourning, joy to gloom (9)

- Exaltation through humility (10)

3. Conflict Containment (vs/11-12)

- A special brand of gossip

- Opposite of humility

Application questions on the back →

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For the following application questions, review your notes from the front.

SUNDAY after church...

Think through the morning and: 1) List and praise the Lord for specific encouragement you were able to give. 2) List and praise the Lord for specific encouragement you received. 3) List songs that touched your heart.

MONDAY – READ & PRAY: Find a good Bible reading plan, a good time, and a good place to commune with God. **WATCH:** How has the Lord shown you Himself and His work? **THINK:** Do you have wish list? What is on it? Has there been something that you want that you have not been able to obtain for a long time? If so, how does that affect those around you? Is your wish list shaped by influencers?

TUESDAY – READ & PRAY: Find a good Bible reading plan, a good time, and a good place to commune with God. **WATCH:** How has the Lord shown you Himself and His work? **THINK:** How much of your prayer time is spent on matters of eternal significance compared with temporal matters? How is gratefulness and contentment evidenced in your prayers? How can you encourage this in others?

WEDNESDAY – READ & PRAY: Find a good Bible reading plan, a good time, and a good place to commune with God. **WATCH:** How has the Lord shown you Himself and His work? **THINK:** Jesus jealously desires all of me. How is this a blessing? How can it be a conflict? How does humility in place of entitlement play out in your life? How do you know if your perceptions are in line with reality?

THURSDAY – READ & PRAY: Find a good Bible reading plan, a good time, and a good place to commune with God. **WATCH:** How has the Lord shown you Himself and His work? **THINK:** Are you more inclined to submit or to take action? Why? Do you see submitting as passive or active? Why is submission so important?

FRIDAY – READ & PRAY: Find a good Bible reading plan, a good time, and a good place to commune with God. **WATCH:** How has the Lord shown you Himself and His work? **THINK:** What does it mean to mourn and weep over our own sin and need? Or do we tend to be more concerned with the sin of others?

SATURDAY – READ & PRAY: Find a good Bible reading plan, a good time, and a good place to commune with God. **WATCH:** How has the Lord shown you Himself and His work? **BUILD:** How can you encourage others tomorrow because of your study of James this week?

Our purpose is ***to know...follow...and love Christ!***