

James 4:1–4 (ESV) *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.*

Together we live our lives for others

You will need to listen to next week's sermon to get the full effect.

Vs 1 *What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you?*

Passions - GK *hedone* - its where the word hedonism is derived. Hedonism is the pursuit of pleasure; sensual self-indulgence.

We want to put our comfort and convenience ahead of other's comfort and convenience every single day in every single situation.

Georg MacDonald - a famous Scottish Christian writer from the 19th century - said "The one principle of hell is - "I am my own."

2 principles to live your life:

1. My life for others
2. I am my own - my life for me

Every day you have hundreds of opportunities to live by and choose between "my life for others" - others needs above mine, or "my life for me" - my needs above others.

This laying down of life always entails a death. It is death to time, it is death to resources, it is death to self every day

Serving others, engaged in others, genuinely interested in others, fighting for others, putting others needs before yours - these are little deaths, and yet, they are deaths that lead to a resurrection.

Death to your individual needs leads to a resurrection of community - and God designed community for you to get better.

Vs 2a *You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel.*

There are two ways we fail at being in gospel community.

1. We simply don't seek it. We are indifferent, uninterested. We say we are too busy.
2. When we do get into community, we fight.

Two ways we fight:

Outward/aggressive (Murder)

Inward/passive (Covet)

The fighting internally, in your head, is the same as fighting externally, in someone's face.

(There's a difference between passionate conversation about life and that of emotional worldly passions coming to the surface.)

Both are "my life for me."

Vs 2b *You do not have, because you do not ask.*

Vs 3 *You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.*

When we spend our passions on the world, we automatically go bankrupt with God.

Vs 4 *You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity (enemy, hostility and hatred) with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.*

Verse 3 uses the term "spend." Then in verse 4, he says "friendship with the world" - friendship is *philia* in GK which is the root word for "philanthropist." Put those two together and he says, what are you spending your life on? Are you lavishly giving "yourself" to the world or are you lavishly giving "yourself" to God? And if you are giving yourself to God, you will live your life for others.

Friendship with the world is being friends with others only for "my life for me." In other words, I'm good with friends that don't require anything from me. No death to my time and my needs.

When friendship in gospel community is "my life for others." I will spend myself for others rather than spend my life for my passions.

John 17:21 (ESV) *that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.*

"Adulterous" is in the feminine form in GK - alluding to the church and her husband

Hosea 3:1-3 (ESV) *And the LORD said to me, "Go again, love a woman who is loved by another man and is an adulteress, even as the LORD loves the children of Israel, though they turn to*

other gods and love cakes of raisins.” 2 So I bought her for fifteen shekels of silver and a homer and a lethech of barley. 3 And I said to her, “You must dwell as mine for many days. You shall not play the whore, or belong to another man; so will I also be to you.”

We are the adulterers ... but the better and truer Hosea has purchased back what he had possessed.

Conclusion

The same son that melts wax hardens clay - Puritans.