

# FAITH IN ACTION

## *Friend of the World, Enemy to God*

### *James 4:1-12*

#### ***The War Within***

***James 4:1-3 (KJV) <sup>1</sup> From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? <sup>2</sup> Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. <sup>3</sup> Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.***

- James 3 closed the characteristics of godly wisdom and those who walk in it will produce the fruit of righteousness
- The fruit of righteousness is sown *in peace* by them that *make peace*
- James 4 opens with a question for the churches he's writing to, "*Where did all these wars and fightings among you come from?*"
- Within the church, there were hostilities, conflicts, and confrontations amongst church members
- James speaks of wars and fightings within the church
- Wars are long-lasting hostilities
- Fightings are individual battles within the war
- The wars and fightings are the "symptoms" of problems within the church, but not the *cause*
- What causes the wars and fightings in the church?
- James asks a 2<sup>nd</sup> question; "*do they not come from the lusts that war in your members?*"
- The cause of wars and fightings within the church is caused by the lust within our flesh
- Lust is the passion pleasure and self-gratification that exists in our flesh
- A person can *lust* for food, drink, drugs, sex, power, position, possessions, recognition, authority, vengeance, etc.
- James says the *root cause* of our wars, battles and struggles is the lusts or evil desires *within* us
- We have war on the inside of us; one part of us is fighting for self-gratification and the other part of us is fighting to resist and walk in humility ***Galatians 5:17 (KJV) 17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.***
- Not only is there lust for pleasure, self-gratification; there's also distrust
- James says, you have not because you ask not; which means the Christian does not trust God or call on God in prayer
- Verse 2 says, "***We lust and have not, we desire to have and kill and can't obtain, we desire to have and fight and war, yet we have not***"
- Lust in verse 1 means self-gratification or desire for pleasure; while lust in verse 2 means a desire, a passion for more
- There's nothing wrong with having basic desires trusting and depending on God to meet those desires because God is the Source and Provider of every good and perfect gift
- The problem comes when we ignore, neglect, and deny God allow our desires to run wild
- But no matter the desire is, you'll never satisfied, you'll crave more and more and you'll do whatever to get it
- The tragedy of our lusts is they never live up to hype
- Our desires are never satisfied apart from God, "*you have not because you ask not*"

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- There's great power in prayer, but unfortunately many believers live in *spiritual poverty* because they either *do not pray* or they *do not ask* when they pray
- Not only is "no prayer" a problem, but so is *selfish prayer*, when we pray with wrong motives
- James says, we ask amiss, which means to pray wrongly
- Our prayers are often not answered because we pray amiss, or we ask for the *wrong reasons* with the *wrong motives*
- The right motive for prayer is to *glorify* God, not "gratify" ourselves

#### ***Friend of the World, Enemy to God***

***<sup>4</sup> Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. <sup>5</sup> Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy? <sup>6</sup> But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.***

- Christians are the *bride* of Christ
- When we desire the things of the world *more than* we desire the things of God; we're committing *spiritual adultery*
- It's when we break our commitment to God to turn to other things
- We follow after the things of the world instead of following after God
- Our "friendship" with the world, make us *enemies* to God
- Friendship with the world is to live for this world and the things of the world
- A "friendship" with the world will often lead to "a love" of the world and what the world offers ***1 John 2:15 (KJV) 15 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.***
- Friendship with the world cuts the heart of Jesus because He gave He endured the pain of the Cross, the pain of bearing the full weight of our sins, and the pain of God forsaking Him when He bore our sins
- But there's a cure, in fact, there are two cures for our lusts, our distrust, our praying amiss, and our friendship with the world
- *The Holy Spirit*
- The Holy Spirit that dwell in you *lusteth to envy*, which means to *guard jealously*
- The Holy Spirit that dwells in us wants the very best for us
- Even when we cast God aside and become friends with the world, we're not rejected or forsaken by God
- The Holy Spirit is always working to convict us of sin and lead us to repentance
- *The grace of God*
- Grace is the *unmerited* favor of God
- When we face temptation of we do wrong, God meets our need, no matter what it is (i.e., strength, wisdom, power, perseverance, patience, forgiveness, etc.)
- We don't deserve God's grace and blessings, but we receive it because God love us
- God is a God of another chance
- God's grace is not automatic, He's resists the proud
- But God gives more and more grace to the humble

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#### **Steps to Repentance**

<sup>7</sup> **Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.** <sup>8</sup> **Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.** <sup>9</sup> **Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness.** <sup>10</sup> **Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.**

- To experience the grace God wants to give us there are some commands we must obey
- *Submission* - Submit ourselves to God
- Submission is the *voluntary willingness* to come under the direction of another; God
- *Resistance* - Resist the devil and he will flee from you
- Resistance is *opposition to* and *standing against* the dictates of the devil
  - Resisting the devil will do us no good if we don't first submit ourselves to God
  - Resisting the devil is putting on the whole armor of God so that we can withstand the wiles of the devil
- *Draw near to God* – Draw nigh to God and He will draw nigh to you
  - When we take steps toward God, God takes steps toward us **Psalm 145:18 (KJV) 18**  
**The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth.**
- *Cleanse our hands* - Cleanse your hands, you sinners
- Cleansing our hands relates to our sinful external actions
- *Purify* – Purify your hearts, you double-minded, be afflicted, mourn and weep....
- Purifying our hearts is repenting of our sinful attitudes in our hearts
- Outward cleansing is never enough, there must be an internal cleansing as well
- James said in James 1, a double-minded person couldn't expect God to answer their prayers
- In order to *purify*, the believer must *unify*
- There must be outward and inward cleansing **Psalm 24:3-4 (KJV) 3** **“Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place? 4 He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart...”**
- *Sorrow for Sin* – be afflicted, mourn and weep
- Genuine sorrow for sin is critical for repentance
- *Humbling ourselves* – Humble yourselves in the sight of God, and He shall lift you up
- Humbling ourselves is the recognition that we can't lift ourselves out of our sinful condition; we need God's help
- It is complete surrender to the will of God and depending on the strong hand of God lift us out of sin

#### **Judging the Judges**

<sup>11</sup> **Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge.** <sup>12</sup> **There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?**

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- Humbling ourselves and getting right with God is important, but it *must* also result in our getting with the people, too
- One of the identifying traits of a true believer is humility
- If we humbled ourselves before God, then we shouldn't speak evil about other people
- *Speaking evil* and judging others is slanderous, insulting, gossiping, or critical speech about others with the intent to injure, defame, insult, ruin the reputation of another person
- Speaking evil or judging others is also talking about someone behind their back
- God hates all sins, but there are a few that are constantly condemned by scripture; one of them is judging others
- Judging others violates the law of God
- God's law is that we are to love our neighbors as ourselves **James 2:8 (KJV) 8 If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well:**
- *Judging others set us up as the judge, the lawgiver*
- When we practice slander and judging others, we're saying we operating in the position of "judge" over others
- We are not the lawgiver, God calls Christians to be keepers of the law, not to sit in judgment on it
- *Judging others usurps God's right and authority*
- God is the *only* lawgiver and judge, He is the One who is able to both save and destroy
- When we slander and judge other, we're attempting to "play God", and God has no pleasure in those who slander and judge others
- Leave the judgement to God
- Our calling is to respond in supportive love and not harsh criticism