

# Faith in Action - James

[James 4:1-12](#) - "Why quarrels and conflict come" – Oct. 11, 2020



## Introduction

Relationships can be challenging, but it is within the context of relationships we have the opportunity to reflect the goodness of God to others. This week, James helps us better understand what's going on in our conflict and how we can respond in a way that honors God and promotes peace – not the disorder from worldly wisdom ([James 3:15-16](#)).

## Pray

Read [James 4:1-10](#). What can you *thank* God for in light of what He says here?

## Sermon Outline

- I. Identify the cause of the conflicts. ([4:1-5](#))
- II. Humble yourself to receive God's grace. ([4:6-10](#))

## Read & Discuss

1) Read [4:1-5](#)

What conflicts have you experienced lately? James helps us pause and ask, "How did we get here?" God's perspective on the issue is that "your *passions* are at war within you." Our passions are the things we desire (see [4:2](#)) to please our self. The cause of our fighting is simple: we aren't getting what we want. But quarrels aren't merely between *people*, they are a symptom of a spiritual issue – a conflict with God. That's why James addresses the reader as 'adulterous' in 4:4. Based on the way God refers to His relationship with His people as a marriage (see [Eph. 5:22-33](#) or [Isa. 62:5](#)), our embracing the world as a friend and its opposition to God is the same as spiritual adultery.

In any conflict, we do well to ask ourselves first: *What is it that I want in this quarrel?* Second: *How am I letting my desires rule instead of God?*

James presses the weightiness of the issue, not to be cruel – but to push us out of our self-reliant pride so we trust in God to provide and trust what God says is good and wise for us.

2) Read [4:6-10](#)

As in any healthy marriage, God's love demands our undivided loyalty. When we feel the weight of the position our sin left us in before a holy God, we may find ourselves crying out, "God, what do I do? I don't *want* You opposed to me." Thankfully, God promises grace to those who humble themselves before Him. What's it look like to humble ourselves before God? In vv7-10, James make it clear for us:

- Submit to God – To submit is to put ourselves under His authority. It's shifting from seeing ourselves as in charge to seeing God as King...as the Boss.
- Resist the devil – To resist is to oppose, to stand against. Overcoming self-centeredness is a *battle*. As Paul shows in Ephesians 6:10-20 and Romans 8:13, we must be vigilant and violent with sin and temptation. The promise? If we resist the devil, he *will* flee.
- Draw near to God – Not only do we run *from* sin, we must run *to* God. What makes it hard to run to God when you come to Him in repentance? How do you see Him in that moment? Remember James promise: if we *draw near* to God in faith, He *will* draw near to us.
- Cleanse your hands...purify your hearts – Rather than being double-minded and leaving our options open when it comes to obedience (in case we don't like what God says is good & wise), James calls us to stop flirting with the world and have a single heart and mind in following God.
- Mourn over our sin – The appropriate response to realizing the gravity of our guilt is not to shrug our shoulders and act like it's no big deal...it is to grieve over the fact that we've grieved God (Eph. 4:30).

The response James calls us to is a gift from God...and put ourselves in the pathway of God's grace by slowing down, making time to read Scripture, confess our sin, pray, and rejoice in His love for us. It can be hard humbling ourselves when the world is racing to make much of self (What if I miss out?). James promise in v10 is one to hold fast to: those who humble themselves *will* be exalted with Christ (Eph. 2:6).

**Additional Reading:** [Luke 7:36-50](#), [Psalm 30:5](#), [Revelation 6:15-16](#)

### **Prayer of Response**

- 1) After hearing God's Word, what sin do I need to *confess*? From what do I need to *repent*?
- 2) How should my life be lived this week based on what I have heard? What should I *understand*, *believe*, *desire*, or *do*?

Spend time praying together in response to God's word asking for His help and greater faith to follow Him in the week to come.

If you missed the sermon on Sunday or would like to listen again, visit our website at <https://fbcum.org/sermons-new/>

<p><b>*Next week's sermon text:</b> we turn to <a href="#">Luke 12:13-21</a> <b>"Wisdom: Being rich toward God"</b></p>
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