

Sunday Bible Study Lesson: James 4:1-10
June 28, 2020

In this passage, James addresses a problem within the fellowship of believers.

What 2 questions does James ask in **verse 1**? _____

In the second question, James identifies the source of their conflicts as their desire for pleasures **or** their passions. James does not state the precise nature of these passions; however, something had gotten in the way of fulfilling those desires. As a result, the believers were experiencing inner frustration which led to quarrels, fights, and disputes among them.

In **verse 2**, James says, "You lust and do not have, so _____"

Did they actually commit murder? Read and explain what Jesus said in **Matthew 5:21-22**. _____

James continues in **verse 2**, "You are envious and cannot obtain, so _____"

It sounds as if the believers were jealous or envious of material things. It seems as if something had stepped in the way of fulfilling their desires, and they had a tendency to fight until they got their way.

In **James 3:16**, what are the results of jealousy and self-ambitions? _____ and _____.

The latter part of **verse 2** leads into verse 3. What does James say about the believers' prayer life? You do not have because _____ and when you do ask _____

While James stresses the importance of asking God to meet our needs, he also warns against asking for things that fuel our own selfish desires brought on by jealousy and envy. These believers were praying for their own interests and not praying to deepen their relationship to God or to accomplish His Will in the world.

Read 1 John 3:22 and 1 John 5:14. What do we learn about prayer from these verses?

What advice would John give to the believers to whom James was writing?

In **James 4:4**, what harsh word does he use to describe the believers? _____

James uses this familiar Old Testament metaphor because the believers' loyalty should be to God and to Him alone. Because their attention, affection, and allegiance were not toward God, essentially, they were cheating on Him. These Christians were committing spiritual adultery.

When James says, "Whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God," what do you think he means? _____

Basically, a heart turned toward the ways of the world leads to anger with God and conflict with man. These conditions lead to quarreling and fighting among believers.

The good news is that James does not lay out this problem before us and then leave us without a solution.

Read **James 4:5** in your translation, then in these translations:

Or do you think Scripture says without reason that he jealously longs for the spirit he has caused to dwell in us? (New International Version)

Do you think the Scriptures have no meaning? They say that God is passionate that the spirit he has placed within us should be faithful to him? (New Living Translation)

Or do you suppose that it is for nothing that the scripture says, "God yearns jealously for the spirit that he has made to dwell in us"? (New Revised Standard Version)

When the Scripture says that God is a jealous God, it means that He values our love relationship with Him. This relationship is threatened by the lure of the world on these believers. God's jealousy for His people's faithfulness is like a husband's or wife's longing for his/her mate's fidelity.

Thus, James' first solution to the problem is the power of the Holy Spirit. We relinquish our control and rely on His control.

James 4:6 states that He gives a greater _____. We ask: Greater than what? Greater than our selfishness. Greater than our wills. Greater than the temptation to give in to the lure of the world.

James 4:5 also states that He gives _____ to the _____. Remember that **grace is "unmerited favor."**

James then has some very specific and practical advice. In **verses 7-8**, James is giving us "application." In other words, he is saying to the believers, these are the steps you need to take to stop fighting. He begins in **verse 7** with **"Submit to God,"** which goes hand in hand with resisting the devil.

In **James 4:8**, he says to "_____, and He will _____ to you. James speaks of drawing closer to God in our daily relationship to Him so that we become more and more like His Son.

How do we draw near to God? James tells us in verses 9-10. List the steps James gives. If the step leads to a result, add the result beside that step. Note that verse 9 includes steps to Godly sorrow about sin and repentance.

Going deeper:

Because you have internet access, please check out this timely devotional message, *When Conflict Comes*, by Dr. Jeff Schreve:

<https://www.oneplace.com/ministries/from-his-heart/read/devotionals/encouragement-from-jeff-schreve/when-conflict-comes-from-his-heart-june-16-11556564.html>

Melanie Campbell wrote "5 Biblical Ways to Love Those You Disagree With," which can be found at:

https://www.biblestudytools.com/bible-study/topical-studies/biblical-ways-to-love-those-you-disagree-with.html?utm_source=today%27s+topical+bible+study&utm_campaign=today%27s+topical+bible+study+-+biblestudytools.com&utm_medium=email&utm_content=3390499&bcid=5cdfb88c0d269d338613d8be01ff867d&recip=550975884+