

PICK A SIDE---ARE YOU A FRIEND OF THE WORLD? OR OF GOD?
JAMES 4:1-8

I AM HONORED AND HUMBLLED TO BE ABLE TO PREACH THROUGH THIS EPIC EPISTLE. ALL SCRIPTURE IS GOD BREATHED SPIRIT FILLED TRUTH, BUT THE EPISTLE OF JAMES HAS BEEN SO PRACTICALLY ACURATE AND CONVICTING FOR TODAY'S MODERN-DAY CHURCH. JAMES PREACHES HARD AND THE WISE PERSON WILL TAKE THESE TRUTHS AND BEGIN TO ADJUST THEIR LIFE IN OBEDIENCE. THIS IS WHAT SCRIPTURE (IN IT'S CONTEXT) DOES, IT CONFORMS US INTO THE IMAGE OF JESUS CHRIST. LESS OF US + MORE OF HIM = A TRUE DISCIPLE. JAMES WROTE THIS LETTER TO CHRISTIANS. THE ORIGINAL RECIPIENTS WERE JEWISH CHRISTIANS WHO WERE SCATTERED BECAUSE OF PERSECUTION FROM KING HEROD AGRIPPA. BUT, BECAUSE THE WORD OF GOD IS ALIVE AND WITHOUT ERROR, IT IS JUST AS RELEVANT TODAY AS IT WAS SOMEWHERE BETWEEN AD 44-49 AD WHEN IT WAS ORIGINALLY WRITTEN. THIS MAKES IT THE EARLIEST WRITTEN BOOK OF THE NT CANNON. ONE CAN SUMMERIZE THIS EPISTLE AS "HOW TO PROVE YOUR FAITH IS GENUINE". THE CHURCH IS FACED WITH THE TASK OF SEARCHING OUR HEARTS AND JUDGING OURSELVES IN CONDUCT (WHAT WE DO), SPEECH (WHAT WE SAY), AND ATTITUDE (HOW WE BEHAVE). LAST WEEK WE LEARNED ABOUT THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN EARTHLY WISDOM (WISDOM OF SELF) AND GODLY WISDOM (SPIRIT FILLED SELFLESS WISDOM). LET ME JUST RECAP THE SCRIPTURES BEFORE WE MOVE FORWARD FOR CONTEXT.

James 3:13-18 NIV

¹³ Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. ¹⁴ But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. ¹⁵ Such “wisdom” does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. ¹⁶ For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice. ¹⁷ But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. ¹⁸ Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.

REMEMBER, THERE ARE NO CHAPTER BREAKS IN THE ORIGINAL LETTER. SO, LET'S MOVE FORWARD

James 4:1 NIV

4 What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you?

JAMES IS PULLING THE COVERS OFF OF THE CHURCH MOST OF THE ARGUMENTS AND CONFLICTS WITHIN THE CHURCH CANNOT BE JUSTIFIED AND THE FIERCEST BATTLES ARE NOT OVER THEOLOGY. MORE OFTEN, THEY ARE FOUGHT OVER CHANGE, PERSONALITIES, LEADERSHIP STYLE, AND INJURED FEELINGS.

IF EVERYONE OBEYED WHAT JESUS TOLD US TO DO IN MATTHEW 18:15-17. MOST OF OUR PROBLEMS WOULD NOT EXIST

DESIRES/EPITHYMEOS/LUST, COVET

BATTLES EXTERNALLY START INTERNALLY

James 4:2-3 NIV

²You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God. ³When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

DESIRE/EPITHYMEOS/LUST, EAGERLY LONG FOR
KILL/PHONOS/MURDER. COVET/ZELOS/ JEALOUS, ILL WILL

WHEN WE FORGET THAT WE HAVE DIED IN CHRIST WE
OPERATE ON OUR OWN UNDERSTANDING, WE FORGET TO ASK
GOD IN PRAYER OR WE PRAY WITH SELFISH MOTIVES
PLEASURES/HEDONISM// FEELINGS THAT PLEASE SELF AND
SELFISH DESIRES---ITS IN THE NEGATIVE CONTEXT/HEDONISM

Psalm 37:3-8 NIV

³Trust in the Lord and do good;
dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture.

⁴Take delight in the Lord,
and he will give you the desires of your heart.

⁵Commit your way to the Lord;
trust in him and he will do this:

⁶He will make your righteous reward shine like the dawn,
your vindication like the noonday sun.

⁷ Be still before the Lord
and wait patiently for him;
do not fret when people succeed in their ways,
when they carry out their wicked schemes.
⁸ Refrain from anger and turn from wrath;
do not fret—it leads only to evil.

TRUST IN, DELIGHT IN, AND COMMIT TO THE LORD
BE STILL AND REFRAIN FROM ANGER

James 4:4 NIV

⁴ You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.

YOU CHEATERS! YOU SAY YOU LOVE GOD YET YOU CHEAT ON HIM WITH THE SHINY SENSUAL THINGS THAT THE WORLD OFFERS. YOU FILL YOUR MIND WITH WORLDLY WISDOM AND EXPECT HEAVENLY RESULTS

FRIENDSHIP/PHILIA/LOVE THAT IS FRIENDLY
EMNITY/ECHTHRA/HOSTILITY, HATRED
CHOOSES/BOULOMAI/TO WISH, WILL, DETERMINE, PLAN

REMEMBER, JAMES IS CHALLENGING THE CHURCH TO EXAMINE THE HEART...ARE YOU MEARLY A PROFESSOR OF FAITH OR ARE YOU A POSESSER OF FAITH

1 John 2:15-16 NIV

¹⁵ Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them. ¹⁶ For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world.

LOVE/AGAPAO/LOVE DEEPLY

Galatians 5:17 NIV

¹⁷ For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want.

James 4:5-6 NIV

⁵ Or do you think Scripture says without reason that he jealously longs for the spirit he has caused to dwell in us? ⁶ But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says:

“God opposes the proud
but shows favor to the humble.”

GOD IS JEALOUS OF SHARING US WITH THE KOSMOS WHETHER
THE S IS CAPITALIZED OR NOT...BOTH WORK

YES, THERE IS AMAZING GRACE, THE BLOOD OF JESUS HAS PAID
FOR OUR SIN....SO BE HUMBLE IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES
PRIDE WILL ONLY BRING DEATH TO YOUR LIFE, AND
RELATIONSHIPS. GOD OPPOSES THAT BEHAVIOR

James 4:7 NIV

⁷ Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

THERE IS A PROCESS:

FIRST SUBMIT YOUR WILL TO GOD, STUDY HIS WORD AND OBEY IT, PRAY, FELLOWSHIP WITH HIM ALL DAY LONG, FEED YOUR SPIRIT, REPENT OF YOUR SIN AND SWIM IN THE RIVER OF GRACE

OUT OF THE MOUTH OF KING JESUS
“NOT MY WILL BUT YOUR WILL BE DONE”

THEN YOU CAN:

RESIST THE DEMONIC ENTICEMENTS OF THE DEVIL, FIGHT AGAINST YOUR SIN NATURE. DON'T FEED IT, STARVE IT OUT HE WILL FLEE WHEN YOU ARE SOAKED IN THE HOLY SPIRIT
DARKNESS CANNOT RESIDE IN THE LIGHT OF GOD

JESUS ALSO SAID:

Matthew 11:29 NIV

²⁹ Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

SELFISH PRIDE WILL LEAVE YOU TIRED, EMPTY, AND FRUSTRATED

SUBMIT TO GOD AND YOU WILL FIND REST AND PEACE

James 4:8 NIV

⁸ Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

YOU TAKE A FEW STEPS TOWARDS GOD AND HE RUNS TO YOU. JUST LIKE A GOOD FATHER DOES. WASHING YOUR HANDS IS REPENTANCE, PURIFYING YOUR HEARTS IS OBEDIENCE, DON'T BE DOUBLE MINDED, BE SINGLE MINDED ON CHRIST

JESUS GIVES US A PARABLE OF HOW MUCH THE FATHER LOVES US

Luke 15:17-20 NIV

¹⁷ “When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! ¹⁸ I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. ¹⁹ I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.’ ²⁰ So he got up and went to his father.

“But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

GOD LOVES YOU SO MUCH

END