

The Heart's Desires

November 6, 2022

James 4:1-10

Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? ² You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. ³ You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures. ⁴ Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. ⁵ Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, "The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously"?

⁶ But He gives more grace. Therefore, He says: "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble." ⁷ Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. ⁸ Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. ⁹ Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. ¹⁰ Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.

James 4:1-10

Why the issues? (vs. 1-5)

Selfish desires and pleasures. (vs. 1-2)

People who are at war with themselves because of selfish desires are always unhappy people. They never enjoy life. Instead of being thankful for the blessings they do have, they complain about the blessings they do not have. They cannot get along with other people because they are always envying others for what they have and do. They are always looking for that "magic something" that will change their lives, when the real problem is within their own hearts.

Sometimes we use prayer as a cloak to hide our true desires. "But I prayed about it!" can be one of the biggest excuses a Christian can use. Instead of seeking God's will, we tell God what He is supposed to do; and we get angry at Him if He does not obey. This anger at God eventually spills over and we get angry at God's people.

If we don't, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, get ourselves under control and work on our heart and mind then it will eat us alive.

Me and you are SINNERS. This is not an excuse but a reality. Until the day we die we will battle between self (sin) and yielding to the Lord. The issue becomes when there is no battle and we give in to our self.

When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. ³⁵ For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it.

Mark 8:34-35

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

Galatians 2:20

As I've said many times from right here, our biggest enemy is us, our own sin.

We try to be in the world AND of the world. (vs. 3-4)

God's Word tells us to be in the world but not of it but we so often try both, it doesn't work. Again this world is not our home.

It is a blessing to be disappointed in the way of sin, you cannot have a worse judgement than to have worldly desires fulfilled.

Proud (v. 6) arrogant, showing one's self above others – opposite of the Lord!

Solution

Humility (v. 6)

Not thinking less of yourself, but thinking of yourself less.

To make low.

Submission (v. 7)

Sincerely, freely and faithfully.

"Now therefore, fear the LORD, serve Him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the River and in Egypt. Serve the LORD! ¹⁵ And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." **Joshua 24:14-17**

Submit literally means to yield,

In the King James Version, "submit" appears only twelve times, "submitted" three times, and "submitting" once. In Greek, the word is *hupotasso*, which means "to arrange in order under." It is actually a military term, and in the military there is a strong sense of submitting to someone of higher rank. A soldier must arrange himself in order under his sergeant. A sergeant arranges himself in order under the master-sergeants. A master-sergeant arranges himself in order under the lieutenants—and the lieutenants to the captain, the captain to the major, and right on up to the general, who himself must submit to the Commander-in-Chief. Everything is "arranged in order under." Its "bare bones" meaning is that one has to arrange himself in order, that is, systematically, under another. It appears in various English Bible translations other than the King James Version (and even sometimes in the King James) as "subordinate," "obey," "subject to," "submit," "surrender," "be weak," "[afflicted](#)," "humbled," "put under," and—how about this one—"stay in your place."¹

Resist the devil (v. 7)

If you humbly submit to God, you must expect to resist Satan.

Satan is still the busiest wherever he has the least to do. ²

Either you resist him or are taken captive by him.

How?

Draw near to God (v. 8)

His Word

His Spirit

His people

Prayer

Pray in His name, Pray in the Spirit, Pray in the will of God... "God's glory is the end of prayer and the beginning of hope". **An Exposition of the Epistle James. Manton, T.**

Prayer is not where we bend God's will to fit ours, rather it's finding the will of God and getting in on it.

Prayer is not some method by which man on earth gets his will done in heaven; prayer is the method where God in heaven gets His will done on earth.³

Prayer Focus:

- I would die to self.
- I would submit to the Lord.
- I would draw near to the Lord.

¹ Forerunner Commentary

² An Exposition of the Epistle James, T. Manton.

³ Ibid.