



James

The Epistle of Straw?



Recap

- ▶ Last week, we discussed the wisdom “which comes from above.”
- ▶ James draws a line in the sand:
Wisdom does not look like jealousy or ambition.



“A harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.” (James 3:18)



Passions & Desires

Our topic today



Quarrels and Fights

James 4:1-10

¹ What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you?





Passions at War

James 4:1-10

¹ What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? ² You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel.



Ask!

James 4:1-10

¹ What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? ² You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. ³ You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions. ⁴ You adulterous people!



“And I will do whatever you ask in my
name...”

Are these magic words?



Magic Words??

John 14:12-14

¹³ Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.



Magic Words?? No.

John 14:12-14

¹² “Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father.

¹³ Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.



Ask!

James 4:1-10

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Do we know this???

James 4:1-10

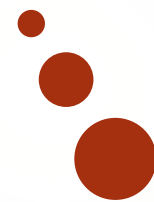
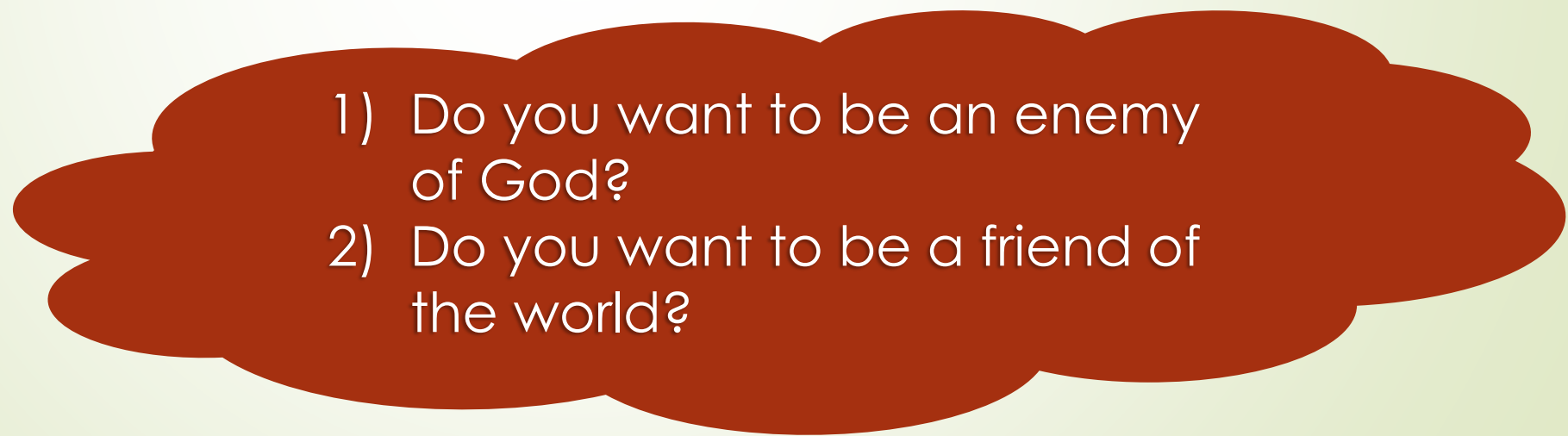
¹ What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? ² You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. ³ You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions. ⁴ You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God?



Two Questions

James 4:1-10

Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

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- 1) Do you want to be an enemy of God?
 - 2) Do you want to be a friend of the world?



God's Desire

James 4:1-10

Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. ⁵ Or do you suppose it is to no purpose that the Scripture says, "He yearns jealously over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us"?



These are **God's**
desires and passions.



God's solution

James 4:1-10

Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. ⁵ Or do you suppose it is to no purpose that the Scripture says, "He yearns jealously over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us"? ⁶ But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."



This doesn't feel like
grace!



Our Response

James 4:1-10

- ⁷ Submit yourselves therefore 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 Be wretched and mourn and weep.
- Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom.
- ¹⁰ Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.



Summary

James 4:1-10

- Passions and desires cause problems.
- We want and ask God for things, and God wants to give us what we desire, but we ask for bad reasons, so we don't receive them.
- We should desire friendship with God more than friendship with the world.
- But we seldom do. Our spirits war within us.
- In recognition of this, the Christian life is a life of submission to God, repentance, and humility.



Submission



- ▶ God commands Y, so I seek to do Y.
- ▶ God wants X, so I want X.
- ▶ God gets the glory for everything I do well.
- ▶ In recognition of the fact that I so frequently fall short, I humbly seek the Lord's counsel in all things.



Discussion Questions & Additional Scriptures for Study

For journaling, calling a friend, discussing with family, and prayer




Have I ever been disappointed by
good circumstances which were not
“the best?”

Discussion Question



Am I seeking “friendship with the world” through my behavior, words, or actions?

Discussion Questions



Do I currently desire anything
which I should “submit to God?”

Discussion Question



Speaking Evil & Boasting

Next Week...



All Scripture References come from...

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An Interlude

James 4:11–12

¹¹ Do not speak evil against one another, brothers.

The one who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks evil against the law and judges the law.

But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge.

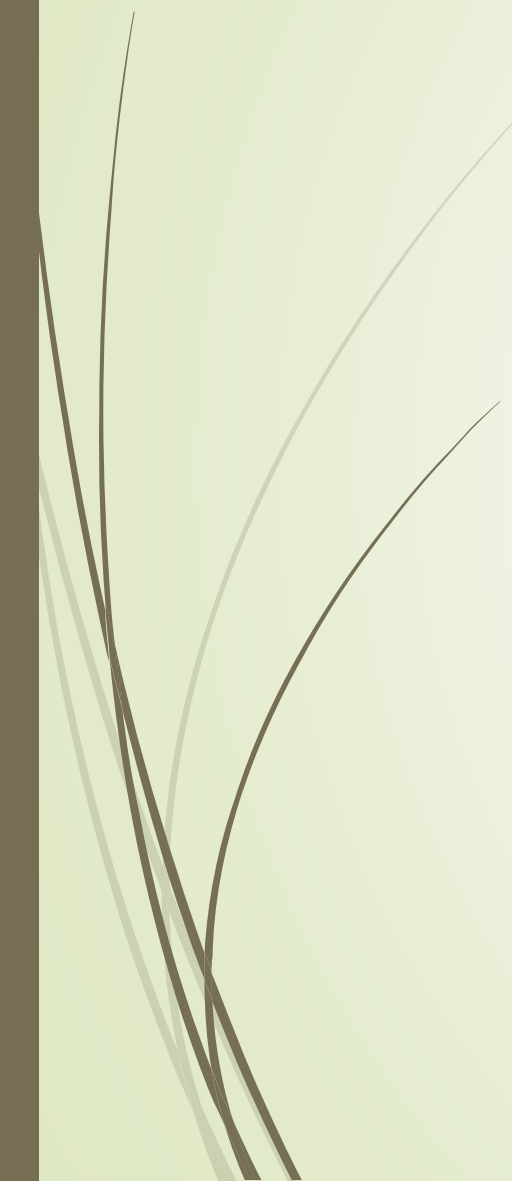
¹² There is only one lawgiver and judge, he who is able to save and to destroy.

But who are you to judge your neighbor?



Where's this coming from?

James 1:12–21




¹² Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him. ¹³ Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God,” for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. ¹⁴ But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. ¹⁵ Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death. ¹⁶ Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers. ¹⁷ Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. ¹⁸ Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures. ¹⁹ Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; ²⁰ for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God. ²¹ Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with



Where's this coming from?

James 1:22–27

²² But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. ²³ For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. ²⁴ For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. ²⁵ But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing. ²⁶ If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless. ²⁷ Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.



Where's this coming from?

James 2:8–13

⁸ If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing well. ⁹ But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. ¹⁰ For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it. ¹¹ For he who said, “Do not commit adultery,” also said, “Do not murder.” If you do not commit adultery but do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. ¹² So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty. ¹³ For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.