

**Faith That Works**  
**“Why Can’t We All Just Get Along?”**  
**James 4:1-10**

Introduction- *“To dwell above with the saints in love that will be glory; but to live below with the saints I know brother that’s another story.”* It was said of the early Christians *“Behold how they love one another.”* It’s sad that often today when the outside world looks at the believers they say, *“Behold how they compete and quarrel with one another.”*

Why is it that God’s people often have a hard time getting along with each other? James asks and answers that question in verse one. The problem is God’s people often follow worldly wisdom rather than heavenly wisdom. The outcome of worldly wisdom is James 3:16, but if we follow the wisdom from above James 3:17-18.

James in our text pinpoints three sins common among the saints that causes quarrels and fights and tells us what we need to do to get along.

What is causing the quarrels and fights among you?

**I. Selfish Desires, vv. 1-3**

It’s your selfish, sinful, evil desires.

The Greek word for lust is “hedone,” so hedonism.

It’s the world view that has as its basic principle the belief that man’s ultimate purpose for living is in enjoying pleasure and avoiding pain. It’s the playboy philosophy, *“If it feels good, do it.”*

Searching for pleasure leads to emptiness and misery in one’s life. Its self-focus diminishes the importance of others and God enthrones one’s pleasures as the goal of life. This brings relational war with those around us.

- Self focused people are not free. Like marionettes suspended and animated by the strings of self-seeking pleasure.
- The sad truth is its in the church, so bringing war to the church and Christian homes.

The trouble is prayerlessness.

A. You don't look to God in prayer (vs. 2).

B. If you do pray, you don't pray for God's will (vs. 3).

Does this mean Christians cannot experience pleasure? No! However, it's pleasure in the will of God.

The Westminster Confession, "*The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.*"

## II. Worldliness, vv. 4-5

A. What does James mean by "*you adulterous people*"? It's spiritual. **Illus.** Israel and Idols.

B. What does he mean by the world (vs. 4). I John 2, Lust of the eyes, flesh, pride of life.

Note the dangers:

1. Friendship with the world.
2. Spotted by the world. James 1:27
3. Loving the world. I John 2:15-17
4. Conformed with the world. I Cor. 11
5. Condemned with the world.

C. It grieves the Holy Spirit.

## III. Pride, vs. 6

Note: God opposes the proud.

There's hope; "The Grace of God." Verse 6, "He gives more grace."

- It's not saving grace, it's living grace. God's gracious supply to live as we ought in a fallen world.
- "For daily need, there is daily grace; For sudden need, sudden grace; For overwhelming need, overwhelming grace." *The Forgotten Blessing*
- Grace for overcoming personal weakness and insurmountable obstacles.

Is there any condition to receiving this river of grace? Yes! It's given to the humble.

What steps should we take to humbly receive God's grace? (vv. 7-10)

**1. Submit** (vs. 7).

It literally means "get back in rank." "*This opening command grates like fingernails across a chalkboard of contemporary culture,*" R. Kent Hughes.

People pay big money to learn the techniques of dominance and self-assertiveness. Even as God's children, we can find ourselves rebelling. If so, the only way we to receive the grace you need is to submit.

Contrast, Satan, "I will" to Jesus "Thy will."

**2. Resist** (vs. 7).

Who? The Devil, not the Lord. How? Eph. 6. Belt of truth; Breastplate of righteousness; Shield of faith; Helmet of Salvation; Sword of the Spirit; and all prayer.

**3. Draw nigh to God** (vs. 8).

Asaph said Psalm 73, "*It is good for me to draw near to God.*" But how? By confession of sin!

1. Cleanse your hands (vs. 8). "Actions"
2. Purify your hearts (vs. 8). "Attitudes"

Jesus said, "*Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.*"  
I John 1:9  
Note the promise, "*God will draw nigh to you.*"  
Ilus.: The Prodigal Son

**4. Grieve** (vs. 9).

K.J.V. "Be afflicted." Lit. "Be miserable." Also, "mourn" and "weep."

- Don't misunderstand this verse. Christians should have joy, but not when there's sin in their life.
- Jesus said, "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted."

**Illus.:** David, "*The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou will not despise.*" Psa. 51:17

Job 40:4. *“Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth.”* \*Not just for big sins.

**5. Humble yourselves** (vs. 10).

Don't wait for God to do it, you do it!

“When you do, “He will lift you up!”

But the way up is down! The way down is up!

Which way will you go?

*“For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.”* Isa. 57:15