

# MAN<sup>2</sup>MAN

## James Chapter 4

Intro: In chapter 3 we learned the importance of choosing our words and choosing Godly wisdom as we communicate and engage with one another. Chapter 3 closes with "...*the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.*" The flip side to peace we know to be wars and fighting and striving and that is where chapter 4 gets down to street level reality. As James gets 'up in your face' remember the goal is to humbly learn and live according to the Word of God, empowered by God, for the glory of God. This means we must be willing to receive tough teaching and strong words of correction if we are going to grow spiritually. I don't mind tough words from someone when I know for a fact that person loves me and will come alongside to help me. That is the case with the Word of God; Love and mercy applied to our lives invites transformation!

**James 4:1** Consider the simplicity of the CEV wording; "*Why do you fight and argue with each other? Isn't it because you are full of selfish desires that fight to control your body?*"

Most arguments are battles of self-promotion. Before you push forward in an argument allow this thought to penetrate your heart and mind; "Honestly, What am I trying to accomplish here?"

Now follow that question up with, "Is this the right way to do it?" (Heart check- v6, "*...God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.*" )

Many of our 'battles' are internal conflicting desires within our own minds. The desire for sensual pleasure is often in conflict with the truth of God's Word. The result is we have an inner 'war' that frequently pours out onto those around us. Our inner turmoil can produce an impatience and frustration that is directed at someone else, often those we love.

**V2-** *lust*=Strong desire for, to set the heart upon/for. *Murder*-Matthew 5:21-26

Understandably when we are turning to the wisdom of this world, see James 3:14, we do not turn to Godly wisdom. The sad irony is that the wisdom we need is readily available to us if we would simply humble ourselves and ask Him.

**V3-** Often when we do ask for God's help we expect Him to support and subsidize our selfish desires. How foolish!

**V4-** Jer 3:1,2, Ezekiel 16 and other passages speak of the people of God as adulterers when they are whoring around with the world. This speaks of claiming loyalty and faithfulness to God and then sneaking around to find pleasure in the world. 1John 2:15-17.

*"Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world- the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life- is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever."* 1John 2:15-17

**James 4:5-** God paid a high price for your salvation and forgiveness of sins. His 'jealousy' is for our good! It is His design to guard and direct us away from that which will be harmful to us.

**V6-** "...more grace..." This is an issue of recognition not provision. God has provided sufficient grace. We need to recognize and grow in grace more often! Grow in grace, be taught by grace! Titus 2:11-15

**V7-** The order here is important; Submit to God and then resist the devil. If you are not submitted to God you will not be able to resist the devil. Many people talk a good fight but get beaten badly when the battle begins. Read Acts 19:11-16

**V8,9-** You have to appreciate how this letter 'calls it like is' so directly. You want to get right with God, do it! Draw near to Him! Once again, we see a step by step approach to spiritual maturity;

1. Draw near to Him, He will draw near to you.

2. Cleanse your hands and purify your hearts. If we try to clean ourselves up before we draw near to Him we are most likely relying on our efforts and not His grace!

Draw near to Him and He will lead you in cleansing. Psalm 19:12-14

**V10-** Bow before Him and He will raise you up!

The previous verses addressed core issues between the individual and God. Now we will see how the next step is to deal humbly with those around us.

**V11, 12-** Choose to build up, choose to encourage, choose to love. Yes, people have faults and failings but you probably don't need to go pointing that out, unless of course you want to be judged without mercy as well. Leave the 'judging' to the Lawgiver/Judge. I'm so glad that our "Judge" Jesus is perfect in truth, mercy and grace! May we cease to speak evil of others!

**V13-16** It seems the people were had grandiose plans and ambitions for the things of this world. It is wise to plan ahead, prepare for the future, just remember to live today. Live in such a way that honors Him everyday and when your day comes to depart you will be glad to be walking in His will.

**V17-** Sin clarified and even simplified! Read Psalm 19:12-14 and discuss how being 'teachable' is important in dealing with sin.

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*"Look upon me and be merciful to me, as Your custom is toward those who love Your name.  
Direct my steps by Your word, and let no iniquity have dominion over me."*

Psalm 119:132, 133

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