

ILLUSTRATION

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Child Refuses to Give Offering

Topics: Children; Giving; Greed; Human condition; Money; Money, Love of; Nature of human beings; Offerings; Sinful nature; Stinginess; Tithing

Filters: Money, Stories, Youth & Children

References: Matthew 6:19-24 , Luke 12:13-21 , Ephesians 5:5 , Colossians 3:1-6

Tone: Warn

A 4-year-old was in church when the wine and wafers were passed out. His mother leaned over and told him that he was not old enough to partake in Communion.

Later, when the collection plate came by, his mother again leaned over and tried to coax a nickel out of his clenched fist. He held firm and shouted, "If I can't eat, I won't pay."

Images: Communion, Communion 2, Tithes

submitted by J. R. Love, Rushton, Louisiana

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Lord, we've had our little wrangles, an' we've had our little bouts;
There's many a time, I reckon, that we have been on the outs;
My tongue's a trifle hasty an' my temper's apt to fly,
An' Mother, let me tell you, has a sting in her reply,
But I couldn't live without her, an' it's plain as plain can be
That in fair or sunny weather Mother needs a man like me.

I've banged the door an' muttered angry words beneath my
breath,
For at times when she was scoldin' Mother's plagued me most to
death,
But we've always laughed it over, when we'd both cooled down a
bit,
An' we never had a difference but a smile would settle it.
An' if such a thing could happen, we could share life's joys an'
tears
An' live right on together for another thousand years.

Some men give up too easy in the game o' married life;
They haven't got the courage to be worthy of a wife;
An' I've seen a lot o' women that have made their lives a mess,
'Cause they couldn't bear the burdens that are mixed with
happiness.

So long as folks are human they'll have many faults that jar,
An' the way to live with people is to take them as they are.

We've been forty years together, good an' bad, an' rain an' shine;
I've forgotten Mother's faults now an' she never mentions mine.
In the days when sorrow struck us an' we shared a common woe
We just leaned upon each other, an' our weakness didn't show.
An' I learned how much I need her an' how tender she can be
An' through it, maybe, Mother saw the better side o' me.

p. 384-5

Never show your horse
more affection than your wife
unless you like
sleepin' in the barn.

p. 12

All cowboys are connoisseurs—
of horses, dogs, cattle, fences,
pickups, saddles, boots, hats,
roping, riding, belt buckles, and
rodeoing. (I ain't including women
here because it wouldn't be
politically correct, and cowboys
don't know much about 'em anyway.)

p. 86

Two great stress reducers:
I'm sorry.
I forgive you.

p. 113

A Practical Study of JAMES: The Battle of Our Behavior

SESSION #8: James 4:1-12

"War Against the Big Three"

Key Verse:

4:1 *For what source do conflicts and quarrels among you come? Do they not come from this, namely your passions which are struggling in your members?*

Memory Verse: James 4:8

TEXT:

v. 1 From what source do conflicts and quarrels among you come? Do they not come from this, namely your passions which are struggling in your members?

v. 2 You are desiring and not having. You are murdering and envying and not able to obtain. You are quarrelling and fighting. You are not having because you are not asking.

v. 3 You are asking and you are not receiving because you are asking with wrong motives, in order that you might spend it on your pleasures.

v. 4 Adulteresses, are you not knowing that your friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore would desire to be a friend of the world is being made an enemy of God.

v. 5 Or, are you supposing the scripture is saying to no purpose that He is yearning jealously over the Spirit which He has caused to dwell in us?

v. 6 And He is giving greater grace. For this reason, He is saying: "God is resisting the proud, but is giving grace to the humble."

v. 7 Be subject therefore to God, but resist the devil and he will flee from you.

v. 8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, sinners, and purify your hearts, double-minded.

v. 9 Lament and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy into gloominess.

v. 10 Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will exalt you.

v. 11 Stop speaking evil of one another, brethren. The one who is speaking evil of his brother, or finding fault with his brother, is speaking evil of the law and finding fault with the law. Now if you are finding fault with the law, you are not a doer of the law, but a judge.

v. 12 One only is a Lawgiver and a Judge, He who is able to save and to destroy; but as for you, who are you, the one finding fault with your fellowman?

Introduction:

Psalm 90:12

Teach us to number our days aright that we may gain a heart of wisdom.

1. Test - Designed by the Father to produce Growth
2. Temptation - Designed by the Devil to Hook us + Fry us.
3. Word - Daily intake required For Growth.
4. Love - NO partiality in the Love that Flows
5. Fruit - From living faith + not From works
6. Tongue - Only controlled by the Spirit
7. Wisdom - From Above + Not From below

Pure - Peaceable - Gentle - reasonable -
Full of Mercy - Good Fruits - Unwavering
without Hypocrisy.

TOPIC	REF #	TEXT
Temptation	597-09	Here is how James breaks down the seven stages of temptation:

1.	THE LOOK	"when he is drawn away"
2.	THE LUST	"by his own desires"
3.	THE LURE	"and enticed"
4.	THE CONCEPTION	"when desire has conceived"
5.	THE BIRTH	"it gives birth to sin"
6.	THE GROWTH	"and sin, when it is full-grown"
7.	THE DEATH	"brings forth death"

p. 122

Temptation 597-10 *We are half-hearted creatures, fooling around with drink and sex and ambition, when infinite joy is offered us. Like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea, we are far too easily pleased.*

C. S. LEWIS

p. 139

TOPIC	REF #	TEXT
		from it.” Go through your list one by one until you are finished.
	7.	<i>Anticipate the personal struggle you will face.</i> Don't be alarmed at your strong desire to flee; everyone feels the same way! Just proceed with your commitment. And give yourself a maximum of three days to make right every single item on your list.
	8.	<i>Make restoration wherever necessary and expect to have to humble yourself to at least one other person</i> in the process of restoration. Take the hardest first and deal with it in person. If that's not possible, use the telephone. If that's not possible, write a letter. Sometimes you will have to return to a store and pay for items you stole or confess to a teacher that you cheated on an exam. Always take the high road and do more than what would be expected of you.
	9.	<i>Write DONE! across your sheet</i> after you have confessed, made restoration, forgiven, and received God's cleansing for each sin. When every item is completed, burn your sheet as an act of assurance of the Lord's total and complete forgiveness. Then realize that any negative thoughts about what you've done are not from God, and never allow the accuser to attack you on these issues again. For tough cases, just pray these words out loud: "Lord, I have confessed this sin of _____ and I know You have forgiven me. I stand in Your forgiveness and cleansing."
	10.	<i>Thank the Lord</i> when you have completed your list. Praise Him for His forgiveness and thank Him for His cleansing. And if you would like to encourage one other person with your victory, send me a simple handwritten card, in care of my publisher, with your name on it and the word <i>DONE!</i> That's all—just to encourage me that people like you are pursuing righteousness with their whole heart.
	pp. 93-95	

Temptation

597-07

No man knows how bad he is until he has tried to be good.

There is a silly idea about that good people don't know what temptation means.

C. S. LEWIS

p. 99

Holiness

597-08

The holy man is not one who cannot sin.

A holy man is one who will not sin.

A. W. TOZER

p. 115

TOPIC	REF #	TEXT
Finishing	640-01	What we need to do—what we need to focus on—is finishing well and making every single day count. We all want a life that is worth living. The tragedy of life is not that it ends so soon, but that we wait so long to begin it. Or that we live our lives in a way that seems to go nowhere fast. p. XVI
Sacrifice	640-02	One man who lived his life well was Jim Elliot. He was in his early twenties when he felt called to take the gospel to the Auca Indians in Ecuador. He, along with some friends and his new bride, Elisabeth, followed God's leading. Jim paid with his life when the very people he'd been trying to teach turned on him. He and his missionary colleagues died from spear wounds. Wrapped around one spear was a gospel tract they had given the Aucas. p. XVII
Finishing	640-03	Jim gave his life for the gospel. It seems like a tragic thing, but he lived for the glory of God. He did what he was supposed to do. And he finished well. He understood the importance of that; in fact, he wrote in his journal before his death: "I seek not a long life but a full one, like Yours, Lord Jesus." He lived that full life. p. XVII
Temptation	640-04	Isn't it interesting how the devil helps us exaggerate our pasts when he wants to pull us back? The devil will whisper in our ears, "Remember the good old days." <i>Yeah. That was good, we think.</i> The devil is clever. He doesn't say, "Remember when you were so miserable that you actually considered suicide? Remember the times you were so drunk you didn't even know where you were when you woke up? Remember when your marriage almost fell apart?" He will remind you only of the few "good times" you had in order to draw you back. He did exactly this to the Israelites, and they went right along with it. p. 6

TOPIC	REF #	TEXT
Salvation	492-02	<p>Recently I talked with a young woman. She was weeping, hands covering her face. "I've lost everything—" she said, "my virginity, my sense of value. Look at all these holes!" She had pierced herself for multiple rings in her ears and nose and mouth. "I'm twenty-one," she said, "and I don't want to live like this anymore. I thought it would be so good."</p> <p>What this young woman was saying was simple. "Everything I reached for was a sham. Now who could ever love me?"</p> <p>I then had the privilege of telling her about Someone who really did love her very much. Someone worthy of her faith and devotion, who loved her just the way she was and could someday make her shine with His reflected beauty and righteousness (see Philippians 2:15).</p> <p>Someone we know as the One True God.</p> <p>p. 24</p>

Tongue	492-03	<p>REALIZE THAT ONLY GOD CAN CHANGE THE WAY YOU SPEAK</p> <p>Every now and then you read a horrible story of a child mauled by some wild animal that had supposedly been domesticated. "It was tame!" the keepers protest. "It never hurt anyone else." But somehow, this "tamed" cougar, leopard or wolf suddenly reverted back to an old instinct—to lash out, to maim, to kill.</p> <p>Our tongue has that same awful potential. Just when we think we have our mouths under control, something will set us off, and we will maul someone with angry or bitter words.</p> <p>You'll never be able to train your tongue to bring life instead of death. Only God can turn bitter water sweet.</p> <p>p. 73</p>
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ILLUSTRATION

Steve Jobs on Remembering Mortality

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Topics: Choices; Death; Decisions; Human limitations; Life, short; Mortality; Worth**Filters:** Famous People, Quotes**References:** Psalms 89:46-48 , Psalms 90:12 , Matthew 6:19-21 , Luke 12:13-31 , Hebrews 9:27 , James 4:13-15 **Tone:** Neutral/Mixed

Remembering that I'll be dead soon is the most important tool I've ever encountered to help me make the big choices in life. Because almost everything—all external expectations, all pride, all fear of embarrassment or failure—these things just fall away in the face of death, leaving only what is truly important.

Images: [Mortality and Sundial](#), [Graveyard](#)*Steve Jobs, cofounder of Apple and Pixar, at the Stanford University Commencement Address (June 2005)*[▲ back to top](#)[Home](#) | [My Account](#) | [Help & Info](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Contact Us](#)

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ILLUSTRATION

A Fatal Loss of Control

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Topics: Bondage, spiritual; Choices; Depravity; Human condition; Nature of human beings; Self-control; Self-discipline; Sin; Sinful nature

Filters: Stories

References: Romans 7:14-25 , Romans 12:1-2 , 2 Corinthians 5:17 , Ephesians 4:22-24

Tone: Warn

On October 31, 1999, a full airplane took off from JFK International Airport, New York, on a routine flight to Cairo, Egypt. The final report of the National Transportation Safety Board concluded that, a short time after take-off, the relief first officer waited for the pilot to leave the cockpit and then disengaged the autopilot. He proceeded to move the throttle levers from their cruise power setting to idle, cutting the engines. Seconds later, the airplane began to pitch nose-downward and descended into a freefall.

In the final moments before impact, the horrified pilot dashed back to his seat and battled the co-pilot for control of the plane. The pilot pulled back on his controls, desperate to bring the nose of the plunging Boeing 767 up, while the suicidal first officer pushed his own controls forward to keep the jet in its lethal dive. The result was the tragic crash of Egyptair Flight 990 into the Atlantic Ocean south of Nantucket, Massachusetts. It killed all 217 people aboard.

The battle in that airliner's cockpit is a picture of the inner life of a Christian. Each day, we choose either to hijack control of our lives—plunging ourselves into sin—or to remain locked in the direction of God's will.

Images: Airplane, Cockpit

National Transportation Safety Board final report on the crash of Egyptair Flight 990 on October 31, 1999; submitted by Jim Bennett

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Whereas we ended chapter 3 in PEACE.

"And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace."

Chapter 4 begins with WAR.

In our study of POINTERS FOR PROGRESS, we come now to a consideration of the EIGHTH POINTER FOR PROGRESS:

8 WAR AGAINST THE BIG THREE.

The BIG THREE that we are going to see in these verses are the

1. WORLD,
2. FLESH, and
3. DEVIL.

We have already seen that these THREE ENEMIES are characteristic of the WISDOM WHICH IS FROM BELOW.

Earthly — Natural — Demonic

v. 1 From what source do conflicts and quarrels among you come? Do they not come from this, namely your passions which are struggling in your members?

This is the **KEY VERSE** in our study:

"WAR AGAINST THE BIG THREE."

In this verse we have the mention of:

1. **PASSIONS or FLESH** and it is from this that we get the **"CONFLICTS AND QUARRELS."**

In **verse 4** we will notice that:

2. **"FRIENDSHIP WITH THE WORLD IS ENMITY WITH GOD."**

And then in **verse 7** we are asked to:

3. **"RESIST THE DEVIL AND HE WILL FLEE FROM [US]."**

WARFARE - **Ephesians 6**

WORK - **Philippians 2**

2 Timothy 2:3, 4

Then therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

~~Woman~~ that warreth . . .

No man

Maturity is reflected in success in your warfare.

Fight the good fight . . .

I fought a good fight . . .

Christian life is a fight all the way home.

Ephesians 6

It is hard to remember your original intention was to drain the swamp when you are hip deep in alligators.

As a Christian going on to maturity, it is going to be a matter of warfare. Paul recognizes this truth in:

Ephesians 6:12, 13

For we are not fighting against people made up of flesh and blood, but against persons without bodies; the evil kings of the unseen world, those mighty, satanic beings and great evil princes of darkness who rule this world and against huge numbers of wicked spirits in the spirit world. So use every piece of God's armour to resist the enemy whenever he attacks. And when it is all over, you will be standing up.

CARNAL and CHILDISH.

Doing war against the WORLD, the FLESH, and the DEVIL makes it possible to:

BEAR THE FRUIT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS which is being sown in peace.

When we yield to the desires of the flesh and enter into an alliance with the world and yield to the temptation of the Devil, it is then that strife and conflict set in.

①

James raises the QUESTION:

"FROM WHAT SOURCE DO CONFLICTS AND QUARRELS AMONG YOU COME?"

②

And in asking ANOTHER QUESTION, he gives the ANSWER:

"DO THEY NOT COME FROM THIS, NAMELY YOUR PASSIONS WHICH ARE STRUGGLING IN YOUR MEMBERS?"

Paul says a very similar thing in:

1 Corinthians 3:1-3

Dear brothers, I have been talking to you as though you were still just babies in the Christian life, who are not following the Lord, but your own desires. I cannot talk to you as I would to healthy Christians who are filled with the Spirit. I have had to feed you with milk and not with solid food because you couldn't digest anything stronger. And even now you still have to be fed on milk for you are still only baby Christians, controlled by your own desires, not God's. When you are jealous of one another and divide up into quarreling groups, doesn't that prove you are still babies, wanting your own way? In fact, you are acting like people who don't belong to the Lord at all.

Are you controlled by:

the FLESH or the SPIRIT?

In order to test our own lives, I have included the following in our study:

Are you conscious of a secret spirit of pride?

An exalted feeling in view of your success or position?

because of your good training and appearance,

because of your natural gifts and abilities,

an important independent spirit,

stiffness and preciseness,

love of human praise,

a secret fondness to be noticed,

love of supremacy,

drawing attention to self in conversation,

a swelling out of self when you have had a free time to speak or pray,

stirring of anger or impatience which, worst of all, you call nervousness or holy indignation,

a touchy, sensitive spirit,

a disposition to resent and retaliate when ^{You Are} it's reproved of or contradicted,

a desire to throw sharp, heated retorts at one another,

self-will,

a stubborn unteachable spirit,

harsh, sarcastic expressions,

- an arguing, talkative spirit,
- an unyielding, headstrong disposition,
- a commanding, driving spirit,
- a disposition to criticize and pick flaws when set aside and unnoticed,
- a peevish, fretful spirit,
- a disposition that loves to be coaxed and humored,
- carnal fear,
- a man-fearing spirit,
- a shrinking from reproach and duty,
- a shrinking from doing your whole duty,
- fear that someone will offend and drive some prominent person away,
- a compromising spirit,
- a jealous disposition,
- a secret spirit of envy,
- a shutting of your heart,
- an unpleasant sensation in view of the great prosperity and success of another,
- a disposition to speak of the faults and failings rather than the gifts and virtues of those more talented and appreciated than yourself,
- a dishonest, deceitful disposition,
- the evading and covering of the truth,
- covering up of your real faults,
- the leaving of a better impression of yourself than is strictly true,

false humility,

exaggeration,

straining the truth,

unbelief,

a spirit of discouragement in times of pressure and opposition,

a lack of quietness and confidence in God,

disposition to worry and complain in the midst of pain,

poverty, or

at the dispensations of divine providence, an over-anxious feeling whether everything will come out alright,

formality and deadness,

lack of concern for lost souls,

dryness and indifference,

lack of power with God,

selfishness,

love of ease,

love of money?

These are some of the traits which generally indicate a **CARNAL HEART.**




The Flesh!



Pastor Learns to Release Bitterness

Keywords: Arguments; Bitterness; Enemies; Forgiveness; Forgiveness, human; Generosity; Golden Rule; Hearing God; Mercy; Obedience; Past; Retribution; Revenge

Filters: Christian Culture, Weekly Updates, Stories, Everyday Disciples

References: Matthew 5:22-25 ; Matthew 18:21-35 ; Luke 12:58 ; Romans 12:17-20 ; Colossians 3:13 

Tone: Positive

Pastor Tim Brown relates this personal lesson in forgiveness:

Some time ago, I was having lunch in McDonald's with my daughter and mother-in-law. We were enjoying a pleasant conversation when a man, with his wife and children, plopped down at a nearby table. The man was someone who in the past had hurt me. We faked pleasantries and exchanged hellos, but I could feel my blood begin to boil at the thought of what he had done to me. This person had wounded me badly, and I was surprised about how much hurt I still felt.

My family and I gobbled down our food and on the way out of the restaurant I overheard "my enemy" and his wife arguing because neither had any money to purchase the food they had ordered. Their three kids were screaming for their Happy Meals. The couple was embarrassed. My first thought was, *Praise God, there is justice in this world. He deserves every bit of embarrassment he's feeling, and I'm so glad I got to see this.*

Suddenly God spoke to me through the text I had read that morning. "Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: 'It is mine to avenge; I will repay,' says the Lord. On the contrary: 'If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink'" (Romans 12:17-20).

God was saying to me: Here's your chance to be set free of your pain and overcome your hurt. I knew I had a choice either to obey or bask in my bitterness. Somewhat reluctantly I reached into my wallet, pulled out \$20, and gave it to this man who had been my enemy.

"Have lunch on me," I said with tears in my eyes.

Citation: Tim Brown, Clovis, California

Progress toward maturity is halted at any point where we **COMPROMISE** with the:

WORLD,

FLESH, and

DEVIL.

External
 * **WORLD** - ~~**INTERNAL**~~
internal
 * **FLESH** - ~~**EXTERNAL**~~
 * **DEVIL** - ~~**INFERNAL**~~

WAR AGAINST THE BIG THREE is vital before we can expect to make any progress toward maturity.

Dr. Charles Ryrie in his book *Balancing the Christian Life* points out:

When one is living under a dictator of a country, he has no choice but to obey the laws of that dictatorship. If the dictator is overthrown by a democratic regime and sent into exile in another country, the citizens are free to live a new kind of life. But it is quite conceivable that there would be some within the country who would prefer the deposed dictator and seek to serve him, even though his power has been broken. And serve him, they could, receiving their instructions over his clandestine radio and carrying them out while rejecting the freedom into which they had been brought.

The sin nature is like a deposed dictator who has been overthrown by the death of Christ. Christians are citizens of heaven with a new freedom to live lives pleasing to God, but the sin nature has not been eradicated nor has the individual's will been nullified. Therefore, it is possible to choose to listen to and to follow the promptings of sin. But it will never be possible for sin to regain the domination and control it had before conversion.

v. 2 You are desiring and not having. You are murdering and envying and not able to obtain. You are quarrelling and fighting. You are not having because you are not asking.

There are FOUR MANIFESTATIONS in this verse of:

LIVING BY THE FLESH or

YIELDING TO OUR DESIRES.

1. "YOU ARE DESIRING AND NOT HAVING."

OUR desires are not HIS desires.

Robertson says that:

If we would make the service of God our supreme end, then our desires will be such as God can fulfill in answer to our prayers.

Psalm 37:4

Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart . . .

Matthew 6:33

But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you.

More Money – What do you think of first?

1. "Good, what can I do for Christ?" or
2. "What can I buy for myself?"

William Barclay points out:

Will it be man's pleasure or God's will? Is the aim in your life to submit to the will of God or to gratify your own desires for the pleasures of this world? If pleasure is the policy of life, then nothing but strife and hatred and division can possibly follow. Ultimate choice in life lies between pleasing oneself and pleasing God. Thy will be done, my desires be satisfied. We can never pray right until we remove self from the center of life and put God into the center of life. If a man is worldly, he cannot be godly.

Ethel Barrett points out:

Are you scrapping with the world, always fighting the controls. [Well, they might introduce that closely graded curriculum in our Sunday school but I'm not going to teach it in my first grade. I'm going to teach what I please and this teacher's training is perfect nonsense. I'm willing to teach but I will not be relegated to meetings and all the rest of it.] In this particular area, you are about 14, testing your "grown-upness." Do you cry to get your way? In this area you are still under 6. Do you find it difficult to admit you are wrong? Do you blame others for your mistakes? You're a nice average 4. Do you lock up your supplies, guard your tools, can't bear to share your visual aids? You're about 2 1/2. Are you bossy and domineering? You'd better hurry, children begin to grow out of that one around 6. In some area or another, you're either impossible or a great big lovable kid, depending upon who is appraising you. Many of us have not come as far from our childhood as we think.

The next thing James says about LIVING AFTER THE FLESH here in verse 2 is:

2. "YOU ARE MURDERING AND ENVYING AND NOT ABLE TO OBTAIN."

UNSATISFIED DESIRES lead to

MURDER and

ENVY.

Bishop, in his book The Spirit of Christ in Human Relationships, says:

The work of Satan is to foster dissension, antagonism, and misunderstanding to wreck harmonious happy relationships. The work of the Spirit of Christ is the very opposite. It is to reconcile the harmonized, to enlighten, to cement happy relationships. Christians, of all people, should be promoters of enlightenment, understanding, and harmony, both among themselves and all people.

3.

"YOU ARE QUARRELLING AND FIGHTING."

DISAPPOINTED AMBITION leads to:

"QUARRELLING" and

"FIGHTING."

4.

"YOU ARE NOT HAVING BECAUSE YOU ARE NOT ASKING."

The Lord Jesus said in:

John 16:24

Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name. Ask and ye shall receive that your joys may be full.

v. 3 You are asking and you are not receiving because you are asking with wrong motives, in order that you might spend it on your pleasures.

A person living in the flesh cannot expect God to answer his prayers.

Isaiah 55:

1 John 5:14-15

And this is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him.

When they are praying, they are "NOT RECEIVING" a response, and the REASON is given. They are:

"ASKING WITH WRONG MOTIVES."

The PURPOSE of their asking is:

"IN ORDER THAT THEY MIGHT SPEND IT ON THEIR PLEASURES."

They are living under the CONTROL OF THE FLESH, dominated by selfish desires, so when they pray, they are only praying to gratify their own selfish needs.

This is a:

WRONG MOTIVE FOR PRAYER.

Thomas Guthrie said:

If you find yourself loving any pleasure better than your prayers, any book better than the Bible, any house better than the house of God, any table better than the Lord's Table, any persons better than Christ, any indulgence better than the hope of heaven, take alarm.

Smith points out in her book *The God Who Is Enough*:

When God, therefore, says to us "I am He Who seeth thy need", He in reality says also "I am He that provides" for He cannot see and fail to provide. "Why do I not have everything that I want then?" you may ask. Only because God sees that what you want is not really the thing you need, but probably exactly the opposite. Often, in order to give us what we need, the Lord is obliged to keep from us what we want. Your heavenly Father knows what things you have need of. You do not know. And were all your wants gratified, it might well be that all your needs would be left unsupplied. It surely ought to suffice us that our God is indeed Jehovah-Jireh, the Lord who will see, and who will therefore provide.

The **REAL QUESTION** comes before us as to:

HOW WE WOULD CONCLUDE OUR PRAYERS?

Do we truthfully mean:

"Thy Will be done" or

"my desires be satisfied"?

In these first three verses then, we have seen the **CONFLICT** that comes from:

YIELDING TO OUR PASSIONS or

THE FLESH.

Paul, in writing to the Galatians, says in:

Galatians 5:16-17

I advise you to obey only the Holy Spirit's instructions. He will tell you where to go and what to do and then you won't always be doing the wrong things your evil nature wants you to. For we naturally love to do evil things that are just the opposite from the things that the Holy Spirit tells us to do. And the good things we want to do, when the Spirit has His way with us, are just the opposite of our natural desires. These two forces within us are constantly fighting each other to win control over us and our wishes are never free from their pressures.

v. 4 Adulteresses, are you not knowing that your friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore would desire to be a friend of the world is being made an enemy of God.

Throughout the Old Testament, God referred to His people as "ADULTERESSES" because:

THEY HAD DIVIDED HEARTS.

Jesus, in Matthew 12:39, speaks of an "evil and adulterous generation."

Matthew 12:39

But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign; and yet no sign shall be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet;

James is speaking strongly here of the fact that we cannot compromise with the world and all the desires which it presents.

It is profoundly true that a man can only be in love with one person at a time. If he thinks otherwise, he does not yet know the meaning of love.

Matthew 6:24

No man can serve two masters for he will either hate the one and love the other or else he will hold to the one and despise the other.

Our choice, of course, is to dedicate ourselves to God or to the material things of this world and the world system controlled by the god of this world.

Worldliness is like idolatry
Another Lover

Paul tells us in:

2 Timothy 4:10

Demas forsook me having loved this present world.

F. B. Meyer points out:

Thousands of Christians are like waterlogged vessels. They cannot sink, but they are so saturated with inconsistencies and worldliness and permitted evil that they can only be towed with difficulty into the celestial port.

Ironside points out:

The world refers, of course, not to the material universe but to that ordered system which has rejected Christ. It consists of men and women, under the domination of Satan who is both the prince and the god of this world. It is impossible to go on in fellowship with the world and yet to walk in fellowship with God.

1 John 2:15-17

Stop loving this evil world and all that it offers you. For when you love these things, you show that you do not really love God. For all these worldly things, these evil desires, the craze for sex, the ambition to buy everything that appeals to you and the pride that comes from wealth and importance, these are not from God. They are from this evil world itself. And this world is fading away and these evil, forbidden things will go with it. But whoever keeps doing the will of God will remain forever.

Paul says in:

Romans 12:2

Do not be comforted to this world, but to be transformed by the renewing of our mind so we may prove what is a good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

2 Timothy 2:4

And as Christ's soldier, do not let yourself become tied up in worldly affairs. For then, you cannot satisfy the One who enlisted you in His army.

2 Corinthians 11:2-3

I am jealous for you with the deep concern of God, Himself. Jealous that your love should be for Christ alone, just as a pure maiden gives her love to one man only, the one who will be her husband. But I am frightened, fearing that in some way you will be led away from your pure and simple devotion to our Lord, as Eve was deceived by Satan in the garden of Eden.

Philippians 3:18

For there are many of whom I have told you before and tell you again now, even with tears, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ. These men are heading for utter destruction. Their god is their own appetite. Their pride is in what they should be ashamed of, and this world is the limit of their vision.

v. 5 Or, are you supposing the scripture is saying to no purpose that He is yearning jealously over the Spirit which He has caused to dwell in us?

God is a jealous God who will brook no rivals. It is His Spirit that has been given to the Christian and He cannot view with anything but jealousy some other spirit in the heart, namely the love of the world.

At a conference preceding the surrender of the Confederacy, they asked LINCOLN what portions he would demand:

"Gentlemen, this government must have the whole."

God is not satisfied until He has all of us. He jealously longs for us. It is not us getting more of the Spirit, but the Spirit getting more of us that involves Christian growth and commitment.

Jesus Christ is either Lord of all or not at all.

That Christ might settle down in your hearts by faith.

v. 6 And He is giving greater grace. For this reason, He is saying: "God is resisting the proud, but is giving grace to the humble."

Jacob

Living by the Spirit — Grace to the Humble.

Living by the Flesh — resisting The Proud.

Johnson points out here that James is saying:

When you are tempted by the world to submit, God gives greater grace to keep you from it.

2 Corinthians 12:9

And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may dwell in me.

Thus far we have seen that war must be declared against our flesh and that we cannot enter into a relationship with the world without becoming an enemy of God.

We really don't have any excuse for failure in the warfare!

v. 7 Be subject therefore to God, but resist the devil and he will flee from you.

In these next four verses, James gives us the 10 COMMANDMENTS to VICTORIOUS CHRISTIAN LIVING.

1. "BE SUBJECT THEREFORE TO GOD."

Pride separates a man from God and submission of ourselves to others is a sign of humility.

Submission to God is a prerequisite to receiving His blessings.

You have longed for sweet peace
and for faith to increase
and have earnestly, fervently prayed,
but you cannot have rest or be perfectly blessed
till your "all" on the altar is laid.

Is your "all" on the altar of sacrifice laid,
your heart does the Spirit control?
You can only be blessed and have peace
and sweet rest as you yield Him your body and soul.

We must submit ourselves to God and not to the world.

Submission to His authority

Will

Business

Body

Wife

Children

Mind

Ethel Barrett

Barrett in her little book says:

There's a story of a bee who overheard a conversation while he was dallying on a windowpane and discovered to his dismay that he was a worker bee. Born to be under authority all his life, he would never be anything else. He flew back to the hive, mad as a hornet, and got his fellow bees to rebel and fly out for themselves and establish their own colony. Well, they fell to quarreling over who would be boss and got nowhere. In the thick of it, our little bee left in disgust, ran into an older bee, decided to live with him. "Who'll be boss?" asked the older bee. "Why you, you're the wiser." "And who will be the worker?" asked the older bee. "Why me, I'm the stronger." Then he saw how things stood. He was right back where he started from. So they both decided to go back to the hive and let the queen bee rule the roost, which was the way God had planned it in the first place.

1. "BE SUBJECT THEREFORE TO GOD."
2. "RESIST THE DEVIL AND HE WILL FLEE FROM YOU."

HUMAN NATURE:

SUBMIT TO THE DEVIL and

RESIST GOD.

Here is the THIRD ENEMY that we do battle against.

We have looked thus far at:

* the FLESH,

* the WORLD and now

* the "DEVIL."

Ryrie in his book *Balancing the Christian Life* says:

A definite stand against Satan on the part of the believer is essential for victory. Why say this? Is it not self-evident? Yes, it is, but many Christians will never realize victory over the Devil simply because they have never decided to take a stand against him. They are still flirting with the sin or temptation Satan puts in their path. They may even pray earnestly for victory and piously speak of their desire for relief, but in their hearts is still the desire to indulge and yield, if only occasionally, to some pet sin. Only a definite decision to take a decisive stand against the wicked one can ever put them on the road to victory.

James wrote of this using a verb tense that means "to take a decisive stand" when he said "resist the Devil and he will flee from you." Likewise, the believer's armour is given in order that he might take a stand against his adversary. Such a stand is vital as a base of operations on which to wage the continual warfare that comes. Without it, there can be only retreat and defeat. With it, there can be victory, though not without continued warfare.

Ephesians 6:10, 11

Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.

Watch ye stand fast

TOPIC	REF #	TEXT
Warfare	648-02	<p>Life is a hard fight, a struggle, a wrestling with the principle of evil, hand to hand, foot to foot. Every inch of the way is disputed.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Florence Nightingale</p> <p>p. 25</p>
Satan	648-03	<p>The existence of the devil is so clearly taught in the Bible that to doubt it is to doubt the Bible itself.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Archibald Brown</p> <p>p. 43</p>
Satan	648-04	<p>My friend Rick Dunham and I were studying Ephesians 6, and he summarized the enemy's goal like this: "Satan and his forces have a plan to terrorize your soul, to render you impotent as a believer, to make you worthless to the cause of Christ, and to make your life one of misery and spiritual defeat."</p> <p>p. 44</p>
Temptation	648-05	<p>You won't find this name in the Bible, but Satan is the original SweetTart™ distributor. Do you remember eating those candies when you were young? They are sweet on the outside and sour when you bite into them. The enemy will come with something that is good on the outside—like a legitimate, strong desire for food, sex, or achievement—and offer it to you in the wrong way at the wrong time. He'll get you to believe that his counterfeit pleasure is the only way to satisfy your emotional needs. He'll offer sex to you from a video screen or in a perverted way, moving you away from what is good, true, loving, and wonderful, and twisting it into something that is evil and destructive in the end. It will always look and taste attractive—that is, until you bite into it. But the problem is that the sour part may not come for weeks, months, or even years. You can spend decades enjoying the sugary coating of sin, only to find out too late that when the sweetness is gone, there's nothing left but a sour taste.</p> <p>Satan comes to us in a multitude of ways. The serpent of Genesis 3 is crafty, the dragon of Revelation 12 will scare you to death, the angel of light in 2 Corinthians 11:14 will win you over, and the father of lies (John 8:44) is behind it all. He is more of a heavyweight than we give him credit for.</p> <p>p. 51</p>

TOPIC	REF #	TEXT
Evangelism	649-05	Several years ago, in his book <i>The Crisis in the University</i> , Sir Walter Moberly identified the failure of evangelicals to penetrate university campuses with the Gospel. To those who claimed to follow Christ, his indicting statement still has teeth: "If one-tenth of what you believe is true, you ought to be ten times as excited as you are." This is the word of a non-Christian who has listened to our message and studied our behavior. It hurts because it is true. It should sting. We must begin to let the Word of Christ and the Spirit of God richly dwell within us so that His divine presence is noticeable. ¹ It was for this that Christ died. p. xxviii
Satan	649-06	He went on to quote a World War II bomber pilot: "If you're taking flak, you're over the target." p. 10

TOPIC	REF #	TEXT
Wartime Faith	636-06	<p>One chaplain approached a soldier who was preparing for a convoy down Route Irish, a contested route just outside of Baghdad known to be among the most dangerous stretches of road in the world. "What do you want?" the chaplain asked, meaning, "How can I minister to you?"</p> <p>Without taking his eyes from his gear, the soldier said what for some has become the soldier's prayer: "What do I want? Sir, I wanna' know that Jesus is in my Humvee."</p> <p>This hunger for God's nearness is both a hope for protection and a need to answer the loneliness in a soldier's soul. Human beings face fear and death alone. But the soul is solitary, and the experience is personal. Even though a soldier may love his friends in arms, he knows they cannot fully protect him in battle or from the trauma that war brings to his soul. He needs God near and involved. This is why one Chaplain said that his favorite name for God, and one he teaches his soldiers, is "Emmanuel—God with us."</p> <p>pp. 61-62</p>
Wartime Faith	636-07	<p>One soldier who came to the field a self-described atheist reported, "I haven't had a change so much in philosophy as I have in experience. I never decided to believe in God over here. I just wanted to survive. I joined the other guys when they prayed or blessed themselves because I thought they had a power I didn't have. Then I seemed to have it, too. That power had to come from somewhere, so I guess I'm not an atheist anymore."</p> <p>p. 64</p>
Wartime Faith	636-08	<p>To talk with young soldiers in the field today is to hear grief, faith, fear, and vision expressed in terms of story. Sergeant Brett Pyles is a medic at the Troop Medical Clinic of Camp Victory. His ability to enter the story of the soldiers who die under his care has pressed him to a deeper level of faith. "When a man dies, it is my job to take out his wallet and handle his paperwork," Pyles relates softly. "I look at the pictures he has—of his wife or his kids or his parents—and I realize they don't know yet. They think he is still alive. They're somewhere praying for him and waiting for him to come home. But he's dead. That's the hardest moment for me. It breaks my heart, and it makes me realize that I can die, too. Life can be taken away in a second. I find myself even praying on my way to the toilet. I want to live, but I want to be ready when I die even more."</p> <p>p. 65</p>

Conclusion

TOPIC	REF #	TEXT
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Warfare

648-01

1. **Satan is a defeated foe.**

“Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out” (John 12:31).

2. **Jesus destroyed the works of the devil.**

“[Jesus] canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him” (Col. 2:14-15).

3. **We are victors in Christ.**

“O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?” The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. 15:55-57).

4. **We have the power and resources to resist Satan and demonic attacks.**

“You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world” (1 John 4:4).

5. **We must learn how to put on the full armor of God to experience in daily living the victory we already possess.**

“Therefore, take up the full armor of God so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God” (Eph. 6:13-17).

Greater is He who is in you, than he who is in the world. I Jn. 4:4
5 things to Remember

Bill Bright in his book *Revolution Now* says:

Satan could be compared to Butch a big neighborhood bully who delights in beating up all the smaller children in the area. Suppose my little lad of 4 years of age is on his way to kindergarten, singing and swinging his little lunch pail as he dreams of building castles in the sand. Suddenly, Butch steps out from his place of hiding and beats up my little lad who returns home with tears, a bloody nose, and a black eye. "Dad, will you take me to school in the future so Butch won't beat me up?" he says. So the next day I take him by the hand and we walk to school together. As we approach Butch's place of hiding, my son says "Watch out, Daddy, he will beat us up!" But several days go by and we see no further sign of Butch. After awhile my son says "Daddy, I guess Butch has moved away. Now I can go to school on my own." So, off to kindergarten he goes, when suddenly, without warning, he is pounced upon by Butch who has never left, but has been waiting every day, observing us as we walk to school together. He did not dare to attack while I was with my lad, but the moment I was no longer there to protect him, he attacked again.

Take heed lest you fall . . .

Greater is He that is in you . . .

1 Peter 5:8

Be careful, watch out for attacks from Satan your great enemy. He prowls around like a hungry, roaring lion looking for some victim to tear apart.

This is the REASON that James asks us to submit ourselves to God, first, and then "resist the devil."

Submission provides a base of operation.

Carroll Dale of the Green Bay Packers points out:

In the same way after accepting Christ as personal Savior, it is easy to live the Christian life when you are surrounded by Christian friends or when all is going our way. The test of our Christian courage comes when we are faced with one of the many rugged goal line stands forged by the Devil. It is always easy to quit or give up when the going gets tough, both on the gridiron and in our daily lives. The determined Christian gets up and continues to fight after being knocked down. Desire is the key to our cracking the goal line stands of our NFL opponents.

Coach Lombardi spends the week instilling within us the knowledge of our game plan and the techniques of execution. How well we play is then dependent upon how much we desire a victory. Christ waits as our prayer intercessor and God has given us the playbook which will enable us to be victorious against any goal line stands set up by Satan. Our heart's desire will motivate the big play which spells victory for Christ and triumph in the Christian life.

Flesh – Body – Appetites

World – Soul – Ego

Devil – Spirit – Relationship

If we put this verse in reverse, it would read:

“Be subject, therefore, to the Devil but resist God and He will flee from you.”

This too, is true.

And this would be the way of the world. This would be yielding to temptation.

James 1:14-15

But each one is being tempted when he is taken in tow and lured by his own desires. Then when the desire is conceived, it is giving birth to sin and this sin, when it has run its course, brings forth death.

Is it a small wonder that James would say "Stop being deceived, my brethren, beloved ones. God's way is the best way":

"BE SUBJECT THEREFORE TO GOD, BUT RESIST THE DEVIL AND HE WILL FLEE FROM YOU."

Ryrie has one final note on this matter of resisting the devil in his book *Balancing the Christian Life*:

Let me conclude this chapter on the wiles of the Devil by reminding you of parts of three verses which this speaker paraphrased and put together for me many years ago and which have been a source of real assurance.

1. Christ lives in me—Galatians 2:20
2. Greater is He that is in me than he who is the world—1 John 4:4
3. He will never leave me nor forsake me—Hebrews 13:5

Our Lord is our victory. Trust Him and use all the means He has provided to defeat the great enemy of our souls.

v. 8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, sinners, and purify your hearts, double-minded.

The third, fourth, and fifth COMMANDMENTS for victory in our "WAR AGAINST THE BIG THREE" are listed in this verse.

3. "DRAW NEAR TO GOD AND HE WILL DRAW NEAR TO YOU."

Don't avoid—Don't run away.

Psalm 42:1-2

As the deer pants for water, so I long for you, O God. I thirst for God, the living God. Where can I find Him to come and stand before Him?

Sin brought about a separation as ADAM AND EVE went into hiding at the time they should have been drawing near to meet with the Lord. It has been that way ever since. Man has gone his own way.

Stephen Alford in his book *I'll Take the High Road* says:

Do these words apply to us? Have we allowed iniquities to separate between us and our God? Let us search our hearts honestly in the presence of God before we answer this question about sin in our lives. The fact that we are not acutely conscious of having drifted away from God does not in any way effect the seriousness of separating sin. So many of us are rather like the small girl who had been to a party and on her return was asked by her mother if she had been a good girl. After due thought, the girl replied "Mommy, I wasn't good and I wasn't naughty. I was just comfy."

You may smile at this story but does it sum up your condition before God? Comfyness, or lukewarmness, is a condition which deadens sensibility to sin. God preserves us from comfyness. It may be that it is this very thing which is spoiling our fellowship with God. If so then, let us acknowledge this state of backsliding and draw nigh and get right.

Guilt keeps us from this ill of a guilty dog.

If you and God feel far apart, guess who moved!!

4.

"CLEANSE YOUR HANDS, SINNERS."

Isaiah 52:11

Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord.

Psalms 119:9-11

Wherewithall shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to Thy Word. Thy Word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against Thee.

2 Corinthians 7:1

Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Psalm 5CLEANSING COMES THROUGH CONFESSION.1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

5. "PURIFY YOUR HEARTS, DOUBLE-MINDED."

Flesh and Spirit

Faith and Doubt

God and World

James has had a great deal to say about the "DOUBLE-MINDED" man:

In chapter 1, he is UNSTABLE in all his ways.

In chapter 2, the ones who are discriminating, he raises the QUESTION "are you not divided in your minds?" and now

In chapter 4 he is asking the "DOUBLE-MINDED" to "PURIFY [THEIR] HEARTS."

You who would love the world and God, serve God with singleness of heart, no more divided loyalties.

v. 9 Lament and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy into gloominess.

6.

"LAMENT."

What is meant here is to EXPERIENCE THE SENSE OF WRETCHEDNESS, become sensitive again to the burden of sin.

It is saying with Isaiah of old:

Isaiah 6:5

Woe to me for I am undone, I am a man of unclean lips . . .

Romans 7:24

O wretched man that I am . . .

Job 42:6

Wherefore I abhor myself . . .

7.

"MOURN."

Here James sounds a lot like Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount.

Matthew 5:4

Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

8. "WEEP."

Because of our sinful condition, our hearts have grown calloused toward the matter of sin, and we no longer shed tears.

We do have the record that Jesus:

1. wept at the TOMB OF LAZARUS as He realized the burden of sin,
2. wept over the CITY OF JERUSALEM as He saw their impending doom because of disobedience to the will of God, and
3. wept in the GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE – consequence.

Jeremiah weeps.

9. "LET YOUR LAUGHTER BE TURNED TO MOURNING AND YOUR JOY INTO GLOOMINESS."

Luke 18:13-14

And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying "God, be merciful to me a sinner." I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other. For everyone who exalteth himself shall be abased and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

v. 10 Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will exalt you.

We now have the FINAL COMMANDMENT:

10. "HUMBLE YOURSELVES BEFORE THE LORD."

As a tree must strike roots downward before it can grow upwards, so must we in our relationship to God.

Mary is a good illustration of this matter of humbling herself as she is presented with the ministry God has for her. She says in:

Luke 1:38

I am the Lord's servant and I am willing to do whatever He says.

James, too, is much the same in calling himself:

"a bond slave of God and the Lord Jesus Christ."

1 Peter 5:5-6

Ye younger men follow the leadership of those who are older and all of you serve each other with humble spirits for God gives special blessings to those who are humble, but sets Himself against those who are proud. Now is the time to humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God. In His good time, He will lift you up.

Permit yourselves to be humbled.

(Holy Transformation: What it takes for God to make a difference in you by Chip Ingram) Chicago, IL: Moody Press. Copyright – Chip Ingram. 2003.

... humility is a biblical, honest appraisal of ourselves. It means we come to relationships with a focus on others and not on ourselves.

p. 43

Paul shows us that transformation requires the practice of sacrificial, other-centered relationships—servanthood. In other words, humility has little to do with how you feel and a lot to do with where your focus is and how you treat others.

p. 43

The second morphing attitude is *gentleness*. It means “to be considerate.” It has the idea of restraint. It’s the concept of not having to have your own rights. It’s knowing the right answer and being able to embarrass someone, but you think instead, “No, I’m not going to go there.” It’s power under control.

p. 44

Those who have morphed into Christlikeness will exercise remarkable gentleness in their dealings with others.

As you willfully choose to “give up” your rights in these relational situations, you will quickly discover a bruised ego dwelling within and desire to tell others “how much you really know” or “what you could have done.” Developing gentleness will drive you back to your identity in Christ. You will rest in the fact that you are secure, loved, valued, and already significant. You won’t have to impress others, fight for approval, or try to get your own way. This “power under control” will allow you to identify and experience Christ’s sufferings in some small way. It will also begin transforming deep identity issues that are foundational to holy transformation.

p. 45

(The Life You've Always Wanted by John Ortberg) Grand Rapids, MI:
Zondervan. Copyright – John Ortberg, 1997, 2002.

One of the hardest things in the world is to stop being the prodigal son
without turning into the elder brother. So how can humility be pursued?

p. 113

v. 11 Stop speaking evil of one another, brethren. The one who is speaking evil of his brother, or finding fault with his brother, is speaking evil of the law and finding fault with the law. Now if you are finding fault with the law, you are not a doer of the law, but a judge.

* CRITICISM IS A VERY SUBTLE FORM OF SELF-EXALTATION.

"For if I can run him down, it puts me in a better light because I don't do those things."

The criticizer is passing judgment without knowing or wanting to know the truth. The one who is criticizing is also acting apart from humility because he feels he is taking God's place and judgment.

So often the most critical are the most guilty.

In the act of criticizing, we are breaking the **LAW OF LOVE** that James has mentioned in:

James 2:8

if indeed you are carrying out the demands of royal law according to scripture, you shall love your neighbor as yourself.

To criticize is easy as you pass along life's road.

It is easy to condemn and sneer when another bears the load.

But if you know an easier way, lend a helping hand.

Do not let a worker sweat while you criticize and stand.

To criticize is easy as you pass along life's road,

but a better and a nobler way is to help to bear the load.

Ridenour in his book *How to Be a Christian Without Being Religious* says:

Be genuine, be acceptant, be understanding. These three simple rules were practiced and lived by the same Person Who, one day, will judge us all. The best cue for criticism and judging others is to remember each of us will stand personally before the Judgment Seat of Christ. Each of us will give account of himself to God.

Ryrie in his book *Balancing the Christian Life* says:

A complaining attitude comes from self, not the Spirit who wants to make us thankful always and disharmony at home or at work is not of the Lord, but of self. At this point, we are right back where we started from, for at the very first I said that spirituality is best demonstrated in the home.

A little seed lay on the ground
and soon began to sprout.
Now which of all the flowers around,
it mused, shall I come out?

The lily's face is fair and proud,
but just a trifle cold.
The rose, I think, is rather loud
and then, its fashion's old.

The violet is all very well,
but not a flower I'd choose,
nor yet the Canterbury bell,
I'd never cared for blues.

And so it criticized each flower,
this supercilious seed,
until it woke one summer hour
and found itself a weed.

(source unknown)

December 29
Wednesday

2004
INCOMPATIBLE?

READ:
1 Peter 3:8-17

All of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous.
—1 Peter 3:8

THE BIBLE IN ONE YEAR:
■ Zechariah 9-12
■ Revelation 20

A quote in *Sports Illustrated* magazine expresses a truth that we as people of faith sometimes neglect: "What counts most in creating a successful team is not how compatible its players are, but how they deal with incompatibility." When we don't get along with others, we are tempted to ignore them and shove them aside.

God calls us to take a different approach: "All of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this" (1 Peter 3:8-9).

Oswald Chambers reminds us in *My Utmost For His Highest*: "In the spiritual life, beware of walking according to natural affinities. Everyone has natural affinities; some people we like and others we do not like. We must never let those likes and dislikes rule in our Christian life. If we 'walk in the light,' as God is in the light, God will give us communion with people for whom we have no natural affinity."

It is natural to have likes and dislikes. But when we seek to honor the Lord in our relationships, compassion, love, humility, and kindness are the God-ordered, supernatural steps in dealing with incompatibility. —David McCasland

THINKING IT OVER

*Do you think unity is an unattainable goal? Read
Developing The Art Of Gracious Disagreement
at www.discoveryseries.org/q0906*

**The way to preserve the peace of the church
is to promote the unity of it.**

LETTERS TO YOUNG CHURCHES

this: that the gentiles, who were previously excluded from God's agreements, are to be equal heirs with his chosen people, equal members and equal partners in God's promise given by Christ through the gospel. And I was made a minister of that gospel by the grace he gave me, and by the power with which he equipped me. Yes, to me, less than the least of all Christians, has God given this grace, to enable me to proclaim to the gentiles the incalculable riches of Christ, and to make plain to all men the meaning of that secret which he who created everything in Christ has kept hidden from the creation until now. The purpose is that all the angelic powers should now see the complex wisdom of God's plan being worked out through the Church, in conformity to that timeless purpose which he centred in Jesus, our Lord. It is in this same Jesus, because we have faith in him, that we dare, even with confidence, to approach God. In view of these tremendous issues, I beg you not to lose heart because I am now suffering for my part in bringing you the gospel. Indeed, you should be honoured.

I pray that you may know God's power in practice

When I think of the greatness of this great plan I fall on my knees before God the Father (from whom all fatherhood, earthly or heavenly, derives its name), and I pray that out of the glorious richness of his resources he will enable you to know the strength of the Spirit's inner re-inforcement—that Christ may actually live in your hearts by your faith. And I pray that you, firmly fixed in love yourselves, may be able to grasp (with all Christians) how wide and deep and long and high is the love of Christ—and to know for yourselves that love so far beyond our comprehension. May you be filled through all your being with God himself!

Now to him who by his power within us is able to do far more than we ever dare to ask or imagine—to him be glory in the Church through Jesus Christ for ever and ever, amen!

Eph. 4:1-3

CHAPTER 4

Christians should be at one, as God is one

As God's prisoner, then, I beg you to live lives worthy of your high calling. Accept life with humility and patience, making allowances for each other because you love each other. Make it your aim to be at one in the Spirit, and you will inevitably be at

Peace with ONE Another.

(Holy Transformation: What it takes for God to make a difference in you by Chip Ingram) Chicago, IL: Moody Press. Copyright – Chip Ingram, 2003.

"Making Allowances For each other" – Phillips

Finally, bearing with one another literally means to put up with other people—their quirks, their failures, and their idiosyncrasies.

Even after we exercise humility, gentleness, and patience, some people will still simply require, "putting up with." Why do it? Out of love for Christ, who puts up with them and with us. You see, morphing begins with understanding who we are in Christ (Ephesians chapters 1-3) and taking seriously God's command to let Jesus live out His life through us. The process occurs, not in a monastery or merely in our personal devotional life, but foremost in our relationships with others.

p. 46

v. 12 One only is a Lawgiver and a Judge. He who is able to save and to destroy: but as for you, who are you, the one finding fault with your fellowman?

There is only one "LAWGIVER" and that is God Himself.

He is the "JUDGE" also and the phrase that James uses "HE WHO IS ABLE TO SAVE AND TO DESTROY" is a word that Jesus used in the gospels.

* Matthew 10:28

Fear not them who kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul. But rather, far Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

Paul says in:

Romans 14:3-13

Those who think it is alright to eat such meat must not look down on those who won't. And if you are one of those who won't, don't find fault with those who do for God has accepted them to be His children. They are God's servants, not yours, let Him tell them what to do. They are responsible to God, not you, and God will help them do what is right. We are not our own bosses to live or die as we, ourselves, might choose. Living or dying, we follow the Lord. Living or dying, we are His. You have no right to criticize your brother, or look down on him. Remember, each of us will stand personally before the Judgment Seat of Christ. For it is written, as I live says the Lord every knee shall bow to Me and every tongue confess to God. Yes, each of us will give account of himself to God. So don't criticize each other any more. Try, instead, to live in such a way that you will never make your brother stumble by letting him see you doing something he thinks is wrong.

Who Are You, The ONE Finding Fault
With Your fellow Man?

CONCLUSION:

The EIGHTH POINTER OF PROGRESS that we have been studying together in James 4:1-12 is:

WAR AGAINST THE BIG THREE.

Our war is against the:

1. WORLD,
2. FLESH, and
3. DEVIL.

Victory is ours and progress is made when we do not yield to the desires of the flesh and we do not develop a friendship with the world and we resist the Devil. Once again, this can only be done through dependence upon the power of the Holy Spirit.

It is a reflection of my maturity. The victory over the world, flesh and devil.

1. Test
2. Temptation
3. Word
4. Love
5. Fruit
6. Tongue
7. Wisdom
8. Warfare

CONCLUSION:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: The Christian warfare is against the world, the flesh, and the devil.

LESSON #2: If you aren't fighting, you aren't growing.

LESSON #3: The Christian life is a fight all the way home.

LESSON #4: The key to victory is in the power of the Spirit.

LESSON #5: A person living in the flesh cannot expect God to be answering His prayers.

I'm pressing on the upward way
New heights I'm gaining every day
Still praying as I onward bound
Lord plant my feet on higher ground.

Pearl & I will be spending quality time with about
60 couples doing Marriage Maintenance. Our Series is
Making A Fresh Start

A FINE-TUNED MACHINE

*Be kind and
compassionate to one another,
forgiving each other,
just as in Christ God forgave you.*

EPHESIANS 4:32 NIV

When one mate holds a grudge against the other, the signs of conflict radiate from both partners.

A marriage without kindness, compassion, and forgiveness lacks the oil that makes a relationship run smoothly. Because grudges remain and are constantly pointed out, a load of "sand" has destroyed a fine-tuned machine. Suddenly its engine grinds to a halt. What you have isn't a relationship anymore—it's a wreck.

The damage probably began with sin. Undoubtedly, there was something the hurt partner "just couldn't" forgive. Instead of seeking resolution, the couple took the easy way out and traded hurtful barbs. Kindness and compassion went to the side, and emotional sniping took its place.

If your relationship has sand in it, wash it out with forgiveness and fill it with kindness and compassion. Don't turn your marriage into a broken-down engine but into a fine-tuned machine for God.



Lord, we don't want to battle each other instead of Satan. Show us how to make forgiveness, kindness, and compassion flow in our marriage.

Maybe we need to do this As A Church.

Ps. 90:12

"Teach us to number our days aright
that we may gain a heart of wisdom." 76

STUDY # EIGHT
WAR AGAINST THE BIG THREE 4:1-12

KEY VERSE: 4:1 From what source do conflicts and quarrels among you come? Do they not come from this, namely your passions which are struggling in your members?

MEMORY VERSE: 4:8

TEXT: 4:1-12

From what source do conflicts and quarrels among you come? Do they not come from this, namely your passions which are struggling in your members? You are desiring and not having. You are murdering and envying and not able to obtain. You are quarreling and fighting. You are not having because you are not asking. You are asking and you are not receiving because you are asking with wrong motives in order that you might spend it on your pleasures. Adulteresses, are you not knowing that your friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore would desire to be a friend of the world is being made an enemy of God. Or, are you supposing the scripture is saying to no purpose that He is yearning jealously over the spirit which He has caused to dwell in us? And He is giving greater grace. For this reason, He is saying "God is resisting the proud but is giving grace to the humble." Be subject, therefore, to God but resist the Devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, sinners, and purify your hearts, double-minded. Lament and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy into gloominess. Humble yourselves before the Lord and He will exalt you. Stop speaking evil of one another, brethren. The one who is speaking evil of his brother, or finding fault with his brother, is speaking evil of the law and finding fault with the law. Now if you are finding fault with the law, you are not a doer of the law, but a judge. One only is a law giver and a judge. He who is able to save and to destroy, but as for you, who are you the one finding fault with your fellowman?

EXPOSITION: Whereas we ended chapter 3 in peace, chapter 4 begins with war.

1. In our study of Pointers for Progress, we come now to a consideration of the eighth Pointer for Progress, war against the big three. The big three that we are going to see in these verses are the world, the flesh, and the Devil. We have already seen that these three enemies are characteristic of the wisdom which is from below.

Verse One: From what source do conflicts and quarrels among you come? Do they not come from this, namely your passions which are struggling in your members?

1. This is the key verse in our study "war against the big three." In this verse, we have the mention of our passions or flesh and it is from this that we get the conflict and quarrels. We will notice in verse 4 that friendship with world is enmity with God. And then in verse 7 we asked to resist the Devil and he will flee from us.

II Tim. 2:3,4 "Therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of J.C. Women that war." *warfare*

Maturity is reflected in success in your warfare
Xian life is A Fight all the way home. Eph. 6:

"Hard to remember your original intention was to drain the swamp
... one big deer in alligators."

1) Test
2) Temptation
3) Word
4) Love
5) Fruit
6) Tongue
7) Wisdom

Warfare
Work
Willing
Spirit

Fight the good
Fight
I fought a
good fight.

2. As a Christian going on to maturity, it is going to be a matter of warfare. Paul recognizes this truth in Ephesians 6, starting with verse 12. "For we are not fighting against people made up of flesh and blood, but against persons without bodies; the evil kings of the unseen world, those mighty, satanic beings and great evil princes of darkness who rule this world and against huge numbers of wicked spirits in the spirit world. So use every piece of God's armour to resist the enemy whenever he attacks. And when it is all over, you will be standing up."
3. Doing war against the world, the flesh, and the Devil makes it possible to bear the fruit of righteousness which is being sown in peace. When we yield to the desires of the flesh and enter into an alliance with the world and yield to the temptation of the Devil, it is then that strife and conflict set in.
4. James raises the question—"from what source do conflicts and quarrels among you come?" And in asking another question, he gives the answer—"do they not come from this, namely your passions which are struggling in your members?"
5. Paul says a very similar thing in I Corinthians 3:1-3. "Dear brothers, I have been talking to you as though you were still just babies in the Christian life, who are not following the Lord, but your own desires. I cannot talk to you as I would to healthy Christians who are filled with the Spirit. I have had to feed you with milk and not with solid food because you couldn't digest anything stronger. And even now you still have to be fed on milk for you are still only baby Christians, controlled by your own desires, not God's. When you are jealous of one another and divide up into quarreling groups, doesn't that prove you are still babies, wanting your own way? In fact, you are acting like people who don't belong to the Lord at all."
6. In order to test our own lives, I have included the following in our study: Are you conscious of a secret spirit of pride, an exalted feeling in view of your success or position, because of your good training and appearance, because of your natural gifts and abilities, an important independent spirit, stiffness and preciseness, love of human praise, a secret fondness to be noticed, love of supremacy, drawing attention to self in conversation, a swelling out of self when you have had a free time to speak or pray, stirring of anger or impatience which, worst of all, you call nervousness or holy indignation, a touchy, sensitive spirit, a disposition to resent and retaliate when it's reprov'd of or contradicted, a desire to throw sharp, heated retorts at one another, self-will, a stubborn unteachable spirit, harsh, sarcastic expressions, an arguing, talkative spirit, an unyielding, headstrong disposition, a commanding, driving spirit, a disposition to criticize and pick flaws when set aside and unnoticed, a peevish, fretful spirit, a disposition that loves to be coaxed and humored, carnal fear, a man-fearing spirit, a shrinking from reproach and duty,

*carnal
+
childish*

*Are you
controlled by
the flesh or
the Spirit!!*

a shrinking from doing your whole duty, fear that someone will offend and drive some prominent person away, a compromising spirit, a jealous disposition, a secret spirit of envy, a shutting of your heart, an unpleasant sensation in view of the great prosperity and success of another, a disposition to speak of the faults and failings rather than the gifts and virtues of those more talented and appreciated than yourself, a dishonest, deceitful disposition, the evading and covering of the truth, covering up of your real faults, the leaving of a better impression of yourself than is strictly true, false humility, exaggeration, straining the truth, unbelief, a spirit of discouragement in times of pressure and opposition, a lack of quietness and confidence in God, disposition to worry and complain in the midst of pain, poverty, or at the dispensations of divine providence, an over anxious feeling whether everything will come out alright, formality and deadness, lack of concern for lost souls, dryness and indifference, lack of power with God, selfishness, love of ease, love of money. These are some of the traits which generally indicate a carnal heart.

7.

Progress toward maturity is halted at any point where we compromise with the world, the flesh, and the Devil. War against the big three is vital before we can expect to make any progress towards maturity.

Internal
External
Infernal

8.

Dr. Charles Ryrie, in his book *Balancing the Christian Life*, points out that when one is living under a dictator of a country, he has no choice but to obey the laws of that dictatorship. If the dictator is overthrown by a democratic regime and sent into exile in another country, the citizens are free to live a new kind of life. But it is quite conceivable that there would be some within the country who would prefer the deposed dictator and seek to serve him, even though his power had been broken. And serve him, they could, receiving their instructions over his clandestine radio and carrying them out while rejecting the freedom into which they had been brought. The sin nature is like a deposed dictator who has been overthrown by the death of Christ. Christians are citizens of heaven with a new freedom to live lives pleasing to God, but the sin nature has not been eradicated nor has the individual's will been nullified. Therefore, it is possible to choose to listen to and to follow the promptings of sin. But it will never be possible for sin to regain the domination and control it had before conversion.

Verse Two: You are desiring and not having. You are murdering and envying and not able to obtain. You are quarreling and fighting. You are not having because you are not asking.

1.

There are four manifestations in this verse of living by the flesh or yielding to our desires. First of all, you are desiring and not having. Our desires are not His.

2.

Robertson says that "if we would make the service of God our supreme end, and then our desires will be such as God can fulfill in answer to our prayers."

Ps. 37: "Delight yourself in the Lord & He will give you the desires of your heart."

3. Matthew 6:33 "But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you." William Barclay points out "Will it be man's pleasure or God's Will? Is the aim in your life to submit to the Will of God or to gratify your own desires for the pleasures of this world? If pleasure is the policy of life, then nothing but strife and hatred and division can possibly follow. Ultimate choice in life lies between pleasing oneself and pleasing God. Thy Will be done, my desires be satisfied. We can never pray right until we remove self from the center of life and put God into the center of life." A man is worldly, he cannot be Godly."
4. Ethel Barrett points out "Are you scrapping with the world, always fighting the controls [Well, they might introduce that closely graded curriculum in our Sunday School but I'm not going to teach it in my fifth grade. I'm going to teach what I please and this teacher's training is perfect nonsense. I'm willing to teach but I will not be relegated to meetings and all the rest of it.] In this particular area, you are about 14, testing your "grown-upness." Do you cry to get your way? In this area you are still under 6. Do you find it difficult to admit you are wrong? Do you blame others for your mistakes? You're a nice average 4. Do you lock up your supplies, guard your tools, can't bear to share your visual aids? You're about 2-1/2. Are you bossy and domineering? You'd better hurry, children begin to grow out of that one around 6. In some area or another, you're either impossible or a great big lovable kid, depending upon who is appraising you. Many of us have not come as far from our childhood as we think.
5. The second thing that James says about living after the flesh, here in verse 2, is "you are murdering and envying and not able to obtain." Unsatisfied desires lead to murder and envy.
6. Bishop in his book, The Spirit of Christ in Human Relationships, says the work of Satan is to foster dissension, antagonism, and misunderstanding to wreck harmonious happy relationships. The work of the Spirit of Christ is the very opposite. It is to reconcile the harmonized, to enlighten, to cement happy relationships. Christians, of all people, should be promoters of enlightenment, understanding, and harmony, both among themselves and all people.
7. The third thing that James has to say in this second verse is "you are quarreling and fighting."
8. Disappointed ambition leads to quarreling and fighting.
9. The fourth thing James says in this verse is "you are not having because you are not asking."
10. The Lord Jesus said in John 16:24 "Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name. Ask and ye shall receive that your joys may be full."

Verse Three: You are asking and you are not receiving because you are asking with wrong motives in order that you might spend it on your pleasures.

Isa. 55:

I Jn 5:14-15

→ a person living in the flesh cannot expect God to answer his prayers.

Move Money
What do you
think of First.
1) Good what
can I do for G.
2) What can I buy
for myself *4.

1. When they are praying, they are not receiving a response, and the reason is given. They are asking with wrong motives. The purpose for their asking is in order that they might spend it on their pleasures.
2. They are living under the control of the flesh, dominated by selfish desires, so when they pray, they are only praying to gratify their own selfish needs. This is a wrong motive for prayer.
3. Thomas Guthrie said "If you find yourself loving any pleasure better than your prayers, any book better than the Bible, any house better than the house of God, any table better than the Lord's Table, any persons better than Christ, any indulgence better than the hope of heaven; take alarm."
4. Smith points out in her book, The God Who is Enough, "When God, therefore, says to us 'I am He Who seeth thy need', He in reality says also 'I am He that provides' for He cannot see and fail to provide. 'Why do I not have everything that I want then?' you may ask. Only because God sees that what you want is not really the thing you need, but probably exactly the opposite. Often, in order to give us what we need, the Lord is obliged to keep from us what we want. Your heavenly Father knows what things you have need of. You do not know. And were all your wants gratified, it might well be that all your needs would be left unsupplied. It surely ought to suffice us that our God is indeed Jehovah-jireh, the Lord who will see, and who will therefore provide."
5. The real question comes before us, as to how we would conclude our prayers. Do we truthfully mean "Thy Will be done" or "my desires be satisfied." *
6. In these first three verses, then, we have seen the conflict that comes from yielding to our passions or the flesh.
7. Paul, in writing to the Galatians, 5:16-17 "I advise you to obey only the Holy Spirit's instructions. He will tell you where to go and what to do and then you won't always be doing the wrong things your evil nature wants you to. For we naturally love to do evil things that are just the opposite from the things that the Holy Spirit tells us to do. And the good things we want to do, when the Spirit has His way with us, are just the opposite of our natural desires. These two forces within us are constantly fighting each other to win control over us and our wishes are never free from their pressures."

Verse Four: Adulteresses, are you not knowing that your friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore would desire to be a friend of the world is being made an enemy of God.

1. Throughout the Old Testament, God refers to His people as adulteresses because they had divided hearts. Jesus in Matthew 12:39 speaks of an evil and adulterous generation. James is speaking strongly here of the fact that we cannot compromise with the world and all the desires which it presents. It is profoundly true that a man can only be in love with one person at a time. If he thinks otherwise, he does not yet know the meaning of love. Matthew 6:24 "No man can serve two masters for he will either hate the one and love the other or else he will hold to the one and despise the other."

Isa 55:

2. Our choice, of course, is to dedicate ourselves to God or to the material things of this world. & the world system controlled by the god of this world.
- 3. II Timothy 4:10--Paul tells us "Demas forsook me having loved this present world."
- 4. F. B. Meyer points out that thousands of Christians are like waterlogged vessels. They cannot sink, but they are so saturated with inconsistencies and worldliness and permitted evil that they can only be towed with difficulty into the celestial port.
- 5. Ironside points out "The world refers, of course, not to the material universe but to that ordered system which has rejected Christ. It consists of men and women, under the domination of Satan who is both the prince and the god of this world. It is impossible to go on in fellowship with the world and yet to walk in fellowship with God."
- 6. I John 2:15-17 "Stop loving this evil world and all that it offers you. For when you love these things, you show that you do not really love God. For all these worldly things, these evil desires, the craze for sex, the ambition to buy everything that appeals to you and the pride that comes from wealth and importance, these are not from God. They are from this evil world itself. And this world is fading away and these evil, forbidden things will go with it. But whoever keeps doing the Will of God will remain forever."
- 7. Paul says in Romans 12:2 "Do not be conformed to this world, but to be transformed by the renewing of our mind so we may prove what is a good and acceptable and perfect will of God."
- 8. II Timothy 2:4 "And as Christ's soldier, do not let yourself become tied up in worldly affairs. For then, you cannot satisfy the One who enlisted you in His army."
- 9. II Corinthians 11:2-3 "I am jealous for you with the deep concern of God, Himself. Jealous that your love should be for Christ alone, just as a pure maiden gives her love to one man only, the one who will be her husband. But I am frightened, fearing that in some way you will be led away from your pure and simple devotion to our Lord, as Eve was deceived by Satan in the garden of Eden."
- 10. Philippians 3:18 "For there are many of whom I have told you before and tell you again now, even with tears, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ. These men are heading for utter destruction. Their god is their own appetite. Their pride is in what they should be ashamed of, and this world is the limit of their vision."
- Verse Five: Or, are you supposing the scripture is saying to no purpose that He is yearning jealously over the Spirit which He has caused to dwell in us?
- 1. God is a jealous God who will brook no rivals. It is His Spirit that has been given to the Christian and He cannot view with anything but jealousy some other spirit in the heart, namely the love of the world.

- 2. At a conference preceeding the surrender of the Confederacy, they asked Lincoln what portions he would demand. "Gentlemen, this government must have the whole." God is not satisfied until He has all of us. He jealously longs for us. It is not us getting more of the Spirit, but the Spirit getting more of us that involves Christian growth and commitment.

3. Jesus Christ is either Lord of all or not at all.

Verse Six: And He is giving greater grace. For this reason, He is saying "God is resisting the proud but is giving grace to the humble."

1. Johnson points out here that James is saying "when you are tempted by the world to submit, God gives greater grace to keep you from it."

2. Thus far we have seen that war must be declared against our flesh and that we cannot enter into a relationship with the world without becoming an enemy of God.

Verse Seven: Be subject, therefore, to God but resist the Devil and he will flee from you.

1. In these next four verses James gives us the 10 commandments to victorious Christian living.

2. The first one is "be subject, therefore, to God." Pride separates a man from God and submission of ourselves to others is a sign of humility.

3. Submission to God is a prerequisite to receiving His blessings.

4. You have longed for sweet peace and for faith to encrease and have earnestly, feverently prayed, but you cannot have rest or be perfectly blessed til you "all" on the altar is laid. Is your "all" on the altar of ascrifice laid, your heart does the Spirit control? You can only be blessed and have peace and sweet rest as you yield Him your body and soul.

5. We must submit ourselves to God and not to the world. Barrett, in her little book, says "There's a story of a bee who overheard a conversation while he was dallying on a windowpane and discovered to his dismay that he was a worker bee. Born to be under authority all his life, he would never be anything else. He flew back to the hive, mad as a hornet, and got his fellow bees to rebel and fly out for themselves and establish their own colony. Well, they fell to quarreling over who would be boss and got nowhere. In the thick of it, our little bee left in disgust, ran into an older bee, decided to live with him. 'Who'll be boss?' asked the older bee. 'Why you, you're the wiser.' 'And who will be the worker?' asked the older bee. 'Why me, I'm the stronger.' Then he saw how things stood. He was right back where he started from. So they both decided to go back to the hive and let the queen bee rule the roost, which was the way God had planned it in the first place."

6. The first commandment is "Be subject therefore to God." The second forms a contrast to the first "resist the Devil and he will flee from you."

Human nature - Submit to the Devil.
Resist God.

That x might
settle down in your
hearts by faith
Jacob

Living by
The Spirit

II Cor. 12:9

We Acally don't
have any
excuse for
Failure in the
warfare!!

Submission
To His
Authority
Will
Business
Bad x
Wife
Children
Mind

- 7. Here is the third enemy that we do battle against. We have looked thus far at the flesh and the world and now the Devil. Ryrie, in his book, *Balancing the Christian Life*, says "A definite stand against Satan on the part of the believer is essential for victory. Why say this? Is it not self-evident? Yes, it is, but many Christians will never realize victory over the Devil simply because they have never decided to take a stand against him. They are still flirting with the sin or temptation Satan puts in their path. They may even pray earnestly for victory and piously speak of their desire for relief, but in their hearts is still the desire to indulge and yield, if only occasionally, to some pet sin. Only a definite decision to take a decisive stand against the wicked one can ever put them on the road to victory. James wrote of this, using a verb tense that means 'to take a decisive stand' when he said 'resist the Devil and he will flee from you.' Likewise, the believer's armour is given in order that he might take a stand against his adversary. Such a stand is vital as a base of operations on which to wage the continual warfare that comes. Without it, there can be only retreat and defeat. With it, there can be victory, though not without continued warfare."
8. Bill Bright in his book, *Revolution Now*, says "Satan could be compared to Butch a big neighborhood bully who delights in beating up all the smaller children in the area. Suppose my little lad of 4 years of age is on his way to kindergarten, singing and swinging his little lunch pail as he dreams of building castles in the sand. Suddenly, Butch steps out from his place of hiding and beats up my little lad who returns home with tears, a bloody nose, and a black eye. 'Dad, will you take me to school in the future so Butch won't beat me up?' he says. So the next day I take him by the hand and we walk to school together. As we approach Butch's place of hiding, my son says 'Watch out, Daddy, he will beat us up!' But several days go by and we see no further sign of Butch. After awhile my son says 'Daddy, I guess Butch has moved away. Now I can go to school on my own.' So, off to kindergarten he goes, when suddenly, without warning, he is pounced upon by Butch who has never left, but has been waiting every day, observing us as we walk to school together. He did not dare to attack while I was with my lad, but the moment I was no longer there to protect him, he attacked again."
- 9. I Peter 5:8 "Be careful, watch out for attacks from Satan your great enemy. He prowls around like a hungry, roaring lion looking for some victim to tear apart."
- 10. This is the reason that James asks us to submit ourselves to God, first, and then resist the Devil.
11. Carroll Dale of the Green Bay Packers points out that in the same way after accepting Christ as personal Saviour, it is easy to live the Christian life when you are surrounded by Christian friends or when all is going our way. The test of our Christian courage comes when we are faced with one of the many rugged goal line stands forged by the Devil. It is always easy to quit or give up when the going gets tough,

Eph. 6:10, 11
Put on the
whole arm.

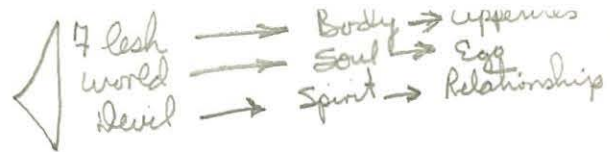
Watch ye
stand fast

Take Heed
lest you
Fall...

Greater is
He that is
in you

Submission
Provides

base of
operation



both on the gridiron and in our daily lives. The determined Christian gets up and continues to fight after being knocked down. Desire is the key to our cracking the goal line stands of our NFL opponents. Coach Lombardy spends the week instilling within us the knowledge of our game plan and the techniques of execution. How well we play is then dependent upon how much we desire a victory. Christ waits as our prayer intercessor and God has given us the playbook which will enable us to be victorious against any goal line stands set up by Satan. Our heart's desire will motivate the big play which spells victory for Christ and triumph in the Christian life.

- 12. If we put this verse in reverse, it would read "Be subject, therefore, to the Devil but resist God and He will flee from you." This too, is true. And this would be the way of the world. This would be yielding to temptation. James 1:14-15 "But each one is being tempted when he is taken in tow and lured by his own desires. Then when the desire is conceived, it is giving birth to sin and this sin, when it has run its course, brings forth death." Is it small wonder that James would say "Stop being deceived, my brethren, beloved ones. God's way is the best way. Be subject therefore to God. But resist the Devil and he will flee from you."

- *** 13. Ryrie has one final note on this matter of resisting the Devil in his book, Balancing the Christian Life. "Let me conclude this chapter on the wiles of the Devil by reminding you of parts of three verses which is speaker paraphrased and put together for me many years ago and which have been a source of real assurance. ① Christ lives in me--Galatians 2:20; ② Greater is He that is in me than he who is in the world--I John 4:4 ③ He will never leave me nor forsake me--Hebrews 13:5." Our Lord is our victory. Trust Him and use all the means He has provided to defeat the great enemy of our souls.

Verse Eight: Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, sinners, and purify your hearts, double-minded.

- 1. The third, fourth, and fifth commandments for victory in our war against the big three are listed in this verse.
- 2. The third commandment is "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you." David in Psalms 42:1-2 "As the deer pants for water, so I long for you, O God. I thirst for God, the living God. Where can I find Him to come and stand before Him?"
- 3. Sin brought about a separation as Adam and Eve went into hiding at the time they should have been drawing near to meet with the Lord. It has been that way ever since. Man has gone his own way.
- 4. Stephen Alford, in his book I'll Take the High Road, says "Do these words apply to us? Have we allowed iniquities to separate between us and our God? Let us search our hearts honestly in the presence of God before we answer this question about sin in our lives. The fact that we are not acutely conscious of having drifted away from God does not in any way effect the seriousness of separating sin. So many of us are rather like the small girl who had been to a party and on her return was asked by her mother if she had been a good girl. After due

Don't Avoid
Don't Run Away

Adam +
Eve

Guilt Keeps us From this
ill of a guilty dog.

If you + God feel far
apart, guess who moves!!

thought, the girl replied 'Mommy, I wasn't good and I wasn't naughty. I was just comfy.' You may smile at this story but does it sum up your condition before God? Comfyness, or luke-warmness, is a condition which deadens sensibility to sin. God preserve us from comfyness. It may be that it is this very thing which is spoiling our fellowship with God. If so then, let us acknowledge this state of backslidding and draw nigh and get right."

II Co. 7:1

Psalms
51:

Flesh
+
Spirit
Faith + Doubt
Gold
World

Job 42:
"Where Fore
I Abhor Myself"

Wept - consequence
in Garden
of Gethsemane

- 5. The fourth commandment is "cleanse your hands, sinners."
- 6. Isaiah 52:11 "Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord."
- 7. Psalms 119:9-11 "Wherewithall shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to Thy Word. Thy Word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against Thee."
- 8. Cleansing comes through confession. I John 1:9 "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
- 9. The fifth commandment is "purify your hearts, double-minded."
- 10. James has had a great deal to say about the double-minded man. In chapter 1, he is unstable in all of his ways; chapter 2, the ones who are discriminating, he raises the question "are you not divided in your minds?" and now here in chapter 4 he is asking the double-minded to purify their hearts.
- 11. You who would love the world and God, serve God with singleness of heart, no more divided loyalties.

Verse Nine: Lament and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy into gloominess.

1. The sixth commandment is to "lament." What is meant here is to experience the sense of wretchedness, become sensitive again to the burden of sin. It is saying with Isaiah of old, "Woe is me for I am undone, I am a man of unclean lips." Rom 7:9 *wretched man*
2. The seventh commandment is to "mourn." Here James sounds a lot like Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5:4. "Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted."
3. The eighth commandment is "weep." Because of our sinful condition, our hearts have grown calloused toward the matter of sin, and we no longer shed tears.
4. We do have the record that Jesus wept at the tomb of Lazarus as He realized the burden of sin. He wept over the city of Jerusalem as He saw their impending doom because of disobedience to the will of God. *Jeremiah weeps*
5. The ninth command is "let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy into gloominess."
6. Luke 18:13-14 "And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying 'God, be merciful to me a sinner.' I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other. For everyone who exalteth himself shall be abased and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

Verse Ten: Humble yourselves before the Lord and He will exalt you.

1. The tenth command is to "humble yourselves before the Lord."
2. As a tree must strike roots downward before it can grow upwards, so must we in our relationship to God.

3. Mary is a good illustration of this matter of humbling herself as she is presented with the ministry God has for her in Luke 1:38. She says "I am the Lord's servant and I am willing to do whatever He says."
4. James, too, is much the same in calling himself "a bond slave of God and the Lord Jesus Christ."
5. I Peter 5:5-6 "Ye younger men follow the leadership of those who are older and all of you serve each other with humble spirits for God gives special blessings to those who are humble, but sets Himself against those who are proud. Now is the time to humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God. In His good time, He will lift you up."

Verse Eleven: Stop speaking evil of one another, brethren. The one who is speaking evil of his brother, or finding fault with his brother, is speaking evil of the law and finding fault with the law. Now if you are finding fault with the law, you are not a doer of the law, but a judge.

1. Criticism is a very subtle form of self-exaltation. "For if I can run him down, it puts me in a better light because I don't do those things." The criticizer is passing judgment without knowing or wanting to know the truth. The one who is criticizing is also acting apart from humility because he feels he is taking God's place and judging. In the act of criticizing, we are breaking the law of love that James has mentioned in 2:8 "if indeed you are carrying out the demands of royal law according to scripture, you shall love your neighbor as yourself."
2. To criticize is easy as you pass along life's road. It is easy to condemn and sneer when another bears the load. But if you know an easier way, then lend a helping hand. Do not let a worker sweat while you criticize and stand. To criticize is easy as you pass along life's road, but a better and a nobler way is to help to bear the load.
3. Ridenour, in his book How to be a Christian Without Being Religious, says ① Be genuine, ② be acceptant, ③ be understanding. These three simple rules were practiced and lived by the same Person Who, one day, will judge us all. The best cure for criticism and judging others, is to remember each of us will stand personally before the Judgment Seat of Christ. Each of us will give account of himself to God."
4. Ryrie, in his book Balancing the Christian Life, says "A complaining attitude comes from self, not the Spirit who wants to make us thankful always and disharmony at home or at work is not of the Lord, but of self. At this point, we are right back where we started from, for at the very first I said that Spirituality is best demonstrated in the home."
5. A little seed lay on the ground and soon began to sprout. Now which of all the flowers around, it mused, shall I come out? The lily's face is fair and proud, but just a trifle cold. The rose, I think, is rather loud and then, it's fashion's old. The violet is all very well, but not a flower I'd choose, nor yet the Canterbury bell, I'd never cared for blues. And so it

Permit
yourselves to be
humbled

So often the
Most critical
Are the Most
Gaily...

critized each flower, this supercilious seed, until it woke one summer hour and found itself a weed.

Verse Twelve: One only is a law giver and a judge. He who is able to save and to destroy. But as for you, who are you the one finding fault with your fellowman?

1. There is only one law giver and that is God, Himself. He is the judge also and the phrase that James uses "He who is able to save and to destroy" is a word that Jesus used in the Gospels, Matthew 10:28. "Fear not them who kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul. But rather, fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."
2. In Romans 14 Paul says this: "Those who think it is alright to eat such meat must not look down on those who won't. And if you are one of those who won't, don't find fault with those who do for God has accepted them to be His children. They are God's servants, not yours, let Him tell them what to do. They are responsible to God, not you, and God will help them do what is right. We are not our own bosses to live or die as we, ourselves, might choose. Living or dying, we follow the Lord. Living or dying, we are His. You have no right to criticize your brother, or look down on him. Remember, each of us will stand personally before the Judgment Seat of Christ." For it is written, as I live says the Lord every knee shall bow to Me and every tongue confess to God. Yes, each of us will give account of himself to God. So don't criticize each other any more. Try, instead, to live in such a way that you will never make your brother stumble by letting me see you doing something he thinks is wrong." ✓

CONCLUSION: The eighth Pointer of Progress that we have been studying together in chapter 4:1-12 is war against the big three. Our war is against the flesh, the world, and the Devil. Victory is ours and progress is made when we do not yield to the desires of the flesh & we do not develop a friendship with the world and we resist the Devil. Once again, this can only be done through dependence upon the power of the Holy Spirit.

It is A reflection of My Maturity. the victory over the world, Flesh & Devil.

Test
Tempt
Word
Love
Fruit
Tongue
wisdom

- Lesson #1 The xian warfare is Against the world the Flesh + The Devil.
- Lesson #2 IF You Aren't Fighting You aren't Growing.
- Lesson #3 The xian Life is A Fight All the way home.
- Lesson #4 The Key to victory is in the power of Spirit.
- Lesson #5 A person living in the Flesh cannot expect God to be Answering His prayer

I'm pressing on the upward way new heights I'm gaining every day still praying As I onward bound hard plant my feet on higher ground.