

Mark Your Bible / Memory Work

- [James 4:3-4](#)
- [James 4:7](#)
- [James 4:10](#)
- [James 4:14](#)
- [James 4:17](#)

[James 4:1](#) - Root Cause of Fighting

1. “From whence *come* wars and fightings among you? *come they* not hence, *even* of your lusts that war in your members?” ([Jm. 4:1](#))
 - a. James asks a piercing question: Where do wars and fightings come from among you?
 - i. Among who? Brethren! (cf. [Jm. 1:2](#), [16](#), [19](#), [2:1](#), [5](#), [14](#), [3:1](#), [10](#), [12](#))
 - ii. Recall that James is writing to a group which included Jewish converts ([Jm. 1:1](#))
 - iii. The Jews knew something about “wars and fightings” as they were divided into many conflicting parties: Pharisees, Sadducees, Zealots, etc. (cf. [Acts 23:6-10](#))
 - b. James answers his rhetorical question: lusts
 - i. The effect, pleasure (*hedone* G2237), is put for the cause, desire [lusts], with this word in the Greek
 - ii. Whenever selfish desire (lust) is put first, wars and fightings will soon follow (pleasure at any cost)
 - iii. Indeed, these fleshly lusts war against the soul ([1 Pt. 2:11](#))
 - iv. Paul spoke of these things ([Rm. 6:11-13](#), [7:23](#); [Gal. 5:15-17](#))
 - v. This is a continuation of what James wrote about in [Jm. 3:13-18](#)

[James 4:2-3](#) - Unasked and Unanswered Prayer

1. “Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not.” ([Jm. 4:2](#))
 - a. James furthers the discussion showing the futility of wordly lust
 - i. Though they desire to have they come up empty
 - b. Murder (ye kill) and covetousness (desire to have) are next mentioned
 - i. Unchecked desire can easily lead to unlawful killing and covetousness
 - ii. Murder begins in the heart ([1 Jn. 3:15](#))
 - iii. There is such a thing as spiritual cannibalism ([Gal. 5:13-15](#))
 - c. They were not seeking those things which they could ask God in prayer
 - i. Some prayers are unasked
 - ii. We are to ask ([Mt. 7:7-8](#))

James 4

2. “Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume *it* upon your lusts.” ([Jm. 4:3](#))
 - a. James addresses the important subject of prayer
 - i. How we prayer matters
 - b. Prayer must:
 - i. Be asked in obedience to God’s commandments ([1 Jn. 3:22](#))
 - ii. Be asked in accordance with the will of God ([1 Jn. 5:14-15](#))
 - iii. Be asked of the Father in the name of Jesus ([Lk. 11:1-4](#); [Jn. 15:16](#), [16:23-24](#))
 - c. They were praying to God to spend it on their desires [lusts]
 - i. God is not going to hear a prayer such as this ([Ps. 66:18](#); [Pr. 15:29](#), [28:9](#))

James 4:4-6 - Friendship of the World

1. “Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.” ([Jm. 4:4](#))
 - a. An adulterer/adulteress is one that violates the marriage covenant through unlawful sexual relations with another person ([Mt. 19:9](#))
 - i. The Bible speaks of spiritual adultery many times ([Hos. 1:2](#), [2:2-5](#); [Jer. 2:20](#), [28, 3:1](#))
 - b. As Christians, we are married to Christ at baptism ([Rm. 7:4](#); [2 Cor. 11:2](#); [Eph. 5:25-27, 32](#))
 - i. When we are unfaithful, we commit spiritual adultery
 - c. James shows how one is unfaithful to God: friendship of the world
 - i. Enmity is the opposite of love (agape) meaning to place oneself in battle array against God
 - ii. We cannot serve God and mammon ([Mt. 6:24](#))
 - iii. Love not the world... ([1 Jn. 2:15-17](#))
 - iv. “Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world...” ([2 Tim. 4:10](#))
 - d. Christ called us out of the world ([1 Pt. 2:9](#); [Gal. 1:4](#); [1 Jn. 5:19](#))
2. “Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?” ([Jm. 4:5](#))
 - a. James asks a rhetorical question which looks back to numerous Old Testament passages (here called Scripture) which taught against idolatry, i.e., spiritual adultery (e.g., [Ex. 20:1-5](#))
 - i. Anything that takes the place of God and His teachings in our hearts is idolatry ([Mt. 6:33](#))

- b. The spirit is the human spirit which has been influenced by the fleshly desires or cravings of the world
 - i. Such is indeed possible and happens
 - ii. Have we ever been envious before or desired to do evil? (cf. [Pr. 21:10](#))
- 3. “But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.” ([Jm. 4:6](#))
 - a. Instead of being lifted up with pride and envy, God’s favor [grace] is bestowed upon those that practice humility (cf. [Rm. 5:20](#))
 - b. James here quotes [Pr. 3:34](#) from the LXX [Septuagint] (as does Peter in [1 Pt. 5:5](#))
 - i. resisteth = opposed to; range in battle against
 - ii. humble = low lying
 - c. We must be a humble people ([Ps. 138:6](#); [Pr. 29:23](#))

James 4:7-10 - Humility Brings One Close to God

- 1. “Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” ([Jm. 4:7](#))
 - a. What is the formula for eradicating pride? Place yourself under God
 - i. submit yourselves = to rank under
 - ii. We need to give ourselves fully to God and His will
 - b. Furthermore, we must not give in to Satan
 - i. resist = to set against
 - c. How do we resist? The same way Jesus did: the Word of God ([Mt. 4:1-11](#))
 - i. “...It is written...” ([Mt. 4:4](#), [7](#), [10](#))
 - ii. “Then the devil leaveth him...” ([Mt. 4:11](#))
 - iii. Satan cannot stand up to the Word of God therefore, use it
 - iv. I must be equipped with the armor of God ([Eph. 6:10-18](#))
- 2. “Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse *your* hands, ye sinners; and purify *your* hearts, ye double minded.” ([Jm. 4:8](#))
 - a. We want Satan to be far away and for us to be very near to God
 - i. Draw nigh = to draw near, to approach
 - ii. If we get close to God, He will get close to us
 - b. How?
 - i. Cleanse = become free from the defilement of sin; wash your hands; abstain from wrong-doing ([Isa. 1:16](#))
 - ii. Purify = to clean up our hearts and make them pure; free from the spots and blemishes of sin ([Jer. 4:14](#))

- iii. Both actions require us to know and follow God's Word
- c. The double-minded (two-souled) man is unstable in all his ways ([Jm. 1:8](#))
- 3. "Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and *your* joy to heaviness." ([Jm. 4:9](#))
 - a. Such are the proper attitudes to have when we have sin in our lives
 - i. Be afflicted = to feel miserable
 - ii. mourn = to lament
 - iii. weep = any loud expression of grief
 - b. How sad it is when we forget how to blush ([Jer. 6:15](#))
 - c. Godly sorrow leads us to repentance ([2 Cor. 7:8-11](#))
 - d. This verse in James reminds one of [Mt. 5:4](#) and [Lk. 6:25](#)
- 4. "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up." ([Jm. 4:10](#))
 - a. James expresses a common sentiment throughout the Scriptures: if we will be humble, God will exalt in due time ([1 Pt. 5:6](#))
 - b. Jesus taught the same thing ([Mt. 23:12](#); [Lk. 18:9-14](#))
 - i. Jesus did it ([Mt. 11:29](#); [Phil. 2:7-8](#))
 - ii. It is our turn now ([1 Pt. 2:21](#))

James 4:11-12 - Unlawful Judging

- 1. "Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of *his* brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge." ([Jm. 4:11](#))
 - a. "Speak...evil"; "He that speaketh evil"; "speaketh evil" are all the same Greek word *katalaleo* G2635 (meaning to traduce)
 - i. Traduce defined, "to expose to shame or blame by means of falsehood and misrepresentation"
 - ii. Evil speaking (slander; backbiting) must be eliminated from the Christian's vocabulary ([Eph. 4:31](#)) and is worldly ([Rm. 1:30](#); [2 Cor. 12:20](#))
 - b. "judgeth"; "thou judge"; "judgest" ([Jm. 4:12](#)) are all the same Greek word (*krino* G2919)
 - i. The meaning is, "of those who judge severely (unfairly), finding fault with this or that in others" (Thayer 361)
 - ii. The sentence is always guilty in this judgment
 - iii. This is the judgment Jesus had in mind and condemned in [Mt. 7:1-2](#)
 - iv. Do not get this confused with righteous judgment which is in accordance with God's Law ([Jn. 7:24](#))

- c. To speak evil of our brother is to speak evil of God's Law that says we are to love our brother ([1 Jn. 2:9-11](#), [3:10-11](#); see [Lev. 19:18](#))
 - i. We thus judge God's Law as not being holy or right
 - ii. What arrogance!
 - d. Our responsibility as Christians is to follow God's Law and not place ourselves in the position of passing or binding personal judgment [opinion] upon others (cf. [Jm. 1:21-22](#))
2. "There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?" ([Jm. 4:12](#))
- a. God is the supreme Lawgiver of which there is only one
 - i. Who am I to think I know more than God? (cf. [Ps. 139:1-6](#))
 - ii. Such attitudes are prideful and align with Satan ([1 Tim. 3:6](#))
 - iii. Only one lawgiver implies one law ([Gal. 6:2](#))
 - b. God is the supreme Judge
 - i. God will judge correctly ([Gen. 18:25](#))
 - ii. God's Word is the judge ([Jn. 12:47-50](#))
 - iii. We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ ([2 Cor. 5:10-11](#))
 - c. To speak evil of and judge the Law (God's Word) is to place oneself in the position of supreme lawgiver and judge i.e., God
 - i. I need to fear God for He can either save me or destroy me ([Mt. 10:28](#))
 - ii. All will be in accordance with His righteous Law and judgment ([Ps. 119:142](#))
 - d. "For the Lord *is* our judge, the Lord *is* our lawgiver, The Lord *is* our king; he will save us." ([Isa. 33:22](#))

James 4:13-15 - Including God in Our Brief Life

1. ¹³ "Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: ¹⁴ Whereas ye know not what *shall be* on the morrow. For what *is* your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." ([Jm. 4:13-14](#))
- a. The words of Solomon ring loudly in this passage ([Pr. 27:1](#))
 - b. For all our advancements in technology and knowledge, we still do not know what tomorrow may bring for us or if it will come
 - i. How many live like tomorrow is guaranteed?
 - ii. Life is short (cf. [Job 7:7](#); [Ps. 39:4-5](#), [90:9-10](#); [1 Pt. 1:24](#))
 - c. The attitude James addresses is one of physical focus only without God included
 - i. Do not be like the rich man ([Lk. 12:16-21](#))

- d. We need not be worried about tomorrow for we have enough to do today ([Mt. 6:33-34](#))
- 2. “For that ye *ought* to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.” ([Jm. 4:15](#))
 - a. This is the proper mindset for living life one day at a time
 - b. Make sure what we do is in accordance with the will of God ([Col. 3:17](#))
 - c. Make sure that God is always brought into our choice making every single day
 - i. This will help us to make correct choices
 - ii. Is this the Lord’s will for me to participate in this activity?

[James 4:16-17](#) - Necessity of Doing Good

- 1. “But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil.” ([Jm. 4:16](#))
 - a. The Holy Spirit, through James, rebukes the attitude of making presumptions which trust in the “stability” of earthly things (see [Jm. 4:13](#))
 - i. The Earth and everything physical in it is going to burn up ([2 Pt. 3:10](#))
 - b. The word translated as “boastings” is found in [1 Jn. 2:16](#) as “pride”
 - c. Our glory should not be placed in earthly things, but rather we should bring glory to God by our behavior ([1 Cor. 6:20, 10:31](#); [Mt. 5:13-16](#))
- 2. “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth *it* not, to him it is sin.” ([Jm. 4:17](#))
 - a. James makes a wonderful conclusion here
 - i. It is not enough to abstain from doing evil
 - ii. We must also do good (cf. [Lk. 11:24-26](#))
 - iii. The goats were not lost because of what they did but what they did not do! ([Mt. 25:41-46](#))
 - b. No excuse here for the Christian as he/she knows to do good
 - i. When we choose not to do good, it is sin
 - ii. Sins of omission
 - c. God’s commandments are both positive (thou shalt) and negative (thou shalt not)
 - i. I must keep both
 - d. In the context, those that would claim to be Christians yet exclude the Lord from their doings are sinning
 - i. Let us bring the Lord into all our choices in life and do His will
 - ii. This will keep us on the strait and narrow ([Mt. 7:14](#))