

# JAMES - THE ART OF FAITHFUL LIVING

## WEEK 8: WHAT ARE YOU FIGHTING FOR?

JASON BRINKER - 10/27/24

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### GROWING TOGETHER (ANSWER ALL OR JUST SOME OF THE ICE-BREAKERS)

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- Have you ever had a moment when you thought, 'This person is definitely the problem' but later realized it was actually more about how you handled it?
- Think back to when you were a child (or a time as an adult) and share with the group that "thing" you had to have and couldn't live without. Was it all it was cracked up to be?

### GROWING WITH GOD (ANSWER ALL OR JUST SOME OF THE QUESTIONS)

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**THIS WEEK'S BIG IDEA:** The conflicts we face reveal our misplaced desires and our covetousness, but God offers grace when we humble ourselves and submit to His way instead of chasing what the world promises.

*Remember what Pastor Jason defined as "Covet" for us; When we want something so bad that we think there is no way I can ever be happy, content or satisfied without it. And Pastor Andy Stanley said this, "Has it ever occurred to you that what you crave you're not getting because you're trying to squeeze it out of someone who doesn't have it?"*

Read, [James 4:1-12](#), [Exodus 20:1-5](#), [Deuteronomy 32:16](#), & [Hebrews 4:16](#) aloud and go over your sermon notes with one another. (Answer all or some of the questions)

James opens chapter 4 by going straight to the heart of conflict in our lives by asking, "What causes quarrels among you?" And in verses 1-3 he uses one word that points to the source, "You". Often, we're quick to pin the blame on others—our family, our coworkers, or even the stranger in traffic—but James challenges us to dig deeper. The real source, he says, is the desires within us.

- **Where have you noticed conflict in your life recently, and how often do you find yourself quick to blame someone else for it?**
- **When you're not getting what you want out of your relationships, what would it look like to respond with God's wisdom instead of reacting from hurt or pride?**

James doesn't sugarcoat things in verses 2-3—Pastor Jason puts it this way and says our conflicts often aren't about personality differences or misunderstandings; they're about things we crave so much we're ready to blame anyone who seems to stand in our way. James says we even "kill and covet...". James tells us in verse 7 to submit ourselves to God.

- **James warns about coveting—Is there something you've been wanting lately that's become "ultimate" in your mind?**
- **James says we often "don't have because we don't ask God." Are there needs in your life you've been trying to fill on your own or through others, rather than asking God for them?**
- **How might your life change if you brought these needs to God first?**

The Bible says in Exodus 20:5, "...for I the Lord your God am a jealous God..." God's jealousy isn't immature or fearful, as Pastor Jason explained. It's not about insecurity but about love—a love that wants only the best for us. God longs to reveal His glory in our lives, knowing that nothing else will truly satisfy or bring us the fulfillment we're so often chasing elsewhere.

- **What's one desire you're holding onto that might be standing in the way of what God wants to give you?**
- **How do we sometimes let good things—even blessings from God—take the place of God Himself in our hearts?**

James uses marriage to illustrate our relationship with God. When we chose to follow Jesus, we made a covenant to live with and for Him above all else. But turning to other things for fulfillment is like taking on a new "lover"—a form of spiritual adultery. God's jealousy is a passionate, protective love; He knows that only He can truly satisfy us and wants to keep us from chasing what ultimately won't.

- **When you hear the term "spiritual adultery," how does that challenge your understanding of loyalty in your relationship with God? Are there areas where you may be giving your devotion to something or someone else?**
- **Pastor Jason said, "There is nothing better, no one greater than God." What are some areas in your life where you might be looking for satisfaction outside of God and how can you redirect those desires back to Him?**

Pastor Jason calls us to live out James's call to humble ourselves, resist the devil, and draw near to God. True submission means setting aside our pride and allowing God to take control, with Jesus at the center of our lives.. The beauty of this message is that as we draw closer to God, He promises to draw closer to us.

- **Talk about how submission is difficult or easy for you at home, at work, but most importantly in your relationship with God. What triggers your resistance?**
- **When have you experienced God drawing near as you intentionally pursued Him?**

## GROWING IN SCRIPTURE AND OBEDIENCE

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Here are four steps of commitment to God James gives us:

1. Be Humble. (reference, James 4:6)
2. Stop resisting God and start resisting the devil. (reference, James 4:7)
3. Pursue God's presence (reference, James James 4:8a)
4. Take sin seriously and receive God's forgiveness (reference, James 4:8b-10)

## GROWING IN OBEDIENCE

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### **Submit to God's Authority (James 4:7)**

Ask yourself, "Where am I still trying to take control instead of trusting God?" Identify one area in your life where you've been holding on to control—whether it's relationships, career, or even your own spiritual growth—and submit that to God. Surrendering isn't weakness; it's opening the door to God's grace and guidance.

**Life Group Leader:** Encourage members to be real about where they struggle with control. Create space for them to share stories, and follow up by praying together, asking God to help them surrender those areas. You might also suggest they spend time this week journaling or praying through what they need to let go of.

### **Resist the Enemy's influence (James 4:7)**

Consider, "Where is my pride making room for the enemy in my life?" Recognize one place where pride or selfish desires have taken root, and intentionally choose to resist. It could be how you handle conflict, treat others, or seek approval. Ask God for the strength to stand firm, knowing that the enemy flees when we resist with humility.

**Life Group Leader:** Help your group identify practical ways to resist pride and temptation in their daily lives. Lead a discussion on the subtle ways the enemy works through pride and self-focus. Maybe even challenge them to check in with a trusted partner during the week to keep each other accountable.

### **Pursue God's Presence (James 4:8)**

Reflect, "Am I drawing near to God or just going through the motions?" Make a commitment to intentionally draw closer to God this week. Whether it's through prayer, time in Scripture, or worship, prioritize spending time in His presence. The more you pursue Him, the more you'll experience His grace and power in your life.

**Life Group Leader:** Encourage your group to explore what it means to pursue God's presence. Suggest practical steps like starting their day with quiet time, committing to prayer before decisions, or worshipping through song. Follow up with them to hear how they're experiencing God in these moments.

## GROWING IN PRAISE AND WORSHIP

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This week's song list if you'd like to worship with your group.

[Praise God \(Doxology\)](#)

[Worthy Of It All](#)

[Same God](#)

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