

Topic: James Chapter 4_answers

Setting: This part of the Epistle is focused on quarrels & conflicts among the believers

Key Verse: "Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you." (v.7)

Thought: Because of the strong language used in these verses, there must have been serious problems among the Jewish members of some churches located in Gentile communities.

Verse	Notes & Questions	Comments & Answers
v.1-3	James, while pointing out serious problems in the church, wanted his Jewish brethren to focus on the "source" or "cause" of their quarrels & conflicts. i. Why might that be a more effective approach than just condemning their behaviour? ii. What was James's conclusion about the source of their problems?	i. Most Christians know that exhibiting these actions would be wrong, sinful and not in keeping with Christ's plea for loving each other in unity within the church. How to solve the issues is the important strategy to please God. Looking at the causes rather than the results should make resolution easier. ii. Lust, selfishness, inappropriate prayers and lack of pure motives was James' conclusion.
v.4-5	Being a "friend" of the world will automatically make one an "enemy" of God. This action will make one unfaithful to God and breaks our relationship to Him. The seal of our relationship is God's gift of the Holy Spirit which will be taken away if we desire the world more than God. How do we know if we are becoming too friendly with the world so as to break our relationship with God? (see 1 Cor. 6:12-20)	Jesus said that followers cannot serve two masters. Being friends with the world means we are trying to "store up treasures on earth" instead of "treasures in heaven". Also, where our treasure is - "our heart will be also". In this passage (see Matt.6:19-24, as well as the rest of that chapter). Key point is when our heart and activities give priority to "worldly" things (i.e. wealth, power, prestige etc.) we definitely have become too friendly with the world. "Seek first...Christ's kingdom" (Matt.6:33)
v.6-7	i. Why is God opposed to the proud? ii. Why does God give grace to the humble?	i. Pride makes us self-centered and leads us to conclude we deserve worldly possessions. It also makes us rely on ourselves instead of listening to God. (see 1 Pet. 5:5-6) ii.If we are humble we will rely on God – not ourselves!
v.8-10	How do Christians resist the devil & draw near to God?	Yield to his authority and commit your life to following him. By dwelling on God's blessings which are so superior to Satan's temporary pleasures, you will gain strength to resist.
v.13-16	i. How does the fact that a life is just a "vapour" change how you plan your life? ii. Why does the phrase "if the Lord wills" help Christians plan their life?	i. If we are intelligent we will plan & conduct our lives for the long term – not just for short-term gain. That means following our Lord Jesus. ii. It means that we should allow God to share/direct our life because He knows best.
v.17	Give some examples of "not doing the right thing when we know that it is right".	i. Neglecting to seek out those in need so we can help them. ii. Neglecting to let workers, neighbours know about Jesus.