

CAUSE OF CONFLICT

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INTRODUCTION

A. *“Whence come wars and whence come fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your pleasures that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and covet, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war; ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may spend it in you pleasures.”* (James 4:1-3).

1. Mankind is caught up in a near constant state of unrest, quarreling, hatred, jealousy and war.
2. Man fights with his fellow man because he cannot be at peace within his own heart!
3. There occasionally surfaces a struggle among brethren which turns the church into a battleground.

B. SETTING:

1. Conflict existed in the church, in the world, in the individual.
2. The conflicts and problems come from within. Brought on by man's actions.

C. Several things James mentions that contribute to this **conflict**.

WRONG DESIRES

A. MAN DOES NOT ALWAYS KNOW:

1. What he wants.
2. Or even what he should want.

B. HE BECOMES BLINDED BY THE APPEAL OF THE WORLD.

1. Tries to find satisfaction and peace in “things”.
2. May work for awhile, but eventually it falls away (Rev. 18).

C. WHEN MAN BECOMES SELF CENTERED ... *“that you may spend it in yours pleasures”*

1. It leads to conflict with others.
 2. And eventually, conflict within himself.
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MISPLACED FRIENDSHIPS

A. When man places his trust in this world, he can only be disappointed.

1. “Then whose shall these things be” (Rich fool).
2. Rev. 18:19-20. Listen to the weeping, when the pleasure and appeal of the world is gone.

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B. CAN'T SERVE TWO MASTERS. (Matt. 6:24).

1. Can't be servant of both. (Rom. 6:16) Either sin or righteousness.
 2. *"Whosoever therefore would be a friend of the world maketh himself an Enemy of God."* v. 4.
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DISREGARD FOR SCRIPTURE

A. *"Or think ye that the scripture speaketh in vain?"* v. 5.

1. People don't study the scripture.
2. Don't believe that it really means what it says.

B. So many today choose their life style without regard for scripture.

1. Immorality....look at the conflict that arises. Divorce, disease, heart ache in general.
 2. Can't make the connection....Drunk to Drunkard. Etc.
 3. When man lives without Divine guidance, James describes the condition of the world.
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RESIST THE DEVIL

A. *"Be subject therefore unto God; but resist the devil, and he will flee from you."* v. 7.

1. The devil wants to have a part in our lives.
2. From Adam and Eve, until now.
3. To control and ultimately destroy God's creation.

B. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO RESIST THE DEVIL?

1. You must recognize him for who and what he is.
 2. When man lets the devil have his way, conflict and troubles result.
 3. Consider the temptations of Jesus (Matt. 4:1-11).
 4. Put on the Armor of God. (Eph. 6:10ff).
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GODLY PURITY

A. THE COMMAND IS "DRAW NIGH TO GOD". The prerequisites of doing so are (1) a pure life, (2) a pure heart, (3) a penitent spirit and (4) humility.

1. First, to *"cleanse your hands"* is to cease all outward acts of wrongdoing.
2. Second, to *"purify your hearts"* is to cleanse the inner spring of life. (Matt. 7:21-23).

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3. Third, “*to be afflicted, and mourn, and weep*” is to be truly penitent and sober as one comes before God.
 4. Fourth, to “*humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord*” is to realize that we are the creatures and God is the Creator.
 5. Wars and Conflicts come because we do not humble our self before God.
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REJECT AUTHORITY

- A. ONE of the great causes of conflict in the world today is a lack of respect for authority!
 1. This is true in the home.
 2. In the school.
 3. In the nation and world.
 4. And in the church.
 5. One of, if not the greatest cause of conflict in religion today is a lack of respect for the authority of God.
 - B. WHEN FINITE MAN TRIES to determine (judge) what is right or wrong, conflicts always follow.
 1. Because even the way of a fool is right in his own eyes.
 2. Man rationalizes to justify himself.
 - C. WHEN MAN ASSUMES THE ROLE OF “LAWGIVER” confusion is the result.
 1. Look at all of the efforts man has made. Then changed.
 2. His creeds and laws not only change but are in conflict with God. James would remind us that: “*One only is the lawgiver and judge, even he who is able to save and to destroy: but who art thou that judgest thy neighbor*”
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PLAN WITHOUT GOD

- A. “*Come not, ye that say, Today or tomorrow we will go into this city, and spend a year there, and trade, and get gain: whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. What is your life? For ye are a vapor that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall both live, and do this or that.*” vs. 13-15.

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- B. Before boasting of tomorrow, think about the nature of earthly life.
1. Is life permanent?
 2. Answered his own question..."but a vapor".
 3. With life so uncertain as this, how foolish are we to plan the future without regard to Him who holds the future in His hands.! How much conflict comes when man's plans fail.
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CONCLUSION

- A. *"TO HIM THEREFORE THAT KNOWETH TO DO GOOD, AND DOETH IT NOT, TO HIM IT IS SIN."* v. 17.
1. This not referring just to a single good deed or thing.
 2. It means the same as "knowing how to live right."
- B. It is worth observing that James is not speaking merely of the sin of failing to do some good deed. He is speaking of failure to live a morally and spiritually excellent life when one has the knowledge.
1. We know how to live right, we have God's Word guiding us.
 2. Are we letting it be our guide.
 3. Look at the things God has listed in James. To fail to follow them is to bring conflict into our life.
 4. To know what to do, and how to live, and not do it is sin!
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