

Study Guide #6

Virtual Study of James – James 4:1-17 Bellevue Church of Christ – Summer 2020

Gr. *polemos* & *machê*
– Two nouns used for
national warfare.
Forceful comments
against open conflict.

In contrast to the
climate of "peace"
required for a
"harvest of
righteousness"
– James 3:18

Does James literally
mean "murder?"
–Matt 5:21-22
–I John 3:15

In what way are they
"adulterous people?"
–Jer 31:32
–Eph 5:23-32
–I Cor 6:12-20

10 Commands for the Proud:

1. Submit
2. Resist
3. Draw Near
4. Cleanse
5. Purify
6. Be Wretched
7. Mourn
8. Weep
9. Let (Change)
10. Humble

What law?
–James 2:8
–Lev 19:18

When we speak evil
against another, we
are putting ourselves
in the position of God

Demonstration of
faith in self
–Rom 3:27-31

¹ What causes *quarrels* and what causes *fights* among you? Is it not this, that your **passions** are at war within you?

² You **desire** and do not have, *so you murder*. You **covet** and cannot obtain, so you *fight and quarrel*. You do not have, because you do not ask.

³ You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your **passions**. Luke 15:14

⁴ You *adulterous people!* Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

⁵ Or do you suppose it is to no purpose that the **Scripture** says, "He yearns jealously over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us"? Exo 20:5; 34:14

⁶ But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the **humble**." Prov 3:34

⁷ **Submit** yourselves therefore to God. **Resist** the devil, and he will flee from you.

⁸ **Draw near** to God, and he will draw near to you. **Cleanse** your hands, you sinners, and **purify** your hearts, you double-minded: James 3:9-12

⁹ Be **wretched** and **mourn** and **weep**. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. Mourning for our spiritual poverty –Matt 5:3-4

¹⁰ **Humble** yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you. –Matt 23:12
–Luke 14:11; 18:14
–Phil 2:5-11
–I Peter 5:6

¹¹ Do not speak evil against one another, brothers. The one who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, **speaks evil against the law** and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge.

¹² There is only **one lawgiver** and judge, he who is able to save and to destroy. But *who are you to judge your neighbor?*

¹³ Come now, you who say, "*Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit*"—

¹⁴ yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes.

¹⁵ Instead you ought to say, "*If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that.*" Does James intend for his reader to use this qualification verbally?
–Acts 18:21
–I Cor 4:19
–Acts 19:21
–Romans 15:28
–I Cor 16:5

¹⁶ As it is, you **boast in your arrogance**. All such boasting is evil.

¹⁷ So whoever knows the *right thing to do* and *fails to do it*, for him it is **sin**. You have been warned!!

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Questions for Discussion

The Worldly Attitude (1-10)

What does James say is the origin of fights and quarrels among brethren? How do we overcome quarrels that arise within the church? (vv. 1-2)

Why does James speak of “murder” in verse two? Does he mean this literally? (vv. Matt 5:21-22; I John 3:15)

What effect do these things that cause quarrels have on our prayer life? What types of things should we ask for in prayer? (vv. 2-3; Luke 15:14)

How does James describe those who seek friendship with the world? What is the reason for this characterization? (vv. 4; Eph 5:23-32; I Cor 6:12-20)

What possible translations for the Scripture quoted in verse 5?

- "The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously" (NKJV)
- "The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy" (KJV)
- "the spirit he caused to live in us envies intensely" (NIV)
- "He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us" (NASB)

What are the ten commands James gives in verses 7-10 to those who are tempted by the world?

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Faultfinding (11-12)

What “law” are we speaking against and judging if we speak against a brother? (vv. 11; 2:8; Lev 19:18)

What qualities make us ineffective judges? What makes God a superior judge? (v. 12)

Arrogant Self-Sufficiency (13-17)

Why should we be careful about the plans we make? (vv. 13-14)

With what qualification can one make plans for the future? (v. 15)

Does James intend for his reader to use this qualification verbally, or simply keep it in mind? (vv. 15; Acts 18:21; I Cor 4:19; Acts 19:21; Romans 15:28; I Cor 16:5)

What does failure to include this qualification demonstrate? (vv. 15-16)

Of what is one guilty if they know what is good, but fail to do it? (v. 17)

What is the key idea throughout this chapter?

Quarrels & Fights

Greek NASB Number: 4171 / Greek Word: πόλεμος

Transliterated Word: *polemos*

Root: a prim. word;

Definition: *war*:--

List of English Words and Number of Times Used

battle (4),
quarrels (1),
war (10),
wars (5).¹

Greek NASB Number: 3163

Greek Word: μάχη

Transliterated Word: *machê*

Root: from [3164](#);

Definition: a fight:--

List of English Words and Number of Times Used

conflicts (2),
disputes (1),
quarrels (1).²

Greek NASB Number: 2237 / Greek Word: ἡδονή

Transliterated Word: *hêdonê*

Root: from therô *hêdomai* (*to enjoy oneself*);

Definition: pleasure:--

List of English Words and Number of Times Used

pleasure (1),
pleasures (4).³

¹ New American Standard Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible.

² New American Standard Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible.

³ New American Standard Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible.

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James 3:18 (ESV)

¹⁸ And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

Murder

Matthew 5:21-22 (ESV)

²¹ “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.’ ²² But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be liable to the hell of fire.

1 John 3:15 (ESV)

¹⁵ Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

Spend it on your Passions

Luke 15:11-16 (ESV)

¹¹ And he said, “There was a man who had two sons. ¹² And the younger of them said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of property that is coming to me.’ And he divided his property between them. ¹³ Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took a journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in reckless living. ¹⁴ And when he had spent everything, a severe famine arose in that country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵ So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. ¹⁶ And he was longing to be fed with the pods that the pigs ate, and no one gave him anything.

Adulterous - Bride of God / Christ

Jeremiah 31:31-32 (ESV)

³¹ “Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, ³² not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the Lord.

Ephesians 5:22-33 (ESV)

²² Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. ²⁴ Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. ²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, ²⁶ that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, ²⁷ so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or

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wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. ²⁸ In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹ For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, ³⁰ because we are members of his body. ³¹ “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” ³² This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. ³³ However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

1 Corinthians 6:12-20 (ESV)

¹² “All things are lawful for me,” but not all things are helpful. “All things are lawful for me,” but I will not be enslaved by anything. ¹³ “Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food”—and God will destroy both one and the other. The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. ¹⁴ And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power. ¹⁵ Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never! ¹⁶ Or do you not know that he who is joined to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For, as it is written, “The two will become one flesh.” ¹⁷ But he who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. ¹⁸ Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. ¹⁹ Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, ²⁰ for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.

Jealous God

Exodus 20:5 (ESV)

⁵ You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me,

Exodus 34:14 (ESV)

¹⁴ (for you shall worship no other god, for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God),

Resists Proud / Grace to Humble

Proverbs 3:34 (ESV)

³⁴ Toward the scornful he is scornful, but to the humble he gives favor.

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Double-Minded

James 3:9-12 (ESV)

⁹ With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God. ¹⁰ From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so. ¹¹ Does a spring pour forth from the same opening both fresh and salt water? ¹² Can a fig tree, my brothers, bear olives, or a grapevine produce figs? Neither can a salt pond yield fresh water.

Spiritual Poverty

Matthew 5:3-4 (ESV)

³ “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ⁴ “Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

Exalts the Humble

Matthew 23:12 (ESV)

¹² Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.

Luke 14:11 (ESV)

¹¹ For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

Luke 18:14 (ESV)

¹⁴ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”

Philippians 2:5-11 (ESV)

⁵ Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ⁹ Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

1 Peter 5:6 (ESV)

⁶ Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you,

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Royal Law

James 2:8 (ESV)

⁸ If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing well.

Leviticus 19:18 (ESV)

¹⁸ You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord.

If the Lord Wills

Acts 18:21 (ESV)

²¹ But on taking leave of them he said, “I will return to you if God wills,” and he set sail from Ephesus.

1 Corinthians 4:19 (ESV)

¹⁹ But I will come to you soon, if the Lord wills, and I will find out not the talk of these arrogant people but their power.

Acts 19:21 (ESV)

²¹ Now after these events Paul resolved in the Spirit to pass through Macedonia and Achaia and go to Jerusalem, saying, “After I have been there, I must also see Rome.”

Romans 15:28 (ESV)

²⁸ When therefore I have completed this and have delivered to them what has been collected, I will leave for Spain by way of you.

1 Corinthians 16:5 (ESV)

⁵ I will visit you after passing through Macedonia, for I intend to pass through Macedonia,

Boasting

Romans 3:27-31 (ESV)

²⁷ Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith. ²⁸ For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law. ²⁹ Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, ³⁰ since God is one—who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith. ³¹ Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law.