

A Great Challenge

[Jas 4:1-4 ESV] 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. 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.

I. Intro

- A. Are you ready for a great challenge today?
- B. You have the tools to receive this challenge and embrace the change that comes.
- C. A challenge brings change, be prepared for it.
- D. Friendship with the world:
 1. This is where we give energy to the philosophy of the world
 2. This can be seen in the church, and is what James is challenging today.
 3. So we are all clear:
 - a) Immorality and self-righteousness are both sins that are fed by our love for the world
 - b) God brings conviction, we either repent or try to mask
 - c) This can be seen in Pride and Arrogance regarding opinions
 - d) This can be seen in justifying sin in our lives
 - e) This can be seen in a thousand different ways as we try to avoid the challenge.

II. Text

- A. Verse 1: Clarifying question: Answer forthcoming, and it's the word of God speaking
- B. Verse 2: YOU
 1. Desire and do not have, so you murder
 2. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel
 3. You do not have because you do not ask:
 - a) This is where our trust in God should grow to believe He has us where we need to be until He needs us somewhere else
 - b) This is where we must learn to get ok with our circumstances and begin looking for how God is at work in the midst of them.
- C. Verse 3: You ask wrongly, for the wrong reasons
- D. Verse 4:
 1. You Adulterous people!
 - a) as the intimate alliance of God with the people of Israel was likened to a marriage, those who relapse into idolatry are said to commit adultery or play the harlot
 - b) When our minds are divided between God and the world, we are being unfaithful to God.
 2. You should know that friendship with the world is enmity with God
 3. Restating the point

III. Points

- A. Surely not us
 1. Surely God is not sending this message to us, we are "good" people!
 2. Many times we think the direct statement about our human nature and sin is directed at someone else...it's for all of us.
 3. [Mat 19:16-22 ESV] 16 And behold, a man came up to him, saying, "Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life?" 17 And he said to him, "Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only one who is good. If you would enter life, keep the commandments." 18 He said to him, "Which ones?" And Jesus said, "You shall not murder, You shall not commit adultery, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness, 19 Honor your father and mother, and, You shall love your neighbor as yourself." 20 The young man said to him, "All these I have kept. What do I still

lack?" 21 Jesus said to him, "If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." 22 When the young man heard this he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

4. Good people...there is no such thing apart from the goodness of God in people.
 - a) [Rom 3:9-12 ESV] 9 What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin, 10 as it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one; 11 no one understands; no one seeks for God. 12 All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one."
 - b) This verse is a series of quotes from Psalm 14 and 53
 - c) Look at psalm 53...this is a song...I don't think we write them like this any longer...don't forget, there is a place in the spiritual journey for a reminder of our desperate situation.
 - d) Pick up a guitar and make a song...
 - e) [Psa 53:1-6 ESV] 1 To the choirmaster: according to Mahalath. A Maskil of David. The fool says in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, doing abominable iniquity; there is none who does good. 2 God looks down from heaven on the children of man to see if there are any who understand, who seek after God. 3 They have all fallen away; together they have become corrupt; there is none who does good, not even one. 4 Have those who work evil no knowledge, who eat up my people as they eat bread, and do not call upon God? 5 There they are, in great terror, where there is no terror! For God scatters the bones of him who encamps against you; you put them to shame, for God has rejected them. 6 Oh, that salvation for Israel would come out of Zion! When God restores the fortunes of his people, let Jacob rejoice, let Israel be glad.
 - f) Looks like we have a problem, and Christ is the only solution.

B. The Root of Evil

1. Our battle is ever present and inescapable, but we battle on.
2. Paul writes a similar message to young Timothy regarding this divided mind
3. [1Ti 6:3-12 ESV] 3 If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness, 4 he is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words, which produce envy, dissension, slander, evil suspicions, 5 and constant friction among people who are depraved in mind and deprived of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain. 6 But godliness with contentment is great gain, 7 for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. 8 But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. 9 But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. 10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs. 11 But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. 12 Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.
4. We do not have to look far to see these challenges in our own lives.

C. What to we do about it?

1. The situation is not helpless, we have a solution
2. Ask God
3. Trust God
4. Walk in Faith with God

5. [2Co 5:1-10 ESV] 1 For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. 2 For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling, 3 if indeed by putting it on we may not be found naked. 4 For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened--not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. 5 He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. 6 So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, 7 for we walk by faith, not by sight. 8 Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. 9 So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. 10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.
6. The Faith Walk is the most secure walk, but becomes unstable when we try to play both sides.
7. Think about what has not worked:
 - a) Anger at people who have not yet come to faith.
 - b) Attempting to control God's plan to match yours.
 - c) Worry, despair, fear...natural responses, but do not build towards the solution.
8. Walk WITH God BY FAITH

IV. Close

- A. When you refuse to go to the source and trust Him through the process you become ripe for failure.
- B. Grow in your faith walk, and walk your faith completely.