

Digging Deeper: James 4:1-12

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Day 1

Read through and pray over James 4:1-12

James 4:1: James ended chapter three talking about peacemakers and planting seeds of peace. Now James goes right into talking about conflict and quarreling, which prevents and disrupts peace. We all have conflicts and quarrels with others for many different reasons. Instead of discussing the outward conflict, James looks to our core to diagnose the true cause. Read Romans 7:23 and 1 Peter 2:11. It is our own sinful worldly desires that is at the heart of our quarreling. These selfish desires wage war against our souls. Consider your current quarrels and conflicts with others and be mindful and pray that God would reveal and remove your own desires that are preventing you from being a peacemaker.

Day 2

James 4:2: Now James speaks to some of the actions we take out of our wants and desires. We want what we don't have. We look at others and begin to covet in jealousy. The conflict begins as we scheme and plot for obtainment by whatever means necessary. We do all of this from our own devices yet we don't have because we don't ask God. Consider how often you place yourself in the driver's seat in your pursuit of attainment. Read James 1:17. Knowing that God is the ultimate giver of gifts why would we not seek God for the things that we truly want?

Day 3

James 4:3: James was ready for our response of "but I have asked God for things before and I didn't get them." James lets us know that our motives matter. Self-seeking motives for our own pleasure are all wrong. Read 1 John 5:14 and Psalms 66:18. God hears us when we ask things according to His will. God is not listening when we cherish iniquity, not confessing our sins. When you make requests, consider your motives. Are you self-seeking, or are your motives pure and beneficial to God and his people?

Day 4

James 4:4-5: James was speaking to fellow believers in Christ when he calls them adulterers! Read Jeremiah 3:6-10 and Ephesians 5:22-33. The church is the bride of Christ and therefore the worship of other gods is adultery. James breaks it down further to make it clear the manner in which they are worshipping other gods. Friendship with the world is to be in direct opposition to God. This message is so important that James repeats himself. The Holy Spirit will not share us with false idols. Read 1 John 2:15-17. Ask yourself today, are you loving the world, its ways, and the pleasures it provides, or are you doing what pleases God?

Day 5

James 4:6-10: In this chapter James warns us of our sinful desires, selfish pursuits, evil motives, and idolatry. Now James points us to how we are to live in light of these things. We need God's grace and thankfully God gives it generously to the humble. So be humble, resist pride, and resist the devil. How can we resist the devil and remain humble? James continues to tell us to draw near to God, admit, grieve, and repent from our sins. Again, be humble, and God will lift us up. Take time today to draw near to God.

Day 6

James 4:11-12: James gives us another important warning about judging others. Don't do it! Our job is to obey the law and not to use the law to judge others. We have no power or authority and therefore no right to judge. Read Ephesians 4:29. Consider your motives and purpose before you speak. Only talk to build others up and bring grace. This week, remember to be slow to speak and slow to anger (James 1:19). Practice the grace which has been shown to you.