

Series – Part 15: How to Live as a Christian:

## Avoid These Things!

James 4:1-6 ESV

Sunday, August 4 at 9:00; Monday, August 5 at 7 PM

11<sup>th</sup> Sunday After Pentecost / 10<sup>th</sup> After Trinity – 2013

Our Summer Schedule for July & August:

Sundays: DS 9; Refreshments 10:10; BC&SS 10:30; Mondays: DS 7 PM

**Introduction:** Dear friends in Christ, God is our loving Heavenly Father, so He ♦sent His Son to be our Savior, ♦tells us what is good, and ♦warns us about what is bad. As good earthly parents tell their children “no” to playing in the street, so our Heavenly Father tells us “no” to many hurtful things; in both cases *their intent is not to restrict but to love!*

1. **Disagreements Among Ourselves:** <sup>1</sup> **What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions [desires] are at war within you?** // From the previous sermon, recall that – *as Christians* – our passions are trying to be controlled both by demonic wisdom and by heavenly wisdom; *the old and new natures are at war within us!* Such is never good, but which one is winning? *The one we are feeding!*
  - a. Sinful desires lead to sinful actions:
    - i. <sup>2a</sup> **You [sinfully] desire and do not have, so you murder.** // LTJ wrote: “The logic of competition moves in the direction of elimination.” (277)

- ii. <sup>2b</sup> **You covet [are filled with jealousy] and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel.** // LTJ wrote about the logic of envy: “It is the failure to ‘obtain’ and ‘have’ that generates the rage that leads eventually to murder and war.” (277)

- iii. <sup>2c</sup> **You do not have, because you do not ask [from God].** // It’s even more than failure to ask, *because many are asking*; instead, it is failure to ask FROM A CONTRITE HEART (*a heart that is sorry for sins and trusting in Jesus*).

- b. Selfish prayers are worthless: <sup>3</sup> **You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly [with sinful motives], to spend it on your passions [pleasures, desires].** // Again, LTJ has a pertinent comment: “The gift-giving God is here manipulated as a kind of vending machine precisely for purposes of self-gratification.” (278) *May those words NEVER describe our prayers!*

### 2. **Friendship with the World and with God:**

- a. Having both is IMPOSSIBLE: <sup>4</sup> **You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity [hostility] with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes [establishes] himself an enemy of God.** // The reference is to *spiritual* adultery! Since the LORD has taken awesome action to make us His own, our response should be complete devotion to Him! Therefore, *those*

who try to befriend God and the world at the same time are committing spiritual adultery. Even worse, such people make themselves enemies of God (1 John 2:15-16)!

- b. Worldly desires do NOT come from God: This is a difficult verse to translate: <sup>5</sup> **Or do you suppose ~~it is to no purpose that the Scripture says, [that the Scripture speaks to no purpose?] “He yearns jealously over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us”?~~ [“Does the Spirit [or possibly the new nature] which He made to dwell in you yearn [long for, desire] to envy [to be jealous]?”]** // For both questions the answer is “NO”! The Spirit within us desires to practice heavenly wisdom—*promoting peace*, not demonic wisdom—*promoting war*!

**Conclusion:** <sup>6</sup> **But he [the LORD] gives more grace [thus a greater gift]. Therefore it [the Bible] says, “God opposes the proud [arrogant], but gives grace to the humble [lowly].”** // So let us humble ourselves by:

- ➔ Stop thinking we are always right!
- ➔ Daily drowning our sinful desires!
- ➔ Praying with right motives!
- ➔ Functioning as the friends of God by doing His will!

LTJ wrote: **“God’s wisdom...is the way to receive God’s favor [not for salvation, but for blessing in our Christian lives]. This means walking in peace, not taking away from the needy or saying to them that they will be helped on the morrow; not envying the ways of the wicked...”** (283)

### Let’s remember and apply God’s Word:

1. God wants us to ask with \_\_\_\_\_ motives, from a heart that *knows Jesus and loves God’s Word*.
2. Is it possible to befriend *God and the world* at the same time? Y N

In today’s world, *where many are rejecting God’s precious Word of Truth*, let us be BIBLE-BELIEVING CHRISTIANS by ➔rejoicing in Christ, ➔loving God’s Word, and ➔living according to it!

And all God’s people said: **Amen!**

| <b>Read, Understand, and Apply God’s Holy Word!</b>   |                                  |   |
|---|----------------------------------|---|
| <b>Verse and Key Word – James 4 ESV</b>   | <b>Greek and Transliteration</b> | <b>Meaning of Key Word</b>                    |
| <sup>4</sup> You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is <b>enmity</b> with God? | ἐχθρα<br>echthra<br>(ch = k)     | <b>enmity:</b> hostility toward God; also see |

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