

TODAY'S VERSES:

James 4:6

James 4:1-12

Ephesians 6:12

Ephesians 2:13

Ephesians 6:18

Matthew 6:24

Proverbs 17:22

THIS WEEK, I CAN APPLY THIS LESSON
TO MY LIFE IN THESE WAYS:

MY NOTES:

[illegible]

JAMES

A FAITH THAT WORKS

PART THIRTEEN: JAMES 4:1-12
MORE GRACE

JAMES

A FAITH THAT WORKS

PART THIRTEEN: JAMES 4:1-12

MORE GRACE

There are 3 primary tools in regard to growing in true wisdom:

1. *The Scriptures* – The point of the Scriptures is Jesus.
2. *The community of the church* – If we want to walk in true wisdom, we surround ourselves with people who love Jesus and submit to His Word.
3. *Those who are further along than us in "the faith" and in life* – We should seek guidance, in humility, from others who have lived more of "life."

Many times the church in America values our individuality more than it values the community God has placed us in. *James 4:1 "What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you?"* The literal root meaning of the phrase "fights and quarrels" is "wars" which conveys the realities of the situation in James' churches.

In James' day everyone in each of the churches would most likely have lived in the same town and knew one another. Friendship in the first century would carry a completely different meaning as friendships would critique and mold you. It's a horrific assault on the mercy and beauty of God when we let those who don't even know Him mold us into what they want rather than what God calls us to.

God's jealousy over us stems from the love of His own name and the hope that our joy in that name might reflect more perfectly His goodness and grace. John Piper says, *"God's jealousy is not the reflex of weakness or fear. Instead, God is jealous like a powerful and merciful king who takes a peasant girl from a life of shame, forgives her, marries her, and gives her not the chores of a slave, but the privileges of a wife—a queen. His jealousy does not rise from fear or weakness but from a holy indignation at having his honor and power and mercy scorned by the faithlessness of a fickle spouse."* God is jealous for the Spirit He gave us, and He is jealous for us to experience the fullest joy possible that is made manifest only in knowing, loving, and following Him.

James is arguing that where we walk in true wisdom and understand the grace of God, quarrels and fights and judgments begin to dissipate. It's not that we won't have them, because we always will, but we are those who are quick to seek forgiveness and even absorb things that most people in the world would not... because we have been given more grace than we can understand or comprehend.

Read James 4:1-12.

- Have you ever seen conflict in a church?
- What did it look like?
- How do you think individualism has affected the health of the Church?
- How is the Church today at conflict in ways similar to James' church?
- How can we gain wisdom from (1) Scripture? (2) Church community? (3) More mature believers?
- In what ways is community hard?
- How do you think we do as a faith community of looking out for each other vs our own needs?
- How has God used friendship to critique and mold you?
- What desires of yours have gotten in the way of Godly wisdom?
- How have you been more focused on what Jesus may give you rather than Jesus Himself?
- In what ways do you need to resist → come near?
- To wash → be purified?
- To grieve → be changed?
- To humble yourself → be exalted?
- How have you experienced Grace?
- Are you more prone to see the shortcomings in others or the strengths in others?
- How can we celebrate what God is actively doing in one another?