

Today We Continue To Look At The Next Major Section Of James, ~ 4:1-12.

Covers 4 subjects.

▶▶1st, ~ Conflict in the Congregation, ~ 1-3. ⇔⇔ Last time.

▷▷Brief review.

▷▷Unchecked sinful, self-centered desires at war within w/in us ~ cause war without.

↳↳The battle within ~ if left to fester, ~ does not stay within.

↳↳It manifests itself outwardly ~ in ugly ways.

→→Ugly ways ~ that can wreak havoc ~ w/in a church.

▷▷James teaches us ~ not to point fingers at others ~~ but rather ~ to ask god to lay bare our own hearts.

↳↳When we experience conflict in our congregation, ~ we should pray as David prayed.

→→Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!

↳↳If the Holy Spirit reveals ~ sinful, self-centered desires in our hearts, ~ we should humble ourselves ~ ↴↴

→→by confessing our sin to God and repenting of it. 1/13

▶▶ The other 3 subjects in 4:1-12.

①▷▷ Sp. A., ~ 4-6. ②⇨⇨ Submission to God, ~ 7-10. ③⇨⇨ Slander, ~ 11-12.

And as look at each of these subjects, ~ we should keep James' overall purpose in mind.

▶▶ To instill ~ correct thinking ~ and right behavior ~ in believers.

▷▷ Tough, ~ but sp. interests @ heart.

Today begin 4:4-6, ~ Spiritual adultery.

▶▶ Not literal. ⇨⇨ Not attacking.

▷▷ Spiritual unfaithfulness. ⇨⇨ Unfaithfulness to God.

▶▶ Vs 4 today. ⇨⇨ Split, ~ 4a, ~ 4b, ~ 4c.

▶▶ 4a, ~ Addresses original readers as ~ adulterous people.

▷▷ From context, ~ because they were making friends with the world.

▶▶ 4b-c, ~ explains why ~ friendship with the world is sp. adultery.

1st & foremost for original audience.

▶▶ Serves as exhortation and warning to us.

▶▶ Then ♥ Principles ♥ Now. 2/13

James Begins With A Shocking Address In 4a.

(LEB) Adulterous people!

▶▶ Grk = adulteresses. ⇔⇔ Jewishness

▶▶ Again, ~ not literal, ~~ talking about being spiritually unfaithful to God.

▶▶ And ~ adulteresses ~ jolts the formerly addressed "beloved brothers and sisters" ~ 77

▷▷ into the reality of their unfaithfulness.

▶▶ Adultery ~ implies divided loyalties between one's spouse and one's lover.

▶▶ If we are not ~ 100% committed to God, ~ 77

▷▷ if we are divided ~ between God and the world, ~ committing sp. adultery.

The startling designation ~ adulteresses ~ reflects the original readers' Jewish background.

▶▶ They would have immediately seen the significance of the terminology.

▷▷ Because it points right back to the OT.

▶▶ As stressed especially in the prophets, ~ God had joined himself w/ the people of Israel.

▷▷ He did this by graciously ~ electing them ~ 77

↪↪ and bringing them into covenant relationship with himself. 3/13

▶▶ This relationship ~ was frequently portrayed ~ with marital imagery.

▷▷ Is. 54:5a, ~ For your Maker is your husband, the Lord of hosts is his name.

▶▶ When God's people, ~ Israel, ~ turned to idolatry, ~ they tried to combine ~ 77

▷▷ the worship of God ~ and the worship of false gods.

↳↳ Like an adulterous wife, ~ they wanted the husband and the home, ~ but also wanted the lover.

Thus, ~ when Israel's relationship with God was jeopardized ~ 77

▶▶ by their flirtation with other gods, ~ the situation could be labelled ~ adultery.

▶▶ Jer. 3:20, ~ Surely, as a treacherous wife leaves her husband, so have you been treacherous to me, O house of Israel, declares the Lord.

▶▶ It is in Hosea ~ that this theme finds ~ its most moving expression.

▷▷ The prophet's marriage to an unfaithful harlot ~ is used to mirror ~ 77

↳↳ the unfaithfulness of Israel to the Lord.

▶▶ Jesus made use of this imagery, ~ calling those who rejected him an adulterous generation (Matt. 12:39; 16:4).

▶▶ As these references suggest, ~ this tradition always pictured ~ 77

▷▷ the Lord as the husband, ~ and Israel as the wife. 4/13

Similarly, ~ in the NT ~ the church is described with marital imagery ~ as the bride of Christ.

▶▶ Rev. 19:6-8

What James says ~ in the subsequent verses implies ~ that his scattered flock ~ 77

▶▶ wanted to embrace both God and the world, ~ and therefore were labeled adulteresses.

This is a warning to all believers ~ who seek to embrace ~ both God & the world.

▶▶ By seeking friendship with the world we are, ~ in effect, ~ committing spiritual adultery.

▶▶ Divided loyalties.

▷▷ We want the spouse and the home, ~ but we also want the lover.

↪↪ Want to embrace ~ both Jesus and the world.

An observation on the text here before moving on.

▶▶ Adultery is a good word-picture here.

▷▷ Devastation caused. ⇔⇔ Sp. adultery = devastation.

4b-c, ~ Explains Why Friendship With The World Is Sp. Adultery.

TPID, ~ Why it is ~ not right ~ or possible for us ~ to embrace both God and the world.

1st, ~ 4b, ~ Do You Not Know That Friendship With The World Is Enmity With God? 5/13

Yes ans.

▶▶ Looked at as assertion.

▶▶ Expressed: ~ ~ Surely you know ~ that friendship with the world is enmity with God.

▶▶ IOW, ~ this was common knowledge ~ to James' original recipients.

▶▶ Their behavior ~ implied a rejection ~ of what they knew ~ but refused to live by.

▶▶ They could not claim innocence or ignorance in this matter.

▶▶ But before we're tempted to look down on these early believers, ~ how often have we been guilty of this?

▷▷ How often ~ have we refused to act ~ on biblical truth ~ that we're well aware of?

↳↳ We know, ~ just as well as they did, ~ friendship with the world ~ is enmity with God.

→→ Therefore, ~ neither can we ~ claim innocence or ignorance in this matter.

The world here ~ is not talking about ~ the physical universe per se, ~ which is God's creation ~ and therefore good.

▶▶ And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good.

▶▶ Neither is James talking about human beings per se, ~ who are made in God's image and whom God loves.

▷▷ For God so loved. 6/13

No, ~ the world here refers ~ 77

▶▶to the entire ~ cultural value system ~ or world order ~ that is hostile toward God.

▶▶The "world" ~ is a common biblical way ~ of referring ~ 77

▷▷to the ungodly worldview and lifestyle ~ that characterize human life ~ in its rebellion against the Creator.

▶▶Furthermore, ~ Jesus declared that Satan ~ is the prince of this world.

▷▷In 1 Cor, ~ Paul referred to Satan ~ as the god of this age.

↪↪Paul goes on to say that Satan ~ has blinded the minds of unbelievers, ~ 77

→→so that they cannot see the light of the gospel that displays the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

▶▶In this sense, ~ God and the world ~ are strictly separate, ~ opposite of one another.

▷▷The world is ~ opposed to ~ and hostile toward ~ God.

▶▶And God's people ~ are mandated ~ to resist and even confront ~ the world.

▷▷In Col. ~ Paul exhorts us ~ not to let anyone capture us ~ 77

↪↪with empty philosophies and high-sounding nonsense ~ 77

→→that come from ~ human thinking and the spiritual powers of this world, ~ rather than from Christ. 7/13

▷▷ What's more, ~ hates us.

↳↳ If the world hates you, ~ keep in mind that it hated me first.

▷▷ So we have no business ~ seeking friendship with this hostile world.

Surely you know ~ that friendship with the world is enmity with God.

▶▶ Basic to the concept of friend ~ in the Greco-Roman world ~ was the view ~ 77

▷▷ that friends saw things ~ from the same perspective.

▶▶ So when a believer ~ strikes up a friendship with the world, ~ 77

▷▷ it means ~ they've adopted ~ a worldly perspective.

▶▶ Most likely this would include ~ a complete agreement in ~ aims, ~ ambitions, ~ and attitudes.

▷▷ All of which ~ are in direct & unmistakable opposition ~ to God & his kingdom.

▶▶ This friendship no doubt ~ also includes a desire, ~ 77

▷▷ for the ~ influence, ~ living standards, ~ financial security, ~ 77

↳↳ and perhaps some of the freedom ~ the world offers.

▶▶ The believer in this position ~ may love and worship God, ~ 77

▷▷ but they also want what the world can give them. 8/13

↪↪ Divided loyalties.

→→ Want the spouse and the home, ~~ but also want the lover.

But there's a huge problem ~ with this friendship with the world.

▶▶ And this is the 1st reason friendship with the world ~ is sp. adultery.

▶▶ James says ~ that friendship with the world ~ amounts to hatred toward God.

▷▷ I.e., ~ being friends with the world ~ is the same ~ as hating God.

▶▶ In this friendship w/ the world we are aligning ourselves with ~ ¶¶

▷▷ persons, ~ forces, ~ and things ~ hostile to God.

▶▶ My . . . , ~ we are the bride of Christ.

▷▷ To make such an alignment, ~ shows us to be unfaithful to our Savior.

↪↪ Warmly embracing all that is ~ the opposite of and in conflict w/ ~ God.

2nd Reason Friendship With The World Is Sp. Adultery.

4c **ESJ**: Whoever therefore chooses ~ to be a friend of the world ~ makes himself ~ an enemy of God.

▶▶ This logically follows. 9/13

▷▷ If the world is hostile toward God, ~ 77

↳↳ then whoever is a friend of this hostile world, ~ automatically makes themselves God's enemy.

The Grk wd for ~ chooses ~ is sometimes translated ~ "to wish" ~ or ~ "to want."

▶▶ But most often in the NT ~ it has the force of purpose or intention.

▶▶ James is referring not ~ to a thoughtfully wished-for friendship.

▶▶ Though that would be bad enough.

▶▶ It is the outright intention ~ to be the world's friend ~ that makes a person God's enemy.

▶▶ Nevertheless, ~ intentionality often begins with a wish.

▷▷ And even wishing to be friends with the world ~ is as dangerous and foolish ~ 77

↳↳ as a married person wishing to flirt ~ with someone other than their spouse.

▶▶ Those who would be friends with the world ~ thus stand in opposition to Abraham, ~ whose faith made him a friend of God.

The form of the Grk verb for ~ makes himself ~ indicates two important points.

▶▶ 1st, ~ it is a self-chosen position.

▷▷ Blame cannot be placed at the feet of another. 10/13

▶▶2nd, ~ it refers ~ to an ongoing state.

▷▷IOW, ~ as long as a believer chooses to be friends with the world, ~ they will remain ~ an enemy of God.

▷▷What this means in practical terms for a genuine believer ~ is that ~ 77

↪↪they have sinned and lost fellowship with God.

▷▷This is what sin does ~ to our relationship with him.

▷▷Is. 59:2, ~ your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear.

▷▷As long as we continue friendship with the world, ~ this separation will remain.

▷▷But, ~ when the erring child comes to their senses and repents, ~ 77

↪↪like the prodigal son, ~ God's ~ forgiveness, ~ grace, ~ and mercy ~ will flow abundantly into their lives.

Notice, ~ no middle ground.

▶▶(ESJ) Whoever therefore chooses ~ to be a friend of the world ~ makes himself ~ an enemy of God.

▷▷No one can serve two masters, ~ for either he will hate the one and love the other, ~ or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. ~~ You cannot serve God and money.

↪↪Neither can we embrace both God and the world. 11/13

▶▶ Christians have no freedom ~ to divide their love and loyalty ~ between God and the world.

▷▷ It is a matter of ~ either-or.

↳↳ We have to make a deliberate choice.

▶▶ God will tolerate no rival.

▶▶ And when a believer behaves in a way characteristic of the world, ~ 77

▷▷ they demonstrate that, ~ at that point, ~ their allegiance is ~ to the world ~ rather than to God.

▶▶ But James ~ does not seek ~ to condemn ~ believers who are guilty of friendship w/ world.

▷▷ He seeks ~ to pierce their conscience ~ and ~ to stimulate their repentance.

▷▷ It's all about ~ restoration.

▷▷ God wants us to be restored to fellowship and blessing.

▷▷ He knows the heartache and chaos friendship w/ world will cause us.

▷▷ So, ~ through James, ~ he uses attention-grabbing language to ~ wake us up ~ and get us to come home to him.

▷▷ Prodigal son. 12/13

▷▷Our heavenly Father ~ will use whatever attention-grabbing language or circumstances it takes ~ ¶¶

↳↳to cause us to ~ come to our senses, ~ repent, ~ and return home.

Notice what James ~ says ~ and does not say.

▶▶He says, ~ when we strike up a friendship w/ the world, ~ we make ourselves enemies of God.

▶▶What he does not say, ~ & this is extremely important, ~ is that ~ God makes himself our enemy in return.

▶▶Human beings do this.

▶▶But not God.

▶▶Our heavenly Father remains a ~ loving, ~ gracious, ~ compassionate, ~ approachable ~ Father.

▶▶One who does not ~ turn his back on us ~ or kick us out of the family, ~ no matter how foolish we are.

▶▶Instead, ~ he works to restore us ~ to full fellowship and blessing.

▶▶Prodigal son's father. 13/13