



Bethany Bible Study & Discussion

James (Part-7) (Chapter 4:8-17)

Strife among believers ... continuing discussion (4:8-12): Source of strife and How to overcome strife? Drawing nigh to God ... how & blessings?

God willing (13-17): God's perspective on our life; God's plan versus Man's plan

Application: *Is strife among believers inconsistent with our Christian faith?*

CONCLUSION

It is all about YOU

Strife (continuing discussion)

James 4

STRIFE

Are you facing strife in Church/Family?

Do you know the reason?

Do you have a solution?

Not others

Source of Strife? #1

Where do wars and fights *come* from among you? Do *they* not *come* from your *desires* for pleasure that war in your members? (1)

But You

- Your (ungodly) Desires
- Your war (conflict between flesh & spirit)

Source of strife #2

Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

Friendship with the world leading to worldly perspective, rather than divine insights

Source of strife #3

¹¹ Do not speak evil of one another, brethren. He who speaks evil of a brother and judges his brother, speaks evil of the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge. ¹² There is one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy. Who are you to judge another?

Do not speak evil of others

Do not spread gossip

Do not judge others

Why do we do it?: Jealousy, envy, insecurity

Better to be silent if you are tempted to speak evil, spread gossip or judge others!

Any correction within a local church must be done in the spirit of love (and restoration) rather than condemnation.

Source of strife

(from Proverbs)

- **Hatred** Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins (10:12)
- **Anger** A wrathful man stirreth up strife: but he that is slow to anger appeaseth strife (15:18)
- **Perversion** A froward man soweth strife: and a whisperer separates chief friends (16:28)
- **Gossip** Where no wood is, [there] the fire goeth out: so where [there is] no talebearer, the strife ceaseth (16:20)
- **Pride** He that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife: but he that putteth his trust in the LORD shall be made fat (28:25)

Strife

(is a sad sign of
carnal believers)

For you are still **carnal**. For where
there are envy, **strife**, and divisions
among you, are you not carnal and
behaving like mere men?

(1 Corinthians 3:3)

Draw near to God... sins of heart & hand

⁸ Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse *your* hands, *you* sinners; and purify *your* hearts, *you* double-minded. ⁹ Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and *your* joy to gloom. ¹⁰ Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.

Clean Hands (symbolizes external dealings ... what we do?)

Pure Hearts (symbolizes internal thoughts ... what we think?)

Deal with sins immediately (lament, mourn and weep) (Repent with an intent to not repeat sin)

How to draw near to God and grow in intimacy?

The Lord *is* near to those who have a broken heart,
And saves such as have a contrite spirit (Psalms 34:18)

I am my beloved's, And my beloved is mine. (Song of Solomon 6:3)

Separate yourself from the World

Confess sins

Read & Meditate on Scriptures

Have a disciplined Prayer life

Maintain fellowship with Believers

Be Faithful to the ministry Lord has given

Be obedient to His revealed Word

Blessing

Because of drawing near to God, Isaiah (Isaiah 6)

- was made aware of his sin
- was purified
- was given a new mission from God

Lord will elevate the humble with contrite spirit (10)

How to resolve sins/strife/dispute (Mathew 18:15-17)

Discuss privately



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graph TD; A[Discuss privately] --> B[Take one or more people with you to discuss]; B --> C[Take it to local church/congregation]; C --> D[If still does not listen, excommunicate the person];
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Take one or more people with you to discuss

Take it to local church/congregation

If still does not listen, excommunicate the person

Goal of church discipline (Mathew 18:15-17)

Member: To spiritually benefit the member guilty of sin

- **Restoration**, not condemnation (or excommunication)
- Restore to fellowship, once corrective action taken.

Church: To maintain the testimony of church

Strife leads to divisions
and unhealthy relationships

LET US NOT GIVE ANY ROOM FOR STRIFE IN OUR
CHURCH OR FAMILIES



Let us Strive for Unity (not strife)

“Behold, how good and how pleasant [it is] for brethren to dwell together in **unity**! ... for there the LORD commanded the **blessing**, *even* life for evermore” (Psalms 133)

How to
resolve
strife?
(James 4)

Receive His Grace

Judge yourself first

Separate yourself from the world

Submit to God and to one
another

God willing ...

¹³ Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit"; ¹⁴ whereas you do not know what *will happen* tomorrow. For what *is* your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. ¹⁵ Instead you *ought* to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that." ¹⁶ But now you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil.

Our life is weak, brief, uncertain

Vapor/fog that appears and vanishes away quickly (4:14) Like smoke (Psalms 102:3) Like passing shadow (I Chronicles 29:15, Job 8:9, Psalms 102:11, 144:4)

Our days are numbered (Job 14:5) The days of our life are 70-years; it is soon cut off and we fly away (Psalms 90:10)

My times are in your hands (Psalms 31:15)

It is appointed for a man to die and then face judgement (Hebrews 9:27)

May the Lord enable us to redeem time (Ephesians 5:16, Colossians 4:5, Psalms 90:12)

Man's plan ... looks very logical.



Time: Today or
Tomorrow



Destination: City



Duration of stay:
One year



Goal: To make a
profit

God's response to man's plan

This is your boasting.
All such boasting is
evil (16)

“Thou, fool!”
Luke 12:20

Our (new)
plan ought
to be ...

God willing, we will live and we shall do this or that
(15)

Remember,

“There are many plans in a man’s heart, Nevertheless
the Lord’s counsel – that will stand” (**Proverbs 19:21**)

This does not mean that bible is advocating for
having no vision, purpose or plan in life (**Luke 14:28-32, Proverbs 29:18**). But do not be proud of a future
that is unknown and out of our control.

God willing ... In Paul's life

but took leave of them, saying, "I must by all means keep this coming feast in Jerusalem; but I will return again to you, **God willing**." And he sailed from Ephesus (**Acts 18:21**)

But I will come to you shortly, **if the Lord will**, and will know, not the speech of them which are puffed up, but the power. (**I Corinthians 4:19**)

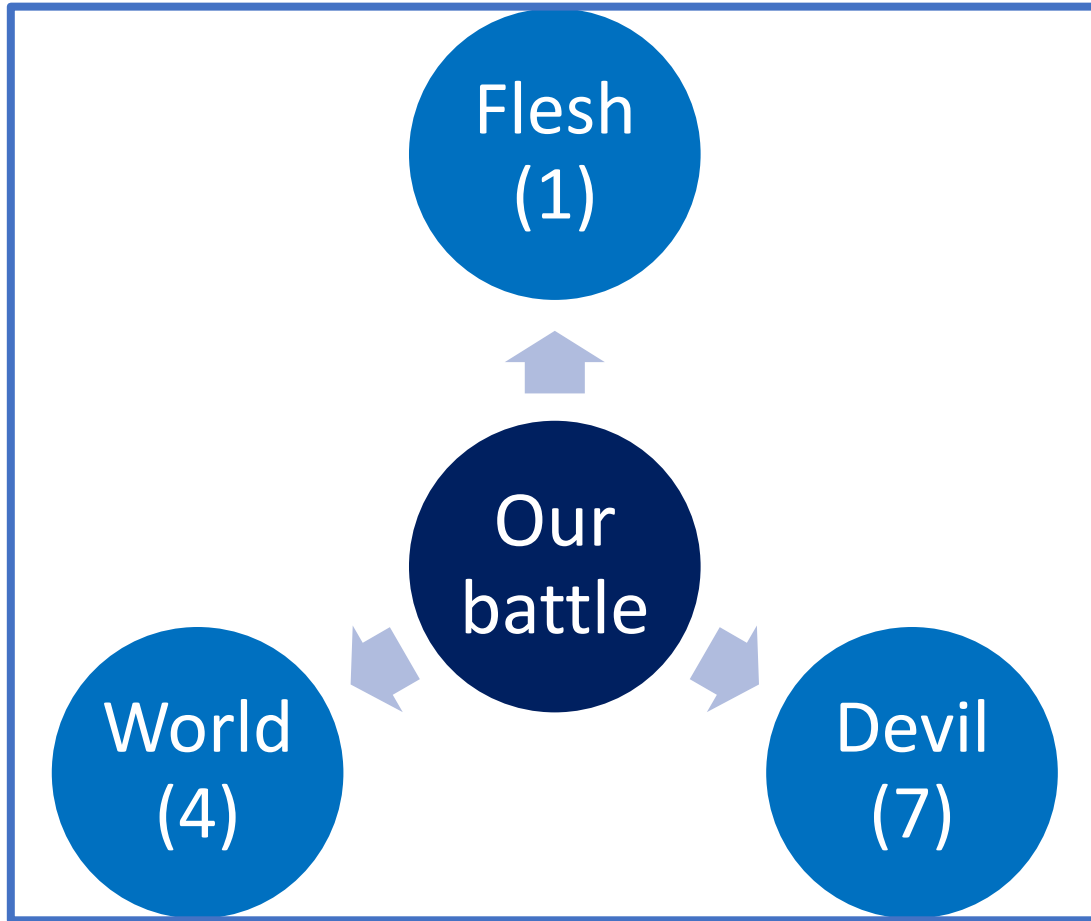
Sins of omission

Therefore, to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin (17)

We have to give an account for our sins of omission towards the two greatest commandment: Loving God and Loving our neighbors

Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. (**Mathew 25:45**)

Summary: Our battle with strifes & solution



Personal Reflection

What must **you** do to resolve conflicts in your life?

How do **you** plan your future?

Are **you** guilty of sins of omission?

**It's all about
YOU**

No Bible study next week
due to VBS

God willing, Next Meeting – July 6th