

## [James Part 8] The Result of Earthly Wisdom

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1. Throughout the book, James has been urging Christians to live faithfully toward God by abiding in His word
  - a. **Ch. 1** – in trials, seek wisdom from God, receive the word with meekness, hear and do not speak against it, and be doers not hearers only – ultimately practice pure and undefiled religion before God
  - b. **Ch. 2** – Do not show partiality in the keeping of the faith of the Gospel, keep all of the law, perfect our faith through our works
  - c. **Ch. 3** – A warning against many of them becoming teachers, be watchful of the tongue, make sure we are pursuing Godly wisdom and not earthly – otherwise great harm will be done.
  - d. **Ch. 4** – addresses some problems which result from earthly wisdom
2. **James 4:1-5** – the result of earthly wisdom

Discussion:

### I. THE RESULT OF EARTHLY WISDOM (James 4:1-5)

- A. Where do wars and fights come from among you? (**Js. 4:1a**)
  1. The Lord desires peace among brethren – **Ps. 133:1; Phil. 2:1-4**
  2. Yet Apparently, there was strife among them – where do these things come from? – what is the source of these fights/quarrels?
  3. 4:1 // **3:13** – seeking them to self-reflect to answer the question
- B. The source of wars/fights is worldly wisdom! – a desire for pleasure
  1. Bitter envy and self-seeking in the heart – **Js. 3:14**
  2. Earthly, Sensual, Demonic wisdom – **Js. 3:15**
  3. Result is confusion and every evil thing (i.e. sin) – **Js. 3:16** – this was the source of wars and fights among them.
    - There were wars/fights because they were appealing to earthly wisdom instead of God's wisdom – they were not spiritually minded, but seeking to fulfill their earthly senses.
- C. Desires for Pleasure: (hēdonē) – sensual delight
  1. From which we get the idea of hedonism – the pursuit of pleasure and sensual self-indulgence.
    - Pleasure is the ultimate aim of human existence – all they live for is earthly pleasure.
    - Most of the world today is characterized in this way. Materialistic. Carnal thoughts. Earthly pursuits. (Possessions, Power, Influence, ...)
  2. Focus was no longer the spiritual things, but the earthly pleasure and pride (// thorny soil **Mk. 4:18-19**).
  3. These lusts war against our member – **1 Pt. 2:11-12; Gal. 5:16-18, 24**
  4. Therefore, there were wars and fights among them. They had progressed beyond bickering/murmuring (which are sinful themselves – **Phil. 2:14**) into wars and fights – maybe even physical altercations between brethren.

“When God no longer rules man’s life, the pursuit of pleasure takes over, and peace is disrupted because of frequent fights and quarrels.”

- D. You lust and do not have (:2a) – intense desire (maybe for something another has)
- E. You murder and covet and cannot obtain (:2b)
  - 1. Perhaps not literally murder (*anger* Mt. 5:21-22; *hate* 1 Jn. 3:15)
  - 2. However, if you have given in to earthly desires and have set aside the word of God, murder as a result of covetousness isn’t out of the picture (Naboth murdered for vineyard – **1 Kings 21**)
- F. You fight and war (:2c) – because your lust is not satisfied
- G. Some do not have because they don’t not ask (:2d)
  - 1. God provides all good things (**Js. 1:17**)
  - 2. Ask God for your needs, rather than seeking to obtain by sinful means (stealing, murder, etc.)
- H. Some ask amiss and do not receive
  - 1. They ask, but intend to spend it on their (earthly) pleasures – they are selfish, greedy, intend it for evil (to fulfill earthly, sensual, demonic pleasure)
  - 2. If we ask with improper motives (not according to God’s will), God will not provide!
- I. Adulterers & Adulteresses! (:4a)
  - 1. Spiritual adultery – not being faithful to God – just because you were baptized into Christ, doesn’t mean you are right with God now! May have been born again spiritually, but they had gone back to following after worldly wisdom – unfaithful to God (like Israel)
  - 2. Friendship with the world = enmity with God (:4b)
    - God is spirit, not physical; all the sensual, earthly pleasures are not from God but this world (**1 Jn. 2:15-17**)
    - To be fond of these things, to be worldly-minded or driven by earthly desires, if you want to be friend (intimate with) the world, you make yourself the enemy of God (:4c)
    - You CAN NOT be right with God if you are friendly with the world, if the things of this world appeal to you and you give yourself to them.
    - The Christian who is on the fence and claims to love God but gives themselves to worldly lusts and desires and aren’t spiritually minded is the ENEMY of God.
    - You cannot serve two masters (**Mt. 6:24**)
  - 3. The Spirit who dwells in us yearns Jealously (:5)
    - Earthly desires contradict the spirit which is in us through the word (**Js. 1:21; Jn. 17:17**) When we commit spiritual adultery against God, He is provoked to jealousy (as a husband)
    - Anything less than full devotion displeases the Lord. (**Gal. 2:20; 2 Cor. 6:17**)

## II. THE SOLUTION (James 4:6-10)

- A. Recognize the problem is with pride (:6)
  - pride is an abomination to the Lord (**Prov. 16:5**); it only leads to strife and destruction (**Prov. 13:10; 16:18**)

- B. Humble yourself and submit to God (:7a)
  - Unconditionally surrender to God and fall into your proper rank
- C. Resist the devil (:7b)
  - He is behind the earthly desires and pride
  - If we resist, he will flee. We are able (**1 Cor. 10:13; Eph. 6**)
- D. Draw near to God (:8)
  - Cleanse your hands, you sinners – Seek forgiveness of your wrongs
  - Purify your hearts, you double-minded – return to single-minded devotion to the Lord (turn from your adultery)
- E. Humble yourself before the Lord, He will lift you up (:9-10)
  - Mourn for our sins (:9)

Conclusion:

1. What kind of wisdom do we possess? Our actions will clearly show
2. If you are focused on this world and consumed with earthly things, you are committing spiritual adultery, led by earthly wisdom.
3. If you are walking in the Spirit's direction, living according to the word of God, fully committed to him, led by heavenly wisdom.
4. Humbly turn your life over to the Lord today!