

# Personal Study

## JAMES PART 8 WORLDLINESS / GODLINESS

**"OUR PASSIONS AND DESIRES ARE AT WAR WITHIN US, AND WE MUST FIGHT AGAINST THEM. WHILE PRIDE, BOASTING AND DIVISIVENESS MARK WORLDLY PEOPLE, HUMILITY, OBEDIENCE AND REPENTANCE MARK THE GODLY".**

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## Introduction:

If you could have one thing today to make you happier.... what would it be? For some it may be a new car, more money in the bank account, a new job, a bigger house, the promotion that is right in front of you, to get married, to have kids, to live in a different neighborhood, to purchase more property, etc.

Every single person would define this differently. However, if we are honest, it is easy to look for fulfillment, purpose, joy, contentment, and meaning in temporal things. When we do this, it is like chasing the wind. Why? Because there is always something else that has the potential to be “more satisfying”.

Take a moment to read **James 4:1-10**. Reflect on what immediately stands out to you.

## Scripture Reflection:

### **vv. 1-3 “What causes quarrels and fights among you”?**

Have you been in conflict with someone recently? The answer is likely “yes”. If you really think about the “root” of the conflict, it can probably be traced back to what James is expressing to us here. Whether it is a big or small conflict, the root cause of our tension with others is almost always our pursuit of fulfillment, happiness, joy, and purpose in material or temporal possessions or circumstances. James is not saying that these things do not matter. What he is saying is that these things have their God ordained place in our lives.

**Here is the big idea:** Good things become bad things when good things become our “god”.

When the pursuit of our lives is temporal things, the Lord Jesus does not sit in the rightful place in our hearts and lives. When the aim of our lives is the temporal and material objects, then these things get our best affections, time, money, energy, thought life, etc. It moves Jesus out of the center of our life and moves our temporal pursuits to the center of our life.

### **vv. 5 “He jealously longs for the spirit that He has placed in us”:**

The desire of the Lord Jesus is to be the Lord **over** your life and **through** your life. This happens when Jesus sits at the **center** of our life.

Is Jesus ruling and reigning at the center of your life? The center of your pursuits? The center of your time? The center of your finances? The center of your marriage? The center of your

parenting? We have been created to worship Jesus with all our lives and possessions. Jesus longs to be at the center.

### **vv. 6 -10 “But He gives us more grace...”**

When our life, rhythms, values, and pursuits get out of alignment, Jesus is faithful to give us grace and point us back to Himself and His Word. James gives us some steps forward here as we receive grace and get back into alignment with Christ and His will for our lives:

**1. Submit & be humble:**

The Lord desires a humble people. We do not have everything figured out. We desperately need the grace of Jesus to keep us moving forward in the right direction.

**2. Resist the devil:**

We will be tempted to pursue the temporal things of this world to receive value, meaning, joy, etc. We have been given the grace needed to resist temptation, run from what is evil, and pursue the presence of Jesus. When we do this, James tells us that “he (Satan) will flee from us”.

**3. Draw near to God:**

Has Jesus gone away that we need to draw near to Him? Absolutely not! This is a call to stop pursuing foolish things, and look to Jesus as the giver of life, value, joy, purpose, etc. This is a call to stop, be still, and know that He is God. He is near to us already! We simply need recognize and press into that truth.

### **Application:**

So the question we reflect on today is “what are you pursuing”? Are temporal, material, self-serving things getting our best time, attention, money, and even our worship? If so, we are pursuing a counterfeit “god”. This corrupts our relationships, our growth as Christians, and the health of our walk with Christ.

Jesus calls us to repentance. Read **verses 9 -10**. Our response is humility, and re-direction. When we do this, Jesus is faithful to lift us up.

**Pray:** Ask the Holy Spirit to lead you in repentance and re-direction back to Christ and His Word.

