

FAITH THAT HELPS ME

FACE AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE



Personal Reflection and Discussion Questions

(As Bishop Charlie is preaching there is no message transcript)

James 4: 1-17.

4¹What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? **2**You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God. **3**When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures. **4**You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. **5**Or do you think Scripture says without reason that he jealously longs for the spirit he has caused to dwell in us? **6**But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: "God opposes the proud but shows favour to the humble."

7Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. **8**Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. **9**Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. **10**Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

11Brothers and sisters, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against a brother or sister or judges them speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgment on it. **12**There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the one who is able to save and destroy. But you—who are you to judge your neighbour?

13Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money." **14**Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes.

15Instead, you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that." **16**As it is, you boast in your arrogant schemes. All such boasting is evil. **17**If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for them.

PERSONAL REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What are commands, imperatives, or actions believers are called to do in 4:1-10?
2. What are at least five ways God might relate to us or actions of God in 4:1-10?
3. Read James 1:14-15; 4:1-5; Mark 4:19; Rom. 6:12; Gal. 5:16-17. Why are our inner desires, passions, or wants central to the temptations and sin we struggle with?

4. If you had to describe a healthy walk with God or the Christian life just from 4:1-10, what would be some key characteristics?
5. Read 1 Peter 5:5-9 and James 4:6-10. What are commands or phrases similar in both passages and what commands or encouragements are distinct to each passage?
6. In James 4:4, he warns us against friendship with the world rather than friendship with God. How might the words and phrases of 4:6-10 call us to confession and repentance from sin and into nearness to God? What role does Jesus play in providing our cleansing, bringing us near to God, and giving us the grace we need to follow Him?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What does James point the finger at when it comes to the sin and fighting in the Church (4:1)? How might we better examine and fight sin at the level of our desires and wants?
2. Read John 15:19; 1 John 2:15-16; Matt. 6:24. What might be some characteristics or symptoms of this "friendship with the world" that James talks about?
3. What are ways we can be in the world and for the world without being of the world (or a friend of the world rather than God)? How do you seek to do this in your own life?
4. Read 1 Peter 5:8-9; Eph. 4:27; 6:11; 2 Cor. 10:3-5. What are ways the Devil tempts, accuses, or discourages you? What are ways you can resist him and stand firm?
5. James calls on us to resist the devil in part (4:7) by submitting to God (4:7), drawing near to God (4:8), and humbling ourselves before God (4:10). What are specific, practical ways we can do these things in our lives?
6. What is one way others can pray for you as you seek to apply James 4:1-10?