



James 4:4 Pt 4 Being a Friend of God!

Oct 25, 2015

Text: James 4:4

- Precious friends, I really feel that James chapter four, and indeed all of this Holy Epistle is wonderfully appropriate for the growth and encouragement of CRCC right now.
- So much so, that including the messages we called “Pre-James 4:4” ☺, we’ve studied James 4:1-4 for 9 weeks including today!
- They are worth a quick review before we finish up with verse 4 today and move forward.

James 4:1-4...what we have learned so far!

1. We learned from verse one that pride is the main cause of quarreling and fighting. We traced several conflicts in Scripture, and we easily attributed the root cause in some way to PRIDE! Most of the conflicts we enter into have found their source in PRIDE! **The chief sin of the devil and the cause of man’s misery; PRIDE is a beast!** ☺
 - a. CS Lewis wrote, “...the essential vice, the utmost evil, is Pride. Unchastity, anger, greed, drunkenness, and all that, are mere flea bites in comparison: it was through Pride that the devil became the devil: Pride leads to every other vice: it is the complete anti-God state of mind...it is Pride which has been the chief cause of misery in every nation and every family since the world began.”
 - b. Jonathan Edwards said, “The first and worst cause of errors that abound in our day and age is spiritual pride. This is the main door by which the devil comes into the hearts of those who are zealous for the advancement of Christ. It is the chief inlet of smoke from the bottomless pit to darken the mind and mislead the judgment. Pride is the main handle by which he has hold of Christian persons and the chief source of all the mischief that he introduces to clog and hinder a work of God. Spiritual pride is the main spring or at least the main support of all other errors. Until this disease is cured, medicines are applied in vain to heal all other diseases.”
 - c. Pride is a good way to sum up the root of the warring passions within. **Humility** is a good way to sum up the answer. The more we can humble ourselves under Christ’s authority and word, and to one another in love, the more we defeat the warring passions within us and limit quarrels and fights.
2. We learned from verse two that we, if we are not very careful, are predisposed to “Murder, Covetousness, and Selfish Prayers.” ☺
 - a. This was astonishing to us because James’ letter is addressed to Christians!
 - b. So then...murder? The cause seems to be “desiring and not having,” better known as **jealousy** and **envy**. As Dave Ramsey has said, jealousy is wanting what someone else has, while envy is not wanting them to have it if you cannot! Both very nasty emotions.
 - c. We looked at murder both figuratively and literally and we remembered that Scripture equates hatred with murder: *1 John 3:15 ESV Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.*
 - d. Sadly, we also realized that actual killing isn’t that uncommon as well, as many of the unborn are offered up to Molech. (Lev 18:21)
 - e. We also reviewed the many verses of Scripture that warn believers against the sin of covetousness and the call to pray selflessly and humbly.
 - f. Because James can be a “bit rough” ☺, we then embarked on some Pre-James 4:4 exhortations.
3. First, we renewed our “Vision of Heaven!”
 - a. So that we could lift our heads out of the “mud puddle” we (exclusively from the book of Revelation) refreshed our vision of God (Rev 4:1-5), our worship of God (Rev 4:6-11), the victory of Jesus (Rev 5:1-5), the Gospel and the worthiness of the Lamb (Rev 5:6-14), the Marriage Supper of the Lamb (Rev 19:6-10), the New Heaven and New Earth (Rev 21:1-7), and the New Jerusalem (Rev 21:9-11, 21-27)!

- b. And we said, “**May we NEVER lose our joy because of what our Lord asks of us! May we NEVER sign a peace accord with the world. May we, right NOW, unfriend the world on spiritual Facebook! May we be overwhelmed by the immensity of what awaits, the grandeur of His Presence, the overwhelming nature of His love, and therefore resist worldliness until the shedding of blood (Heb 12:1-4).**”
4. Then we looked at “The Beauty of the Lord!”
- The goal of this message was to take another step towards Christian maturity that we might lovingly long for the **pure** instead of lamenting the loss of the **ugly!**
 - We looked at many “pictures” behind the precepts of God, that we might learn more about His loving heart and holy character. We desired to see His commandments not as burdens but as blessings!
 - We said that understanding the beauty of the pictures is important:
 - Because it helps to ease our transition from disobedient to **consistently** obedient.
 - Because the LORD’s precepts ARE **beautiful** as He is.
 - Because it gives one a better sense of the **heart** of the LORD.
 - Then we just looked at Him...high and lifted up, with the train of His robe filling the temple. And like Isaiah, we are awestruck, dumbfounded, and humbled. (Isa 6:1)
 - We said, “we so often miss the beauty of the God we serve. His dominion. His majesty. His authority and power. His love. His purity. We can get so pulled into pride, into what we want from Him, into our circumstances. Let us lift our vision and see God better. Let us behold His beauty. **Then let us consider His desire for our fidelity to Him instead of the world.**”
5. Then we asked a question from verse four: “What if we were a loving people instead of an adulterous people?” To frame the question, we looked at God’s overwhelmed love for us through the Scriptures:
- God created us! What love! Despite Man’s rebellion, God Promised a Redeemer and cared for us! What love! Despite more rebellion, God is continually merciful! Look at the rainbow; what love! God establishes a people through whom the Redeemer would come! What love! God gives the Law to point His people to the Redeemer! What love! God promised a new heart for His people! What love! God sends His Son! What love! Christ gives His Gospel! What love! Christ establishes His Church! What love! God gave His Word! What love! God gives us teachers! What love! The Marriage of the Lamb at His Return! What love! Our eternal state! What Love!
 - Then we asked, what should our response be to all this love? John gives us a good answer: *1 John 5:1-4 ESV Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of him. (2) By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. (3) For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome. (4) For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world--our faith.*
 - We said, “based on God’s love, a ‘loving people’ cannot continually choose the world.”
6. Then we looked at the heartbreak of spiritual **adultery**.
- We called spiritual adultery “heartbreaking” because in Scripture, not only is it a harsh indictment of unfaithfulness on behalf of God’s people, it is expressed by God in the most heart-wrenching terms. One of the greatest is God as a husband, and his people as His betrothed or as His bride.
 - Then we took the time to look in Scripture, and read that God views His **worship** in **extremely intimate terms**. It is striking (and sad) that James uses the word “adulterous” to describe Christians. We looked at the golden calf, the incident at Peor, the idolatry of Jeroboam, statements from Jeremiah and Ezekiel and the life of Hosea.
 - Could it be that we are privileged and called to a level of devotion much higher than we think?
7. Then finally, we looked at some “**Worldisms**” extrapolated from verse four and the whole of Scripture. ☺
- We saw that “friendship” is an intimate word.
 - We defined the word “world,” and stated that the *kosmos* (*Gr. world*) in the context of James 4:4 is a “harmonious arrangement or order” of the “ungodly multitude” that fights against our LORD. It is a satanically inspired system of ideologies, philosophies, governments, and jurisdictions.

b. *“Worldliness is also enmity with God. The world does not mean the planet on which we live, or the world of nature about us. It is the system which man has built up for himself in an effort to satisfy the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life. In this system there is no room for God or His Son. It may be the world of art, culture, education, science, or even religion. But it is a sphere in which the name of Christ is unwelcome or even forbidden, except, of course, as an empty formality. It is, in short, the world of mankind outside the sphere of the true church. To be a friend of this system is to be an enemy of God. It was this world that crucified the Lord of life and glory. In fact, it was the religious world that played the key role in putting Him to death. How unthinkable it is that believers should ever want to walk arm-in-arm with the world that murdered their Savior!” --William MacDonald*

- b. The Worldisms we called out included Atheism, Feminism, Consumerism, Pragmatism, and Racism.
8. Pastor (Designate) Harry helped us see more last week from the Parable of the Soils that the world, if embraced, sets our hearts up to receive the Word like the **thorny** ground hearer; the cares of the world can crowd out and choke the seed of Scripture if we are friendly with it!

Being a Friend of God

So what does all this mean?

James 4:4 ESV You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

1. It means that we should, **daily**, monitor our propensity to be prideful and adulterous.
2. It means that we must, daily, choose friendship with God, not in a salvific sense, but in a relational, love for Him sense. ☺ We should **intentionally** set our affections on Jesus!
3. It means that the last thing a true believer should want is to think, speak, believe, or act in a way that demonstrates enmity (hatred) towards the Christ who saved us by His blood, or His holy Word!

Friendship with God; think these through precious friends...

- Is there anything you are attached to that is hostile towards God?
- Is there any attitude within you that demonstrates more care for the world than Christ?
- Is there anything you've placed higher than Him?
- Is there any unconfessed love for worldliness and carnality lurking within?
- Is there any manner in which you present yourself that gives more credence and honor to the carnal than to the King?
- Is there anything in you or anyone you allow around you that "chokes" the Word?
- What are you willing to do to be His friend instead of His enemy?

Prayer:

“and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness”-- and he was called a friend of God.”

James 2:23 ESV

“You are my friends if you do what I command you.”

John 15:14 ESV

Help us to be your friends, Lord, day after day after day.

Amen.