

James

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James 4

- **There are five powerful instructions for us in this chapter.**
 - **We don't have because we don't ask.**
 - **We should not be 'friends' of the world.**
 - **If you want the devil to leave you alone, resist.**
 - **If you want to get close to God, do it.**
 - **If know what to do, but don't, it's sin.**

James 4

- **1 What 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.**

We don't have because we don't ask.

- **James may be addressing a known situation which is why the text is so specific.**
- **For us – what do we learn about praying from James' words?**
- **For some – they don't have what they want or need because they don't ask.**

We don't have because we don't ask.

- If I could convince you to make a change this morning it would be – never be guilty of not asking.**
- If we were honest, we would have to admit that we really don't ask God for His help because we don't believe He will answer.**
- I don't know all that Jesus meant by 'faith the size of a mustard seed', but I suspect He meant we don't need a lot of it to be effective prayers.**

We don't have because we don't ask.

- **And for some the problem is not the lack of asking – it's our poor motives for asking that keeps God from moving.**
- **Some want God to spare them from their terrible choices so they can keep on living the way they want to.**
- **Others want God to give them things to entertain themselves and so they can continue their lives fully distracted from God.**

We don't have because we don't ask.

- **God loves us too much to jump at our every whim and too much to give us things that take us further away from Him.**
- **When our prayer aren't answered maybe we should say thank you!**
- **Maybe we should be asking for a changed heart before we ask for anything else.**

We don't have because we don't ask.

- **Acts 4:13** The members of the council were amazed when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, for they could see that they were ordinary men with no special training in the Scriptures. They also recognized them as men who had been with Jesus.
- **To claim this verse for myself I need to check my motive – do I want the glory of being recognized as associating with Jesus, or do I want glory for him?**

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- **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 ?**

We should not be ‘friends’ of the world.

- **The Greek root word for friend here is no mystery – ‘philia’. (brotherly love)**
- **So how would I know if I am a friend of the world?**
- **And wasn’t Jesus considered the ‘friend of sinners’?**

We should not be 'friends' of the world.

- Friends prefer one another's company to all others.**
- Friends support and encourage each other.**
- Friends defend each other when criticism comes.**

We should not be ‘friends’ of the world.

- Maybe the key to understanding James’ charge of being a ‘friend’ to the world is the additional charge of ‘adultery’.**
- He was writing to Jews who would have understood the analogy from the O.T.**
- When you love someone or something else above God you are a spiritual adulterer, and making the world and what it offers a priority over God that makes us spiritual adulterers.**

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- **6 But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: “God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.” 7 Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.**

If you want the devil to leave you alone, resist.

- **Resist the Devil? One must first be convinced there is one.**
- **When we see evil abound how often do we look deep enough to see the true force behind the evil deeds of people?**
- **Perhaps we need to be reminded that we have an enemy who wants to steal, kill, and destroy and he plays for keeps.**

If you want the devil to leave you alone, resist.

- **So how do we resist the Devil?**
- **Luke 22:31 “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, 32 but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail.”**
- **Matt 6:13 “And don’t let us yield to temptation, but rescue us from the evil one.”**

If you want the devil to leave you alone, resist.

- **Eph 6:18 “Praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints.”**
- **Prayer is a very effective way of resisting the Devil, and there are many other ways that we need to be intentional about.**
- **We ought not be haphazard about our resistance – we are in a war.**

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- **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.**

If you want to get close to God, do it.

- **If you ever sense you are far from God, we just may be, and it is always our fault.**
- **The Son of God came to seek and to save us.**
- **When shepherd lost a sheep he went looking for it.**
- **When Adam and Eve sinned, God called to them.**

If you want to get close to God, do it.

- **There is no mystery here – God has made it abundantly clear that He wants us. Do we want him?**
- **When we say we don't know where God is when we need Him, it may be because we've pushed away from Him.**
- **Jesus promised to never leave us – He didn't move, we did.**

If you want to get close to God, do it.

- There are some conditions – God wants us to repent of our sins and change our behaviors.**
- Yes, God has conditions – “Just as I am” works well in salvation, but not for fellowship.**
- He says ‘wash up’, ‘change’, and ‘mourn over your sin’, and ‘humble yourselves’.**

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- **13** Now 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. **15** Instead, 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.

If know what to do, but don't, it's sin.

- **In addition to the 10 commandments and other specific sins listed in the bible, we see here that sometimes inactivity is a sin.**
- **There are sins of omission.**
- **Prove 3:27 Do not withhold good from those who deserve it when it's in your power to help them.**

Questions