

Welcome back! Thank you for continuing our Distance-Discipleship Summer Study: JAMES by Matt Chandler; hosted by Grey Stone EDU with Small Groups by Lifeway! We hope you are growing spiritually over these 13 weeks by studying this vital book together! *****Video reminder:** In order to view the video teachings each week, you will need to download the **Lifeway Small Groups App** for your device.

MAIN POINT

Our passions and desires are at war within us, and we must fight against them. Pride, boasting, and divisiveness mark worldly people, while humility, obedience, and repentance mark godly people.

INTRODUCTION

- **How would you define worldliness? Why is worldliness a temptation that even believers are continually drawn toward?**
- **How is worldliness related to the topic of true and false wisdom?**

This week we'll build on our previous study of true and false wisdom. Worldliness and godliness are both the root and the fruit of the wisdom we live by. False wisdom is rooted in and reproduces more worldliness. True wisdom is rooted in and reproduces more godliness. Apart from the wisdom of God, we will continually drift towards worldliness.

[Watch the session 8 video featuring Matt Chandler: Worldliness/Godliness](#)

Video Teaching Notes

1. If you feel as though you are entitled, you grow not in gratitude and gladness but C_____.
2. Rich, good friendship is fought for, it's restrictive, and it invites in critique.
3. God is not jealous A_____ you; He is jealous for you, for His own glory.
4. The Lord is jealous for us to experience the fullest joy possible, made manifest only in knowing, loving, and following Him.
5. There is no sin with more power than the cross of Christ.

How Do You Submit?

- Resist the D_____.
- Draw near to God.
- Be S_____ about sin.

6. Because the Holy Spirit is inside me, I don't have to sin anymore. I resist, and God is faithful to make a way out.
7. We don't read the Bible for F_____ and figures. We read the Bible to gaze upon the beauty of God.
8. We are refined best in the furnace of community.
9. Our watchfulness and seriousness about sin is not just about our actions but about our D_____.
10. It's in our brokenness over our sin that the forgiveness and grace of this jealous God who gives more grace launches us into an orbit of J_____.

*** **Contempt; About; Devil; Serious; Facts; Desires; Joy.**

Scriptures Used in Today's Session:

- James 4:1-6
- James 4:7-9
- Romans 7:15
- Romans 12:2
- Ephesians 6:10-18

Conclusions & Remarks:

1. It's by our love for one another that Christ is most visibly seen, savored, and worshiped.
2. Our passions and desires are at war within us and we must fight against them.
3. Pride, boasting, and divisiveness mark worldly people.
4. Humility, obedience, and repentance mark godly people.

Notes from Pastor Randall

- *“Friendship” with the world is describing an “intimacy” (in context with the broken world) that we should fight against.*
- *Friendship with the world comes from sinful desires of the flesh and a longing for earthly pleasure over pleasure in your relationship with God. This results in a spiritual adultery against God.*
- *Worldly speech discourages one another in criticism, attacks, gossip, or slander.*
- *Worldly speech also dishonors God because it is done out of selfish ambition and pride...putting yourself ahead of God and others.*
- *Godly speech encourages others and exalts God.*

My Personal Study:

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

Read James 4:1-6.

- **The way we view the world causes us to grow in one of two ways: gladness and gratitude or entitlement and contempt. Of the two ways people grow, which way are you growing?**
- **What circumstances in life lead you to feel most entitled? Why should you find satisfaction in God regardless of your circumstances?**

When we learn to spot God’s goodness in our lives, it leads to an ever-increasing sense of gladness and gratitude. As joy and satisfaction begin to grow in our lives, we learn to appreciate God’s work regardless of our circumstances. In contrast, if we feel that God owes us something, instead of growing in gladness and gratitude, we’ll grow in contempt. The only thing we deserve from God is death and eternal punishment, but by His grace, He has given us life.

- **How can social media feed our entitlement and ungratefulness?**
- **How can real friendship—which Matt described as rich, good, fought-for, restrictive, and inviting critique with both God and with others—keep us from entitlement and worldliness?**

Read James 4:7-9.

- **What three actions for submitting to God are commanded in these verses?**
- **What does it look like in practical terms to resist the devil? How are you establishing support systems and accountability to help you resist spiritual attack and temptation?**

James also said to resist the Devil. When we do, James said the victory over his temptation is certain—he will flee from you. The Greek word translated “resist” means “to oppose,” “to stand against.” James made it clear that in regard to the Devil (the word means “slanderer” or “accuser”) and our yielding to his temptations, there can be no neutrality.

- **What does it mean to draw near to God? For Him to draw near to you?**
- **How is true sorrow and repentance over sin related to drawing near to God?**

We must resist the Devil on the one hand and draw near to God on the other. James promised that the closer we get to God, the closer He gets to us, as the opposite ends of two magnets attract each other. To get closer to God we must cleanse our hands and purify our hearts. James had in mind that we need to clean up our outward actions as well as our inner attitudes and motives. We cleanse ourselves when we confess our sins and repent of our sins. We can be sure that if we are not actively drawing near to God, we are moving closer to worldliness.

APPLICATION

Identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to our lives.

- **What has proved most effective in helping you resist temptation at different times in your life? How do you need to act now?**
- **What practical steps do you currently take to structure your day or week in order to pursue God? What do you need to begin?**
- **Who is someone in your life with whom you are having conflict or an uneasy relationship? How can God’s grace help with that relationship?**

PRAYER

Pray for God to empower you to resist the devil, drawn near to Him and take your sin seriously.

Digging Deeper COMMENTARY in James 4:1-9

4:1 While pride and selfishness are natural to fallen humanity and often serve as a basis for advancement in worldly rank, James names them as the source of wars and fights within the congregation. “Wars and fights” indicates physical conflict among members and/or factions within the congregation. The source of conflict was the cravings... at war within you. “Cravings” refers to the pleasures of life, the pursuit of which leads to conflicts.

4:2-3 Two statements distinguished by paired opposites (**desire**... do not have and murder and **covet**... cannot obtain) and two direct assertions (**fight** and **war** and do not have because you do not ask) describe the problem to which the circumstances had led. People were actually killing one another to appease their misplaced desires! Their desires were unappeased because they were asking with wrong motives. The source of conflict was selfish desire and envy run amok (3:13-18).

4:4-5 Adulteresses refers to the congregation’s unfaithfulness to God. Self-centeredness is cast as diametric opposition (hostility) to God. The phrase the Spirit who lives in us yearns jealously plays off “the cravings... at war within you” in verse 1, demonstrating the difference in attitude between a Spirit-filled life and one enslaved by selfish cravings.

4:6 The phrase but He gives greater grace introduces the main point—God’s grace is able to overcome unfaithfulness. The exhortation to repent is backed by a stark reality expressed in Proverbs 3:34 and quoted here by James: God resists the proud. “Resist” is a military term used to describe an army arrayed for battle. To remain in sinful pride is to invite God’s battle array against you. In contrast to this, God gives grace to the humble (1:17).

4:7-9 James issued ten commands needed to resolve the conflict within the congregation. The theme is repentance and forgiveness. The use of imperatives followed by and suggests that the result of each command is conditioned by the response to it, which yields the idea, “if you do X, then Y results.” Submit to God carries the idea of self-humbling; resist the Devil suggests an active resistance against temptation. Sinners and double-minded people are parallel ideas that characterize both the teachers and the congregation. “Double-minded” recalls the doubter of 1:8.