

# James IV - An Exegesis and Application with Commentary

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[Presented January 9, 1979 at pastoral conference in Crete, IL]

Let us begin with a short recap as to what we have heard thus far in James' epistle.

James is apparently writing to Jewish Christians. Converts who lived outside the holy land. The letter he pens is aimed at practicing practical Christianity. In the first chapter we observed the marks of true religion: Joy and patience under trials, unwavering faith, recognition of the sources of evil and godliness.

In chapter two our essayist pointed us to two main parts: I. Avoid discrimination and II. avoid an inactive faith (in other words, do good works).

In the immediate preceding chapter, Chapter 3, we heard about the blessed instrument called the Tongue. This instrument is either used for godly purposes or sadly abused to the harm of men and blasphemy of God.

Now, let's briefly look at an outline of our day's concern James Chapter Four.

## OUTLINE

### Disregard of God Causes Trouble!

- I. Disregard of God in preference to the world, Vs. 1 - 10
  - A. Source of strife among men
    - Vss. 1 - 2 Unrest and unholy passions
    - 3 - 4- Unanswered prayers and worldliness
  - B. Steps to Divine Favor
    - Vss. 5 - 9 Pride, stubbornness, impurity, double-mindedness, and. patience, put these away from your hearts.
    - 10 Humility, submission to the Lord.
- II. Disregard of God in Judging
  - Vss. 11 - 12 Evil speaking and judging.
- III. Disregard of God in Business
  - Vss. 13 - 16 a) presumption in business dealings.
  - b) uncertainty of life.
  - Vs. 17 Neglect of proper duties (sins of omission)

Vs. 1 Whence (from where) wars and whence (from where) quarrels among you? Not from here (Are they not from here) from your lust, the ones which keep waging a battle in your members?

James opens chapter four with two searching questions to help the people check their lives and recognize the sinful behavior with which they are carrying on. It appears to James that his Jewish, dispersed brethren are taking on the ways and attitudes of the un-Christian world around them. The Christians are picking fights with each other. That there is no theological basis for these fights and quarrels among the people is apparent from James definition "*pleasure - lust.*" Your personal desires are causing you undue quarrels.

James' people were picking up the quarrelsome ways of the heathen, just as God's Old Testament people picked up the heathen ways of the Canaanites, Moabites and others. Paul had to warn the Galatians against quarrels between one another and we today experience the same difficulties in congregational life with families,

spouses and voting members at meetings. TV portrays quarrelsomeness and bickering as a way of life, as a manner of getting along, which is quite natural and acceptable. But we know, as James attempts to point out, that it is not godly. Man's sinful lusts *keep on waging wars* between brothers. Our task is to show ourselves and our people that personal lusts and pleasures must also be subject to the will of God.

Vs. 2 You long for (lust) and you do not have; you murder and you are filled with jealousy and you are not able to obtain, you fight, and you wage war.

When James addresses this verse to the people, he is equating their harsh sinful actions and behavior with open punishable sin. To show how God considers their evil, continual strife-making between themselves, he calls it murder and war waging. No matter how hard and long this reprehensible, sinful action continues in their midst they still gain nothing. What they do become is sinful in the sight of God.

Those peoples' personal lusts and desires demonstrate an ego-centric selfishness always wanting their own way and never willing to give in to their fellow Christians or fellow men of the world. Their selfishness leads them into jealousy and hatred. James is here trying to remind the people of Jesus' words in Matthew 5:22, "but I say to you that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of judgement." Or of Jesus' words through I John 3:15, "whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him."

In our congregational counseling how often doesn't such ungodly lust and selfishness lead to hatred and murder of the heart in marriages. One spouse is amorous selfish in his feelings, the other not so amorous and equally selfish ... the result ... the one's desires are not satisfied. His will is not subject to Christ and a warfare is waged in the marriage. James says such problems are continuing among you brothers and sisters, cease from them.

Vs. 3. You do not have, because of this, you do not ask for yourselves, you ask and you do not receive, because you ask (for yourselves) with wrong motives, so that on account of your lusts you may waste.

James is deeply concerned with the *motive*, the *attitude* behind prayers to God in this verse. He stresses that those people, 'the unregenerate,' whose passions and lives are controlled by selfishness, will unquestionably not have their prayers answered. Even the Christian to whom he writes may have some of this self-centered larceny lurking within him, if so, prayers offered to God, which are meant to feed that self-indulgent evil will, will not be honored by God with an answer.

When James says, "you ask and you do not receive," he could very well have Jesus' Matthew 7:7 passage in mind, "Ask and it shall be given you, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you."

When the middle voice is used in this verse, it drives home the point of selfishness, greed, "me, myself, and I" attitude. How much we need to beware of this attitude in the ministry. How careful we need be in our prayers for God to bless our work, so these prayers aren't asked in an ego-centric, ego-feeding way.

God tells us perfectly well which and whose prayers He will readily accept. (e.g. His ears are open to the cries of the righteous, Ps. 34:15. The Lord promises to be close to them who call on Him in truth, out of a proper heart, Ps. 145:18. The prayer of the penitent is heard and answered as in the Pharisee and Publican, Luke 18:14. We also have the confidence from God's Word that when we ask anything according to His will, He will hear it, I John 5:14. Jesus set that beautiful prayer model in the garden of Gethsemane).

Vs. 4 Adulteresses!! Do you not know that the friendship of the world is enmity against God? Accordingly he who desires to be a friend of the world, has become (established himself as) an enemy of God.

Adulteresses!! James nails the readers to the wall, mincing no words. If you live as the rest of the ungodly world in your lust, greed, bickering and quarrelling, you have become adulteresses and turned away from your true love, Jesus and His way of life.

The variant reading slips in μοιχοι (adulterers). This appears as a later addition also found in the King James. It is not in the earlier manuscripts, but its addition may make the ERA movement feel more equal in this chiding rebuff of James. How often Jesus referred to people that didn't listen as an adulterous generation as in Mt. 12:39 (a reference to the Jews as Sign seekers).

The church is the Bride of Christ. The label or epithet of brides is carried out in the Old and New Testament.

The firm, stern, point-blank accusation, 'adulteresses,' is meant to wake up the sleepy-headed Christians to whom James is writing. He is warning them that if they love the world and its pleasures too much, they can readily slip into spiritual adultery. Isn't this true of many people at the Christmas season, just past? Adults and youngsters alike who dwell on the thought of Santa, elves and earthly peace, more than the true Birthday of Christ. Or what about Easter coming up? The Bunny, Spring fashions and sports begin. Sometimes the love of these worldly pleasures adulterates even Christians from the deep love of God they should have.

Jesus warned, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon," Mt. 6:24. Enjoy the world, take pleasures in the world, but do not be overcome by the world and let it run you. When you love God more than the friendship of this world, you can expect the corollary to Mt. 6:24, where Jesus says, "... because ye are not of the world ... therefore the world hateth you," John 15:19.

The question, "Don't you know?" is another shocking statement, meant to make the people think about their lives. James confidently expects to hear, "Yes, we know," but they must be reminded about which lasting friendship to choose and cultivate.

Vs. 5 Or do you think that the Scripture speaks in an empty way? Does the Spirit whom he caused to dwell in you yearn jealously? Moreover he gives greater grace.

The one thing on which many commentators agree in regards to this verse is that its interpretation is difficult. James here asks a question to which one definitely expects the answer, NO! He takes for granted his readers regard the Scripture as the unquestionable truth, without error, (quite a contrast from even today's "Lutheran" circles, as reported in the last Northwestern Lutheran regarding the Missouri Synod pastor, who referred to biblical inerrancy as a lie and deceit of Satan).

The Spirit is God's Spirit whom He caused to dwell in man. This Spirit of God, given to man, cannot but view with jealousy (envy) the possession of any rival spirit within the soul of man. This refers very well back to verse four, where we are told one can only retain friendship with one comrade, the world or God. We cannot adhere to both at one time. This Spirit has every right to be jealous over what or whom fills our souls, because our souls also belong to God and should be filled with only wholesome, godly feelings.

In Isaiah 42 :8 we are reminded of the divine jealousy of God when He tells us, "I am the Lord, that is my name and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." The commandments prescribed by God in Exodus Chapter 20 carry His own warning of divine jealousy when He said, "Thou shalt not bow down Thyself to them, nor serve them for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the Fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me."

God recognizes the inability of man to render undying faithfulness to Him, therefore He supplies a greater measure of His grace to assist man in adhering to the triune God with unswerving tenacity. The assurance of God's grace reminds us of Paul's understanding of God's divine grace in Romans 5:20 "But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Out of His love, God not only supplies the power to resist temptation, but also the forgiveness required to sponge away the sin's guilt, which lies heavily on man's soul.

Vs. 6 Therefore he says, God puts down the haughty, but he gives grace to the ones of low position.

Our text is a repetition of a quote from Proverbs 3:34, which expresses the same attitude of God over against the pride of mankind. First Peter 5:5 also expresses this aversion to the proud and the exalting of the lowly, humble child of God. Even Mary, Jesus' own earthly mother expressed this divine principle in her

magnificat recorded in Luke 1:51-53 when she said, “He hath showed strength with his arm, he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath sent empty away.”

Who are these proud? The arrogant humanist of our day, the snug Know-it-all college graduate, who has all the answers when you conduct an evangelism call on him as a prospect or be he a delinquent in the congregation.

Of this sinful pride, every pastor does well to beware. The high-calling and office of the ministry can tend to puff one up with pride, until one learns he doesn’t have “all” the answers.

The proud are so filled and satiated with self-importance they have no room for God’s law or the Gospel.

In contrast to the arrogant, proud persons, there are the “lowly,” the humble. These humble are the ones who recognize their spiritual insufficiency before God. They also recognize that others around them are as important as they. Such humble ones “cast all their care on Him, for He careth for you” I Peter 5:7. These humble are thankful for and rely on God for all physical and spiritual blessings. These humble are the content of I Timothy 6:6-10. Those are the content ones, who view any gift during the year and at Christmas as a rich blessing. They do not complain they received no more or an insufficient amount in comparison to a another person. Let us *be* such *humble* persons in our ministry!

Vs. 7 Accordingly submit yourself to God, set yourself against the devil, and he shall flee from you.

After James has told us about the people of low position or the humble ones, he then tells us what humble people do in regard to their God, they submit themselves to God. James doesn’t say *obey* God. Many people can obey because they dread the outcome of disobedience to God or some higher authority. But James says, *submit*. To submit is to put oneself under another’s rule because of a respect of love for that person. Submission is one of the most noble of Christian virtues. Each Christian needs to pray for the spirit of submission to be worked in him. Submission to another is contrary to man’s innate, ego-centric, selfish, sinful nature. This becomes blatantly evident, when young married couples today desire to pen their own marital vows. One prime reason is to strike the godly principle of the wife submitting herself to her husband.

For the Christian, submission is a desire, a privilege. He knows submission out of love and respect is God’s will (e.g., citizens to the government, wives to their husbands, slaves to masters, children to parents).

When a Christian exercises submission to God, God blesses him with the ability to resist the devil. How frequently we pastors must resubmit ourselves to God to find strength to resist the Satanic attacks of pride, when parishioners compliment us on our sermons, laud the Bible class discussion, almost overbearingly thank you for the words of comfort at a funeral or time of a personal dilemma.

The imperative used here sounds almost conditional in its force with the sense being, “If you resist the devil, he will flee from you.

The devil from Eden to eternity continually appeals to the pride of man. The devil loves to make man think of himself, to cause man to “*do his thing*” regardless of how many toes he steps on through his unloving actions involving his fellow man. To counteract the wiles of Satan, Jesus offers us a promise in this imperative and ensuing future tense. Resist and the devil *will flee from you!*

Jesus exemplary resistance of Satan established our course of action in resisting the devil. In the wilderness Jesus used the sword of God’s Word to thwart the attack of Satan. For more spiritual battle accouterment all you and I need do is refer to Ephesians 6 to be reminded of the impenetrable armament at our disposal to resist Satan and insure his flight from our presence.

In this verse and following verses there are 10 Preemptory Aorist Imperatives, which call for decisive action on the part of the Christian. To use James’ earlier expression, Be a Doer and not a Hearer only!

Vs. 8. Come near to God and he shall come near to you, cleanse (your) hands, you sinners, and (your) hearts, you double-minded.

The manner through which God's people draw near to Him is through repentance over sin and faith in the meritorious work of Christ. In the Old Testament it was a special function of the priests to come near to God in behalf of the people and himself. In their hands they brought sacrificial offerings in obedience to the ordinances of the Lord. In the New Testament this privilege of drawing near to God is open and extended by Christ to all Christians. We need not come with hands filled with sacrifices, but with hearts that trust solely in the all-atoning blood of *the* Sacrifice, Jesus Christ. In fact our Lord invites us to come when we are heavy-laden with sin, Mt. 11:28 and to come boldly before His throne of grace to find help in time of need, Hebrews 4: 16.

Again Jesus promises us He will draw near to such persons, who humbly approach Him.

"Cleanse your hands" in the Old Testament, hand washing was a ritual duty imposed on the priests to make them fit for service to the Lord, Ex. 30:20. These ritual washings apply to us New Testament Christians also, in that they refer to our spiritual lives and deeds. Our deeds should be morally clean and purified.

To whom is Jesus and James addressing these admonitions to cleanse their deeds? To his fellow Christians, yet he calls them, "Sinners" instead of brothers. It may sound harsh, but is still very descriptive of our human lives. Even pastors are sinners, who fit under this title sinners. We too still commit sins either by commission or omission.

The influence of the world wielded by Satan and our own sinful, weak flesh can cause us to morally defile God's law again and again, or as God says *sin!* My heart doesn't want to sin! With my inward man I delight to do God's law, I don't desire to defile God's will, but the good I would, I do not and the evil that I would not, that I do. Thus even as a pastor, I am as James says a *diyuxov* double-minded person. My deeds and my thoughts need to be continually resubmitted to God for continued purification by His Holy Spirit's operation within me. Only when I as a pastor revert time and again to God for purification, will I then personally be able to pluck the speck of dust or pull the mote out of my brother's eye.

Vs. 9 Lament and mourn and weep, let your laughter be turned to grief and your joy into gloominess.

Verse nine is a result of recognizing one's double-mindedness before God. A truly repentant Christian will lament and weep over the sins he has done against his Savior. Jesus too despite his sinless state wept over the sins of men and the results of God's curse on that sin. He wept over Jerusalem's sinfulness for which He would die. He wept at the grace of His friend Lazarus, who experienced the fulfillment of the Father's curse on sin. Those examples of weeping over sin should remind us to weep also over the harsh words we speak, the unwholesome thoughts we think or improper actions we perform.

Don't pastors also fit under this double-minded behavior? How many pastors do you know have such a double-minded, double-standard. They bless on Sunday and in the sickroom, but their speech at home, at "closed" parties with other clergy is quite opposite (double-minded) from what it ought to be as a "man-of-God." I'm no angel, but to me and to you, this admonition should raise a red flag against our bawdy humor.

The hortatory imperative commands, "Let your laughter be turned to grief." This almost supports some people's view of Christianity, that to be Christians, one must mope around with dejected, down-cast look, never smiling. Most every pastor has such people within his congregation, who relish this type of "Christianity," but in reality such improperly understood dejection becomes an offence to many, especially to the Christian, who has found real joy in the forgiving kindness of Christ, his Savior.

Jesus tells us, Blessed are they who mourn, Mt. 5:5. Those who mourn over their sin, repent and not think lightly of their sin, such will be comforted now and in heaven, where we will and join in the guileless laughter and joy of being in the blessed presence of our most holy triune God.

Vs. 10 Humble yourself before the face of the Lord and he shall lift you up.

Verse ten is the summary statement closing off the first section of chapter four verses 1-10. This section has been labeled – “Friend of the World, An Enemy of God.

The self-humiliation of which James speaks is in regards to repentance only. The passive aorist imperative *humble yourself*, is again understood in a reflexive middle sense, just as it occurred in verse 7, which imperative stated, Set Yourself Against The Devil.

Attendant to this exhortation to Humble Yourself is another promise of up-lifting by the Lord. To those who confess and repent of their sin, God is kind, gentle and reassuring that all is well between the penitent and his God against whom he sinned. Such exaltation is for the Christian both an immediate and a more distant reality. Through humiliation and repentance we are exalted now, relieved of guilt, the weight of our guilt disappears and we can start over. The truly humble person will find the denouement, the apex, the completion of his exaltation, when he finally lives with Christ in the kingdom of glory in heaven.

Jesus repeated this principle of self-humiliation time and again in the Gospels. The most familiar repetition of such repentive humiliation is in the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican, which also acted as a summary of the parable.

Vs. 11 Do not speak evil of one another, brothers, the one speaking evil of (his) brother, the one judging his brother, he speaks evil of the law and judges the law. Now if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but judge.

Verse 11 and 12 fit together as a unit. Their title is “*backbiting and judging.*” Those two verses follow well after the thoughts of verses 1-10 as an example of how those who are the friends of the world, will indulge in unwholesome activities with their mouths. This activity demonstrates the lack of humility in a person. It depicts the haughtiness and self-arrogance of man. Such self-prestigious attitudes are often oppressed in the cruel treatment of our follow-men (fellow-pastors).

James changes his address in this section. Formerly he called his readers adulteresses and sinners, now he returns to the term “Brothers.” He is reestablishing the bond of unity they should be enjoying as fellow-followers of Jesus Christ. He is indicating the close tie which binds them together spiritually. This tie is as close, if not closer, than any blood relationship of human origin.

It is indeed very true that those who indulge in the habit of running down their neighbors, or a follow-member of their church, often do so because they feel that in so doing, they are implying that they themselves are very much better people than those who they disparage. Back-biting is a subtle form of self-exaltation.

How about pastors in the close-knit kinship of the WELS? How often don’t we hear or perhaps personally revel in a tidbit of unsavoriness concerning some pastor with whom we may not agree, or for whose character we do not care. One good piece of advice is never judge another’s ministry or degrade it, especially when you don’t know all the facts. Remember, there are plenty of other unsanctified people, including other unsanctified pastors, who may relish an opportunity to judge your ministry.

How many friendships are broken, reputations ruined, relationships destroyed though careless gossip and backbiting only indulged in for the lack of something better to do. Fill your thoughts with God’s thoughts. As a pastor, study God’s Word harder, and you won’t have room for such drivel and nonsense of uncharitableness, evil speaking against your brothers.

The person who backbites or hypocritically judges his brothers again shows no humility and subjection of himself to God’s law of love for his fellowman. Such a person usurps God’s divine prerogative to be *the Judge!*

If one backbites, gossips is a talebearer, he sets himself outside of God’s law as if the law of God didn’t apply to him. Such a person not only presumptuously acts as a judge over his fellow man, but judges God’s law. He indicates himself to be above God’s law. There is only one above and not bound by the law, that is God, the

initiator of the *law*. As His people we are bound to all His Laws, only He can circumvent them (e.g. baptism God says, You Do It, but He can save without it).

Vs. 12 Only one is the law-giver and judge, the one having power to save or to destroy, but you, who are you, the one judging the neighbor?

James wants his readers to understand there is only *one* lawgiver and judge, that is God almighty. This is not a specific reference to the Christ, but to the total triune God, who makes the laws, detects and convicts and punishes all who disregard those laws.

As far as his readers go, and we too, James exhorts us not to fear Man's penny ante judgements, but fear (respect and tremble at the judgements of only One, God Himself. Jesus pointed this fact out in Luke 12:4-5, "I tell you, my friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that can do no more. But I will show you who you should fear: fear Him who, after the killing of the body, has power to throw you into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear Him, (NIV).

The articulated participle and attendant infinitives beautifully describe the power of God, Him alone who is judge supreme with whom there is no variableness neither shadow of turning in all His divine judgements on mankind.

Again this is good food for thought for us as pastors. We too, as we grow and develop in our ministry, may first be tempted to curry man's favor (perhaps without realizing it, at other times being conscious of it) so as to not cause offence or make people upset and leave the church. James last warning against such judgement on people's parts against us, helps us put away our personal cares and feelings of what people think, as long as we do all in God's name, in accordance with His will.

We too must beware of becoming the usurper of judgement. *Su!* - You! Who do you think *you* are, the one judging your neighbor? James expends no effort to negate the minister's right to judge people and their actions. He does warn us not to become little dictators, popes, who like to be in charge and begin to uncharitably judge the sheep and lambs of God entrusted to our care.

Proper judgement is allowed by Christ Mt. 7:1-5 ; 15-20, but James reminds us of Jesus' warning of hypocritical judgement.

Vs. 13 Lead on now, you (who are) speaking, today or tomorrow we shall proceed to this city and we shall work there a year and we shall carry on business and shall make a profit.

Verse 13 begins the *third* section of Chapter four.

*Disregard* of God is the thread waving the chapter's fibers together. Vss. 1-10 dealt with disregard of God in preferences to the world. Vss. 11-12 disregard of God in judging and now vss 13-17, disregard of God in respect to business endeavors.

*Age* opening verse 13 is an interjection with *nuh* added to provide emphasis. Idiomatically it is translated by some as "Come Now, - Go to now."

James conjures up a hypothetical case of several merchants planning their future business. They seem to have all well in hand, e.g. when to start, where to go, how much profit will be derived. But one crucial element lacks in this planning, *if God wills it!*

Here we are nine days into the new year of 1979. Pastors as individuals and parish leaders, together with their boards, make plans for the congregation's future (buildings, expansion, evangelism, stewardship, etc... etc...). The one ingredient of planning which must be kept alive in people's hearts is *if God wills it!* To proceed without humble submission to God's will and right to change our human efforts would be folly. As pastors we plan, devise and map out courses of action for our parish. A call arrives, we accept. God willed differently than we planned.

The entire verse exhorts us to plan with God's will for our life in mind. We need be careful of presumption and over-confidence about the future. Jesus Himself warned against this in Proverbs 27:1, "Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring forth."

Perhaps the best example of such false, confidence planning was given through the rich farmer parable, who planned well on earth, but whose soul was spiritually bankrupt. Against this kind of planning we can never stop warning ourselves and our people.

Vs. 14 Being such ones, you do not know about (of) tomorrow, of what kind your life is, for a vapor you are which is appearing for a sort time an then disappearing.

This verse despite all the variant readings below, which do not change the verse's meaning, points to the brevity of life. Lenski translates the *gar*, "To Tell The Truth." By this he wants to stress the certainty of life's shortness. None of us here today can boast of the certainty of his life's longevity. The only real certainty or facts of our human life is that, sooner or later, it will come to an end. The refusal to accept this reality is another sign of sinful human arrogance. It shows such a person has not yet humbled himself to the will of God.

How truly short life is. I would share with you from personal Christmas week experiences, which pointed out the brevity of life. Two deaths occurred in the congregation. One a forty-one year old woman of an apparent suicide, and the other a 75 year old woman who was in apparent good health, suffered a massive coronary resulting in immediate death. Truly our life is a vapor, a short blink of the eye in comparison to the endless age of eternity. The lesson from this verse? Use each moment of grace to it's fullest depth, don't waste a single heart-beat on the sinful frivolities of the world.

Vs. 15 Instead of your saying, if the Lord wills, we shall both live and we shall do this or that.

James offers an alternative saying to his Christian readers. Instead of crowing about your certainty concerning the future, why not give credit where credit is due, to God. Why don't you say, If God wills. This is the condition which determines every moment of our lives, If God wills it.

According to Lenski, the Old Testament doesn't use this phraseology "if God wills." The New Testament does use it frequently. Paul and other writers make their actions (as Paul's journeys) contingent on the will of God in his life.

The conditional sentence with two future verbs shows total dependence on and submission to the will of God as the arbiter of man's life and destiny. If God wills is an expression used today two ways: 1. too infrequently; 2. too frequently.

By some this expression is not used enough. This demonstrates their lack of understanding of who is in control of their lives. Others use this expression so glibly that it becomes devoid of any deep conviction or meaning. In fact, you may have labeled someone over-pious and obnoxious, who runs around spouting "If God Wills."

We do need remember it is God whose will controls our life, not our will.

Vs. 16 But now you boast in your arrogance, all such boasting is evil.

Again verse 16 refers back to the merchants boasting in verse 13. Such boasting of what you will do on *your own* is bad enough, but to glory in your boasting is the height of arrogance and sinful pride – in fact, it is *sin!* Such boasting is hollow and empty. You make more of your accomplishments than they are worth. The reason your glorying is vain is because you forgot God, who gives you the ability to accomplish anything in life.

Vs. 17 To the one knowing to do good, and not doing it, to him it is sin.

James ends this chapter with an axiom or proverb of sorts. To the person, the Christian, in particular, who knows what God's will is, and fails to do that will, one can only call such self-willed disobedience sin. To you and me, pastors, shepherds of God's flocks, we *must* practice what we preach, practice what God says. As much as we don't want to be in the lime-light at times with our lives, yet God's people within and without the congregation see us. If we know to do good and don't do it, we not only offend God, but we offend someone else, one of God's lambs.

You can make this excuse or that excuse, but honestly, when you know God's will, you must do it or else your action is sin.

In summary, James chapter four tells us don't disregard God and His will in any part of your life.

### Vocabulary

1. ποθεν			whence; locally (from where, what place?); of origin (from what source?)
maxh, hv, h(			battle; in literature only used in plural and only of battles fought without physical weapons. "fighting, quarrels, strife, dispute"
strateuomehwn	strateu/w	present, middle, participle	"conflict, wage war"
2. eϑiqumeite	eϑiqume/w	present, active, indicative, 2 pl.	"desire, long for, lust"
eχete	eχw	present, active, indicative, 2 pl.	"have, possess"
foneuete	foneu/w	present, active, indicative, 2 pl.	"murder" (Erasmus replaced with "to envy, be jealous, begrudge")
zhl oute	zhl olw	present, active, indicative, 2 pl.	"strive, desire, exert oneself earnestly" – our text: in a bad sense "be filled with jealousy, envy toward someone"
duhasqe	duhamai	present, passive, 2 pl.	"can, be able"
eϑituxein	eϑitugxahw	aorist, active, infinitive	"obtain, attain to"
makesqe	makomai	present, middle, indicative, 2 pl.	"fight, quarrel, dispute"
pol emeite	mol eme/w	present, active, indicative, 2 pl.	"fight, make war"
3. eχete	eχw	present, middle, indicative, 2 pl.	"have, hold, possess"
aiϑeisqai	aiϑebmai	present, middle, indicative, 2 pl.	"ask, ask for, demand"
lambahete	lambahw	present, active, indicative, 2 pl.	"take, take hold of, grasp"
kakwv		adverb	"badly" our text: with wrong motives
dioti			"because" (begins a causal clause)
dapanhshte	dapana/w	aorist, active, subjunctive, 2 pl.	"spend freely, waste"

4. boul hqh┘ kaqistatai	boul-omai kaqistamai	aorist, middle, subjunctive, 3 sg. present, middle/passive, indicative, 3 sg.	“wish, want, desire” “be made, become, take his stand”
5. dokeite  eḡipoqei~  katwκisen	dokew  eḡipoqew  katoikizw	present, active, indicative, 2 pl.  present, active, indicative, 3 sg.  1 aorist, active, indicative, 3 sg.	“think, believe, suppose, consider” “long for, desire – to yearn lovingly” used with its derivatives in the NT always in a good sense. “cause to dwell, establish”
6. aḡitassetai	aḡitassw	present, indicative, middle, 3 sg.	“oppose, resist (used with the dative of person)
7. uḡotaghte aḡtisthte feucetai	uḡotassomai aḡqistamai feugw	aorist, middle, imperative, 2 pl. aorist, passive, imperative, 2 pl. future, indicative, middle, 3 sg.	“subject, submit” “set against” “flee”
8. eḡgisate eḡgisei kaqarisate aḡnisate diyuxov tal aipwrhsate	eḡgizw eḡgizw kaqarizw aḡnizw  tal aiprew	aorist, active, imperative, 2 pl. future, active, indicative, 3 sg. aorist, active, imperative, 2 pl. aorist, active, imperative, 2 pl.  aorist, active, imperative, 2 pl.	“come near, approach” “come near, approach” “make clean, cleanse, purify” “purify” “doubtful, double-minded” a) “endure sorrow, be miserable” b) “be wretched” in giving expression to this feeling and when used with [sic.] and [sic.] lament, complain.
penqhsate kl ausate metatraphtw	penqew kl aiw metatrepw	aorist, active, imperative, 2 pl. aorist, active, imperative, 2 pl. aorist, passive, imperative	“be sad, mourn” “weep, cry” “turn around” passive: “be turned”
10. tapeinwqhte uḡwsei	tapeinow uḡow	aorist, passive, imperative, 2 pl. future, active, indicative, 3 sg.	“make low, humble” “lift up, raise high”
11. katal al eite katal al wḡ krihwn	katal al ew katal al ew krihw	present, active, imperative, 2 pl. present, active, participle, sg. present, active, participle, sg.	“speak against, evil of” “speak against, evil of” “judge”
12. dunamenov swsai aḡol esai ei}	duhamai swzw aḡol   umi eiḡi/	present, passive, participle, sg. aorist, active, infinitive aorist, active, infinitive present, active, indicative, 2 sg.	“can, am able” “save” “destroy” “am, is”
13. aḡe	aḡw	present, active, imperative, 2. Sg	“load, bring”

poreusomeqa poihsomai	poreubmai poie/w	future, middle, indicative, 1 pl. future, active indicative, 1 pl.	“go, proceed, travel” “do, make, manufacture, produce” our text: work or be active with accusative of time
eoporeusomeqa kerdhsomen	eoporeubmai kerdai/w	future, middle, indicative, 1 pl. future, active, indicative, 1 pl.	1. “carry on business” 2. “buy, sell, trade in” “gain, make a profit”
14. epiistasqe fainomehh oDigov, h, on	eπistamai faihomai	present, passive, indicative, 2 pl. (passive with an active meaning) present, passive, participle	“understand, know” “appear” “few, little, small, short, brief; used with prov (for a short time)
aCanizomehh	aCanizw	present, passive, participle	“render invisible, disappear”
15. I ehein qel hsh  zhhsomen poihsomen	I egw qel w za/w poie/w	present, active, infinitive articularized infinitive with a noun force aorist, active, subjunctive, 3 sg. future, active, indicative, 1 pl. future, active, indicative, 1 pl.	“say, tell, give expression to” “will, wish” “live” “do, make”
16. kauxasqe eioti poiouti	kauxabmai oi)a poie/w	present, middle, indicative, 2 pl. present, middle, infinitive perfect, active, participle present, active, participle	“boast, glory, pride oneself” “know” “do, make”

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