

How the Church Can Become Enemy of God

Pt. 3

James 4:1-6

James 4:1–6 (NKJV)

Where do wars and fights *come* from among you? Do *they* not *come* from your *desires for* pleasure that war in your members? ² You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. ³ You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend *it* on your pleasures. ⁴ Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. ⁵ Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, “The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously”? ⁶ But He gives more grace. Therefore He says:
*“God resists the proud,
But gives grace to the humble.”*

Introduction:

In our world, there are two kingdoms, only two. There is the kingdom of light and the kingdom of

darkness. The kingdom of truth and the kingdom of lies. The kingdom of light is ruled by Christ who dwells in unapproachable light and is the way, the truth and the Life. The kingdom has a very large population of citizens that can't be numbered throughout the ages. They have been brought out of the kingdom of darkness into the glorious light of the kingdom of God. They are new creations, who being sanctified and conformed into the image of Christ. They have a different set of allegiances and commitments than the rest of the world and have an entirely different worldview.

The other kingdom, the kingdom of darkness is ruled by the devil, the serpent of old, the dragon of the Book of Revelation. His goal is death and destruction of every one of the citizens of this kingdom. He is saturated with lies and deception and blinds men and women to the glorious gospel of Christ. His kingdom is the antithesis of the Kingdom of light. He hates Christ and everything that He stands for. He works tirelessly to mislead and deceive all the willing participants of his kingdom. He is immoral, perverted, twisted, ungodly and full of sin. He is involved in some way, whether active or passive in every evil act of defiance of the will and purpose of God. He promotes, supports and encourages the grossest forms of depravity and

influences every form of antichrist way of thinking. He has a huge population of followers that love his way of thinking and whole heartedly pursue his perversion. His followers have a love for darkness and hatred for the light. They are the opposite of the kingdom of light and love it to be so.

The Devil loves the ungodly sin loving desires of his people, but he knows that is not the way to sustain his kingdom. To continue the growth of his kingdom, he must get into to the minds of the children. He has to make them think like him so they will love what he loves. He does not concentrate his energies on the bars and immoral gatherings of the world. He does not spend the most of his energies where drugs are sold and prostitutes sell there bodies. As horrific as it is, he does not spend the majority of his time with trafficking of children or even at the abortion clinics. By the time it gets to the point where a man or woman has given themselves over to drunkenness or drugs or prostitution or perversion, the selling of children or the murder of them at the Abortion clinics he has already won them over long ago. He has already convince them in there minds that this is the way to live. This is the best way, this is the only way, and this is the right way.

While we who are part of the kingdom of God are telling the world that all of these immoral practices are wrong and quoting Bible verses to them, The devil is busy at teaching the children why the Bible isn't true and is irrelevant and unreliable and unscientific.

He's in your schools and universities and libraries systematically dismantling the Bible. He's on your TV on the Discovery Channel and in your Netflix subscription, He's active on Social media and Youtube feeds. He's in the seminary's and Bible colleges chipping away at the Biblical world view.

Listen, the primary place of war to end abortion in America is not at the clinic, although that battle front is important and battles can be won, but the war is won in the universities and the schools where the children are taught that this is a clump of cells or use different terminology to disguise the sin. They use the term "fetus" to shift the thinking away from the fact that this is a baby, a human being, when in fact it is a deceptive tactic. The devil uses the latin word "fetus" which means baby to shift the thinking of people way from the fact that it is a living baby. And most people don't know Latin. They say it is a fetus not a baby. So what they are ignorantly saying is, it is a baby, not a baby.

Fetus, as defined by Websters Dictionary : an unborn or unhatched vertebrate especially after attaining the basic structural plan of its kind
 In Latin, *fetus* sometimes was transferred figuratively to the newborn creature itself, or used in a sense of "offspring, brood"
 late 14c., "the young while in the womb"
<https://www.etymonline.com/word/fetus>

1. brood/litter
2. children (of a parent)
3. offspring/young (animals)

<https://www.latin-dictionary.net/search/latin/fetus>

Also the devil has convinced the world to use the term "Abortion" for the willful, selfish termination of a pregnancy, instead of the murder of a child. The word abortion does not carry the same weight and severity as the word "murder" And the devil has done such a thorough job at this, that in some cases, some are willing to take the child's life up to 9 months right before birth.

The devil can win the minds of people by just changing 2 words.

He knows that if he wins their mind, he owns their soul. So it is no longer a murder to avoid and be repented of, but a convenient abortion of a fetus that is not a human and not a sin.

And currently there is another controversial debate which I believe is another area the devil is winning in. It involves the debate over same-sex attraction. It is stated that this is not a sin to be repented of or an evil to avoid.

You can have same sex attraction and it not be sinful as long as you don't entertain it or act on it. So ultimately the conclusion would be that you can have an attraction that is morally neutral. It is neither good or bad, just as long as you don't act on it.

The problems with this view are numerous.

1. It says that it is not possible to have a bent, or inclination, or attraction that in and of itself is evil or sinful and that it only becomes sinful or evil if you act on it. And that all attractions no matter how unnatural they are, are neutral so long as you never act on them.

So if this is true about same sex attraction, that would mean that same sex attraction is not morally wrong or evil and is no different morally than opposite sex attraction, because if it is not morally wrong or evil to be attracted to that same sex, then it

is not an evil to be avoided and a sin to be repented of.

And so if this works with same sex attraction then it should work with all other attractions. So lets see if it works.

1. Would we say that it is morally right for a married man to be attracted to another woman other than his wife as long as he does not act on it? I would say no, and that the attraction is something to be avoided and repented of and put to death.

2. Would we say that is is morally right for a man to be attracted to children as long as he does not act on it. I would say no, and that the attraction is something to be avoided, repented of and put to death.

It is natural and within the ordained will of God that a man is attracted to women and a women is attracted to a man for the purpose that God has ordained that the get married and fulfill God's intended purpose for marriage.

It is how God created man before the fall and before sin.

It is however unnatural, outside the will of God and a product of the fall of man and is sinful nature to be attracted to same sex and is therefore

something to recognize as sinful in and of itself and to be avoid, an crucified.

Today we use the words attraction, or orientation, but the bible does not use those terms. And just because it does not use those terms does not mean it doesn't speak to it. Like Abortion, it does not use that term. It uses murder. It does not use there term fetus. It uses the same term for a baby outside the womb as it does inside the womb. It makes no distinction. But that does not mean it does not speak to the horrific sin of Abortion.

So it is with same sex attraction. It does not talk in those terms. In fact regarding this, it does not use the term “attraction”

The closest we get to the term is passion, evil desire and even covetousness.

Colossians 3:5–6 (NKJV)

⁵ Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, **passion, evil desire**, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

⁶ Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience,

25.30 πάθος, ους *n*; πάθημα^b, τος *n*;

καταστρηνιάω: to experience strong physical desires, particularly of a sexual nature—‘passion, lust, lustful desire, to have lust.’

Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). In [Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains](#) (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 291). United Bible Societies.

3806. πάθος *páthos*; gen. *páthous*, neut. noun from *páschō* (3958), to suffer. Passion, lust. *Páthos* occurs three times in the NT; once coordinated with *epithumía* (1939), desire (Col. 3:5), and once subordinated to it, *páthos epithumías*, the lust of desire (1 Thess. 4:5), and in the third reference modified by *atimía* ([819], dishonorable), vile affections (Rom. 1:26). These are lusts that dishonor those who indulge in them. *Páthos* is the soul’s diseased condition out of which the various lusts spring. *Epithumía* is the active lust or desire springing from the diseased soul.

Zodhiates, S. (2000). In [The complete word study dictionary: New Testament](#) (electronic ed.). AMG Publishers.

Romans 7:5 (NKJV)

⁵ For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions which were aroused by the law were at work in our members to bear fruit to death.

Galatians 5:24 (NKJV)

²⁴ And those *who are* Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

Romans 1:26 (NKJV)

²⁶ For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature.

Colossians 3:5–6 (NKJV)

⁵ Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, **passion**, **evil desire**, and **covetousness**, which is idolatry.

⁶ Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience,

4124. πλεονεξία *pleonexía*; gen. *pleonexías*, fem. noun from *pleíōn* (4119), more, and *échō* (2192) to have. Covetousness, greediness (Luke 12:15; Rom. 1:29 [cf. 1 Cor. 5:10, 11]; 2 Cor. 9:5, “as bounty or blessing on your part, and not as covetousness on ours, not as extorted by us from you” (a.t.); Eph. 4:19; 1 Thess. 2:5; 2 Pet. 2:3, 14; Sept. Jer. 22:17; Hab. 2:9). *Pleonexía* is a larger term which includes *philarguría* (5365), love of money to hoard away, avarice. It is connected with extortioners (1 Cor. 5:10); with thefts (Mark 7:22, covetous thoughts, plans of fraud and extortion); with sins of the flesh (Eph. 5:3, 5; Col. 3:5).

Pleonexía may be said to be the root from which these sins grow, the longing of the creature which has forsaken God to fill itself with the lower objects of nature.

Syn.: *epithumía* (1939), desire, lust; *órexis* (3715), appetite; *hormé* (3730), impulse.

Zodhiates, S. (2000). In [The complete word study dictionary: New Testament](#) (electronic ed.). AMG Publishers.

I could go on with more illustrations, but my point is that the devil and his kingdom are looking to win the hearts in the minds of the children and the adults but primarily he wants to get the children early. He wants the church also to be on discerning and ignorant on the scripture. He loves to have men in the puppets of America that are not bold and willing to confront the errors of our thinking.

I have been reading a book this past week, which is a recent release. It's in titled.

Warrior Preachers : A Spiritual Call to Arms in an Age of Militant Unbelief

What is greatly lacking in the church today are “warrior preachers” — a term used to describe the Reformation preachers of seventeenth-century

Scotland known as the Covenanters— who, under threat of torture and death, sacrificed themselves to protect the treasure of the true gospel that exposed man’s guilt and condemnation before a holy God, and proclaimed Christ’s finished work on the cross as the only means of saving grace. These were the godly Puritans who rejected false doctrines and the popish relics of Roman Catholicism, including the ritualistic, superstitious, and external religiosity also inherent in the Church of England. They were instead committed to holiness in the heart and to biblical preaching. Warrior preachers then and now are biblical preachers; men who fear God, not man; men who never cower to critics and never avoid preaching a text that might offend; men who preach the whole counsel of God regardless of the response it might elicit; men who realize they are mere heralds of the King of kings, preaching the only message that can save sinners, sanctify saints, and bring glory to the One who purchased our redemption.

Harrell, David A.. *Warrior Preachers : A Spiritual Call to Arms in an Age of Militant Unbelief* (p. 18). Shepherd's Fire Media. Kindle Edition.

An evil cloud of satanic darkness encompasses the world today. The fierce winds of deception are pummeling all that God deems righteous. The very foundations of basic civility and common sense are

being shaken. And without question, the church of Jesus Christ is under siege! Only the most naïve, undiscerning, and biblically illiterate Christian can deny this. Like never before, a violent storm of persecution against authentic Christianity is gaining strength across the globe. Because “the whole world lies in the power of the evil one” (1 John 5:19), the vast majority of the inhabitants of this planet live in fear and uncertainty. War, violence, immorality, poverty, famine, disease, drug addiction, drug and sex trafficking, illegal immigration, social justice, homosexuality, transgenderism, systemic racism, and economic instability are all subjects that have become so commonplace in public discourse that our society has been inoculated against their damning implications. Ethnic (racial) tensions are at an all-time high, while confidence in our political leaders is at an all-time low, especially in the United States. Very few people trust the media or even the medical and science experts who claim to have all the answers, and the majority of Americans believe the country is moving in the wrong direction.

As A.W. Tozer once said, “A scared world needs a fearless church.” But this is not what we see today in our post-Christian culture. Most churches are fearful, not fearless, cowering to the pressures of

the world, capitulating to the shrill voices of feminism and political correctness, and compromising God's truth to gain man's praise. As a result, they forfeit divine blessing, spiritual power, and moral authority. Worse yet, they place themselves in the pathway of divine judgment. Indeed, most churches today have "Ichabod" ("The glory has departed") written across their entryway, but remarkably, both their leaders and their members are clueless of their true spiritual condition in the eyes of God. Because of this, most non-religious people have no confidence in the leaders of evangelicalism—and for good reason. Much of Christianity today is a counterfeit. Sadly, this is not the heartfelt testimony of most pastors and church leaders today. Far too many are more concerned with attracting a crowd than equipping the saints, while many others fear cancel culture more than God Himself. With the courage of a fainting goat, they collapse in panic when someone criticizes them for saying (or even believing) something society considers offensive,

Warrior preachers today are men who will not capitulate to the culture, but will confront it. They reject the popular notion of evangelical pragmatism that regards friendship with the world as a better strategy for evangelism than preaching the gospel.

Harrell, David A.. *Warrior Preachers : A Spiritual Call to Arms in an Age of Militant Unbelief* (p. 17). Shepherd's Fire Media. Kindle Edition.

I want to be frank with you today. The reason the church as a whole is a friend of the world is because of its leadership. The preachers, the pastors, the elders, and in some cases the deacons where they serve in an elders position. It all goes back to the leadership. The church will rise or fall on her leadership. What the leadership is is what the church will be.

The temptation is great to be successful and non-offensive in ministry, when neither of those are the requirements for ministry by Christ.

Christ has given the leadership of His church one task one task only. It is the most important task on the planet.....To take care of his bride until He returns to get her. Not to let her or even worse, to encourage her and enable her to go after another man.

But sadly, in many cases, that is exactly what the shepherds have done. They have led the Bride of Christ whom he died for, right into the arms of another, who god is the devil

Jeremiah 23:1–2 (NKJV)

“Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture!” says the Lord. ² Therefore thus says the Lord God of Israel against the shepherds who feed My people: “You have scattered My flock, driven them away, and not attended to them. Behold, I will attend to you for the evil of your doings,” says the Lord.

Ezekiel 34:1–10 (NKJV)

34 And the word of the Lord came to me, saying, ² “Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy and say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord God to the shepherds: “Woe to the shepherds of Israel who feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks? ³ You eat the fat and clothe yourselves with the wool; you slaughter the fatlings, *but* you do not feed the flock. ⁴ The weak you have not strengthened, nor have you healed those who were sick, nor bound up the broken, nor brought back what was driven away, nor sought

what was lost; but with force and cruelty you have ruled them. ⁵ So they were scattered because *there* was no shepherd; and they became food for all the beasts of the field when they were scattered. ⁶ My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and on every high hill; yes, My flock was scattered over the whole face of the earth, and no one was seeking or searching *for them*.”

⁷ “Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the Lord: ⁸ “As I live,” says the Lord God, “surely because My flock became a prey, and My flock became food for every beast of the field, because *there was* no shepherd, nor did My shepherds search for My flock, but the shepherds fed themselves and did not feed My flock”—⁹ therefore, O shepherds, hear the word of the Lord! ¹⁰ Thus says the Lord God: “Behold, I *am* against the shepherds, and I will require My flock at their hand; I will cause them to cease feeding the sheep, and the shepherds shall feed themselves no more; for I will deliver My flock from their mouths, that they may no longer be food for them.”

Needless to say, God has no pleasure in the shepherds, who do not take care of his flock. For those who lead the flock into the distant lands to be

idolaters and forsake the God of Israel, they set themselves up to be an enemy of God.

So James says....

verse 4,

“.....Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore **wants** to be a friend of the world **makes** himself an enemy of God.”

Boulomai (**wishes**) connotes more than just wanting a desire or wish to be fulfilled. It carries the stronger idea of choosing one thing over another.

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1998). [James](#) (p. 193). Moody Press.

2525. καθίστημι *kathístēmi*; or *kathistáō*; fut.

katastēsō, aor. *katéstēsa*, from *katá* (2596), down, and *hístēmi* (2476), to stand. To set, set down, place.

Zodhiates, S. (2000). In [The complete word study dictionary: New Testament](#) (electronic ed.). AMG Publishers.

“Becomes” (*kathistatai*), the very term used in 3:6, asserts that by his decision to foster friendship with the world the individual “becomes,” “constitutes

himself,” or takes his stand as, God’s enemy. The present tense points to the continuing condition, whereas the middle voice marks it as a self-chosen position. It is not a matter of a Christian quite unintentionally finding himself in an atmosphere pervaded by worldliness. He has made his deliberate choice to be a friend of the world. Neutrality Godward is impossible. His decision to love the world defies God’s rightful claim to his total allegiance. As Moo remarks, “God will brook no rival, and when the believer behaves in a way that is characteristic of the world, he demonstrates that, at that point, his allegiance is to the world rather than to God.” The startling result of their attitude is a serious call to repentance

Hiebert, D. E. (1997). [James](#) (Revised Edition, p. 229). BMH Books.

Friendship with the world and friendship with God are mutually exclusive.

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1998). [James](#) (p. 194). Moody Press.

2 Corinthians 6:14–7:1 (NKJV)

¹⁴ Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness

with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? ¹⁵ And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? ¹⁶ And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said:

*“I will dwell in them
And walk among them.
I will be their God,
And they shall be My people.”*

¹⁷ Therefore

*“Come out from among them
And be separate, says the Lord.
Do not touch what is unclean,
And I will receive you.”*

LESSON

I. The Source of Worldliness

II. The Shock of Worldliness

III. The Seriousness of Worldliness

I. The Source of Worldliness

1. Where do wars and fights *come* from among you? Do *they* not *come* from your

desires for pleasure that war in your members? ² You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. ³ You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend *it* on your pleasures.

James begins by describing the turbulent and conflicting ways worldly wisdom affects a believer and then rebukes them for the adulterous affair with the world.

1. Where do **wars** and **fights** come from among you?

wars

4171. πόλεμος *pólemos*; gen. *polémou*, masc. noun.

(I) Generally, war (Matt. 24:6; Mark 13:7; Luke 14:31; 21:9; Sept.: Ex. 1:10; 2 Kgs. 3:7).

(II) Particularly, fight (1 Cor. 14:8; Heb. 11:34; Rev. 9:7, 9; 11:7; 12:7, 17; 13:7; 16:14; 19:19; 20:8; Sept.: Ex. 13:17; 2 Sam. 19:11; Job 39:25).

Hyperbolically referring to strife (James 4:1).

Deriv.: *poleméō* (4170), to make war, fight.

Syn.: while *pólemos* embraces the whole course of hostilities, *máchē* (3163), battle, includes the use of arms

of hostile armies; *agōn* (73), struggle; *pálē* (3823), wrestling.

Ant.: *eirénē* (1515), peace; *hēsuchia* (2271), quietness.

Zodhiates, S. (2000). In [The complete word study dictionary: New Testament](#) (electronic ed.). AMG Publishers.

Polemos (**quarrels**), from which we get the English “polemics,” relates to general, prolonged, and serious disputing or combat and is often rendered “war” (e.g., Matt. 24:6; Heb. 11:34; Rev. 11:7; 16:14)

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1998). [James](#) (p. 184). Moody Press.

fight

3163. μάχη *máchē*; gen. *máchēs*, fem. noun from *máchomai* (3164), to fight. Fighting, battle (2 Cor. 7:5; 2 Tim. 2:23, controversies respecting the Mosaic laws; James 4:1; Sept.: Gen. 13:7; Prov. 15:18). The NT includes many kinds of battles such as legal battles as in Titus 3:9, and battles of words (*logomachíai* [3055]) in 1 Tim. 6:4.

Deriv.: *ámachos* (269), not contentious.

Syn.: *agōn* (73), strife, fight; *pálē* (3823), wrestling; *pólemos* (4171), war which embraces the whole course of hostilities, not a mere battle; *máchē* (3164), battle, strife; *stásis* (4714), insurrection or sedition as a civil war; *pólemos*, a battle between nations.

Ant.: *anápausis* (372), inner rest; *anápsuxis* (403), revival; *ánesis* (425), liberty, relief; *katápausis* (2663), rest from, cessation of work; *eirénē* (1515), peace; *hēsuchia* (2271), quietness.

Zodhiates, S. (2000). In [The complete word study dictionary: New Testament](#) (electronic ed.). AMG Publishers.

Conflicts translates *máchē*, which refers to a specific fight or battle. Both terms are used here

metaphorically of violent personal relationships, which, in the extreme, can result even in murder (v. 2).

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1998). [James](#) (p. 184). Moody Press.

1. Where do wars and fights *come* from among you? Do *they not come* from your *desires for* pleasure that war in your members?

The answer is clear, the source of all conflict and worldly desires comes from within.

The unpleasant fact is that their turbulence comes “from” (*ek*, “out of”) “your desires that battle within you.” It derives not from “a noble fighting for the truth,” nor an evil environment beyond their control, but from their own self-seeking desires.

Hiebert, D. E. (1997). [James](#) (Revised Edition, p. 223). BMH Books.

The source of all of our problems is us. We have met the enemy and it is us. The world would have no conflict, no strife and not sin if we were not here.

1. Where do wars and fights *come* from among you? Do *they not come* from your *desires for* **pleasure** that war in your members?

ἡδονή *hēdonē*; gen. *hēdonēs*, fem. noun from *hēdos* (n.f.), delight, enjoyment, which is from *hēdomai* (n.f.), to have sensual pleasure. Pleasure, gratification, enjoyment. In the NT, used only of physical pleasure (Luke 8:14; Titus 3:3; James 4:3; 2 Pet. 2:13).

Figuratively used as desire, appetite, lust (James 4:1).

Deriv.: *philēdonos* (5369), a lover of pleasure.

Syn.: *epithumía* (1939), strong desire of any kind; *órexis* (3715), desire; *páthos* (3806), passion; *euphrosúnē* (2167), joyfulness, gladness; *aréskeia* (699), pleasing, pleasure; *apólausis* (619), enjoyment.

Ant.: *pónos* (4192), pain; *odúnē* (3601), dejection; *lúpē* (3077), grief; *ōdín* (5604), pain of childbirth; *brugmós* (1030), gnashing; *pikría* (4088), bitterness; *stenochōría* (4730), straightness, depression.

Zodhiates, S. (2000). In [The complete word study dictionary: New Testament](#) (electronic ed.). AMG Publishers.

“Desires” (*hēdonōn*), the term from which we derive our English term “hedonism,” denotes the enjoyment derived from the fulfillment of one’s desires or, as here, the craving for the pleasure itself. The Greek term is rare in the New Testament,¹⁰ always with a bad connotation, being “one of the many forces which belong to the world of unsanctified carnality, which strive against the work of God and His Spirit.” The cause of their widespread bellicosity lay in their

strong desires to please themselves, the yearnings of self-love.

Hiebert, D. E. (1997). [James](#) (Revised Edition, p. 223). BMH Books.

Do *they* not *come* from your
desires for pleasure that **war** in your
members?

στρατεύομαι *strateúomai*; Pres. Mid Participle
fut. *strateúsomai*, mid. deponent from *stratós* (n.f., see *stratēgós* [4755]), camp, army. To lead an army, wage war, be a soldier. In the NT, to serve in war, to war, be a soldier, warrior. Intrans.:

(B) Desires and lusts which war against right principles and moral precepts (James 4:1; 1 Pet. 2:11).

Zodhiates, S. (2000). In [The complete word study dictionary: New Testament](#) (electronic ed.). AMG Publishers.

The appositional present participle *tōn strateuomenōn*, “that battle,” depicts these pleasures as soldiers carrying on a military campaign aimed at securing the satisfaction of their cravings. This self-centered, pleasure seeking activity stands over against their proper submission to God (cf. v. 7).

“The ultimate choice in life lies between pleasing oneself and pleasing God.”

Hiebert, D. E. (1997). [James](#) (Revised Edition, p. 223). BMH Books.

Do *they* not *come* from your
desires for pleasure that **war** in your
members?

Romans 7:5 (NKJV)

⁵ For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions which were aroused by the law were at work in our members to bear fruit to death.

Romans 6:12–13 (NKJV)

¹² Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. ¹³ And do not present your members *as* instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God.

Paul clearly identifies the source of all sin as that which resides in our flesh and is literally fleshed out in our members. Our eyes, mouth, tongue, hands and feet.

Galatians 5:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷ For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.

James 4:1-2b

Where do wars and fights *come* from among you? Do *they* not *come* from your *desires for* pleasure that war in your members? ² You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war.

The sources of external conflicts among people invariably arise from internal conflicts within each person.

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (1998). [James](#) (p. 186). Moody Press.

Because of your hedonistic mindset, being led by your sinful flesh the fruit of this is

² You **lust** and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war.

² You **lust** and do not have.

ἐπιθυμέω *epithuméō*; contracted *epithumō*, fut. *epithumḗsō*, from *epí* (1909), in, and *thumós* (2372), the mind. To have the affections directed toward something, to lust, desire, long after. Generally (Luke 17:22; Gal. 5:17; Rev. 9:6). To desire in a good sense (Matt. 13:17; Luke 22:15; 1 Tim. 3:1; Heb. 6:11; 1 Pet. 1:12); as a result of physical needs (Luke 15:16; 16:21); in a bad sense of coveting and lusting after (Matt. 5:28; Rom. 7:7; 13:9; 1 Cor. 10:6 [cf. James 4:2; Sept.: Ex. 20:17; Deut. 5:21; 14:26; 2 Sam. 3:21; Prov. 21:26]).

Deriv.: *epithumētēs* (1938), one who desires; *epithumía* (1939), desire.

Zodhiates, S. (2000). In [The complete word study dictionary: New Testament](#) (electronic ed.). AMG Publishers.

The verb *epithumeō* (to **lust**) When *any* strong, sinful **lust** is not gratified, the worldly person is prone to lash out in angry frustration, sometimes even committing **murder**..

² You lust and do not _____
 have. You **murder** and **covet** and cannot _____
 obtain. You fight and wa _____

Murder translates the verb *phoneuō*, which, in this context, could include murderous hatred, extremely destructive behavior, and even suicide. When the lusting person cannot achieve his desired goals—whether for reputation, prestige, sexual gratification, money, power, escape through drugs or alcohol,

success, possessions, the affections of another person, or whatever—the result is often catastrophic to others and always destructive of oneself. Even when they were struck blind by the angels in Lot’s house, the men of Sodom were so obsessed with their perverted lust that, ignoring their blindness, they continued groping for the door in a vain attempt to gain entrance and satisfy their unrelenting passions (Gen. 19:11).

Zeloō, here rendered **envious**, is a synonym of *epithumeō*, and connotes an even stronger, more compelling feeling of desire. It is the word from which we get “zealous” and “zealot.” The noun form is rendered “jealously” in James 3:14, 16.

ζηλώω: set one’s heart on something that belongs to someone else—‘to covet.’ φονεύετε καὶ ζηλοῦτε, καὶ οὐ δύνασθε ἐπιτυχεῖν ‘you kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want’ Jas 4:2. It is, of course, also possible to render ζηλώω in Jas 4:2 as meaning ‘to be envious’ or ‘to be jealous’ (see 88.163).

Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). In [Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains](#) (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 290). United Bible Societies.

² You lust and do not
have. You murder and **covet** and cannot
obtain. You fight and war.

Unlike what the world says, that all of conflicts, strife and sinful actions arise from our environment. The Bible says all of this exist because of what is in us. We are the problem.

Any worldliness on our part can't be blamed on temptation from without, but from the hedonistic self seeking lust the rages from within.

Any believer that pursues the hedonistic lust of his fallen flesh, if he continues in it unrepentant, and make himself an enemy of God.

This is why there are so many warning and commandment in Scripture to kill the deeds of the flesh.

Romans 8:13 (NKJV)

¹³ For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

Galatians 5:24 (NKJV)

²⁴ And those *who are* Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

Galatians 6:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴ But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

Romans 13:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴ But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to *fulfill its* lusts.

² You lust and do not have. **You murder** and **covet** and cannot obtain. **You fight** and **war**. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. ³ **You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend *it* on your pleasures.** ⁴ Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God?

This is the second time he has mentioned, pleasures. The first was in verse 1

Regarding these wars and fights among you....

Do *they* not *come* from your *desires* for pleasure that war in your members?

The world is a pleasure driven world. It is thoroughly hedonistic. It is wholly committed to satisfying its lust of the flesh. It is “me” centered and works its 40 hr week to live for the weekend.

1 John 2:15–16 (NKJV)

¹⁵ Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that *is* in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the **pride** of **life**—is not of the Father but is of the world.

ἀλαζονεία *alazoneía*; gen. *alazoneías*, fem. noun from the adj. *alazón* (213), a boaster. Ostentation, boasting about what one is not or does not possess. Someone going about with empty and boastful professions of cures and other feats. An *alazón* shows off that which he thinks or pretends he possesses. An ostentatious quack. A boast or boasting (James 4:16). As joined with *bíos* (979), life, it means the period of extension or duration of life as contrasted to *zōé* (2222) which means the breath of life. Therefore, *alazoneía tou bíou* in 1 John 2:16 means showing off to fellow mortals; the pride, pomp, or manner of life; the ambitious or

vainglorious pursuit of the honors, glories, and splendors of this life; the luxury of life for the purpose of showing off, whether in dress, house, furniture, servants, food.

Syn.: *kenodoxía* (2754), the act of pretending to be what one is not; *kaúchēsis* (2746), the act of boasting in a good or bad sense; *kaúchēma* (2745), the boast itself in a good or bad sense; *huperēphanía* (5243), pride, the desire to show off what one may be or have in comparison with others, thus appearing above them.

Zodhiates, S. (2000). In [The complete word study dictionary: New Testament](#) (electronic ed.). AMG Publishers.

βίος *bíos*; gen. *bíou*, masc. noun. Life, but not as in *zōē* (2222), life, in which is meant the element or principle of the spirit and soul. *Bíos*, from which the word “biography” is derived, refers to duration, means, and manner of life. See Mark 12:44; Luke 8:14, 43; 15:12, 30; 21:4; Sept.: Job 7:6; 8:9; Prov. 31:14; 1 Tim. 2:2; 2 Tim. 2:4; 1 Pet. 4:3; 1 John 2:16; 3:17, possessions or wealth.

Deriv.: *bióō* (980), to live, to pass one’s life without reference to its quality.

Syn.: with the meaning of goods, wealth: *húparxis* (5223), subsistence, goods, and also as a pl. part. noun, *tá hupárchonta*; *skeúos* (4632), primarily a vessel, but also goods; *psuché* (5590), with the meaning of natural life, breath of life, the seat of personality; *agōgē* (72), a

manner of life, conduct; *anastrophé* (391), behavior, conduct.

Zodhiates, S. (2000). In [The complete word study dictionary: New Testament](#) (electronic ed.). AMG Publishers.

Mark 12:42–44 (NKJV)

⁴² Then one poor widow came and threw in two mites, which make a quadrans. ⁴³ So He called His disciples to *Himself* and said to them, “Assuredly, I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all those who have given to the treasury; ⁴⁴ for they all put in out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all that she had, her whole **livelihood.**”

Luke 15:11–12 (NKJV)

¹¹ Then He said: “A certain man had two sons. ¹² And the younger of them said to *his* father, ‘Father, give me the portion of goods that falls *to me.*’ So he divided to them *his livelihood.*”

1 John 3:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷ But whoever has this world’s **goods**, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?

So John tells us that a love of the world consist of a love for

1. The lust of the flesh, which would include all the fleshly desires and sinful inclinations of our fallen nature which is pursued because of the pleasure of it.

2. The lust of the eyes, which include greed and coveting anything from possessions, positions to coveting people and all for our hedonist drives. We want it cause it gives us pleasure.

3. The boastful arrogant possession of things. We accumulate and pile up our stuff and boast to others of what we have because of our hedonistic pleasure seeking desires.

All of this is what the world wants. This is why it ends up fighting and warring with each other. It is a constant competition of who can have the most stuff and get the most pleasure out of there sins and things of life.

This should be entirely uncharacteristic of the church. We are not of this world, and we are pilgrims passing through. Our love and passion should be Christ and his Word.

But it is very easy to be sucked into the vacuous hedonistic hedonism that is all around us. It is the way of the world that we live in 24/7. It is constantly knocking at our door to seduce us.

It comes in the constant solicitations of the world to enjoy all the pleasure that it offers. It is inherently self centered at its core and will do whatever it takes to make sure self is pleased.

This can have devastating effects on the church and her mission.

Revelation 3:14–21 (NKJV)

¹⁴ “And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write,

‘These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God:
¹⁵ “I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. ¹⁶ So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. ¹⁷ Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—¹⁸ I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, *that* the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see. ¹⁹ As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.

²⁰ Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to

him and dine with him, and he with Me. ²¹ To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.

Look at verse 2 again

² You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. **Yet you do not have because you do not ask.** ³ You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend *it* on your pleasures.

James begins to zero in on the problem even more by identifying that the main problem is that “you want something but you do not get it”

² You lust and do not have

So you fight to get it, you war to get it.

but

You are going about this all wrong. So he shows how they are going about this all wrong.

1. They don't ask

2. When they do ask, they ask the wrong way.

2 You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. **Yet you do not have because you do not ask.**

this serves to

serves to hold before them their tragic spiritual condition. Instead of turning to God as the Giver of every good and perfect gift (1:17), they attempt to satisfy their gnawing wants through their own efforts. Their approach is self-centered and worldly. Instead of wrestling with God in prayer, they wrangle bitterly with men.

Hiebert, D. E. (1997). [James](#) (Revised Edition, p. 226). BMH Books.

“Because you do not ask” need not mean that they were utterly prayerless, but apparently they felt it inappropriate to ask God for the things they had their heart set on

Hiebert, D. E. (1997). [James](#) (Revised Edition, p. 226). BMH Books.

“Ask” (*aiteisthai*) is in the present tense and points to their repeated failure to ask; the middle voice implies an asking that involved their personal interests. They failed to put into practice Jesus’ teaching “Ask, and it shall be given you” (Matt. 7:7).

Hiebert, D. E. (1997). [James](#) (Revised Edition, p. 226). BMH Books.

So they are going about this all wrong and acting like the world by

1. Not asking God, but using fleshly means to get what they want.
2. Not asking God in the right way.

3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask **amiss**, that you may spend *it* on your pleasures.

James 4:3 (NASB95)

- 3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask with **wrong motives**, so that you may spend *it* on your pleasures.

88.106 **κακόσ^a, ή, όν; κακώσ^a**: pertaining to being bad, with the implication of harmful and damaging—
‘bad, evil, harmful, harshly.’

Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). In [Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains](#) (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 753). United Bible Societies.

(*kakōs*) renders an adverb, standing emphatically before the verb, and means “in an evil manner, badly.” Their petitions were motivated by a mean and unacceptable desire.

Hiebert, D. E. (1997). [James](#) (Revised Edition, pp. 226–227). BMH Books.

They could honestly say that they did “ask” (*aiteite*) as a deliberate act. Although they made it a practice to ask, answers to their prayers were not forthcoming.

God does not answer all “prayers” directed to Him, for true prayer must meet His conditions. True prayer is always answered according to God’s wisdom. Davids well notes,

If prayer is no more than a formula (saying the right words, believe hard enough, confess; it will happen), then Christians are back to a type of magic: They can manipulate God or impose their will on God, for he *has* to answer. In contrast, New Testament prayer grows out of a trusting relationship with a father whose will is supreme.

Hiebert, D. E. (1997). [James](#) (Revised Edition, p. 226). BMH Books.

James 1:6–7 (NKJV)

⁶ But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and

tossed by the wind. ⁷ For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord;

Psalm 66:18 (NKJV)

¹⁸ If I regard iniquity in my heart,
The Lord will not hear.

Proverbs 21:13 (NKJV)

¹³ Whoever shuts his ears to the cry of the poor
Will also cry himself and not be heard.

Isaiah 1:15–16 (NKJV)

¹⁵ When you spread out your hands,
I will hide My eyes from you;
Even though you make many prayers,
I will not hear.
Your hands are full of blood.

¹⁶ “Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean;
Put away the evil of your doings from before My
eyes.

Cease to do evil,

1 John 5:14–15 (NKJV)

¹⁴ Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. ¹⁵ And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.

3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may **spend** it on your pleasures.

“On your pleasures” stands emphatically forward: “in order that in your pleasures you may spend (it).” “In” (*en*) marks their “pleasures” (cf. v. 1) as the sphere where they intended to use the gift being asked of God. They are not accused of praying for sinful things, but their basic purpose in making their requests is to further their personal pleasures. It is possible to ask for good things for a bad reason. “To use what is requested from God in accordance with ungodly principles is a complete perversion of the relationship to God.” Their worldly, self-centered desires have invaded their prayer life and perverted their relation to God.

Hiebert, D. E. (1997). [James](#) (Revised Edition, p. 227). BMH Books.

δαπανάω^b: to spend completely, with the implication of uselessly, and therefore, to waste—‘to spend completely, to waste.’ διότι κακῶς αἰτεῖσθε, ἵνα ἐν ταῖς ἡδοναῖς ὑμῶν δαπανήσητε ‘because you ask with bad intentions in order to waste them on your own pleasures’ Jas 4:3. In some languages ‘to

waste’ may be expressed as ‘to use up and to get no benefit’ or ‘to have, but for no purpose.’

Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). In [Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains](#) (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 574). United Bible Societies.

2 Corinthians 12:14–15 (NKJV)

¹⁴ Now *for* the third time I am ready to come to you. And I will not be burdensome to you; for I do not seek yours, but you. For the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.

¹⁵ And I will very gladly **spend** and be for your souls; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I am loved.

The verb, which in Luke 15:14 is used of the prodigal son,

Luke 15:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴ **But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that land, and he began to be in want.**

may here have the added connotation of wastefulness. The aorist tense suggests that their intention to indulge in selfish pleasure was the unifying urge behind all their asking.

Hiebert, D. E. (1997). [James](#) (Revised Edition, p. 227). BMH Books.

When I first read this section of James, I wondered how this fit into the whole theme of being a friend of the world to be an enemy of God. But as I studied it, the truth of it came to light. He is telling us that one of the symptoms to know that you have become a friend of the world is that in your prayer life that you begin to pray for even good things that may be used to give you pleasure more or to make your life more comfortable instead of for the future purposes of the will of God.

A couple of examples may help clarify this. Let's say that do you have a job but it's not the best job in the world. When you pray for God to give you a better job but your primary goal may be a bigger house, nicer things, better close, bigger, vacations, etc. instead of being able to help your brother in need for gift to the church for the mission projects or enable a poor person to have some food.

Or you may pray for some better friends, because the people you're around all the time or a pain in the neck. The reason why you want to friends is because it would be easier. Let's confront it and more pleasurable. But you don't realize, but

God has these people in your life to help you deal with the sin in your own. It rises to the surface in your relationship with them as a purifying relationship making you more like Christ.

Or you may have an ongoing health condition that you have prayed to be released from because it would make you feel better and you would have more energy to do what you want to do. But perhaps it's not God's will let you be released from this, although you cry out to be released multiple times, God keeps you there for the purpose of making you more like Christ. And he tells you like he did Paul who prayed three times for the thorn to be removed from his flesh but God told him my grace is sufficient. My strength is perfected in your weakness.

Ephesians 4:28 (NKJV)

²⁸ Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with *his* hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need.

To often we act and think like the world. We want what we want because it will make us feel

better or it will make us more comfortable, or we will more pleasure. But that is the world. That is the way they think.

This should not be us. Our prayers should always be, They will be done as it is in heaven. Not my will but your will be done. We pray in the name of Jesus consistent with his will and purpose for the promotion of the kingdom.

We should not be known as those that acquire more and more stuff so that we can build bigger barns and consume it on our pleasures.

Our goal should be what more can we do for Christ with more money, more health, more means.

Is there anything wrong with having nice things. No, but if God has granted you those things, then you need to be about serving Christ and his church with it.

Is there anything wrong with having good health and pursuing a healthy lifestyle. No, But if you do, then use all your health to serve Christ and his church.

Is there anything wrong with having money or praying for a better job to make more. No. but if you do make sure your motive is so you can serve Christ more and give more to those in need.

If you are praying for God to give you more, make you better, put you in a better place so you can be happy, wealthy and comfortable for your own reasons. You my friend are a friend of the World and have made yourself an enemy of God.

Repent of your self-centeredness and live a selfless life for Christ and you will have a great reward in heaven.