

Scripture: James 1:1-12

Singing: 382:1-5 – 87:1-3 – 89:3-5 – 81-4

Introduction: God is zealous to bring peace in a world of conflict! (Gen. 3:15)

THE REALITY OF HUMAN CONFLICT (2)

I. The origin of conflict II. The remedy of conflict

I. The origin of conflict:

A. James 4:1-3 reveals that lusts *wage war* in all human hearts

1. God forces us to focus on our hearts first where *needs* can become *tyrants*
2. That's why in all our conflicts, we are to pray Ps. 139:13-14

B. James uncovers a deeper dimension in conflicts in vs. 4:

1. In vs. 1: 'lusts' refers to 'desires: *can be good or evil*
2. Yet 'good' desires can easily turn into demanding idols
3. If that happens, we commit (spiritual) adultery with our own desires

II. The remedy of our conflict

A. Only remedy is God's grace in the Gospel of Jesus Christ

1. The Gospel is the *Christian life* from beginning to end
 - a. as fruit of Christ's coming to us, we entered into spiritual marriage
 - b. what sustains a marriage relationship and makes it flourish?
 - c. the only way to live holy is to *live in faith of the Gospel* (Gal. 2:20)

B. First James turns to God's jealous love for us (vs. 5)

C. Next James then focuses our eyes upon God's grace (vs. 6-10)

1. God is not just jealous: *He is full of grace* (Prov. 3:34)

2. What a blessed Gospel: *with God is more grace than we can exhaust!*

3. All conflict resolution must begin with **us** *turning back to God*: 6, 7, 8, 10

a. without obedience to His directions there will be no resolutions

b. first act is *to draw near to God* which begins with our repentance

c. following acts are *submit* (vs. 7) – *humble* (vs. 10) – *put away* (vs. 8b)

4. Though not mentioned here, other Scriptures instruct us about the *human relationship mending* steps (Matt. 18; Luke 17)

Reflection: *Are there lingering conflicts among us that grieve the Holy Spirit?*

Thoughts to Ponder

God sends no one away empty except those who are full of themselves.

God is not out to hurt our pride. He is out to kill it.

God will not go forth with that man who marches in his own strength.

Pride in conflict is the master sin of the devil.

Pride is such a choking weed that nothing will prosper near it. (Alleine)

Pride is the cause of all other sins. (Thomas Manton)

The pride of others offends me and makes me diligent to hide my own. (Newton)