

God's Rebuke Against Worldliness

Wayne Dailey
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James was a strong preacher. What he had to say was plain and clear, important enough to be included in the Word of God. And his epistle would be needed many times down through the years to deal and warn. In the 4th chapter we find God's rebuke of worldliness.

James 4:1

From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?

Do you have any wars in your life?

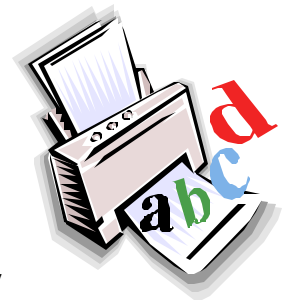
One of the wars that people fight is because they're out of control from the lusts that are in their lives - those things which their flesh would lust after.

So many fires are set as the result. So many wars rise up in the midst of the human body because of those things.

The wars that go on, with which people have so much trouble. They don't have to have such trouble, but they do. They yield, and only cause more troubles.

You never get over a problem by taking another dose of it.

You get over a problem by subtracting, not by adding.



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Notice here in James that he doesn't refer to **lust** (singular) but to **lusts** (plural):

It might be a lust for food, for alcohol, for drugs, or for anything else your body would lust after.

These are the things which the old man lusts after in his members, the things which cause so many problems and troubles.

God would rebuke those lusts, because they should have no place in the new man.

They're not something He wants us to have in our lives. They're not something spiritual, something that would draw us closer to God - but something of the flesh, something that needs to be dealt with and put down.

That lust needs to be put to death,

no longer a part of our life.

James 4:2

Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not.

So, nothing is gained by lust. It only causes wars and fightings, problems and troubles.

And then it goes beyond lusting, to where you kill, and desire to have yet more.

You kill, and desire: People sometimes go so far in lusting after something that they will kill to get it.

We want to look further into this chapter and see where God is rebuking worldliness - those things which should have been worked on and taken out of our lives long ago.

We came to Jesus. We submitted to Him. We turned our problems over to Him. We began to live by the Word, and were purged of the world.

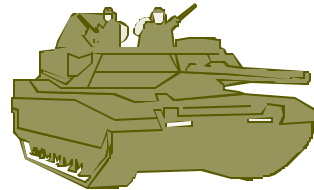
... that's the way it should be, anyhow.

But here James is not talking to those out in the world. He's speaking to those who were hanging around the church.

You kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: something that is wanted so much that one is willing to fight to get it - but in the midst of all that, they can't obtain what they are going after in their lust. It is never satisfied.

So, it's not a lack of desire - but of never being able to satisfy that desire.

And we shouldn't be able to obtain our desires without things being right in our hearts and lives. Then, what we desire will be the things of God.



You fight and war: That same problem that started in the beginning is mentioned again - all because of the lust that seems to control and bring into the realm where they cannot obtain.

... yet you have not, because you ask not: **What should you be asking for?** Should you ask God to bless your lust? or ask Him to bless you in taking that lust away?

Some would be more interested in having that thing which is wrong, than in having a desire and spiritual hunger that God would take that lust from their lives.

Remember, lust is not just after one thing. It is a lust after anything you shouldn't have - anything that you burn for.

You have not, because you ask not:

there's a block right there.

The type of people James is speaking to are those who don't always ask for the help that they need.

They're not asking for the right things. They're not asking for the spiritual things they need.

They are asking, yes - but what are they asking for?

When we ask God for something, we should be specific, asking Him for those things we need, those things which would be helpful.

James 4:3

Ye ask, and receive not,
because ye ask amiss,
that ye may consume it upon your lusts.

You have not, because you ask not - and you ask, and receive not. Something is being said here.

James is still speaking to those who have problems and troubles because of their lusts; those who are carrying burdens, troubles, lusts and wars in their members - and not seeking God for help and deliverance.

So, God would rebuke their worldliness. He is letting them know they aren't receiving that for which they ask of Him because they are asking to consume it upon their lusts.

A lot of people, even among those who attend church, seem to only want the fulfillment of their lusting after the things of the world - their lusting after the flesh.

It gets in them that they've just got to have that thing. They can't get along without it. They ask only to consume it upon their lusts.

Total failure! Somebody prayed earnestly for something; but that thing they prayed for was only to extend the lust that is already controlling them.

Is God going to feed their lust? No, God won't feed one's lust or greed.

If someone, therefore, comes to Him asking - and his purpose is only to consume it upon his lust - then God isn't going to have any part of it.

It's not that God doesn't want to answer prayer. But it's that we are to ask with the right motives, asking for the right things.

If you look back at your life, you'd probably see a lot of times where you asked for things that weren't right - and therefore, you didn't receive that for which you asked.

Then you began to get into the Lord, began to serve Him with all your heart - and the next thing you knew, you were asking for things that are good and right; and you had no trouble receiving what you asked for.

Why? because God wants you to have those good things that will draw you closer to Him.

God doesn't want you to have a heart that is lusting after the things of this world, a heart that loves the world.

James 4:4

Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

James gets down to deal with the worldliness that was in the church - and we find the same conditions in the church world of today.

God would want this rebuked, because it is enmity with Him.

Now, James deals with both men and women: ye adulterers *and* adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?

We're living in a day when divorce and remarriage is common.

Today this is found even amongst many in the church - divorcing and re-marrying into adultery.

This is not right!

God looks at it square on, knowing that these adulterers and adulteresses have to come to grips with the truth that friendship with the world is enmity with Him.

So they're at enmity with God. Once again, it's their lust that is in control. It's their lust that drove them into such a place. And they need help to put that down.

They don't need someone to come along with a new doctrinal idea that somehow it's all right, that somehow God understands.

This is the philosophy of modern times!

“*God understands.*” Everything that is contrary to God’s Word is put into this category.

They never put these things into the category that God forbids! yet God says right here that friendship with the world is enmity with Him.

. . . whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God: thus, adulterers and adulteresses are enemies of God.

That’s what God calls them!

Am I overstating this? or is this what God says?

God’s Word is clear for all to understand. He rebukes love for the world as being enmity with Him.

I Corinthians 7:10, 11

And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband: but and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife.

Realize that there’s no stronger words than these to look at, if you want God’s opinion of those who go down this avenue.

Paul is writing to the church at Corinth. They had written him a letter requesting information about these things, and this chapter records his answer.

He is talking to the married couple - commanding that the wife not depart from her husband. God’s plan is for people to get married and become one flesh, in a relationship ordained of Him.

Hebrews 13:4

Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge.

Getting married is meant to be a time when two people are joined together for the rest of their lives - not for a year or two, nor for twenty years or thirty. But for life!

. . . till death do us part: that's the way it was in the beginning with Adam and Eve.

Putting away your husband or wife means divorce.

Now, what happens if a couple does get a divorce? If you want to go ahead and get a divorce, anyway, you should know that there's a price to pay: you are to remain unmarried!

You know why most people who get divorced chose that route? because they wanted another mate. They wanted to get rid of the old one, and take on a new one.

. . . but and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: God's Word is strong! This is His commandment, not Paul's.

If the wife decides she still wants a husband, what is she to do to still remain in grace? be reconciled to her husband.

This sounds like God is just not wanting people to divorce and remarry. Yet, this was done through the dispensation of the law.

Matthew 19:8, 9

Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives:

but from the beginning it was not so. And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.

God has drawn a line. He is against divorce - and always has been. He looks for those who love Him, and want to walk with Him according to His Word.

God will rebuke those who decide they're going to change what He has said, that He didn't mean it that way.

Know that the Word of God is just that - the Word of God, not of man.

“This is old fashioned! It's archaic! It's too strict! “

Today, the church wants to accommodate such thoughts. There are doctrines out today that say God is giving you a second chance, or a third chance.

But that's not what God has said in His Word. He rebukes worldliness.

Know that if you go ahead anyhow, and marry someone whom God has not sanctioned in His Word for you to marry - you could be marrying into adultery!

Now, when you came to the Lord, God accepted you in the state you were in at that time. What happened before you came to the saving knowledge of the Lord has been forgiven and removed.

If you came to the Lord married, that's the mate you are to stay with.

Just because you are now saved doesn't mean you can go out and find a new mate.

[The rebuke of adulteress marriages.](#) There are people who are living in a marriage that is really adultery - just as much as going to bed with someone who is not their mate.

You may call that one you go home to your wife, yet be living in adultery! God warns us of this very clearly: [if we leave our mate and marry another, we are committing adultery.](#)

We may go along thinking everything is just fine - until the judgment day! and then find out that our adultery will keep us out of heaven.

It's better to know what God has said in His Word, so we won't get trapped - than to do as we please, and find out too late.

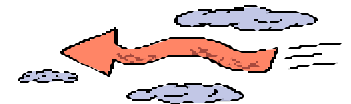
The church should teach these Scriptures on marriage and divorce, along with the rest.

If that woman over there who couldn't have another husband goes and remarries - they will both be living in adultery. And be in trouble with God!

How are they going to get out of that mess? If you were in a room, and the door was locked - how would you get out? you say you'd climb out the window! But what if there was no window? was no escape for you to be able to just walk away?

The churches need to speak up about these things. If you were in this place and wanted to know what to do, they should tell you that you'd have to leave that mate if you want to remove yourself from committing adultery.

[That's the only way out of it.](#)



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