

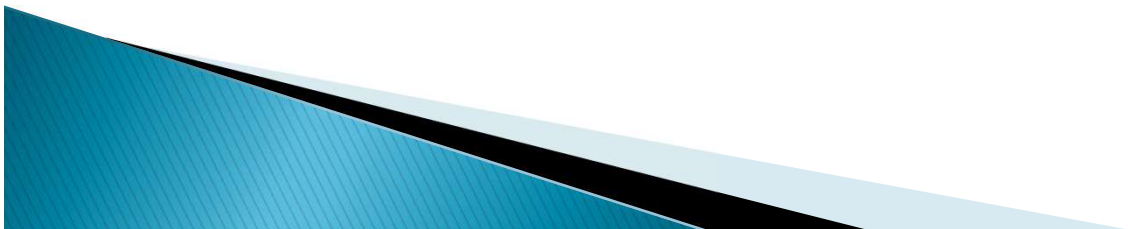
The Epistle of James: Living My Faith

- Living My Faith is an excellent approach to the letter
- This includes:
 - Living my faith in the midst of trials from without and temptations from within
 - Living my faith in relation to the word of God
 - Living my faith in relation to our fellow man
 - Living my faith by understanding that pleasing faith works obedience
 - Living my faith in relation to the use of our tongues
 - Living my faith in relation to the world and worldliness
 - Living my faith in prayer and compassion



The Epistle of James: Living My Faith

- Living my faith starts with
 - The right relationship with God which is only through Jesus Christ
 - The righteousness of God which is by faith
- Living my faith requires
 - The right attitudes
- Living my faith is seen in
 - My words
 - My deeds
- As we go through this letter, take intermittent attitude checks



Living my faith in relation to worldliness

- In chapter 3, two wisdoms contrasted:
 - Earthly, sensual, demonic wisdom
 - 3:14-16: “But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.”
 - Wisdom from above
 - 3:17-18: “But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.”
- One leads to conflict. The other is peacemaking.
- Chapter 4 shows there is conflict among brethren
 - Conflicts, strife, and faction are evidence of worldliness
 - James goes to the source of the conflicts



Living my faith in relation to worldliness

- “Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war.”
- War = a quarrel, a wrangle, a prevailing state of strife
- Fightings = produce a state of war
- Source of these problems: Selfish desires for pleasure
 - Seeking the wrong things: “You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain”
 - 1 Peter 2:11
 - They war against our selves and seek to overthrow our faith
- In this context, could be lust for power, desire for acclaim, pride of opinion



Living my faith in relation to worldliness

- What is the effect of battles and fights among Christians caused by selfish desires?
 - Disgraces the cause of Christ
 - Discourages the good
 - Diverts attention and energy away from positive effort and work



Living my faith in relation to worldliness

- “Yet you do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.”
- Unasked prayers. Prayers asked amiss.
- James is writing to some who
 - Were after what they did not need or should not want
 - Did not ask God for what they truly needed that is good for them
 - Were asking amiss – from a motive of selfishness
 - Motive is important



Living my faith in relation to worldliness

- “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. Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, ‘The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously’?”
- Adulterers/adulteresses – figurative regarding unfaithfulness of God’s people to God
 - Common analogy in Old Testament
 - Ezekiel 16:15, 32
- Christians are married to Christ
 - 2 Corinthians 11:2
 - Ephesians 5:23ff
 - Romans 7:1-4



Living my faith in relation to worldliness

- “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. Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, ‘The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously’?”
- As an adulteress is unfaithful to her husband, so are Christians unfaithful to God by being a friend of the world
 - Matthew 6:24
 - 1 John 2:15
 - John 15:14
 - John 15:19 – in, but not of



Living my faith in relation to worldliness

- “But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: ‘God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.’”
- Grace is the unmerited favor of God toward man
- God gives grace. Grace is neither earned by man nor owed by God
- There is grace to assist those described in verses 1-4 and you and I
 - But they and we have a role to play in this!
 - God resists the proud
 - God gives grace to the humble
 - And verses 7-10
 - Romans 5:20; 6:1



Living my faith in relation to worldliness

- Overcoming worldliness:
- “Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.”
- Submit to God = be subject to God = put yourself under God; place yourself in the position of those who are in the service of God
 - 1 Peter 5:5-6
- Resist in verse 6 means to place against
- “The root [of the Greek word, lij] has a military connotation, and means to array oneself; hence, ‘Those who are proud God arrays Himself against; see to it that you array yourselves under God.’” (Guy N. Woods, Commentary on James)
- Place yourself in the rank of God’s faithful soldiers and remain there



Living my faith in relation to worldliness

- Overcoming worldliness:
- “Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.”
- Resist the devil = take your stand against the devil
- A military connotation; used of those who put themselves in battle array against the enemy and hold their ground
- We must resist Satan, for
 - he is a dangerous enemy
 - We could be taken captive by him
 - It is an issue of life or death; it is a war for our survival
- We have weaponry. Ephesians 6:10-18



Living my faith in relation to worldliness

- Overcoming worldliness:
- “Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.”
- Devil = “the accuser, the slanderer”
- 1 Peter 5:8
- 2 Corinthians 11:13-15
- We resist him by a total rejection of his offer. Must not yield in slightest degree. No compromise with him.
- Meet him with the truth of the word of God, as Jesus did.
- He will flee. He wants to come back at an opportune time.



Living my faith in relation to worldliness

- Overcoming worldliness:
- “Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.”
- Get close to God and stay there.
- The result? God will come close to us.
- 1 Chronicles 28:9
- 2 Chronicles 15:2
- Hebrews 10:22
- How can we get close to God?
 - Read and study His word
 - Worship Him, including praying
 - Serve Him faithfully



Living my faith in relation to worldliness

- Overcoming worldliness:
- “Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded”
- Hands are the members of our body by which deeds are done
- We cleanse our hands by putting away wicked deeds, including termination of friendship with the world
- 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1
- The heart is the source of sin; it is the spring of evil; the hands are the instruments by which the purposes of the heart are accomplished
- Must cleanup the source
- Don't be double-minded!



Living my faith in relation to worldliness

- Overcoming worldliness:
- “Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom.”
- Laughter in the presence of sin – no
 - Luke 6:25
- Sin in my life is not a time of laughter but ought to be a time of mourning



Living my faith in relation to worldliness

- Overcoming worldliness:
- “Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.”
- Humility – voluntary acceptance of a place of lowliness under the authority of God
- Luke 15:18-19
- The way to be lifted up is to humble self
 - Matthew 23:12
 - “the way up is first down”
 - Psalm 51



Take-aways

- Acting according to earthly wisdom is a source of strife and contention among brethren
- We need to be sure we are desiring the right things
- With our desires in the right place, let us ask of God, and let us ask of Him unselfishly
- We must choose between God and the world
 - Choices must often be made
 - Friendship with the world is wanting to be like the ways of the world, ways that are opposed to godliness and holiness



Take-aways

- The way out of worldliness involves
 - Humbling self under God
 - Submitting to Him
 - Resisting the devil
 - Drawing near to God
 - Cleansing and purifying our hearts and deeds
 - Need God's forgiveness
 - Being grieved over our sin

