



October 27-28, 2020

Series: James

Message: James 4:1-10 Submit Yourselves

Teacher: Michael Farrell

The Main Thing: *What motivates you?*

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS:

Could you relate to Michael's story about wanting to be popular?

Do you feel a lot of pressure at your school or in your friend group to fit in?

Have YOU ever led others in the wrong direction?

What does it mean to be a friend to the world?

To be a friend of God, what are we to love? What are we to hate?

Is it ok to have friends who are not Christian?

Jesus was "a friend of tax collectors and sinners." How is this an example for us?

Do you want anything that you don't have right now? What?

Would the thing(s) you want give glory to God? Why/why not?

Should we pursue these "lusts of the flesh" or our Creator? Why?

What dreams do you need to give up to humble yourself before God?

(Ex. Being rich, having lots of things, social media fame)

Everyone wants to be liked/social media famous/an influencer.

Can you be an influencer and still be a Christian?

How can you be an influencer for Christ?

What are some small ways you can draw near to God this week and put Him first?

What are some ways we can build God's Kingdom instead of our own? (serving, etc)

Scriptures referenced: James 4:1-10; Matthew 11:19; Matthew 19:16-30; Luke 18:23-25; 1 John 2:15-17

Bible Background Notes:

James 4:1 James addresses the poor who were oppressed by the rich and tempted to overthrow them and take their goods.

Philosophers often talked about passions ruling a person and evil impulses causing wars inside or outside of a person.

4:2 James' readers probably hadn't killed anyone, but they were exposed to violent teachers who believed murder was a way to get justice and wealth for the poor. James calls for prayer instead. Violence is never a solution worthy of pursuit, only peace from God.

4:3 Prayers asking God to supply genuine needs will be answered, but those based on envy of others' wealth or status would only satisfy a person's passions, not God's will. We should control rather than cultivate our passions. What we want is not really status, but what we hope it will bring: wholeness, joy, and peace. Only God's wisdom brings these things.

When we pray, we presume that we know what is best, when only God does.

4:4 Those who share the world's values are unfaithful to God. Some passionately desire to seek status and prestige as the surrounding culture defines it, instead of following God's law of love. See also 2 Timothy 3:4. The world is any human institution, value or tradition that is against God, knowingly or not.

4:5 The "spirit" James refers to here could be the evil impulse within each person. God desires us to ask for His wisdom.

4:6 James quotes Proverbs 3:34. Humility includes submitting to God's sovereign plan for a person's life. God opposes the proud, because they have little interest in anyone but themselves.

4:7 One should choose between the values of the world and the values of God. A person who lives by God's values is no part of Satan's kingdom.

4:8 Purification was often used in the inward, moral sense. James speaks against hypocrisy: one should act from God's peaceful wisdom not the devil's hateful wisdom.

4:9-10 Mourning and self-humiliation were often connected with repentance.

Sources: *The IVP Bible Background Commentary OT/NT*; *The NIV Application Commentary: James* (David P. Nystrom)