

"On the Way" 365 Bible Reading Plan**James 4****James 4**

Some familiar words are in this chapter as well as some familiar attitudes and actions, unfortunately. James has just given us the practical aspects of the blessings and cursings of the tongue. Now he goes for the heart of the issue which is who is going to who or what controls us in our daily living. Who knows of a family, church, or person that does not go through times of disagreements and quarrels? The answer is probably no one. As long as we are in this life we will be fighting with the world, the flesh, and the devil. All three enemies are addressed in James four. In James 4:1 the Greek words are instructive for us to properly understand the nature of the fight. The word for wars in the word "polemic" a word that speaks of combatants going at each other, quarrel is the second word, and it is descriptive of someone in a "fuss" and that fuss escalating. Verse two gives us the attitude that is behind it. It is selfish "hedonism." As many of you know this is a desire to live in pleasure and self-consuming lifestyle. There is hardly a better word to describe Western culture in the present day. This brings about hate, murder, and people burning up, and is Greek for "Lusting" after what someone else has. Lack of contentment. Never enough. Let me ask you a very simple question. When is enough, enough? The lifestyle

characterized by discontentment with such things as we have has permeated the church of Jesus Christ. This does not mean we have no desire to provide for family. But in a day of HGTV, JTV, Amazon, just to name a few, it is easy to see how people get carried away with what they don't have, instead of being grateful for what they do have, more importantly, *who* they have in Jesus, and those with whom we do life.

James does not ease up on those scattered throughout the first-century world but rather says to be "Philos" loving in a friendly way the world places us on enemy standing with the world. If we fail to submit to God, "*order our lives according to His arrangement*" and become proud, then God Himself will stand against us. The Greek word is to "square off" against us, that He is going to come at us with full force, head to head. God always wins. However, He says, when we humble ourselves before Him, He gives us grace; Divine enablement to live a life pleasing to Him. Please listen to the "On the Way..." Podcast for more insights.

Prayer and Action Steps

C.S. Lewis defined humility as "Not thinking less of ourselves but thinking of ourselves less." May God help us to love and live for our Father in heaven and to love and live for those made in His image all around us each day!

Amen