

Let Every Man Be Slow to Wrath: Part 1 (James 4:1–10)

Grace Chapel of OC, CA

Dr. John Niemelä, Teaching Elder

September 5, 2007

INTRODUCTION

REVIEW

The context of trials

Benefiting from trials, rather than blaming God for our failure in trials

Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath (1:19–20)

Let every man be swift to hear (1:21–2:26)

Being hearers who do (1:21–27)

Not holding our faith with an attitude of partiality (2:1–13)

Deliverance through applying what we believe (2:14–26)

Let every man be slow to speak (3:1–18)

Let every man be slow to speak (4:1–5:6)

NEW EXPOSITION

4:1 Wars and fights among believers arise from a selfish pleasure-focus

These believers were warring with one another

The word for pleasure is *hēdonē* (from which we get *hedonism*)

4:2 They lust and lack; they murder and lack; they war and lack; but (ultimately) they lack because of that they do not do: They do not pray (in the proper way)

2a. They lust (to obtain), but still lack

2b. Although they murder, because they covet, but they cannot obtain (they still lack)

2c. They fight and war(, but still lack)

2d. The (ultimate reason) they lack, is because they do not pray (in the proper way)

4:3 They pray, but do not receive, because they pray with selfish motives (double-mindedness)

It is not incidental that their intention is to spend, rather than to invest

Did they want good and perfect gifts?

4:4 Believers who are unfaithful to God need to know: Friendship with the world makes one an enemy to God

How does James define friendship with the world? (Hint: It is not a *Do* and *Don't* list)

What does James say about friendship with God?

How does one chart a course?

4:5 Scripture means it when it tells us that the indwelling Spirit jealously yearns for us

This is not a quotation from Scripture, but a summary of Scriptural teaching

1. Our God is a jealous God: Exodus 20:5; 34:14; Zechariah 8:2
2. The Holy Spirit is God
3. The Holy Spirit indwells believers
4. James hints that believers ignore this truth do so at their own risk

4:6 [The God is jealous for us to be friends] He gives grace to the humble, but resists the proud

4:7 [In light of God giving more grace to the humble, but resisting the proud] these believers need to humbly respond to God [& His word] & need to resist Satan, who will look for greener pastures

4:8a God will draw near to believers who draw near to Him

4:8b [Drawing near to God for] double-minded and sinful believers requires cleansing their hands and purifying their hearts

4:9 These sinful and double-minded believers should grieve over their sin, rather than being joyful

Please note, James does not ask or answer the question of whether grief over sin is an essential feature of confession of sin. [I am inclined to recommend confessing sin as soon as we recognize it, which means that we will often confess sins before we may perceive grief over the confessed sin]. However, this passage is a clear correction for those who suggest that expressions of grief should not accompany confession. Grief is entirely appropriate when one confesses sin.

4:10 God will (at the appropriate time exalt) believers who humble themselves before Him

CONCLUSION