



“Restoring A Broken Heart”

The book of James is all about living by genuine faith. James describes the kind of life the one who claims to live by faith lives.

- I. **Faith’s response to trials 1:2-27**
- II. **Faith’s response to partiality and prejudice 2:1-13**
- III. **Faith’s True Nature 2:14-26**
- IV. **Faith’s response to conversation 3:1-12**
- V. **Faith’s way of life 3:13-18**
 - A. **Instruction – If you claim to be wise, live wisely 3:13**
 - B. **Insights**
 - 1. **Claiming wisdom without living wisely makes you a liar. 3:14**
 - 2. **Human wisdom arises from three sources. 3:15**
“earthly” “Soulish” “Demonic”
 - 3. **Jealousy and strife breed a multitude of other evils 3:16**
 - 4. **Wise living promotes righteous living 3:17-18**

God’s wisdom revealed in God’s implanted truth produces specific results. I suggested using this list as an effective template to examine our hearts. Pay attention to what comes out of our mouth. Pay attention to how we relate to others. James continued further insights regarding the differences between human wisdom and divine wisdom; between life according to the ways of God and life promoted by earthly, soulish and demonic sources. After the eight insights, James issues seven curative commands. He lists seven actions we should take to restore our heart to function according to God’s ways; the way of wisdom.

5. The war within triggers wars without 4:1-3

James already exposed the chaos created by a heart driven by bitter jealousy and selfish ambition. He provided additional insight into the cause of human conflict. He traces human conflict to an internal war of unbridled passions.

What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.

You cannot resolve issues with people until you resolve your inner battle. Every Christian must manage two sets of passions. Paul wrote imbedded passions / desires.

Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. Ephesians 2:3

James referenced these unbridled passions earlier.

But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. James 1:14

At salvation, Jesus embeds a new set of passions through the Holy Spirit. This sets up a continual conflict of emotions.

For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. Galatians 5:17

Paul informed the Galatian how to live above these passions.

If you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another. But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. Galatians 5:15-16

The war of passions within ourselves triggers wars with others. We must address the inner passions that wage war against the soul. We must also address our relationship with the world in which we live.

6. Friendship with the world is enmity with God 4:4

James bluntly calls them out not only for a self-centered focus but a failure to be fully devoted to God.

You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. James 4:4

God continually rebuked Israel for committing spiritual adultery by embracing the gods of other nations. It becomes increasingly more difficult to differentiate between those who embrace Christianity and those who don't by lifestyle. Behind most everything being disseminated through media and higher education to day is some anti-God element. Trying to maintain friendship with the world system of thought and deeds and God is as incompatible as pursuing two partners at the same time.

Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica... 2 Timothy 4:10

Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Isaiah 55:2

But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. Matt 6:33

God really does desire relationship with us.

7. God jealously desires intimate relationship 4:5

Or do you suppose it is to no purpose that the Scripture says, "He yearns jealously over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us"? James 4:5

"The Spirit which He sent to live in us wants us for himself alone"

We grieve the Holy Spirit whenever we seek gratification outside of Him. Even in the mists of infidelity God responds to us with grace.

8. God gives grace to the humble 4:6

But he gives more grace. Therefore, it says, "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

He freely offers us His loving favor. Yet, that favor can only be accessed by a humble heart. James painfully exposes issues with the proud divided heart; the divided-soul. He lovingly offers His favor, His grace, His life changing power. He promises to enable the humble heart to return to intimate relationship. James laid out the process of this humbling of the heart in the next six verses which include seven specific instructions. I have never noticed before that these commands were ALL directed to the body. They apply to the individual as well, but I believe James addressed the body. Amid the relational chaos due to a failure to deal with their unbridled passions. James called them as a body to do the following seven things.

C. Instructions for a clean heart 4:7-12

1. Submit to God

Any corruption or chaos in the heart exposes an obedience problem. All sin begins with a deliberate decision to reject God and His ways and embrace some other way. I proudly choose to do it my way rather than His. I arrogantly choose to obey the dictates of the world, my flesh or the devil. Such alignment opposes God and His way. I deliberately and arrogantly make myself an enemy of God. I choose to spurn God's desire for intimate relationship with me for personal satisfaction. The only option for restoration is a deliberate choice to submit to Him. The term means to place yourself under the authority and protection of another. Lord, I confess seeking satisfaction from sources other than you. I acknowledge you as the only source of life. You are my life. I submit to you only.

2. Resist the devil

Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

Just as I need to firmly declare my allegiance toward God and His ways, I must also vigorously declare my opposition to the devil and his ways. When I actively resist the devil, he must immediately release whatever hold he has on me. The assumption is the devil has had some involvement in my departure from pure devotion to Christ. We need to refuse the world's influence, deny the passions of the flesh and resist the schemes of the devil. Paul went so far as to say the core of our struggle has to do with the devil.

We do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenlies. Ephesians 6:12

Because of that, we need God's armor and God's strength to stand firm against him.

3. Draw near to God 4:8a

Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you.

Whereas submission involves an act of my will to come back under the authority of God over my life, the drawing near involves a passionate inclining of my heart to restored intimacy. As we draw near to God, He draws near to us. The restoration of relationship includes a realization of the gravity of my offense.

4. Cleanse your hands and heart 4:8b

Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

It was necessary to address their sinful actions and their sinful hearts.

If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us. 1 John 1:7-10

5. Get serious about your sin. 4:9

Be miserable and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom.

He called them to recognize the seriousness of their infidelity to God and offenses toward each other.

6. Humble yourselves before the Lord 4:10

Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.

This command summarized the heart necessary to maintain intimacy with God. The humble heart becomes the empowered heart. The proud heart is the hardened heart.

7. Don't speak evil against one another 4:11-12

He concluded his instruction with a specific application regarding the control of speech.

Do not speak evil against one another, brothers. The one who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks evil against the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the

law but a judge. There is only one lawgiver and judge, he who is able to save and to destroy. But who are you to judge your neighbor?

Allow the conflicts in your life to expose the conflict in your heart.

Pay attention to the inner war.

Cultivate your passion toward God.

Confess your infidelity.

Humble yourself.

Return

Draw near.