



Reasons To Rejoice  
BIBLE STUDY

# WHERE THE RUBBER MEETS THE ROAD

THE BOOK OF JAMES



## Where the rubber Meets the Road: James Chapter 4

Please begin by reading the end of James chapter 3 and then right into chapter 4 before you begin to do your lesson. This will help you keep the author's purpose in context, especially in this instance because James seems to be dealing with the same thought. Remember to pray and ask the Holy Spirit to give you eyes to see and ears to hear what He is saying through this chapter and our lesson this week.

James gets pretty stern in this section. Most commentators think that he is addressing specific issues that he's personally witnessing or hearing about in the early Jewish/Christian churches. In chapter three, James ends with the topic of peace, and now he contrasts it with war. I think you'll find this really interesting and terribly convicting. I know I did.

1. Read James 4 and list the key words on your "Key Word Sheet."
2. What would you say is the specific or main theme of this chapter?
3. Do you see any contrasts and/or comparisons?

4. What's the author's tone in this chapter? Who is he talking to?
  
5. Are there any:
  - a. Promises to cling to?
  - b. Commands or warnings to follow?
  - c. Anything to praise Him for?
  - d. Anything new you didn't know?
  
6. From this chapter, how would you fill in this blank? True or genuine faith \_\_\_\_\_?
  
7. How does James answer his own rhetorical question in verse 1?

The Greek word for "quarrels" is a general word for fights or warfare. The word for "conflicts" is a term that refers to more individual attacks. So, believers were in an ongoing war that would explode into individual attacks. Sound familiar?

The word "desires" is *hedone* in the Greek, meaning "the belief that pleasure is the chief god in life." The term James uses for "pleasures" is another word for "enjoyment." James is not just talking about fun and leisure, but any type of desire ... to be rich, to be successful, for food, for certain relationships, etc. Our desire for pleasures, James says, can become a source of conflict because if those desires aren't met or fulfilled, we tend to fight until they are fulfilled!

8. James tells us that wars and conflicts come from within. What illustrations does he use? What do they all have in common?

9. James says we sometimes have not because we ask not, and sometimes we don't receive because we ask amiss. Can you tell me how these statements relate to his point, and how these verses are often taken out of context, and why?

10. Why does James call them adulterers and adulteresses? Can you explain his point?

We seem to live in a "pleasure-centered" culture. Pleasure is not wrong, but it's the driving desire for it that is. One commentator described it as "A self-focus which naturally diminishes the importance of others and enthrones ones' pleasures as the goal of life." It can be sensual, materialistic, professional, or positional ... not just fun. Our prayers can even be self-centered and pleasure driven. Our prayers should be for things that please God, not for our own selfish ambitions.

11. In Luke 16:13, Jesus says "No servant can serve two masters." How does this reinforce what James is saying?

12. Exodus 20:5 tells us that God is a jealous God. Can you explain what this means and how it relates to this?

13. Do you feel that you are cheating on God in any way? Is your allegiance to Him or to someone or something else? Are there some areas where you allow your desires and affections for other “things” to draw you away from Him? Any changes need to be made?

14. Swindoll wrote, “Worldliness in the church causes quarrels and conflicts.” Does this ring true, in your opinion? Have you ever played a part in that?

15. James offers solutions to this problem. What are they, according to the next few verses?

16. What is God’s attitude toward pride and humility? (Who gets the grace?)

17. According to verse 17, how should we handle the devil?

It's important to understand that once we are saved, we are "near" God. This refers to our position in Christ, which will never change. James is talking about our daily walk and relationship with God as we grow in Him.

18. According to James 4:8-10, how do we draw near to Him? (And what are we mourning and weeping over?) What's one word for this process? One more question ... how does humility tie in?

19. Are you drawing near to Him, or are you resisting, fighting, or ignoring Him in some area of your life?

20. Does humility characterize your life? Do you struggle with pride in any area?

21. Read verses 11-17. How does James develop his theme of humility? What other character traits are illustrated in this section?

22. How are judging and boastings evidences of pride? What does it say in Matthew 7:1 and Romans 12:1?

Swindoll wrote, “James isn’t suggesting we be gullible and permissive, letting people get away with anything. Remember, in his own letter, James confronts fellow Christians about their sins. But there’s a difference between confrontation for the purpose of building up and condemnation for the purpose of tearing down.”

23. James says if you judge your brother, you become a lawbreaker. What law do you think he’s referring to?

James refers to judging others in chapter 2:4-13 when he talks about being prejudiced. A judgmental attitude can manifest itself in many ways.

24. What are some other ways a judgmental attitude and spirit can manifest itself?

25. In verses 11-12, James talks about playing God over others’ lives, and now in verses 13-16, he deals with the temptation to play God in our own. Can you summarize the point he’s making?

26. What three words in verse 15 show us the balance between seeking God and making plans for ourselves? How do you keep that principle from becoming a cliché? (Are these magic words or simply principles and attitudes?)

27. Do you often try to navigate your own life, make your own decisions, plan your own course ... without seeking guidance from the Lord? Do you tend to take God out of the picture? Is there a decision you've made lately in which you've failed to include God's perspective? (Are you ready to surrender your will and depend on the Lord and recognize His sovereignty in your life?)

It's been said it is the height of arrogance to disregard God as the master of our fate. Psalm 14:1 says, "The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God."

28. How does James sum it all up in verse 17? What warning is he giving?

James 4:17 is a verse that really grabbed my heart as a new, young believer. The fact that once I "knew" the right thing to do, through His Word, I was accountable to "do" the right thing, almost scared me. If I didn't, I'd be in sin. It's sin if I'm doing something I shouldn't, but also if I'm not doing something I know I should. The Holy Spirit brings the heat from both sides! 😊 It all boils down to obedience to His will ... seek, trust, surrender, obey. (This verse is such a "James" statement!)

29. So ... is there something you know you should be doing... a relationship to fix, a person to love, an attitude to adjust, an enemy to forgive? Are you ready to obey?

30. What part should humility play as you continue to plan your future? Any decisions coming up?

31. What verses or principles impacted you the most from this chapter?

**Memory Verse of the Week:** "Humble yourself in the sight of the Lord and He will lift you up." James 4:10

**\*\* If you want to do some additional homework, read the following verses. How do they relate to James 4? 1 John 2:15-17, 1 Peter 5:5-9, Colossians 3:12-13, Proverbs 22:4.**



# James Chapter 4

G U G O O D A I D P G V P L I C A Q A I  
 R Q Y U D T R E T H G U A L P J Z Z A R  
 D I T D D L R O W D A F T D U R T G J K  
 Y V Z M G J M K E F Y W T D N V O E L R  
 C G O A R R F G Z S A I U W L U N U E N  
 S C R I P T U R E B E R I W D M U S D L  
 I H X R G F E G Q A I V N O I P I W M F  
 F D Y A Q I Z V G C I L W T L S L U R Q  
 D H Q Z O G X L I U O C Y F T V E E D A  
 E T A E Q H Q H H L U H R M V D R G N V  
 T J V Q J T O E Y B R I A F T D I D R A  
 C Y K S V V A E V E E B Z P Q Z S U O N  
 I G F U F V U A L N O R R F E C E J E B  
 L B I B I N I B D P M P R E S H D W U V  
 F I B N I G M S R B W G V B Q G Y Z M C  
 F E E T W U H L W F N W G R A C E L O P  
 A S N Y H I D W D C U M I X Q T R X U N  
 S O C V P A Z V K M T J M P O F J L R D  
 C C X S Y M X M T I G J L Z U R B X N T  
 B W B Z V G K J F V D D J E N E M Y Z I

## WORD LIST:

AFFLICTED	ENVY	HEAVINESS	MOURN
CONTINUE	FIGHT	HUMBLE	PROUD
DESIRE	FRIENDSHIP	JUDGE	RESIST
ENEMY	GOOD	LAUGHTER	SCRIPTURE
ENMITY	GRACE	LIVE	WORLD