

Peace for Our Troubled Soul part 2

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[0:00] Let's pray together. Father, we come here this morning. We praise you above all things, Lord. We come here this morning. We come here this morning. We come here this morning.

We come here this morning. We come here this morning. We come here this morning. We come here this morning. We come here this morning. We come here this morning. Let's pray together this morning. We come here this morning this morning. Let's pray together this morning this morning. We just love you and praise you and pray that you'd be with us here in the rest of this time.

And we pray this all in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen. I want you to turn your Bibles to James chapter 4 this morning.

[1:59] James chapter 4 as we continue in the topic of the war of the soul. And today we are really homing in on the deadly results of a divided heart.

As we look at the battle of the heart and what's going on within us, how it affects everything in our life. And I do just want to say just on Brent's introduction there, I appreciate so much.

And I know Darrell is just on edge every time he gets up. And so he introduced today a rhetorical feature that is called the pregnant pause.

That's when you say something and there's this pause that could interpret a whole lot of meaning into what you've said. And so everybody's seeing the pregnancy, waiting for it to give birth here. And then he says something and it's different. And then all of a sudden you're like, oh, well that's different. So we've got to make sure that we don't use that in phrases like talking about sticking something somewhere. Right?

[3:16] So thank you Brent for expressing these rhetorical functions this morning for us. We pray for Darrell every day.

What a great topic. We come to James chapter 4. And really I think this is one of those epistles in the New Testament that I think speaks so practically to our life.

I was thinking this week about the message and I remembered back to the movie that I saw as a kid.

It was the 1960s version of War of the Worlds. Right? You remember that movie? The 60s version. Not the Tom Cruise version. That's Steven Spielberg and all that.

It was the 60s version which made it kind of, you know, freaky. Okay? And as a kid I remember seeing that movie and just being totally freaked out about these alien things and whatever.

[4:20] The movies are coming from H.G. Wells' book that was written in the 1890s. And so very old book. Adaptation comes in the 1930s in the form of a radio show.

And when this radio show is given, it causes national panic. Because... People are hearing that and you've got to think this is, you know, days of innovation in entertainment.

And so this is all new. News and things like that is very new on the radio. And so blurring the lines of what's entertainment and what's news is really a difficult thing.

And so there was national panic. People actually fleeing from their homes hearing that there's this alien invasion. And some people checking into hospitals because they think they may have been poisoned in some way by alien gas.

And you just look back and think, man. So when I saw it as a kid in the movie form, it was kind of freaky. But it didn't bring me to that level. Right? You see this movie unfold.

[5:32] And really, the majority of the movie is the adventures that kind of ensue as these people are fleeing for their lives. And this thing emerges.

It's an alien ship. And it's vaporizing people. And so they're fleeing. And then at the end of it, when it's just, you know, at the point of when it's just all hope is lost, then the alien just dies.

And the alien ships just kind of crash. And as it turns out, it's some kind of germ that's gotten within the alien. And what was the war of the worlds became just a war inside the alien.

And the alien dies. And then everything, you know, people are picking up the pieces and returning to normal. And I thought of that because I'm looking at the epistle of James and I'm thinking, man, what a picture.

The war of the worlds. The war of the worlds.

[7:08] The parent-child relationships. You know, employer-employee. All the relationships of your life are kind of wrapped up in this battle and the conflicts that are at work among you, as he described it.

And as he said, is this not finding its cause in the very root of this battle that's not among you but within you? As your passions are battling against each other.

It's really a war against your soul. And this battle that we looked at last week is really also related not just to the relationships that we have with others in the body, but it's also how we relate to the values of the world.

It's the war against the world system. The battle that we have against the values of the world, which we can sometimes see illustrated in election time, especially because there's these moral issues that we're dealing with.

The believers, as we're looking at elections and saying, well, I don't want Western civilization to crumble, so I'm not going to vote for Kamala.

[8:23] And so, and I'm looking at, you know, the other side, and I'm like, man, Donald Trump isn't the most moral guy. And so I'm struggling with some of the ethical issues there.

And yet, it's the lesser of two evils. I don't want Western civilization to crumble, but I want to work towards something better. This is at least a step in the right direction, and we've got some track record and whatever.

But those moral issues are really coming down to issues of value. The world's values versus biblical values. Elections and things like that.

This is not foreign to the biblical mind. As believers, this is exactly what James is getting at, is that all the conflicts of your life, whether it's the relationships among you or the relationships around you, the relationships you have in the world and the relationship you have with the values of the world and how you relate to the world around you.

It all has to do with this battle that's going on inside you, which ultimately represents a hostility with God and your relationship with God.

[9:47] James is not some sci-fi thriller, and I hope no public panic ensues as we read this. I do hope that we see this for what it is as the war of our soul and that we take this very seriously and carry the tone that the text takes of this.

Just like the conflicts that we have in our life, this is a serious conflict, and James poses this in the form of a question beginning in verse 1 of chapter 4.

So let's go ahead and back up. We'll read the part we covered last week, and then we'll come up to verse 4 and 5, which is really where we'll end up honing in today, and I don't think I'll get much farther than that.

So let's stand together. We're going to read this together. In this, I really think we're going to see how this inner war really leads us through some dangerous territory.

We're going to see how we become spiritually in the journeys of God if we're not careful.

[11:03] But I really hope what we'll see in this is the good news of it is that there's always a way back to Christ. That's always the hope of the message.

James chapter 4, beginning in verse 1. What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you?

You desire and you do not have, so you murder. You covet and you cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask. You ask and you do not receive because you ask wrongly to spend it on your passions.

Verse 4. The world is enmity with God.

Therefore, whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. 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?

[12:15] But he gives more grace. Therefore, it says God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble. Father, we pray that you would just speak to us today.

May you allow our hearts to be responsive and receptive. May you help us to hear the warnings that you have for us. But may you help us to hear the beckoning and the call of your Holy Spirit to come and return to you.

May this be so. We pray it in Christ's name. Amen. Amen. The Lord has spoken. Amen. I. See in this text really three deadly results of a divided heart.

Three deadly results of a divided heart. Because really this is the issue. The values of the world around me all come back to these issues of the heart.

And when our heart is divided and when we're allowing the conflict to continue and the dilemma to remain in our hearts, then there are some deadly results to this.

[13:41] And result number one is in verse four, as he issues the accusation, which is just a dramatic rebuke to people who are brothers in Christ, filled with the Holy Spirit.

Right? I mean, this is the church people that he's talking to. This isn't just lost world people that he's talking to. He's talking to followers of Christ. And what does he say in verse four?

I mean, what a, what an accusation, right? I mean, you've got to hear this as the New Testament reader would hear this as, especially the leaders of the church, as they're getting this epistle, this circular letter that's going around.

And as they read this, just the, the, the shocking insult that has just been hurled their way. Right? You adulterers, you adulterous people.

This is the image of adultery that is carried from the Old Testament and, and the idea of Israel being God's bride over and over again.

[14:58] We get the example in the Old Testament of the, you know, Israel being the bride of Christ in some way, and him being the groom and how they have been unfaithful to him in idolatry and in following pagan ways.

And in that he refers to them as the harlot. Sometimes playing the harlot. And when we allow our passions and desires to remain in conflict, this is the imagery that he's giving here is that there is a spiritual adultery taking place in our life.

Our hearts are meant to be united with God. There is a relationship that is so unique and so dramatic that we have with God that when there is a divided heart in me, God sees this in me as adultery.

My affections are given to the things of the world. My... My heart is meant to be devoted to God. And when I turn to the world for wisdom, and I'm appreciating the wisdom of the world more than I'm appreciating the wisdom of God, then he sees this as adultery.

[16:22] You're adulterous. Think about this in terms of even something as simple as psychology, right? We think of psychology, modern psychology. Man, we've really come to understand humanity so that we can give instructions to you and really help you navigate through the difficulties of your life.

And granted, sometimes modern psychology gets it right. I like to say it's like a broken clock. It's right twice a day. The reality is that it does get it right sometimes because making observations, you see something going on.

However, if you understand what psychology is, psychology, the word psychology, psuche is really from the Greek meaning, the word means soul.

The soul of man. The study of the soul is what psychology is. So when you study the soul, and you don't look to the wisdom of God that has created the human soul, then you are taking a very limited,

very finite look at a being that has been created by an eternal God.

And when he reveals things about the soul in his word, the insights and the revelation that he provides for us should far outweigh whatever modern psychology has to say.

[17:48] Right? When we honor something like that above the wisdom of God, which is the theme of James, what you are doing is spiritual adultery.

So modern psychology divorced from spiritual truth is adulterous. That's what he's saying. So this idea is really trying to help us to get a grip on this battle of our heart because if you want to study the soul, look in the scriptures.

See what God has to say about the human soul. And that's what James is unveiling for us is to say all the conflicts of your life are actually a spiritual issue. It is a heart issue where passions are at play and in a battle in your soul.

Adultery was a very serious sin in the scriptures. As it is now, I'm sure, if you are a spouse, right? If you're not, you think, oh, it's a big deal, but is it really that?

Oh, it's a big deal. It's a big deal. Most of the murder shows on TV have to do with this, right?

Brandy and I have made a promise that if you ever cheat on me, it's okay. I'm going to prison, right?

[19:06] I'll start my prison ministry. I'll be fine with it. Everything's going to go well. But somebody's going to die. It's just the way it's going to be, right? The word that's used here is the consistent word through the New Testament and Old in Hebrew and then in Greek.

And it's a word that describes married and impure. An unlawful lover. It pertains to being unfaithful to one to whom one should remain faithful, identifying someone as adulterous.

And in this situation, it's actually using the feminine form of the word, which is saying, you adulteresses. The female side of this.

So now you get some of the insult as the leaders of the church are reading this. These men are gathered together. They're reading the epistle. Did he just call us a woman? He just called, he didn't just call us adulterers.

He called us adulteresses. Word. So then if while her husband is living, she is joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress.

[20:18] The same exact word, exact form. But figuratively, it's being used here. Talking about this relationship with God that you have. That you are in a relationship with God, not unlike Israel being called the bride of Christ.

Now in the New Testament, Christ refers to us as his bride. And all through the epistles, we're referred to as the bride of Christ as the church. And the figurative use of this is common throughout the scripture.

Also to say that this adultery is the characteristic of how God sees your relationship with him whenever this battle of passion or an open question, then you are an adulterer.

What a picture, right? Hosea chapter 3. Picture in the Old Testament. The Lord said to Hosea, Go again, love a woman who is loved by another man and is an adulteress, even as the Lord loves the children of Israel, though they turn to other gods.

Adulteress. You're turning to other gods. You're appealing to other things. You're finding your joy in other things, your satisfaction in other things. There's a draw of the world that just is so alluring and is a hard one to embrace the other.

[21:51] You're an adulterer. You're committing spiritual adultery. And I've counseled people. I counsel marriages. You know, that's part of what I do as a brother in Christ, as a pastor.

It's really just discipleship, and it's really helping couples to come together and work through issues sometimes when they get hard. Because it happens. It happens to all of us, every relationship.

If you haven't had difficulties in your relationship, I question if you're a real person, okay? But the reality is, in these situations, I've come to places where at times there has been infidelity that has been really hard to overcome.

And there's been times when it's couples that I love, people that are faithful, people that are serving in the church. I mean, you would have never thought anything was going on, and then all of a sudden they come out, oh, I've been having an affair for years.

And the other person is left devastated. And I had a friend one time, I tried to work with him through this, and what he said was, he said, I don't love her the way that I should.

[23:08] And it all goes back to the fact that I married her on the rebound, and I've always loved this other woman, and I've never been able to let it go. And I'm just telling you, as a brother in Christ, this is one of those moments where I just want to lay hands on that dear brother, like around his neck, and just choke him out as he chooses to go back to an old love and throw his family away, right?

And as a pastor, I have seen it way too many times. And just the devastation and the wife that goes through or the husband that's left that goes through just this devastation and goes through like weight loss and just anemic, I mean, just overwhelmed, and it takes the scars, emotional scars, it's so hard to get over, right?

And I think of that, and I'm thinking of that guy, and I'm like, man, I'm just joking, man. What are you doing? And what James is saying is, that guy, that's you.

That's you. That's you when you love the world. That's you when you're wanting the applause of the world. That's you when you're wanting to be accepted by the world, and so you dumbed down your spiritual life a little bit so that you can be accepted in your circles.

That's you. You are the adulterer. You are the one unfaithful to God. You are the betrayer here. And God is revealing this to us because this is where the battles are taking place in your heart.

[24:51] It's the passions that are at war within you. And if you don't discard the other so that you can embrace Christ, you become the adulterer.

The word passions that he's talking about is used 27 times in the New Testament. It is always in the negative. There's not a positive use of it in the New Testament.

We think of passions, and we might use those words like in a positive way. It's I'm really passionate about my love for my wife, and I use it that way. But when the New Testament's using that word, it's always in the negative.

It is the appeal of the flesh to something. And so it's always referring to the sexual immorality or an appeal to the power of the world or the allurements of the world drawing you in, those kinds of things. So Peter teaches on this explicitly over and over again in the epistles of Peter, 1 and 2 Peter, where he would say, like in 2 Peter 2.18, talking about false teachers, they entice by sensual passions of the flesh.

[25:57] And in this, you get the picture of false teachers that would dumb down morality and kind of teach things like, well, sin isn't a real thing anymore. And you go, well, who would teach that?

Lots of people today. Churches in this city teach that. There's no such thing as sin. And as a believer, I don't sin anymore. Well, guess what? Yes, you do.

False teachers are identified by dumbing down morality. So all this movement of accepting homosexuality and whatever, it's kind of like, I've got an open relationship with God.

That's what I've got. Right? I'm not, we're committed and we've got an understanding that I'm going to be in the world and be with God and it's just an open relationship. There is no such relationship in Scripture.

You are an adulterer. Peter says in 1 Peter 4.3, some of you are doing what the Gentiles do. He says, living in sensuality, passions, drunkenness, orgies, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry.

[27:08] Is this drawing you in in the world? You're an adulterer. In 1 Peter 1.14, he says, you as a follower of Christ are not to be, as he says, not to be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance.

You used to be an adulterer. You are not an adulterer in Christ. Now, that's not how you're to live. As a follower of Jesus, I've been redeemed. I've been born again.

The passions in me were put to death at the cross. And when I turned from sin and turned to Jesus, he gave me new life. And I am his and he is mine. The drawing of this is where you feel the passions at war.

And that's exactly what he said in 1 Peter 2. Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles, 1 Peter 2.11, Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh which war against your soul.

Same thing. So James isn't saying something that's not common among all believers here. He's saying all of this is coming back to this issue of the passions that are at war within you.

[28:38] Your soul was made for God. To me forever, God says the Lord, I will betroth you to me in righteousness and justice, in steadfast love and in mercy.

I will betroth you to me in faithfulness and you shall know me as the Lord. That's the relationship. Isaiah said, For your maker is your husband.

The Lord of hosts is his name. And the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer. The God of the whole earth he is called. He is your husband. You are espoused to him.

You are to be devoted. The things in your house are his. There's nothing in your life that don't belong to him.

Ephesians 5.27, Paul said, Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself for her.

[29:46] Why? You're the bride of Christ. David Jeremiah said, we have lost the sense that we are at war and that is why we are so often defeated.

It is not that Christians don't want to win. We're not keeping in mind what the nature of this relationship is with God.

And we've lost the war because we're not looking at it with the seriousness with which we need to look at it as believers in Christ. I'm devoted to God. And when I let anything else in to crowd that, I'm an adulterer.

So, really, that's the first deadly result of a divided heart is that I come to the accusation of being an adulterer.

I'm identified as an adulterer. But secondly, this is where he moves in chapter 4, verse 4. I also become an enemy of God.

[31:03] That's how serious it is, right? I'm an adulterer. This gives you the character of it. This gives you the emotional appeal so that you really understand how God feels about this.

But the reality then starts to set in is that, yeah, that makes me an enemy of God. When I betray him that way in my heart and allow these things to carry equal value in my heart, then I'm betraying God just as if I had another woman and what it would do to Brandy.

And I treat them equally. Well, I'm not sure which one I should go to. And, oh, Brandy will tell me. She has given vivid description of that that I don't want to experience.

Look what he says. Chapter 4, verse 4, you adulterous people, do you not know, and this is his polemic teaching, giving the question and then giving the answers, do you not know that friendship with the world is be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

Now, how, that is so sinful, corrupt value systems around us.

[32:29] We align ourselves sometimes with the world. We position ourselves in doing so as the enemy of God. It's not a small matter. It's actually really big, just like adultery.

Now, I'm in a hostile relationship with God when I allow this dilemma to be maintained. Like, I don't end it. I don't win that war. I'm still wondering what I should do, what I want.

Which way is good in this? Friendship with the world is enmity with God. So, he used the word friendship, phileo, which we see throughout Scripture being used in ways of a relationship with God also.

Abraham was called the friend of God. He had fellowship with God. He met with God. You as a believer in Christ are to daily, you know, go into the secret place and spend time with the Father. Jesus did that. He went away in private places over and over again all through the Scripture. It was his custom, the Scripture said, to spend time with the Father. Who in the world are you not to spend time with the Father with whom you have a relationship with?

[33:35] And this is the friendship with God you have. Faithful to God. Called out of a pagan world like Abraham.

And the word he uses here in the New Testament is the word cosmos, which is translated world. It sometimes talks about the created order or the arrangement of things around us in the material world.

We get our word cosmetics from that for you ladies. Not for you men, for you ladies. Cosmetics, you arranging things, right?

And necessarily imply that you're worldly. It used to be that many, especially good, independent Baptist pastors would say, if you've got makeup on, you're of the devil, whatever.

You know. And then they would follow it quickly as their wife looked at them and said, well, if the barn needs painting, paint it. You know. But the reality is it's not necessarily of the world.

[34:41] It's just talking about the arrangement of things. Am I going to get myself in trouble? Friend of God.

And the problem for the church is often reoccurring here you see it in the book of Revelation as it talks about the church of Pergamum. And as John MacArthur comments on it, he says, Pergamum, much like today's church, had failed to heed the biblical warnings against worldliness.

Consequently, it had drifted into compromise and was in danger of becoming intertwined with the world. The serious problem, MacArthur said, of the Corinthian church was worldliness, an unwillingness to divorce from the culture around them.

Most of the believers could not consistently separate themselves from their old, selfish, immoral, pagan ways. Kevin DeYoung put it this way.

He said, the world stands for everything that opposes the will of God. In its simplest form, this means the desires of the flesh, the desires of the eyes, the pride in possessions, as it says in 1 John 2, 16.

[35:58] Or to put it another way, he said, worldliness is whatever makes sin look nice. worldly.

And James says, if you wish to be a friend of God this way, when you're allowing this worldly, the appeal of worldly things to win or to let this thing stand in like the never-ending dilemma, he says, he who wishes, and he uses the word in the original language, bulimai, which is where we get the word in English, bulimic.

What does that mean? Well, it means a determined act of the will. So for bulimia, it would be, I'm determining that I'm not going to eat or however that works. I'm determining that this is an act of the will.

Modern psychology say, well, that's a sickness. I'm just saying, there's some things that are sinful that lead to patterns of life that are difficult to get out of.

In this, it's saying, there is a determined act of the will for you to remain friends with the world and in a relationship with the world. I want to be both.

[37:24] It's like the compromise of the bear in the woods and the hunter, right? And as the story goes, the hunter comes across this bear and the bear's in the woods and he raises his gun up to shoot the bear and the bear says, hold up, hold up, hold up, hold up.

Let me speak to you for just a moment. As bears do, right? He said, look, what are you looking for in this? For a coat, so I'm going to shoot you and I'm going to get a full coat.

And the bear says, well, look, let's reason together about this because there's things that I want to. I want a good meal. I want a good meal and you want a coat.

And as the story ends, as they negotiate this situation, they both end up with what they wanted. The bear got a good meal and he was inside the coat.

It's compromise. It's the way we and the friend of God without losing something dramatically.

[38:34] Without it affecting the nature of this relationship so that I'm identified as an adulterer and I am at war with God in this because friendship with the world is enmity of God.

There's no in between. It's a divided heart. We know what friendship is. Everybody wants a friend. People go to church because I'm looking for friends and we think sometimes, well, if we'll be a friendly church, they'll come.

No, they won't. People will come when you're friendly at first and they're like, oh, that's great.

They're a friendly church and most of the churches aren't friendly. You come in, they won't talk to you. It's the craziest thing I've ever seen but that's not really what they're looking for.

They're not looking for a friendly church. They're looking for friends. Involvement in their life with people that love them and care about them. So yes, it's good for us to be friendly but it's also to be friendly friends.

The body of Christ is even more than that. The relationship that we have but with God it's even more than that. This covenant friendship relationship. We think of friends and we think of as one person wrote and he said, a friend is one who comes when the world goes out.

[39:52] A real friend warms you up by his presence, trusts you with his secrets, remembers you in his prayers. Friendship doubles our joy and divides our grief. There are not many things in life so beautiful as true friendship.

There are not many things more uncommon. He whose hand is clasped in friendship cannot throw mud. A faithful friend is an image of God.

A faithful friend is one of life's greatest assets. A friend is one who knows you as you are, understands where you've been, accepts who you've become and still gently invites you to grow through a valley. We know what friendship is. We want to be friends. And what James is expressing here is this is also the nature of your relationship with God.

God loves fellowship with you. He loves the relationship with you. When you befriend the world, you betray your friendship with God.

[40:55] 1 John 2, Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

For all that is in the world, the desires of the flesh, the desires of the eyes, and the pride of life is not from the Father. It highlights really the aspects of worldliness.

The desires of the flesh pursuing physical pleasures and indulgences. The desires of the eyes coveting things. I want more stuff. I need more things.

I need a better house. I need more car. I need whatever it is. Pride of life. The arrogance or boasting in one's achievements or status or possessions. And over and over again, the scripture is saying, this is at war in you.

You know how to break the cycle of greed in your life? Generosity. Put on the spirit and watch the works of the flesh be put to death.

[42:13] Jeremiah Burroughs, a Puritan, wrote it this way. He said, a Christian comes to contentment not so much by way of addition as by way of subtraction.

Contentment does not come by adding to what you have, but by subtracting from what you desire. when your desires are set on the Lord Jesus Christ, it puts everything else in proper perspective.

Does it bother you to see immorality on the shows you watch? Does it bother you? Like, like, am I, am I accepting these things in a way that's, that's, that's really causing divided loyalty in my heart? Is materialism creeping into my life? Do I have a problem eating out and throwing \$100 down on a deal, on a meal deal at McDonald's today?

Or 150, whatever it is today, I don't know. But, but when there's a family in need, I struggle to give a \$20 bill away, right? It's like, it pulls on my heart.

[43:27] It's like, am I living my life in a way that's really showing my devotion to the Lord?

It doesn't mean it's wrong to spend money on a meal. But are these things in balance? Am I, am I really being honest with myself about my worldliness? Do I prioritize earthly concerns over spiritual growth?

I'm so busy, I can't be involved in the body of Christ, right? How many times have I heard that in ministry? Oh, I'm just so busy today. You know, just so busy.

My life's just so complicated, so busy. I don't have time to grow. Do I want weed in Jesus too? Hmm. Am I realizing that some things in my life are a stumbling block to others?

[44:36] So much so that I, I'll sacrifice those things for my brother in Christ? An alcoholism's epidemic in our culture. Be careful.

my schedule all about me and my family. I'm not inclusive of others. I mean, we all need time together.

Our families need to serve together. We need to invest in our families. I'm not taking away from that. We've got ourselves so busy sometimes that we've got no time for God.

that makes you a friend of the world and an enemy of God. D.L. Moody said, the church is full of people who want one eye for the world and another.

One eye is long and the other is short. All ends up confusion.

[45:38] When the Spirit of God is upon us, the world looks very empty. The world has a small hold on us. When we begin to let our hold of it lay hold of things eternal, and this, he said, is what the church needs today.

Instead, we're just a bunch of cross-eyed Christians running around, just one eye on the world and one eye on God and can't figure out why we keep running into each other. This is the deadly effect of a divided heart.

You're an enemy of God. You're an adulterer. And then the third point is that you are one beckoned in a love relationship with God.

And this is the reminder to that. Do you not suppose, verse 5, that it is to no purpose that the Scripture says he yearns jealously over the Spirit that he has made to dwell in us.

But he gives more grace. That's a relief, isn't it? He's looking at the relationship and the nature of your relationship with him and the adultery that often creeps into our heart, the friendship that now becomes hostility and an enemy relationship with God, and yet he says, and there is grace.

[47:04] There's grace. He yearns jealously for the Spirit within you. Now, note a couple of things here. Every commentary said, as I was trying to figure this out, and I was talking to somebody about this, and I was like, man, I'm looking at this, and he's quoting something it looks like, but I can't find that verse.

And every commentary says, it's not really a quotation of Scripture that's already been given. It's like the quoting of a general thing that the Scripture teaches. It's like he's saying, hey, here's what the Scripture teaches.

There's no corresponding quote that goes along with that in Scripture, but Scripture teaches this overall principle. He yearns jealously over us. And it's difficult because the question is, is it referring to the Holy Spirit that dwells in us because we use that terminology of the indwelling Holy Spirit, or is it talking about the Spirit in man that God has given us, the Spirit of life?

He's breathed into us life and given us a Spirit according to Scripture. We're made up not just of body, but body, spirit. Spirit. And notice in your Bible, Spirit is not capitalized, which is the attempt of translators to not make the assumption here that he is talking about the Holy Spirit, but that he's talking about the Spirit of man.

God has given us a Spirit, and His Spirit dwells within us. And yes, there is a union here. He's talking about the Spirit in me.

[48:37] I'm unified with Christ now, and there is something inseparable in this. So maybe He's talking about both. I don't know. But the idea is is that this work of the Spirit on my Spirit, in me, is something that He yearns over jealously.

When I am torn, He's jealously yearning for me to come. Not in weakness like we would, the jealousy of God is not weak in human terms.

Jealousy is an attribute of God that's a perfect jealousy. He deserves your devotion. He deserves your love and affection. He deserves it all. And when He doesn't get it, jealousy is the response, and it is a righteous jealousy.

He deserves it, and you should give it to Him. He's right to be angry. Just like a spouse. Your spouse deserves your fidelity. And when you're not, you can't say, hey, you shouldn't be angry about this.

You expect something because there's a just sense of jealousy there that you're protecting a relationship that's valuable to you, that means something to you. So, the Spirit, the Spirit within you.

[49:54] And so, the idea, you see it in Exodus 34, 14, you shall worship no other God for the Lord whose name is jealous is a jealous God.

See? So, this is an attribute of God. It's a righteous jealousy. It's not humanly, like our sinful jealousy.

God knows joy. He knows happiness. He knows fulfillment far better than we, Sproul says. And so, His jealousy exists for our ultimate good. And, our ultimate good is uniquely tied to God's eternal glory.

It's for His glory. It's for our good. He's jealous over us. He's jealous for us. We have a relationship with Him that He deserves. He's yearning for us. And so, this gives you the picture of hope.

He wants your fellowship. He desires your fellowship in spite of your sinful ways, Israel. Israel. You shall worship no other gods for the Lord whose name is jealous is a jealous God.

[51:01] gravity of our unfaithfulness and enmity with God. James reminds us of a beautiful truth. He yearns jealously over the spirit that He's made to dwell in me.

Even when we turn away, God's love for us remains constant. His jealousy is not petty, but a righteous desire for our undivided loyalty and love.

I have an exclusive relationship with my wife. Exclusive. And I protect that. I make, I make diligent effort to protect that. Sometimes to the point where I'm awkward with some of you ladies.

Okay? So I apologize for that, but not really. Okay? Because I, I have a unique relationship that I have, I'm going to guard with my life. Now, Brandy's mom and Brandy's mom, Brandy is a lot like her mother.

Okay? But she's also uniquely different than her mother, which is why I love her because I was scared of her mother. Okay? Her nickname was Wrath to everybody that knew her.

[52:15] Okay? But, but she was really a godly woman, but she did not mess around. Okay? And I remember so vividly because I was in the living room one day, we were, I think we were just coming home from the mission field or something.

We were there staying at the house for an hour. And I hear her talking or actually it was the answering machine came on and it's the voice of a woman and she says, speaking to Brandy's stepfather and she says, oh, Dale, I just wanted to touch base with you and wanted to see about getting with you at some point to talk about and then the phone picks up and I look back and her mom had gone to the phone and I just heard her mom shift in tone and all of a sudden it was not, hello, how are you doing?

It's like, mm-hmm, uh-huh, uh-huh. Well, let me tell you something, Missy. If you ever call this number again, if you ever come around my husband again, you are going to be incredibly sorry. Click. And I was thinking, I don't want to be in this room right now. Was she wrong to be jealous? She wanted to do something, some story on his family or whatever, but she seemed very flirtatious, I guess, in hindsight and her mom had nothing to do with this.

Why? Because she was jealous over this relationship. She was going to protect this relationship. She was going to step out of her way and make sure there's no bones about it. This is not time to be nice. This is not time to be, you know, kind.

[54:02] This isn't time for decorum on the phone. Let me make it very clear, exceptionally clear for you. You have no place in my husband's life. He has no place in your life.

I'm going to guard this thing. And when it comes to your relationship with the Lord, what James is saying, this is the nature of your relationship. And God is not like us in human weakness, where there are times in human relationships where we can't cross those lines.

God says, you come to me and there's grace. In human relationships, there's limitations and there's some things we can't get beyond. It's hard to live with.

We can't go across those lines. But with God, God's saying it in a different way. I'm jealous for you in a way that I'm going to overcome all of your sinful ways. All I'm longing for that relationship within you in such a way that I've sent my son to the cross to die for your sins, make propitiation for you and a sacrifice for you that if you'll turn from sin and let go of the world and come to me, I will receive you.

You can't go too far. There's grace. There's grace from God that loves you in spite of all of your sin.

[55:40] It's the reality. God said in Zechariah 1.3, Return to me, says the Lord of hosts, you that have harloted yourself off. Return to me, says the Lord of hosts, and I will return to you.

You were harlots. You loved other gods. You were enemies of mine. But I'm jealous for you. I love you. I'm going to restore you if you'll turn.

A.W. Tozer said it this way, and I'll close. The only cure for worldliness is the cross where we die to the world and we live for him.

Could I have every head bowed and every eye closed? Amen. As we contemplate the reality of this, we're reminded of some things that say, Lord, what are the areas of my life that I've let the world

creep in that I need to address?

What are the things that I've let creep in that have caused some dilemmas in me that I recognize now are the passions of my soul at war, within my soul at war.

[57:03] It's affecting my relationships. It affects my relationships in the church with friends, with people, my marriage, my parents. But it also reflects my relationship to the values around me.

I've let things creep in. I love things that I should say in the voice of God because Micah 7, 19 said he will again have compassion on us and he will tread our iniquities under foot and will cast all our sins into the depth of the sea.

You want your sins forgotten? He said, oh, I'll forgive and I'll forget. I'll throw them into the sea. You are unfaithful to me.

You walked away from me. You're a friend of the world. You are an adulterer. And guess what? I forgive you if you'll come to me. Turn from your sin.

Come. I'll throw it in the sea. Romans 5, 20, where sin abounded, grace abounded even more.

Father, we come to you this morning.

[58:20] And as we wrestle through and as we contemplate the reality of this verse, you're unveiling things in our heart right now that don't belong, perfections that don't belong.

And you're calling us to turn from it all and to come home. Drop those things and be the friend of God.

You yearn for us. You've put your Holy Spirit inside of us in an inseparable union and your Holy Spirit is grieved every time we sin.

that separates us from you. There's some here that maybe they've never turned from sin to begin with. You are marked by a pattern of change where they realize they're in a relationship with the Lord of the universe, the husband of their soul.

soul. Maybe today's the day of salvation where they're confronted with their sin and recognize their need for Jesus, who is the only hope of salvation, and they're ready to abandon all to accept him.

[59:38] And I pray that today would be that day of being born again, not just some gray area of their life where they don't know where it happened, but Lord, that they hone in on this relationship with you and say, I do.

And that they may that happen today. And for those, Lord, that are in that relationship but have found the adultery in their heart, found the friendship with the world in their heart, I pray that they would hear the call of God to come.

Return to me, and I'll return to you. Father, may you have your way in our hearts today. We pray this in Jesus' name.