

James: The Internal War

James 4:1-3

The Conflict Within (v. 1-2a)

- Using leading questions, James points out that the source of conflict in our relationships is not external
 - The problem is not other people
- The conflict is internal
 - Our desires are at war within us
- Desires (hēdonēs): Thoughts that center on pleasure or enjoyment
 - These unmet desires lead us to covet
 - Covet: To desire what you do not have (Ex 20:17)
- This attitude produces sinful actions
 - Verbal arguments
 - Physical altercations
 - Murder

Why We Lack (v. 2b-3)

- We have this internal war due to a lack within us
 - What we think we lack:
 - Money & Power
 - Esteem
 - Pleasure
 - What we actually lack:
 - Security
 - Acceptance
 - Love
- We wrongly believe that these needs will be met by others
 - When what we really need comes from God, who freely gives to us when we ask
- But God will not give us things to satiate our sinful desires
 - Rather, if we truly seek Him, He transforms our desires
 - Where there was lust, He brings selflessness
 - Where there was pride, He brings humility
 - Where there was covetousness, He brings contentment

So What?

- Are we fighting an internal war?
- Or are we calling on the Lord to fight the battle?

Meditation Verse: *James 4:1*