

War and Peace

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[0 : 00] If you're there in James chapter 4, please stand with me as we honor the reading of God's word together.

! Again, I'll be reading verses 1 through 10. 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 cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask. You do not ask and do not receive because you ask wrongly to spend it on your passions.

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. 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?

But he gives more grace. Therefore, it says, God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble. Submit yourselves, therefore, to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

[1 : 20] Draw near to God and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom.

Humble yourselves before the Lord and he will exalt you. May God add a blessing to the reading of his word. Would you please be seated? At the beginning of time, God created the heavens and the earth.

He filled it with all kinds of creatures, the pinnacle of which was man whom God created on the sixth day in his image.

This meant that, like God, human beings possessed an intellect, a will, an emotional capacity that set them apart from every other creature that God made.

And being God's image bearers, human beings were blessed to enjoy a unique and special kind of relationship with him. They walked with him.

[2 : 29] They talked with him. They had perfect fellowship with him. God gave Adam and Eve the privilege and responsibility to serve as his stewards over all that he had created.

In Genesis 1, 28 through 30, it's as if God says to them, the whole world is yours. I have provided everything that you need. All your physical, material, relational, and spiritual needs have been fully supplied by me.

I am the source of all that you need to feel and experience satisfaction. Genesis 1, 31, God, having created everything, it says there, he saw all that he had made and behold, it was very good.

It was perfect. There was nothing more to be added. Everything existed in perfect relationship and fellowship with each other and God, their creator.

But there was one prohibition, one stipulation. Adam and Eve had all that they needed to feel fully satisfied in God.

[3 : 44] But one thing was off limits. Genesis 2, 16 through 17, it says, There's no reason given for this prohibition other than it being a test.

I think a test to determine whether or not Adam and Eve trusted in God as their true source of love, their true source of peace and joy and satisfaction.

There was nothing magical about the tree, but eating its fruit was forbidden. And while Adam and Eve understood good, if they ate of that tree, they would know evil.

At some point after God declared all that his creation was very good, Satan, a fallen archangel, assumed the form of a serpent in the Garden of Eden to tempt Eve.

And his temptation came in the form of a question. Did God actually say? He sought to create doubt in Eve's mind that God was a reliable source of the truth.

[5 : 05] He deceived her to exchange the truth of God for a lie, drawing her eye to the forbidden fruit, promising that if she ate it, it would make her like God.

Genesis 3, 4 through 5 says, But the serpent said to the woman, You will not surely die, for God knows that when you eat of it, your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.

We know that Satan successfully fooled Eve and later Adam, her husband, to believe that they could find truth, that they could find satisfaction outside of God.

But what they received instead were lives filled with shame and toil, suffering, and a tremendous amount of conflict, both internally and externally.

There would be pain in Adam's work now. There would be pain in Eve's childbearing. There would be conflict in the relationship as husband and wife.

[6 : 10] A relationship that was once harmonious would now be a struggle with each seeking to exert their will over the other. Though they didn't die physically, they did die spiritually.

And all their descendants would be born with the same nature that they now possessed. Physically alive, but spiritually dead.

This is what sin has done in you. This is what sin has done in me. In all of us. In whatever form it occurs, all our sin, I think, can be reduced to one single cause.

Selfish desires. Which are the product of a refusal to believe that God is able to truly satisfy our souls. And that refusal to trust that God is the only one capable of satisfying our souls creates conflict.

All kinds of conflict. Wherever you see and experience conflict, you can be sure that the cause of it is sin. And at its core is a refusal to trust that God is the only one capable of satisfying the longings and desires of our souls.

[7 : 32] All sin comes from rejecting God as our greatest treasure and the source of our supreme satisfaction. Both in this life and in the life to come. And this is the truth.

That is at the heart of James chapter 4 verses 1 through 10. And the main idea for this morning sermon is this. The source of conflict is sin. The source of conflict is sin.

So thus far in our study of James, we've seen him write with a passionate desire for his readers to not be in conflict with God's word, but to be obedient to it.

He is concerned that many of the people he is writing to aren't genuinely saved, but are self-deceived. Both their actions and inactions are betraying their confession that Jesus is who they truly treasure.

To truly know Jesus Christ is to be changed, to be transformed, to be born again. Though the sin nature remains, there is a desire to obey him, to be like him, to live your life for him.

[8 : 38] Because you know what he's done to save you from your sin. And so you can't help but be a doer of his word. You treat people differently, not partially.

You delight in his word, agreeing with what it says instead of ignoring it or excusing it or rationalizing your sin and being disobedient to it.

You tame your tongue. You use it for blessing instead of cursing. And in these ways, you demonstrate wisdom by your conduct, which all these things James has said, and he just says before chapter 4 in verse 318, These things produce a harvest of righteousness, which is sown in peace by those who make peace.

Righteousness and peace flourish in hearts and in environments where Jesus Christ is treasured above all things.

But when and where that is not the case, conflict wreaks havoc. And so in our passage today, James makes it clear that the source of our conflict is sin.

[9 : 57] And he does so by telling us about the three types of conflict that sin creates in verses 1 through 6. And then in verses 7 through 10, he tells us what we should do about it.

So the first source or the first thing that conflict does, the first type of conflict, is that sin creates conflict in the church. Sin creates conflict in the church.

Look again at the beginning of verse 1. What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you?

So we understand that James is writing to Christians, at least people who claim to be Christians.

Some of them genuinely are, but there are others who aren't. They are the ones who are self-deceived. They are the ones who hear God's word but have no spiritual fruit in their lives that proves that they are truly saved.

And I'll get more into that in a moment. But what we need to understand is that James is writing this letter to Christians. He repeatedly calls them throughout this letter his brothers.

[11 : 03] They are part of his Christian family. And that's how we should consider the church. As the family of God. Brothers and sisters in Christ.

The children of God. That's what we are. This letter would have been read as the family, as the church gathered on the Lord's Day, which is Sunday morning, as we've gathered.

Then once read by that church, it would circulate to other Christians in other places who made up other local churches. So what we need to understand here is that conflict in the church was a reality for believers back then, just as it continues to be a reality in the church today.

But as James points out, it's a reality that we should not accept. Conflict within the church is not God's will.

In Matthew 18, Jesus talks about the reality of conflict within his church. And that the cause of it is sin. And he tells us there what to do about it.

[12 : 10] Verses 15 through 17. Our Lord says, The context of Jesus' instructions here are dealing with restoration.

That's the goal. Sin creates conflict, which requires discipline, with the goal that the sinner seeks forgiveness, and the person offended grants forgiveness to that person.

And there is restoration as a result. But here is where I think we often get it wrong, get what Jesus says here wrong in many unfortunate ways.

First of all, when we feel sinned against, instead of going to that person one-on-one, we share the grievance with someone else. And that can often lead to gossip. And the creation of divisions by fracturing the church into taking sides.

Secondly, we tend to differentiate the problem from the person. We attack them personally. Not really wanting to see that sin issue resolved, but to give them a piece of our mind.

[13 : 46] But such an attitude seeks revenge, not restoration. Conversely, sometimes the person who has committed the sin and is confronted about it takes a defensive posture.

Excusing their behavior. Refusing to admit that they've done anything wrong. And then sometimes launching a counterattack. And then when discipline moves on to the next step and another person is brought in and involved, they claim that they're being ganged up on.

All these things boil down to the sin of pride. A refusal to admit wrong. A refusal to seek or to grant forgiveness.

A desire for retribution instead of restoration. James doesn't mention what the issue was or what the issues were that caused quarrels and fights among this church, these brothers and sisters in Christ.

I think that it's likely, since James presents his readers with so many tests to determine whether they are truly saved, that the quarrels and fights they were experiencing stemmed from unbelievers posing as Christians in the church.

[15 : 01] James, or Jesus, excuse me, warned about this very thing in the parable of the tares among the wheat. Tares or darnel is a type of weed that looks a lot like wheat.

And so the point of the parable is to reveal Satan's efforts to deceive the Lord's church by mingling his children with God's children.

And in some cases, as we've seen in the gospels, like Judas Iscariot, it is nearly impossible to discern the true disciple from the false disciple.

But the Lord knows. He knows who are truly his. And imposters will be revealed at some point.

They are also revealed through the spiritual gift of discernment that he's given to us.

A person can look like a Christian. They can sound like a Christian. But as James has pointed out to us, it's their actions that will prove the genuineness of their faith.

[16 : 11] How they respond to suffering and trials. How they live. How they talk. How they conduct themselves. How they either create conflict or seek to resolve it.

A Christian in conflict desires to either seek forgiveness when they've sinned or extend forgiveness when they have been sinned against.

They understand that sin is the source of the conflict. And so they desire what our Lord desires.

And that is restoration. But there are cases when conflict is between people who genuinely believe.

Maybe the quarrel or the fight is reminiscent of Jesus' disciples. Remember on multiple occasions.

Multiple occasions they quarreled. They disputed with one another over which of them was going to

be the greatest in our Lord's kingdom.

They viewed each other as competition. And their selfish ambitions for greater recognition and authority made them at times treat each other as rivals.

[17:25] I think one of those disputes led to Jesus washing his disciples' feet in John chapter 13.

Verses 12 through 15. When Jesus had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, Do you understand what I have done to you?

You call me teacher and Lord and you are right, for so I am. If I then your Lord and teacher have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.

For I have given you an example that you should also do just as I have done to you. Sin creates conflict in the church. And when it does, it makes us exert our energies in quarrels and in fights. It causes us to lose sight of Christ, to lose sight of his purpose for us, which is to make and train disciples. A church in conflict is drained of its energy and the resources that it needs to be used to obey our Lord's commands.

[18:39] A church in conflict, a church that allows sin to go unchecked, will lose also its testimony to the world because it won't look any different from the world.

Again, in John 13, Jesus said to his disciples, A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.

By this, all people, the whole world will know that you are my disciples if you have love for one another. The adversary would like nothing more than for us to be divided so that we fight amongst ourselves and have little energy left for the real battle going on around us.

Sin is the source of conflict in the church. Sin is the source of conflict in conflict and conflict is best resolved when, like Christ, we seek restoration and humbly love each other.

It looks like this. An attitude like this. I love you. And so I'm going to speak the truth in love to you because I want what is best for you. Not revenge.

[19:54] I love you. And so I will hear what you have to say. I'll try to see things from your perspective and I'll admit my wrong so that we can move on together in peace in Christ.

So the first type of conflict that sin creates is conflict in the church. And next, James, I think, is getting deeper to the heart of the issue. He says, sin creates conflict in you.

Sin creates conflict in the church. Now sin creates conflict in you. Look at the rest of verse 1. What is the source? And he says, is it not this, that your passions are at war within you?

Notice that James does not say that the cause of our sinning is Satan. He doesn't say that we fight and quarrel and engage in bitter conflict because Satan is at war within us.

He doesn't say that the cause of conflict within you is the result of other people and their mistreatment of you. The cause of all of our sinning and our passions, our desires that wage war within us.

[21:02] That's it. Peter expressed the same idea in 1 Peter 2.11. Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul.

And then Paul clarifies what these passions and desires are that wage war within us in Galatians 5, verses 19-21. Now the works of the flesh are evident. Sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these.

I warn you as I warned you before that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. Our flesh is an enemy.

It is the sin nature that we are all born with, but with God's help and by the indwelling of his spirit in salvation, we are told that it is an enemy that we can defeat.

As Paul says in Romans 8, 12-14, So then, brothers, we are debtors not to the flesh to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh, you will die.

[22:19] But if by the spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are led by the spirit of God are sons of God. If you've truly been saved, you have this desire.

Not to hide your sin, not to excuse your sin, or justify the passions of your flesh, but to kill it. You long for the day when the Lord returns and your salvation will be complete in glorification.

When the sin nature will once and for all be totally done away with. But until then, we seek God's word and the Holy Spirit's energy as we strive against our flesh, progressively strangling it out of our lives.

But this is not the instruction that the world and that our secular society gives, is it? Instead, they say all such desires, all such passions, the one that God identifies in his word as sinful passions, they say they can't be altered.

They can't be overcome. In fact, they say for the sake of your emotional health, you shouldn't resist them, but you should totally give in to them.

[23 : 45] And express them in whatever ways that find you to feel the most satisfied. They say things like, if it makes you feel happy, do it.

And just be yourself. Now, I don't know about you, but the longer I've known Christ, the less I want to be like myself.

And the more I want to be like him. It's a struggle for sure. If it wasn't, I wish it wasn't, I should say, but thank God that by his grace, it's a struggle that I don't have to endure alone and neither do you. Last weekend, my best friend from childhood was in town. He was in town to watch his son play hockey.

And so we got to get our families together. And, you know, it's been over five years, I think, since we've seen each other. But he's one of those friends where we can just get back together and it's like it hasn't been five years at all.

[24 : 53] It's like I just saw him yesterday. He's a mechanic and he runs his family's shop back in the Kansas City area. And he knows everything about cars.

I know how to change tires. I've changed the battery once. And I know where the gas goes in, right? And that's about it. And I remember when Danny and I were first married, you know, we were poor. We needed to get a car and our options were limited. And so we'd look at these used cars. And I had no idea if the car that we were looking at was going to break down as soon as we pulled it off the lot.

And so I'd take the car to my friend. And he'd give it a thorough inspection and he'd do all of that for me for free. And he'd tell me what he saw.

He'd tell me what his concerns were. Or he'd say, yeah, this is good. Go ahead. I think you're okay. Because he wanted to make sure that whatever car we drove would be safe for us to drive and not cause problems for us later down the line.

[26 : 03] You know, it's nice to have a friend like that. But in Christ, we have a better friend. One who, through his word and through his spirit, opens our eyes to see deception.

Who warns us against it. Who tells us what is true. Who preserves us until the day of his return. But like my buddy growing up, I could have rejected his counsel.

You know, I could have said, well, I don't care what's under the hood. I like what it looks like on the outside. Either I was going to trust in someone who knew better than me.

Or I was going to allow my desires to get me in a situation that I would later regret. And so I ask you, do you trust Christ? Do you trust his word more than you trust yourself?

And so James is saying here, don't trust your passions and your desires if they are contrary to the truth that has been revealed to you in Christ. Don't believe them.

[27 : 15] They lie. They deceive. Fight them. Resist them. Fill your mind and keep a firm grasp on what you know is true.

James is saying all of our problems, all of our struggles, whether with others or within ourselves, are sinful, selfish desires that seek to convince us that we can find satisfaction in pursuing them rather than pursuing Christ.

In verse 2 he says, you desire and do not have, so you murder. And here I believe James is talking about hatred of others. John put it this way in 1 John 3.15.

Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer. And you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. James continues in verse 2.

You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. Again, this is a selfish desire for material possessions. Status symbols. Power and position.

[28 : 17] All such things are rooted in selfish desire and a belief that once acquired, you will feel satisfied. We want these things. And then when we don't get these things, we explode in fits of rage.

Like children kicking and screaming on the floor, right? Mothers and fathers, when you tell your kid that they can't have something that they really want and you know it's not good for them, what do they say?

I love you. Thank you so much, mother and father, for sharing that with me because I really would have regretted that decision. No, what do they say? I hate you. I hate you. When others don't come through to fulfill our desires, our passions, and our demands, we fight, we argue, we criticize, we seek revenge, we cut them off, we cut them out, desiring to get even.

And we feel justified in our rage and justified to vent our frustration to God in prayer. As James says in verse 3, you ask and you do not receive because you ask wrongly to spend it on your passions. Now, this is really sad. When you allow your sinful desires to control you, what you end up doing is going to God, not trusting that he is the one who can truly satisfy you, but making demands that he satisfy you with something or someone other than him.

[29 : 44] Think of it this way, married couples. And see this from God's perspective. If your spouse came to you and said, I need to borrow some money from you so that I can go on a date with this guy or this girl that I just met.

And if you love me, you'll give it to me because I know that they will fulfill me in ways that you can't. There would be conflict, wouldn't there?

And so as we get deeper to the source of our conflicts, we see, third, that sin creates conflict with God. Creates conflict in the church. It creates conflict within you.

It creates conflict with God. In verse four, James here kind of explodes in righteous anger. And he says, 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. The world is cursed by sin and it's ruled by Satan.

[30 : 52] His systems are at odds with God. There is no middle ground. You have either entered through the narrow way in your traveling down the narrow path that leads to life.

Or you've taken the wide way and the easy path that Jesus says leads to destruction. James says, if your hope is set on this world and the things of this world, if what it offers to you is what you truly prize, then you are in conflict with God.

He says more strongly, you're an enemy of God. And friend, there is no worse enemy for a sinner to have than an omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, holy God.

But thankfully, James doesn't end with that bad news. And he continues in verse 5 and 6.

Or you suppose it is to no purpose that the scripture says, he yearns jealously over the spirit he made to dwell in us, but he gives more grace.

[32 : 10] Therefore, it says, God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Though we are guilty and have fallen short of God's righteous standards, though our sin condemns us and we all deserve to endure the eternal consequences of them, God yearns.

He desires. He provides within himself a most gracious salvation. He designed you with passions and desires.

With desires for joy, for peace, love, and everlasting satisfaction. And he is the only one who can provide those things to us.

He desires that you desire him so that he can glorify himself by satisfying your soul in ways that no earthly thing ever could.

And it's through humility that we experience this kind of exaltation. Humility in admitting your sin.

[33 : 25] Seeing your need. Knowing that you cannot do it yourself. And finding that need in Jesus Christ. He is the one. He is the only one who can resolve our conflicts.

And he did so. By humbling himself. And becoming a servant. In Philippians chapter 2, verses 4 through 9.

Again, Paul writing to a church that's experiencing conflict. He says, hey, look to the Lord as your example. What kind of example did he provide? He tells us, let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped. But emptied himself by taking the form of a servant.

And being born in the likeness of men and being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death. Even death on a cross.

[34 : 33] Therefore, God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name. God has provided this salvation for us.

For you. God has liberated us from the consequences of our sin. He humbled himself so that we, his enemies who were born spiritually dead, can be born again to new life in Christ.

To be the recipients of his never-ending grace and love. To be adopted forever as his children. To be lavished with an inheritance of heavenly rewards forever.

Forever. And so, are we still going to fight and quarrel and scrap with one another over earthly stuff that will perish?

Are we going to cling to our sin and for the things that it desires in this world? Possessions and positions that will one day all go up in flame?

[35 : 38] Will we waste our lives, our time, our energy in conflict with others, in conflict with ourselves and worse?

In conflict with God over such worthless things? Is this how we will spend our lives? Is that how you want to spend your life?

If so, it will be wasted. Terribly, terribly wasted. So what should we do? James says, beginning in verse 7, Submit yourselves therefore to God.

What does that look like? He continues, resist the devil and he will flee from you. Trust that your life is in Christ. And that obedience to Christ is better than Satan's lies.

His influence, though great, is nothing compared to God's. So in verse 8, he says, Draw near to God and he will draw near to you. Turn away from your sin.

[36 : 42] Turn away from your passions and your desires that put you in conflict. Repent of them. And James continues, he says, Cleanse your hands, you sinners. Purify your hearts, you double-minded.

Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. What's he saying? Treat your sins seriously. See what it's done to you.

What it does to you. Turn from it now. Don't wait. Repent. Plunge the sword of God's word that you're hearing today into its heart.

Exterminate it. Eradicate it. Eliminate it. I remember sitting in a meeting with some volunteers. This was quite a long time ago now.

And we were helping with the church I grew up in, our youth group. And for years I had been avoiding God's call to the ministry. And the youth pastor there got to know me and asked if I would come help out with the teens on Wednesdays.

[37 : 49] One of the first things he had us do as volunteers was get together for a meeting. We're in this meeting. And I'm telling you it's been years since I've been running from the Lord.

It's been years since I've been in the word or really steadily in prayer. And I was surrounded by these people. And they were talking about just sharing about all these things that the Lord was doing in their lives.

These things that they were reading in scripture. They were talking about the teens that we were going to be serving. And these plans that we had. And ways that we wanted and desired for them to know the Lord better.

And as they're all talking, I'm just kind of sitting there quietly. I didn't say one word. And the youth pastor turned to me and he said, Mike, what about you?

Do you have anything to add? And I just started crying. You know, I'm 24 years old, maybe around this time.

[38 : 52] 24, 23, 24. I started sobbing uncontrollably. In this group of people that I didn't really know very well.

I longed. For what they had. And I missed God at work in my life.

And I mourned. In that moment. Over that loss. That I felt.

Being crushed. In that moment. By the realization. Of my own sin. And so I tell you. I know.

How gracious God is. I know how forgiving. God is. That was a.

[39 : 55] Humbling. Moment. I felt. I felt. Embarrassed. As the tears were just pouring down my face. And I couldn't speak.

But it was only a moment. And soon afterward. The weight. Was lifted. You ever felt that way before? Like the weight was just.

Lifted. And so maybe that describes you this morning. You've allowed sin. To put you in conflict. With others. Within yourself. With God. God. And this is what he. Says to you.

This morning. James says in verse 10. Humble yourselves. Before the Lord. He won't humiliate you. He won't beat you up.

[40 : 54] And make you feel worse. He won't throw your sin in your face. And tell you how rotten you are. What will he do instead? And he. Will.

Exalt you. How amazing. A holy God. Will do that. To sinners who. Are in conflict with him. Who rebel against him. If we humble ourselves. And confess our sin to him. And repent of it. He'll exalt you. God will give you. Grace.

In your humility. And he will be the one. Who raises you up. Hope. And so the main point of application.

Is this. The source of peace. Is Christ. The source of conflict. Is sin.

[41 : 48] But the source of peace. Is Christ. Christ. I'll go through our application. Questions in a moment. I'm not sure where you're at.

This morning. In hearing. God's word. If you're that true believer. Who realizes man. And you know. Is convicted by it this week. Like me. I'm in conflict.

Perfect. And I hope. And I pray. That you. Like me. The Lord. Would bring you. To mourn over that. To mourn over that.

Until you resolve it. And maybe. During. Our time. Of invitation. You just. That needs to be your prayer. God. I realize.

The conflict. That I have. I know. And I desire. To resolve it. And taking that first step. In prayer. Lord. Help me. To not chicken out.

[42 : 48] And to do what you've commanded me. To do. Maybe you hear. This word this morning. And you realize. That you. Might be in the position. That some of James's listeners were.

They were self-deceived. They thought they knew the Lord. But as they're hearing this letter. They're saying. Oh my goodness. That's not me. That's not how I live. There's something wrong with me.

Terrribly wrong with me. I'm a sinner. I'm in conflict with God. I have no peace. Then I pray. That today. Is the day of salvation.

For you. You are here. By God's design. To hear this message. So that you will hear it. And hopefully. Obey. In belief. Repent from your sin. What has it done for you? What good thing. Has it done for you? God has so much better. And it's not about you. You know. Being good enough.

[43 : 43] Or cleaning yourself up first. It's you seeing that sin. Hating it. Repenting of it. Mourning over it. In the next moment. Turning to Christ. And experiencing the overwhelming.

Peace of Jesus Christ. And knowing. That in him. You have a savior. Who died for your sin. Who suffered the wrath of God. For your sin. And that you have been cleansed.

And you have eternal life. And you'll experience that exaltation. In his presence forever. So if that's you this morning.

I would like to know. As we would like to celebrate. Your new birth. Four questions of application. For you guys to look at today.

And to discuss in your community groups tonight. Question number one. What do these verses teach about conflict? How does Jesus teach us to resolve conflict?

[44 : 39] Or resolve it in Matthew 18. 15 through 17. What role does humility have in ending the conflict? What role does humility have in ending the conflict?

Question two. How do our internal conflicts to satisfy our selfish desires. Affect our relationship with God? How does it negatively affect our prayer life?

How does it negatively affect our prayer life? Question three. Read James 4.5. Again. Exodus 20. Verse 5. And Deuteronomy 4.24. How is God a jealous God?

And have you ever thought of him as jealous? And then finally. Can we love both God and the world? What happens if we try to love both?

Read 1 John 2.15 through 16. And Matthew 6.24. Let's pray. Lord, you know each and every one of us, God.

[45 : 50] Intimately. Beyond our names, Lord, you know. And can number the hairs on our head. You know everything about us, God.

There is nothing that we can hide from you. Lord, you know the conflicts that we have. Both with others, in the church.

Conflict within ourselves and our own desires and passions that try to pull us away from you. And convince us that this world is truly our home and it has things to offer us that can satisfy us more than you.

Lord, ultimately these conflicts put us in conflict with you. And God, you know. So, Lord, I pray for each and every one of us. That your spirit would be at work to reveal these conflicts to us. That we would do as your word has commanded us to do. To mourn over them. To weep over them. To not hide them.

[46 : 56] But to come to you humbly and just throw our mess at your feet. Ask for your help. And Lord, your promise to us is that if we will do that.

If we will come to you and share these things. Humble ourselves and admit our inability and our need for you.

That you will exalt us. That you will forgive us. That you will raise us up. That you will help us to see. That you truly are the God who satisfies.

In ways in which no one or no other thing can. God, I pray for us as a church. That we would be a people. Where there is peace.

Where there is joy. Where there is obedience to your word. That we would strive together. Not in quarreling or conflict. But that we would strive together.

[48 : 04] To make much of the name of Jesus Christ. Because you're worthy, God. And you're worthy of our best. So Lord, I pray that we would give it to you.

In Jesus name I pray. Amen.