

Backsliding Uncovered (James 4:4-6)

- Last week we looked at the 'Root of all Trouble' from verse 1-3 and we observed
 - 1) The diagnosis of the problem: James tells us it is our passion at war within us
 - 2) The root cause of our problem: every part of our beings are affected by sin
 - 3) Our passions become destructive: there is a progression that climaxes in murder
 - 4) Our prayers become defective: they are frustrated, because their motives are bad

I. The Hostility of God (v.4)

- James is addressing Christians but his focus is upon backsliders. What is it?
- When earthly wisdom permeates and governs a Christian, he is backslidden
- James 3:15 says emphatically this wisdom is earthly, unspiritual & of the devil
 - 1) It Is Adultery: "you adulterous people" no evidence of physical adultery here
 - It includes males & females – picture of marriage here (Isa 54:5; 2 Cor 11:2)
 - 2) It is hatred: "do you not know friendship with the world is enmity with God"
 - James says backsliding is going back in spirit to what we once were in the world
 - Friendship with the world is enmity with God, plain and simple (1 John 2:15)
 - 3) It is bold faced mockery provoking God to jealousy: James testifies to this vs. 4b

II. The Jealousy of God (vs.5)

- In vs.5 James is bringing us face to face with the jealousy of God
- In our culture jealousy has a bad connotation, but God's jealousy is good and right
- God requires perfect obedience, that's why we need Christ's obedience
- The Bible tells us that God is jealous for His glory: (Ex 20:5; Zech 8:2)
 - 1) God's jealousy is an intense jealousy: God is said to burn with jealousy
 - 2) God's jealousy is infinite: as one of his attributes his jealousy must be infinite
 - 3) God's jealousy is intimate: the phrase 'the spirit He has made to dwell in us'

III. The Grace of God (vs. 6)

- What's the remedy to this terrible condition: James says 'but he gives more grace'
- This is not saving grace, but it is greater grace, God's graciousness to help us live
- This verse means there will always be enough grace regardless of our need
- In the face of abject failure & ensnarement of sin, grace is ceaseless (Rom 5:20)
- John 1:16 there literally is "grace instead of grace" or "grace following grace"
- But James warns "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble"