

Resolving Conflicts In Your Life

- James 4:7-10

- **If I were to tell you tonight that this world that we are living in is tough, it's unfair, and many times it's just depressing ... I don't think that would catch any of us off guard, would it?**
- **As a matter of fact, there are times where we experience exactly what Jesus talked about when He said, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." – John 15:18-19**
 - There are days where we feel hated, abused, & even cast out, AMEN?
 - Why is it the more we try to serve God & live for Him, it's almost like picking a fight with Satan?
 - Is it just me or does he always seem to come around & try to destroy what God is doing in your life & steal your joy, steal your time with God, steal your closeness with Him, and steal your worship?
 - When you have a service like we had this morning, you want to enjoy it as much as possible b/c we know Satan is coming, right?
- **And though the world stands against us & pressures us & even tempts us, child of God I have to ask the question tonight ... "Do we really expect any different from the world?"**
 - I mean the scriptures are plain that the world is not with us, it is against us; the more we try to do right, the more the world will push us to compromise.
- **In James 4:1-6, James is clear that we have an enemy that is ever present, he is alive today, and he is roaming around seeking to destroy & devour your marriage, your children, your relationships, your church & your walk with the Lord.**
- **So what is a good, Bible-believing Christian to do in a world that is so wicked & perverse? Let me share with you what many have done:**
 - Many are abandoning the faith completely.
 - Its not worth it to them. They are tired of the struggle & they have given in to the world.
 - Many are compromising when the pressures come.
 - You know, they may not give up ... but they're backing up, which is just as bad.
 - They no longer stand for a separated, holy life.
 - They no longer hold to the convictions & standards of God's Word.
 - "Preacher, its too hard", they will say.
 - But then there are those that don't quit, they don't retreat, instead they cling to Jesus.
- **READ SCRIPTURE**
- **This shouldn't take long tonight, but I want to share with you God's solution when the world is on the attack, you feel as though you are overwhelmed & defeat is almost imminent. How are we to claim victory in our spiritual life?**
- 1. **Submit To God**
 - Now I must admit, we don't use the term submit that often b/c we don't like the phraseology that it is associated with.
 - In numerous passage we are instructed & the people of God were instructed to submit to Him.
 - We are commanded to submit to those in authority over us ... even if we didn't vote for them!
 - Wives are commanded to submit to their husbands.

- Children are commanded to submit to the elders.
- But even good old Christian men & women don't always like "submitting" to someone or something, do we?
- The term submit is a military term which means, "to get into your proper rank".
 - For you military men & women, I dare say you learned full well the meaning of submission really quick when you entered the military.
 - When a captain, or a sergeant or a general especially speaks, you move!
 - You may not understand their plan completely when you go to war, but you do what they tell you to; you follow the orders completely; in other words you completely submit to them b/c that is the only way to complete victory.
 - In the same manner when you come to Christ, it is imperative that we completely submit to Him.
 - Now, I will tell you this, we don't have to. As a matter of fact, there are many that choose not too.
 - But when we don't, we can expect trouble. It is still sin. We can never expect God to bless us.
 - James 4:17 – "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."
 - For the private, there will be consequences, but so will there be for the Christian as well.
 - Let me ask you tonight, is there any area of your life that you are battling with God about?
 - Are you attempting to maintain control over some sin or some area of your life that you just will not give over to Him?
 - If you are, I can tell you tonight that you have no joy in your Christian walk. You don't have the peace in your life, "that passes all understanding".
 - You don't have that close, intimate relationship with God b/c you have never given yourself completely to Him.
 - What Satan is looking for in the Christian's life is not to take over, not to completely wreck your faith; but he is looking for a foothold, and we give him that foothold if we don't submit to God.
- Submission in its truest sense is an act of the will, it's a choice that we make. It is saying, "Lord, not my will, but yours be done."
- Have you completely submitted yourself to God?

2. Draw Close To God

- This ought to be something that each of us desire more and more in our lives, the closeness of God. Christian, are we trying to draw closer to God in our lives? Do we want to be more like Him?
 - The truth is, sometimes we aren't close to God simply b/c we choose not to be.
 - There are times where we don't get close to God & others b/c there are things that we want to keep hidden from them.
 - You may hide things from me & your mate & your children; but folks, we will never hide from God.
 - Adam & Eve, as soon as they had sinned, they immediately hid from God. But they soon saw that God sees all & knows all, but thank God He also died for all.

- Let me tell you, when there is sin in our lives, it is impossible to have a close walk with the Lord.
 - Abraham “drew near” to God when faced with Sodom.
 - Lot drew nearer to Sodom instead of God & lost the blessing of God.
 - We tell new converts to draw close to the Lord; we encourage struggling Christians just to draw closer to the Lord, but how do we do that? How can me & you, unworthy sinners, draw close to a Holy & Righteous God?
 - Cleansing our hands.
 - Confessing our sins daily to the Lord.
 - Recognizing our faults, our failures, and our need of Him.
 - Purifying our hearts.
 - This is not something we can do. We need the power of the Holy Spirit if our hearts & lives have any chance of being pure.
 - Psalm 139:23-24 – “Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”

3. Humble Ourselves To God

- Can we submit outwardly to someone or something without humbling inwardly? Ask your children. Let me come see you come tax time. Come talk to me when you get pulled over for speeding.
- We are as guilty as the next person for often times submitting to do something without ever humbling ourselves inwardly.
 - Let me ask you, if there was one tool (one character trait) that Satan could use & be most effective in the average person lives in controlling them, what would it be? Pride!
 - What is one of the very things that God hates? “Six things doth the Lord hate, yea seven are an abomination.”
 - Proverbs 6:17 – “A proud look ...”
 - Now when we talk about sin, it depends on whose sin it is as to how seriously we look upon it.
 - Now if it is someone lying about our little Johnny, they need to suspend that kid & throw the book at him, right?
 - But if we tell a “little white lie”, that’s no big deal.
 - James says, let your laughter be turned into mourning. In other words, quit laughing & justifying your sin & learn to mourn over your sin. Why?
 - Because of your sin & my sin, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, left Heaven’s throne & took upon Himself the form of a servant & became SIN for us so that we might be set free.
 - Our sin cost the Son of God His life. That should bring us to tears. That should cause us to mourn. That should humble us before a Holy God.
- **IF ... we can ever get to the point where we do these 3 things, God will draw near to us, He will cleanse us, and He will forgive us & the joy of our salvation can be renewed once more.**
- **You say, “Preacher, how often should we do this?” Well, how often do you sin? How often can you go without God’s protection in your life? How often do you need His power & His touch in your life?**