

Thought for the Day

James 4:1-2 New International Version - UK

What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? ² You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God. ³ When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

In our modern society we have seen a lot of violence because people don't have what they want, more recently there has been a noticeable change with people recognising the needs of others as well as their own desires, an attitude of 'we are in this together' it has led to much kinder responses towards one another. Let's pray that society is changed for the better and people will work together to resolve the issues rather than quarrel and fight. Pray for those who ask for the wrong things, or with the wrong motive.

James 4:4-6 New International Version - UK

⁴ You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. ⁵ Or do you think Scripture says without reason that he jealously longs for the spirit he has caused to dwell in us? ⁶ But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says:

***'God opposes the proud
but shows favour to the humble.'***

This reading sounds harsh, but the road that leads to life is only found in our Spiritual journey with God, if we put Him above everything else, He will ensure we have everything we need, we only have to humbly ask and He will show us His favour! Ask God to guide all those who are seeking in the wrong places, praying with the wrong motives, or are too proud to ask for His help.

James 4:7-10 New International Version - UK

⁷ Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸ Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. ⁹ Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. ¹⁰ Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

In amongst a treasure of well known and often quoted scripture nestles the instruction to 'wash your hands' How many times have we heard that recently?! But in all seriousness, these verses encourage us to draw near to God, to make a change that we might be clean, forgiven and made whole by God who lifts us up. These verses encourage us to rejoice in the Lord and not in sinful ways, to be pure and humble. Pray for all who find it difficult to follow Him, who are drawn away from the path by sinful desires, ask God to give us strength to follow Him, wherever he may lead us.

James 4:11-12 New International Version - UK

¹¹ Brothers and sisters, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against a brother or sister or judges them speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgment on it. ¹² There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the one who is able to save and destroy. But you – who are you to judge your neighbour?

It is always possible to find someone whose behaviour is worse than your own, to look down on others who do not meet your standard, but we all fall short of God's standard, which is perfection, so we are in no position to judge others – Ask God to help us meet His high standards and forgive us where we fall short.

James 4:13-17 New International Version - UK

¹³ Now listen, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money.' ¹⁴ Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. ¹⁵ Instead, you ought to say, 'If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that.' ¹⁶ As it is, you boast in your arrogant schemes. All such boasting is evil. ¹⁷ If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for them.

So many plans are being made for when life returns to 'normal' but what plans does God have for you? Do you make plans and then pray God will bless them, or do you seek God's plan for your life? Pray for those who are making plans for the future, especially young people choosing subjects to study and courses to take, planning their future career, that God will guide them into the work He has for them to do.

James 5:7-9 New International Version - UK

⁷ Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains. ⁸ You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near. ⁹ Don't grumble against one another, brothers and sisters, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door!

James reminds us that patience is the key to seeing God's will being done in our lives, in our society and in our world. The farmer doesn't just sit back and wait for the crops to grow, he works to plant and sow initially but also recognises the part that God needs to play, in His time, before the crops are ready to harvest. Pray for patience and for a harvest in God's time!

James 5:13-16 New International Version - UK

¹³ Is anyone among you in trouble? Let them pray. Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise. ¹⁴ Is anyone among you ill? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. ¹⁵ And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven. ¹⁶ Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

James encourages each one to pray and praise as appropriate for their circumstances, he encourages each to seek help from others when we need prayer and forgiveness – he reminds us that faith is key in prayer and powerful and effective prayer comes not from gifted, clever, or wise people but from the righteous – are your prayers powerful and effective? Pray for those who are in trouble, those who are sick, give thanks for those who are celebrating good news, and offer your prayers in faith and righteousness.
