

**Mankind** is caught up in a constant state of unrest.

**Conflict** is an unnecessary but inevitable part of life in this world, & it will continue to be as long as men refuse to acknowledge & pattern their lives after the goodness & holiness of God.

**From** day to day we see an ongoing conflict between nations, races, business & family relationships—and even between brethren.

**When** this happens, the body of Christ becomes a battleground & ceases to be what it ought to be, which is a body of healthy members nurturing one another.

**The** scriptures teach that all warring between groups & individuals is the result of wars raging within men's hearts.

**Man** is not at peace with himself so he falls into strife with his fellow man.

**The** desire to do evil not only estranges us from God, but it also separates us from the people around us & sets us to warring & fighting with anyone who may cross our path.

**Thus** in order to have peace with others we must first be at peace with ourselves, which may only truly be accomplished by being at peace with God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

1. Are the questions in verse 1 referring to relations in the church?

**There** is no question (see 2:1 & 4:11).

## 2. What does James mean by “wars and fights” (1)?

“**Wars**” – polemos (pol'-em-os); from pelomai (to bustle); warfare (literally or figuratively); a single encounter or a series.

“**Fights**” – mache (makh'-ay); from machomai (makh'-om-ahee); to war, i.e. (figuratively) to quarrel, dispute:

**This** is not fisticuffs but unnecessary conflict about words & questions that gender strife (see [Titus 3:9-11](#); [2 Tim 2:23](#) – same Greek word for “fights” in [James 1:1](#) is translated “strivings” or strife”).

### a. List three things that contribute to this situation (1-2).

**Evil desires** are the root cause of all strife:

- 1) At first, there is a **personal, internal war or conflict** because one does not have what he wants to have ([4:1b](#), [2a](#)).
- 2) This results in an **evil attitude toward others** who have what he wants to have or who are preventing him from having what he wants to have. This evil attitude James describes as murder & covetousness (not actual murder, but hatred in the heart [Matt 5:21-22](#); [1 Jn 3:15](#)); these attitudes lead to wars & fights.
- 3) The cause of this breakdown in relationships was the **unwillingness** on the part of the one who lusted **to petition God** for His gifts.

### b. What will end it (2)?

- 1) Make a petition; ask the Father ([Matt 7:7-11](#)).
- 2) Consider the motive for asking ([1 Jn 3:22](#); [5:14-15](#)).
- 3) Accept the will of God.

c. What will perpetuate it (3)?

**Wishing** only to please oneself in the asking or request made to God.

3. In what way are they committing adultery (4)?

**“Adultery”** is the breaking of a marital vow through unfaithfulness or infidelity.

**This** is done in a spiritual sense when we strike up a friendship with the world, or when we live by the values & patterns of the world.

**Anyone** who creates an atmosphere of “wars & fights” to accomplish their purposes in a local church or in the brotherhood, is guilty of unfaithfulness to the Lord.

**Diotrophes** (3 Jn 9-11)

**Those** who pressed the church to support human institutions from the treasury of the local church

4. Explain verse 5.

**The** human spirit unchecked longs to envy.

5. How will God’s grace help the situation (6)?

**Evil** desires (1 Tim 6:19-20; 1 Jn 2:15-17) destroy peace of mind; they war against the soul (1 Pet 2:11).

**God** will help us overcome our lusts if we can restrain our selfish impulses & learn to be content with the opportunities & blessings God provides through prayer.

a. Who will receive God's grace (6)?

**"He gives grace to the humble":**

**Forgiveness** for the past & **deliverance** & opportunity for the future

6. How can the Christian be assured of God's grace (7-10)?

**Be subject to God** (submit to His will; obey the written ordinance of His word through Christ & the apostles)

**Resist the devil** (counteract the tempting urge to disobey God)

**Draw near to God** (The prerequisites that follow will explain HOW to draw near to God – an action that will cause God to draw near to us.)

**Cleanse the hands** (cease all ungodly endeavor & do only good: Gal 6:10; 1 Tim 6:18; Heb 13:16; 1 Pet 3:11)

**Purify the heart** (purge impure thoughts, replacing them with godly thoughts: Phil 4:8).

**Be single-minded** rather than double-minded (Phil 1:21)

**Lament & mourn over sin** (no casual flippant attitude)

**THIS IS WHAT IT MEANS TO HUMBLE YOURSELF  
IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD!**

**THE RESULTS: HE WILL LIFT YOU UP!**

**How?** In what way?

**He** will give GRACE...gifts such as *peace, love, mercy, forgiveness, & salvation – even opportunity to be of service to Him.*

**All** that God has to offer His people is bestowed upon them when they strive to be *prayerful, obedient, penitent & humble.*