

Day 11 Why all the fighting?

Matthew 5:5(NLT) God blesses those who are humble, for they will inherit the whole earth.

Everybody wants something. We all have desires, hopes, dreams and longings. For thousands of years most people understood that if you want something you have to fight to get it. Survival of the fittest might not have been a known saying, but it sure was an understood sentiment. The strong always rules. To maintain that position, you have to display your strength over any and all challengers. Especially those who might threaten your position. That's just plain and simply the way of the world, and that world included the religions of the day.

Then something happens or rather Someone happens. Jesus of Nazareth shows up on the scene. He began to preach and teach. He did signs, wonders and miracles. People were drawn to Him, and crowds were gathered around Him. They wanted to hear what this 'Teacher' had to offer. Maybe, just maybe, He could be the One we all have been waiting for, and then we would be in charge. We would rule and throw off this yoke of Roman oppression and finally we would be in first position.

So, Jesus goes up the mountain and the crowds follow. Once He reached the top, He sat down (like Rabbis would do in that time) and He began to teach. The crowd, with bated breath, waited to hear every word. They were ready! When the first word came out of Jesus' mouth, they were giddy with excitement. He said; "Blessed...Yes, that's what we wanted to hear. Finally, we are going to be on the winning side." It was not the first word that took people by surprise, but the words that followed. ***"God blesses the humble, for the humble gets the prize..."*** (I am paraphrasing) What do you do with words that are so contrary to what you have observed, seen and experienced? There are only two responses; you reject them as simply fantasy that cannot possibly be lived out in everyday life, or you accept them and embrace them as the only way to true life!

Here's some questions that every sincere Christ follower have to ask themselves: "Do I believe that humility and meekness is the highest value of my life? Do I believe that humility is how God's Kingdom operates? Do I believe that meekness is the way of the cross? Do I believe that if I were to humble myself, that I would receive what God has promised?" If your answer is yes, then why are you still feuding to get what you think you rightfully deserve? Why all the fighting? Why all the striving? James writes and says: ***"What is causing the quarrels and fights among you? Don't they come from the evil desires at war within you? 2 You want what you don't have, so you scheme and kill to get it. You are jealous of what others have, but you can't get it, so you fight and wage war to take it away from them. Yet you don't have what you want because you don't ask God for it." James 4:1-2(NLT)***

You want, and you will do anything to get what you want, regardless of what kind of conflict it creates or quarrel it produces. We think: "They have it, I want it, so therefore, because they have it, I also should have it. I am just as worthy and deserving as they are." Then James simply says, you don't have it because you don't ask God for it. Because your motive is no different than those who do not serve or know God. ***"And even when you ask, you don't get it because your motives are all wrong—you want only what will give you pleasure. James 4:3(NLT)*** Before you read any further, I need you to take a deep breath! Because the truth that James is uttering, is downright scary. Are you ready? Proceed with caution...

“You adulterers! Don’t you realize that friendship with the world makes you an enemy of God? I say it again: If you want to be a friend of the world, you make yourself an enemy of God. 5 Do you think the Scriptures have no meaning? They say that God is passionate that the spirit he has placed within us should be faithful to him.” James 4:4-5(NLT) No mincing of words here, no soft peddling by James. James says, if you operate like the world operates, meaning fighting, arguing, quarreling and strife, to get what you want, you are committing spiritual adultery. Your wants and needs are not supposed to be met by using the same attitude and approach as the world does. You have a Heavenly Father. You are not a spiritual orphan, ask your Father. Don’t play the field, pray!

If that is hard to hear, then ask for His grace. If it seems others are progressing, and you are standing still, ask for His grace. If you feel that you need to make it happen, stop and ask for His grace! Why ask? Because asking is an acknowledgment of your need for Him. Asking is a sign of dependence and being dependent on Him is a demonstration of humility. Prideful people don’t ask, they take. Humble people ask. Note the next few verses: ***And he gives grace generously. As the Scriptures say, “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” 7 So humble yourselves before God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8 Come close to God, and God will come close to you. Wash your hands, you sinners; purify your hearts, for your loyalty is divided between God and the world. 9 Let there be tears for what you have done. Let there be sorrow and deep grief. Let there be sadness instead of laughter, and gloom instead of joy. 10 Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up in honor. James 4:6-10(NLT)***

Three times in five verses, James says to humble ourselves. If you don’t pray, you are not humble. A lack of prayer is an indication of a person that does not acknowledge their need for God. Humble people pray, dependent people ask. Humble people receive the grace to do what they cannot possibly do on their own, because they ask the Father. What do you want? Have you humbled yourself enough to believe that it is through humility that you can receive what you need?

How long are you going to fight the world’s way? When are you going to practice the way of the cross? The path to a blessed life can only be found through a humble heart. It’s time to stop the feuding and start humbly asking. Ask your Father, He will give you the grace to stop the fighting...

Reflection and Prayer:

- **What do you want?**
- **Have you asked the Father? If not, why not?**
- **Take a moment and sit and wait on the Lord. While you wait, ask Him to help you weigh all your desires. Discern what it is that He wants for you. Write it down.**
- **Now boldly and confidently pray and ask your Father for the grace to do what He shows you.**