

Introduction: Piercing words – wounded lives

The root cause of interpersonal conflicts is our consuming passion for

_____.

¹ What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members? ² You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask. ³ You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures.

James 4:1-3 (NASB)

- Our problem =

- The symptoms =

- Our strategy =

- The results =

God's diagnosis:

- We've believed a lie.

- We've betrayed a trust.

- We've become an enemy.

⁴ You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. ⁵ Or do you think that the Scripture speaks to no purpose: "He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us"? ⁶ But He gives a greater grace Therefore it says, "GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE."

James 4:4-6 (NASB)

God's prescription: _____

and God will heal your relationships.

⁷ Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. ⁸ Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. ⁹ Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy to gloom. ¹⁰ Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.

James 4:7-10 (NASB)

Four steps to diffuse conflict:

1. _____
"Submit yourselves therefore to God" James 4:7a

2. _____
"Resist the devil and he will flee from you." James 4:7b

3. _____
"Draw near to God and He will draw near to you." James 4:8a

4. _____
"Cleanse your hands . . . purify your hearts . . ."
"Let there be tears for the wrong you've done" James 4:8b
James 4:9

God's promise:

Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you. James 4:10 (NASB)

Personal Application and Discussion Questions:

1. What is at the core of our conflicts with other people? Briefly define “hedonism” in your own words.
2. Why is hedonism a lie? How are we influenced to unconsciously “buy into” its philosophy daily?
3. How does God view our strategies to gratify ourselves apart from Him?
4. What is the solution to interpersonal conflict? What specifically is involved in “humbling ourselves” before God and others?
5. Is there a specific relationship that needs attention in your life? What would humbling yourself look like in this situation?