

Submit Yourselves to God

James 4

4 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.

4 You adulterous people,^[a] 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^[b]? 6 But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says:

“God opposes the proud
but shows favor to the humble.”^[c]

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.

11 Brothers and sisters, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against a brother or sister^[d] 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?

God the broken hearted

For those who know, having a bad break up is horrible experience

- Being broken hearted or rejected is a terrible feeling
- As you may well know, the Fleetwood Mac album “Rumours”
- Was written after 2 couples in the band had broken up
- Most of the songs are about breaking up, moving on
 - o Go your own way, never going back again, dreams , I don't wanna know
- When they were recording the only thing they would talk about was the music
- As they are writing songs about each other and how they feel
- Amazing album tho

There are lots of images of God we talk about, the warrior, judge, creator, saviour

- But one image we don't often mention is God the broken hearted
- God who longs for his people and is jealous for love

The Book of Hosea opens with God saying to the prophet Hosea

- Go and marry a prostitute
- So Hosea take a prostitute as his wife and they have 3 children
- But of course... Hosea is probably never sure if they are his children
- God does this to Hosea, because he want to show him how he feels

God loves his people greatly but they constaly reject him

- They turn to idols and other God's
- They love the world more than they love him
- And here we get this Image of God a broken hearted groom
- With us....his wandering bride

One of the meanings for The Name Israel "wrestle with God" or "God wrestles"

- After Jacob wrestles with the Angle of the Lord he is called Israel
- Because this is how God's relationship with his children will be

Now I am a father I am seeing my relationship with Wes more and more as a wrestle

- Wes wants to do something, like play with the power point and I wont let him
- Wes wants to stay nude after the bath, I want him to have clothes
- Changing his clothes is always a fight. I literally wrestle him into clothes
- I flip him over pinn him down, get 1 leg on... right, swing him around grab the other foot, now I have 2 legs on
- In summer I get seriously sweaty dressing him

And in James 4 I want to focus on this part of the passage with focuses on

- God and his relationship with us
- AND his longing for what that relationship should be.
- V4

James alludes to Hosea here calling us "adulterous people"

- But here his people have not cheated on him with other idols of gods.
- But through their loving of the world more than God.
- Here is the NT shift, now we are not leaving God for the pagan religions
- But for no religion... for the ways of this world
- And I don't know about you but this sounds a lot like the Northern beaches to me.
- V5

If your reading the passage on paper, you will see a foot note V5, digital copy might have one also

- But the footnote is saying that there are other ways to translate V5
- It's a tricky passage to bring into English
 - o The spirit envies intently or it longs jealously
 - o NIV goes with God jealously longs for the spirit he has caused to dwell in us
- But the point is clear God jealously wants his spirit to dwell in us.....

- just think about that for a moment... God is jealous to dwell in us
- I am Jealous for Amys affections, if I saw her flirting with another man
- I would get this feeling in my heart of jealousy
 - because I want that affection to be only for me
- there is a difference between jealousy and envy
 - you envy something that is not yours
 - While jealous is fearing that you will lose something that is yours...

When God sees his children give themselves to this world

- this pang of fear and jealousy flares up in God's heart
- because we are his and he fears losing us.....
- he gave us his spirit that we might be close, that he might be present in our lives
- but we choose the ways of the world to fill our mind and our hearts
- be it career, or lifestyle or success or parties or relationships
- we fill God's place with these other things... and it breaks His heart

V6

He give us more Grace... even though we break his heart, we cheat on him, and reject him

- he keeps turning to us giving us more of his love and more of his grace
- Because he want us to be close to him, to be filled with his spirit
- 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.
- We are made to be vessel of his spirit... that is how we are designed, made to be.
- We are hand crafted and tailored for his spirit ... his dwelling in us.

Imagine you ordered a pizza and the delivery man came to the door holding the pizza in his hand

- And the pizza is all sliding down I arm . on to the ground
- You would say where my Box! Dude I want my pizza box
- But if he just brought u just the box, you would say hey where my pizza
- The box on its own is worth 25c ... and if you were given the box alone
- You would just throw it in the recycling
- The Box gains its value when it is filled with something good

James says that we are like this Box, empty vessels...

- And when we are filled with the spirit of God, then we fine our true value
- Then we are fulfilling God's design for our lives
- Christianity is not merely bunch of great moral teachings
- It is not the performance of rituals and sacraments.
- It is the life-changing experience of the Holy Spirit through faith in Jesus Christ

But the question is how do we get filled?

V7 Submit yourself to God

- For the box to be filled it need to be open and empty
- Are you closed to the spirit? Do you shut of part of your life to the Lord?
- You know what I do I turn down pray? Why?
- Just this week I had some one ask is their anything I need prayer for?

- And I said nar is good..... like pray is something I do for some one else?
- Or its only reserved for emergencies, people who are sick or in great need
- That's me closing my heart to the spirit... im not submitting my heart to God
- To fill me and change me... im doing the Aussie male thing, relying on me.
- Keeping my walls up

V10 By being humble before the Lord, we are filled and lifted up.

- The Path to being exulted and lifted up is through humility
- This idea flies in the face of the world as we know it
- Nice guys finish last ... the path to getting ahead in life is shamelessly self-promotion
- No politician ever got elected by saying, im not that great,
 - o the other guys are pretty good too.
- You get elected by saying I am the person to lead us, I have the answers the policies
- Anyone other than me and were all headed towards disaster.
- But James tell us here that the path to being raised up spiritually
- Coming close to God being filled with his presence is in humility
- In admitting our dependence...
- As we come to the date about the road, we have great lawyers and people on the job
- But really we totally are dependant of God

And finally We are filled through the word

- All scripture is God breathed. 2 tim 3:16 ... breath or wind being images of the spirit
- In the word the spirit lives and moves
- After the reformation the protestant church when crazy for the bible
- Because before it was only in Latin, held by the clergy
 - o Kept from the people...
- But after the reformation it got translated into native languages for people
- They could read it for themselves
- And the great reformation theologians went crazy for the word
- Its said that Luther preached over 7000 sermons, often twice a day
- Zwingli in Switzerland had services of basically just bible and sermon
- BECAUSE they believed fiercely that God moved in the written word
- Luther said, "often a good sermon outline was undone by the spirit"
- As he is preaching the word the spirit is released and take control of his preaching
- God moves when his word is read and preached.
- Because in it we hear his voice.... We just don't read it enough

There are to many distractions, too many things to keep us occupied

- Well bring God's word into your routine
- Read it as you eat breakfast, or as u go to sleep at night
- Look up some of the great christian podcasts, Rick warren, Steve Fertick, Andy Stanley, nicky gumble... all for free!!!

Here the thing.. in the witten word of God the spirit dwells

- We know scripture is God breathed 2 tim 3:16
- 1 thess 1:5 tells us that Gospel is not simplie words, but the power of the HS
- **HEB 4:12**For the **word** of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and **spirit**, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.
- God's word wants to do surgery on our hearts... its is sharp as a scaple
- It will cut open our barriers and pour the spirit into our lives

I came to Faith through the spirit moving in the preached word

- At a youth convention the preacher was talking on Isaiah 6
- The calling of Isaiah, with angles and seriphs, fire and lightening
- As I hear him preach the spirit reveals in my hear the gospel
- That this is the God who died for me, not what he was talking about
- But in the word the spirit revealed in me the truth, opened my heart and came on in.
- The Spirit moves in the Word of God.

There is a lot here I haven't mentioned but I have stuck to the meat of this passage

- We are made to be vessels of the spirit
- And through Submitting to God, opening ourselves to his presence , his word
- God eagerly waits to come into our lives
- Because if we are doing that all the other stuff will just fall into line
- The quarrelling, the coveting, the false motives, all that stuff will just sort itself out.

As V8 says "Come near to God and he will come near to you."