

MONDAY

Today's Reading: James 4

Today's Application: *What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions^(a) are at war within you?^(b) ² You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet 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 wrongly, to spend it on your passions.* – James 4:1-3.

Conflict, both external and internal, is birthed out of misplaced priorities. As Christ followers, our hope, fulfillment, joy, and sustenance are in the Lord. It is when we forget this truth that we begin to reach for what God does not have for us and forget to ask Him for what is good. Controlling our passions is hard, but worth it! As Paul reminds us, we fight for a prize worth keeping which does not fade! (1 Cor 9:24-27) Let us refuse to settle for lower prizes!

Today's Dedication: Lord, I confess that my priorities are not always in line with your word. I invite you today to reveal where they are out of order. Cause me to enjoy you as the prize.

TUESDAY

Today's Reading: James 4

Today's Application: You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God

- James 4:4. What a sobering thought that on a given day I could be an "enemy" of God. That is not to say of course that we are ever cast out. Those who have believed are His through and through. However, it is possible to live my life in such a way that causes me to stand against God and His word. In those times, God is certainly against us in the way that He will not bless those plans. Surely we must realize that we are on the losing end of that equation. When I am friends with the world (settling for loving created things more than the creator) I am at odds with the Father who loves me. How much better would it be today if we agreed with God about what is good?

Today's Dedication: Lord, help me to not settle for created things today. My trust is in you. My desire is to walk as your friend. Thank you for grace.

WEDNESDAY

Today's Reading: James 4

Today's Application: *"He yearns jealously over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us"*

. – James 5b. What a beautiful truth that God is Jealous for us! That He wanted to have us for his own so much that He gave His only Son to die in our place. His jealousy is righteous and good, not petty like an immature teenager. How often we stiff arm His presence. What have we rejected when we choose fellowship with the world over Him? What loss! Where are the moments in your day today that could be turned into moments with Him? Those are never a loss.

Today's Dedication: Father, your presence is sweeter than all other things I am prone to choose. Help me to steal moments today to sit at your feet, read your word, and enjoy your love.

THURSDAY

Today's Reading: James 4

Today's Application: *Do not speak evil against one another, brothers.* – James 4:11a. James had much to say in chapter 3 about the way we use our words. Consider his command here, "don't speak evil against others." Notice the last word in that sentence, "brothers." James is making an appeal to the truth that we are part of the family of God because of the work of Jesus. If we have been shown grace, should we not in turn show grace? Take time to examine your heart for ways you may be "against" others. Ask God to fill you with grace in place of strife.

Today's Dedication: Lord, thank you for showing me mercy. Please help me to be merciful to others today.

FRIDAY

Today's Reading: James 4

Today's Application: *...you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes.* - James 4:14b. What a fruitful reminder that this life is temporary. That is not to say that we are to take it for granted as some little thing. Life is a great gift from God. We must remember that ultimately we were created for eternity. Ephesians 2:6 reminds us that we are already seated with God in Heaven. Let us live here as if we believe His word that we are headed there. Eyes on Him. Trusting in His promises. Glory ahead.

Today's Dedication: Father, I look forward to the day I am at your side. Until then, allow me to walk by faith and not by sight.