

- A. Humility is foundational for coming to salvation in Christ and for your growth in grace.
- B. As we look at this text tonight, we must remember that the audience of this general epistle is the entire church which he called the **“the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad” (Ja 1:1)**.

What you must do to draw near to God.	I. KNOW THE SOURCES OF SIN II. REPENT OF YOUR SIN
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I. SOURCES OF SIN → **vv1-2**

A. The early church dealt with troubling sins.

1. Dr. Simon Kistemaker wrote, “We have the impression that the early Christian church was marked by peace and harmony. Think of the time after Pentecost when ‘all the believers were one in heart and mind’ (Acts 4:32). This picture of the church, however fades within the span of a decade or more.”¹
 - a. The warrant for him saying this is found in **Ja 4:1-2**.
 - b. Some theologians that this conflict was outside of the church, yet in **v1** James addressed the entire church when he wrote, **“What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you?”**
2. In **Mat 24**, Jesus warned that the early church would see persecution, false prophets, lawlessness, and that **“most people’s love will grow cold” (vv9-12)**.

B. James asked a rhetorical question and then gave his answer. → **v1**

1. Here James is speaking about the **“members”** or the parts of our bodies.
2. Among the parts of the body responsible for our sin, Jesus said the heart is primarily to blame. In **Mat 15:19**, our Savior taught, **“For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders.”**
3. Elsewhere in Scripture, other body parts are mentioned as having a key role in sin.
 - a. In **Prov 6**, some of the abominations that the LORD hates include, **“Hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that run rapidly to evil.”**²
 - b. In **1 Jn 2:16**, the apostle condemned the **“...lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes”** that come from the world.
4. **Ja 4:1** says that quarrels come from our sinful **“pleasures”** or desires rather than godly desires.

C. Having this source of sin in mind, James next taught that our prayers are negatively obstructed by sinful desires. → **end of v2-v3**

1. Prayerlessness is a lack of faith yet also a consumption with other desires that choke out our desire for Christ and His glory.
2. James taught that wrong, selfish motives or desires in our prayers is why we do not receive what we ask God for.

D. Worldliness is another source of sin. → **v4**

1. We are at war with the world, the flesh, and the devil.
2. **1 Tim 2:9** says women should adorn themselves modestly, yet the world says they need to wear tight-fitting pants, low tops, or miniskirts or extremely short shorts.
3. The secular world also esteems the accumulation of material goods over godliness.

¹ Kistemaker, Simon. New Testament Commentary: James, p. 129

² Also see **Isa 59:7** and **Prov 1:16**.

II. REPENT OF YOUR SIN

A. One motivation for you to repent of your sin is to consider that our God is a jealous God. → v5

1. Scholars are not sure what Scripture James is mentioning here.
2. He may have been making a logical conclusion from Scripture. For example, Ex 20:4f says, **“You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. ⁵You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God.”**

- a. The Holy Spirit is God just as the Father and Son are equally God.
- b. It is logical to conclude that the Holy Spirit which dwells in Christians can be provoked to jealousy as well when we ignore His direction and go headfirst into sin anyway.
- c. This could be one example of what Paul meant when he warned in Eph 4:30f: **“Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you.”**

B. To repent of your sin you must get rid of your pride to humble yourself before the Lord. → v6

1. The citation here is from Prov 3:34, **“Though He scoffs at the scoffers, yet He gives grace to the afflicted.”**
 - a. A scoffer is a proud person.
 - b. The citation James gave from Prov 3:34 is word for word from the Septuagint— the Greek translation of the OT.

2. If you approach God with pride, claiming you deserve something from Him, you will only get His judgment.
3. Both James and the Holy Spirit considered humility an important part of the Christian life. Later in v10, James repeated this same truth: **“Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.”**

C. With humility in mind, confessing your sin and unworthiness, James went on to say how you ought to submit to God and turn from sin. → vv7-8

1. James spoke of our war with the desires of the members of our bodies, our flesh.
2. He mentioned how **“friendship with the world is hostility toward God” (v4)**.
3. In v7 he said we must **“resist the devil and he will flee from you.”** He said that we do that by submitting to God.

D. WSC 88 describes repentance unto life as **“a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God.”**

1. James in vv8-9 give us a very good description of one having **“grief and hatred”** of sin
→ Middle of v8-v9
2. James described the professing Christian who has one foot in the world and one foot in the church as **“double-minded.”** God wants you to choose whose side you are on!

Review, further application, and conclusion: