

It Begins With Me / True Religion / Week 9 / Sermon / Dr. Paul Michael Vacca / 10.5.25

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Devotions for the Week

Verse of the Week

James 4:1 - 'What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you?'

Check off each day as you go

- ☐ **Monday** Today, I will pray to God about the conflicts in my heart and express them honestly.
- ☐ **Tuesday** When I pray to God, I will first seek His will, not my desires.
- ☐ **Wednesday** Today, I will consciously reject the values of the world and act according to God's word.
- ☐ **Thursday** When I pray to God, I will check that my prayers reflect God's will, not my desires.
- ☐ **Friday** I will share the conflicts in my heart with God and seek His help.
- ☐ **Saturday** Today, I will approach others with a humble heart and draw near to God.

Monday — The War in My Heart

Today's Passage James 4:1

We often blame external problems, but we must realize that the conflict in our hearts is the root cause of the issues. It is important to acknowledge the war within and to resolve the conflicts that arise from it.

Ask Yourself What conflicts are happening in my heart?

Do This Today Today, I will pray to God about the conflicts in my heart and express them honestly.

Prayer God, please help me to reveal and resolve the conflicts in my heart.

Tuesday — Seek God's Wisdom

Today's Passage James 4:2

Our desires can often distort even our prayers. We need to realize how important it is to ask God for what we truly need.

Ask Yourself What is the reason I pray?

Do This Today When I pray to God, I will first seek His will, not my desires.

Prayer God, please guide my prayers to align with Your will.

Wednesday — Friendship with the World

Today's Passage James 4:4

Friendship with the world can lead to hostility toward God. We must be faithful to God and not be swayed by the values of the world.

Ask Yourself In what areas am I more dependent on the world?

Do This Today Today, I will consciously reject the values of the world and act according to God's word.

Prayer God, please help me to break my friendship with the world and be faithful only to You.

Thursday — The Power of Prayer

Today's Passage James 4:3

Prayer is not just a simple request but a process of giving our hearts to God. Our prayers should move in the direction that pleases Him.

Ask Yourself How can I know if my prayers are pleasing to God?

Do This Today When I pray to God, I will check that my prayers reflect God's will, not my desires.

Prayer God, let Your will be done through my prayers.

Friday — Resolving Inner Conflicts

Today's Passage James 4:5

God knows the conflicts in our hearts. He desires to purify our hearts. We must seek His help.

Ask Yourself What efforts am I making to resolve the conflicts in my heart?

Do This Today I will share the conflicts in my heart with God and seek His help.

Prayer God, please resolve the conflicts in my heart and grant me Your peace.

Saturday — Restoring Relationship with God

Today's Passage James 4:6

God gives grace to the humble. We must be humble to restore our relationship with Him.

Ask Yourself Am I humble before God?

Do This Today Today, I will approach others with a humble heart and draw near to God.

Prayer God, make me humble and restore my relationship with You.

Check Your Understanding

1. What is the title of the sermon?

- A. It begins with me
- B. True Religion
- C. James chapter 4
- D. Godly Wisdom

2. What is the cause of wars and fights mentioned in James 4:1?

- A. Satan's temptation
- B. The actions of others
- C. One's own desires
- D. Social conflicts

3. What is the importance of prayer mentioned in the sermon?

- A. Prayer is optional
- B. Prayer is a conversation with God
- C. Prayer solves the problems of the world
- D. Prayer is for others

4. What does 'becoming friends with the world' mean in James 4?

- A. Hostility with God
- B. Popularity in the world
- C. Freedom of faith
- D. Social status

5. What is the effect of the state of our hearts on prayer as emphasized in the sermon?

- A. Increases the effectiveness of prayer
- B. Hinders prayer
- C. Changes the content of prayer
- D. Makes prayer easier

Answer Key

1. **A** — The title of the sermon is 'It begins with me', conveying the message that our change starts from our own hearts.
2. **C** — It emphasizes that wars and fights arise from the desires within our hearts.
3. **B** — Prayer is a conversation with God and is an important element that helps direct our hearts towards Him.
4. **A** — Becoming friends with the world leads to hostility with God, which is contrary to the essence of faith.
5. **B** — When our hearts are contaminated by desires, the effectiveness of prayer is hindered, and God may not listen to our prayers.

Key Points

- Our inner conflicts lead to external conflicts.
- I must manage my heart through true prayer in my relationship with God.
- I must forsake friendship with the world and be faithful to God.
- If I want change, I must first reflect on my own heart.

Discussion Questions

1. How is the conflict in my heart affecting my life?

2. What does prayer mean in my relationship with God?

3. How does friendship with the world affect my faith?

4. What specific actions can I take for change?

Apply This Week

This week, I should pray daily and honestly share my inner conflicts with God. Additionally, I should strive to live a life faithful to God, breaking away from worldly values.

Prayer & Reflection

God, heal the conflicts in my heart and help me to forsake friendship with the world. I pray that you will change me through true prayer.
