

Overcoming Worldliness

James 3:13-4:10

I. Introduction

A. James 3:13-4:10 (READ)

1. James introduces the reader to the concept of the world and worldliness – James approaches from basically two viewpoints:
 - a. There is the perspective of the wisdom of the world
 - b. There is a friendship of the world
2. The term “world” can be defined scripturally in many different ways:
 - a. ENTIRE UNIVERSE / COSMOS
 - Acts 17:24 “The God who made the world and all things in it”
 - b. EARTH
 - Matthew 4:8 “Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory”
 - c. ALL HUMANITY
 - John 3:16 “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son”
 - d. Negative context – ALL THAT IS SINFUL IN THE WORLD (against God’s will)
 - John 12:31 “...now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out.”
 - World represents all of sinful humanity and God’s judgment is coming against them as well as their ruler
3. A distinction is made between those who are in the world (judged) and those who are in Christ (no condemnation Rom. 8:1)
 - a. There is no third category!

- We're in Christ (no condemnation)
- But we once were in the world...

b. Ephesians 2:1,2 “And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.”

- Satan is the leader of this worldly realm
 - 2Cor. 4:4 “...in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.”

c. Ephesians 2:4-10

B. An individual can move from the world's sphere of influence and wrath filled destiny over to Christ's sphere and an eternal inheritance:

1. Colossians 1:13, 14 “For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.”
2. Romans 6:1-7 This transfer occurs at baptism - “Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with {Him} in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be {in the likeness} of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; for he who has died is freed from sin.”
3. Galatians 6:14 And so Paul can say of himself “...may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, *through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.*”

a. Paul sees himself as being dead to the world

- b. He was once a part of the world – but now he is dead in his relationship with the world

C. The world tends to come after us in two ways:

1. John 15:18-25 Jesus said “If the world hated Me it will also hate you...”
2. The world will also try to entice us back into fellowship with it
 - a. 2Peter 2:20, 21 “For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world by the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and are overcome, (*moved from Christ back into the world*) the last state has become worse for them than the first. For it would be better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn away from the holy commandment handed on to them.”
 - b. Romans 12:2 “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”
 - c. 1John 2:15 “Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”

D. James is writing to a group of Christians who are moving away from God back into worldliness

E. There are two questions we can ask ourselves to see if we are moving from Christ (no condemnation) back to the world (judged):

1. James 3:13-18 “Am I following the wisdom of the world?”
2. James 4:1-5 “Am I pursuing a friendship/relationship with the world?”

II. James 4:7 – 10 James’ seven steps to combat worldliness:

- A. SUBMIT TO GOD
- B. RESIST THE DEVIL
- C. DRAW NEAR TO GOD
- D. CLEANSE YOUR HANDS YOU SINNERS
- E. PURIFY YOUR HEARTS

- F. BE MISERABLE, MOURN, WEEP
- G. HUMBLE YOURSELF IN GOD'S PRESENCE