

STUDY GUIDE

JAMES: Week 8 8.4.13

[set up]

Think of your closest and most important relationships. How do you know if you are being loyal to those people and if those people are being loyal to you (words, attitudes, actions)?

Have you ever had someone betray you maybe even cheat on you? How did that feel? Did that relationship ever get restored and if so, how?

How does God show His love and faithfulness to you? How do we try and live with a loyal love for God?

[digging deeper]

Read the passage from this last weekend's service – James 4:4-10

Notice that in previous verses, that James addresses the recipients of this letter as brothers, but now there is a tone change to “You adulterous people”. God is communicating to His people that they are committing spiritual adultery by cheating on Him with the world. Study the following verses to come to an understanding of what God means by “the world”, because some of the different uses of the world could be confusing. How would you define the world as we see in the James passage?

John 3:16 John 15:18, 18 John 17:14 Rom. 12:1-2 James 1:27 1 John 2:15-17

Spiritual adultery is not new. God has addressed this before. Look up the following verses for further understanding of God's passion for a faithful people

Ex 34:11-17 Is. 54:5; 57:3-9 Jer. 3:20 Ez. 16:32-38 Hosea 2

A great example of how we can easily get sucked into living for the world is seen in how Lot makes his decision in Gen 13:10-13. How is what happened to Lot a picture of what happens to us when we become friends of the world?

How do we typically “live out” our spiritual adultery and spiritual unfaithfulness in a love affair with the world. What does it look like in our daily lives today? How does 2 Cor. 11:2,3 address the heart God has for us in this issue of spiritual unfaithfulness?

These verses say that God is jealous for us. You can also look up “Jealous” in a Bible concordance and see many other instances where God's jealousy for His people is mentioned. But 1 Cor. 13 says that love is not jealous. Is this the same kind of jealousy? How is God's jealousy for us different or even justified

We hear so often of the great joy, love, peace and contentment that comes when we follow Christ, so why all the doom and gloom language in James 4:8-9 and what does it mean? Can you give examples of people laughing in their sin yet needing it to be turned in to mourning? Maybe even an example from your own life?

We are told to cleanse our hands and purify our hearts. How do we do that? How does our relationship with Jesus help with that? (Heb. 9:14; 1 John 1:7)

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Read the following excerpt taken from sections of *The Divine Marriage* by David Kyle Foster and elaborate on how it connects with what we have looked at above

The power of Almighty God is not being released in many of our lives because we have never embraced this high calling. We have married Christ in word but have never consummated the marriage by giving ourselves to Him with the trust and abandon that we were designed to give. Rather than giving our all to Him, rather than submitting to the source of our life with joyful obedience, we have grumbled and complained and questioned Him at every turn in the road.

We have rejected the call to love, which is a call to sacrificially give ourselves to Him just as He has sacrificially given Himself to us. We have defiled the marriage bed with other gods, with other idols. We have remained fixed on ourselves, offering only periodic, emotion laden gestures of love that only tease but never deliver. God may see us at a worship service, erupting with a sudden burst of romantic sentiment as we sing our love songs to Him. But so often, His hope is dashed as we leave the service and return to our self involved lives without putting any of those sentiments into practice—without any change in our lives, without any deepening of our pursuit of Him, without any reality beyond the sentimental notions of those love songs that we mouthed.

[living it out]

What are the worldly desires that entice and seduce you away from God?

What are the godly desires that help you stay faithful to God?

Using Facebook language, how are you going to make sure you “unfriend” the world from your life, or “ignore” the world as it tries to pull you away from God?

As a closing prayer, take the imperative verbs, the commands that we see in James 4:7-10 and turn them into a prayer as you close this time. (Example: God, I will submit to you in my life... Lord help me to resist the devil... God, help me to draw near to you... etc)