

What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures. James 4:1-3 (NIV)

Motive

I know that I have had plenty of wrong desires. I have wanted something that I did not get. I have often coveted what I could not have. I know that my wrong desires have created conflict within me. I have been discontent. I have been discouraged and disappointed. I have been upset and angry. I have not given thanks to you for all the good things you have given to me. I have been ungrateful. Forgive me. **You are forgiven, you know that.** Yes, I do. I am thankful for your forgiveness of all my sin. I am grateful for your cleansing of all my unrighteousness. **That's good.**

How have your wrong desires motivated your prayers? I have prayed for the wrong things. **Like what?** I have asked for everything I wanted. I have prayed for everything that would bring comfort and pleasure to my life. I have asked that every burden would be lifted and every inconvenience would be removed. I have asked for smooth and happy sailing every day of my life. My prayers have revolved around me. I am tired and weary praying for me and my wants and needs and desires. **It is not wrong to pray for your wants and needs and desires. It is my delight to meet your needs and wants and desires.** Yes, I know. You have richly blessed my life. But, I want to pray prayers that will make a difference in the world. **How so?** I want to pray prayers that come from you. I want to know your will. I want to walk in your ways. I want to do what is pleasing to you. I want to ask for what you want. What do you want me to pray for? **That is a very good question.** Yes, I want that question to dwell richly in my heart and mind and life. **Keep on coming to me. Keep on asking me that question. I will guide your motives and give you prayers to pray. Your prayers will make a difference in the world. Do you know why that is?** I'm not positive. **I will give you prayers to pray that I will hear and answer. I will give you prayers to pray that will bear fruit for my kingdom and bring glory to my name.** That is what I want. That is my desire. That is the motive of my heart and mind and life. **Yes, I know. That is very good.**

Lord, I want to pray according to your will. I want to have right desires within me. I don't want to covet what I can't have. Help me to pray according to your will. Help me to ask for what you want to give to me. Help me to pray prayers you will hear and answer. Amen

Prayer*Wrong Motives*

What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

NIV

James 4:1-3

Prayer*Motives Are All Wrong*

What is causing the quarrels and fights among you? Don't they come from the evil desires at war within you? You want what you don't have, so you scheme and kill to get it. You are jealous of what others have, but you can't get it, so you fight and wage war to take it away from them. Yet you don't have what you want because you don't ask God for it. And even when you ask, you don't get it because your motives are all wrong—you want only what will give you pleasure.

NLT

James 4:1-3

Prayer*Ask Wrongly*

Those conflicts and disputes among you, where do they come from? Do they not come from your cravings that are at war within you? You want something and do not have it; so you commit murder. And you covet something and cannot obtain it; so you engage in disputes and conflicts. You do not have, because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, in order to spend what you get on your pleasures.

NRSV

James 4:1-3

Prayer*Wrong Purpose*

WHAT LEADS to strife (discord and feuds) and how do conflicts (quarrels and fightings) originate among you? Do they not arise from your sensual desires that are ever warring in your bodily members? You are jealous and covet [what others have] and your desires go unfulfilled; [so] you become murderers. [To hate is to murder as far as your hearts are concerned.] You burn with envy and anger and are not able to obtain [the gratification, the contentment, and the happiness that you seek], so you fight and war. You do not have, because you do not ask. [Or] you do ask [God for them] and yet fail to receive, because you ask with wrong purpose and evil, selfish motives. Your intention is [when you get what you desire] to spend it in sensual pleasures.

AMP

James 4:1-3

Prayer*Wrong Motives*

What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members? You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures.

NASB

James 4:1-3

Prayer*Ask Wrongly*

What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? 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. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.

ESV

James 4:1-3

Prayer*You Ask Amiss*

Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may

NKJV

James 4:1-3

Prayer*What You Have No Right To*

Where do you think all these appalling wars and quarrels come from? Do you think they just happen? Think again. They come about because you want your own way, and fight for it deep inside yourselves. You lust for what you don't have and are willing to kill to get it. You want what isn't yours and will risk violence to get your hands on it. You wouldn't think of just asking God for it, would you? And why not? Because you know you'd be asking for what you have no right to. You're spoiled children, each wanting your own way.

MSG

James 4:1-3

Prayer*Your Whole Aim Is Wrong*

What is causing the quarrels and fights among you? Isn't it because there is a whole army of evil desires within you? You want what you don't have, so you kill to get it. You long for what others have, and can't afford it, so you start a fight to take it away from them. And yet the reason you don't have what you want is that you don't ask God for it. And even when you do ask you don't get it because your whole aim is wrong—you want only what will give you pleasure.

TLB

James 4:1-3

Prayer*The Reason You Ask Is Wrong*

Do you know where your fights and arguments come from? They come from the selfish desires that war within you. You want things, but you do not have them. So you are ready to kill and are jealous of other people, but you still cannot get what you want. So you argue and fight. You do not get what you want, because you do not ask God. Or when you ask, you do not receive because the reason you ask is wrong. You want things so you can use them for your own pleasures.

NCV

James 4:1-3

Wrong Motives

Year ____ Week ____ Day ____ Date ____

Prayer – James 4:1-3

In Context: *Read James 4*

Begin With Prayer:

Here I am Lord. I Am Listening.

Meditating On God’s Word: ***(What is God speaking to your heart?)***

What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures. James 4:1-3 (NIV)

Considering The Words: ***(What words speak to your heart?)***

What | causes fights | and | quarrels | among you? | Don't they | come from | your desires | that battle | within you? | You want | something | but don't | get it. | You kill | and covet, | but | you cannot | have | what | you want. | You quarrel | and fight. | You | do not | have, | because you | do not | ask God. | When | you ask, | you | do not | receive, | because | you ask | with wrong motives, | that | you may | spend | what | you get | on | your pleasures. James 4:1-3 (NIV)

Praying The Scripture: ***(What prayer from your heart will you write?)***

Lord, I want to pray according to your will. I want to have right desires within me. I don't want to covet what I can't have. Help me to pray according to your will. Help me to ask for what you want to give to me. Help me to pray prayers you will hear and answer. Amen

What It Means: ***(What questions speak to your heart?)*** *(Suggested questions for small group discussion are in bold)*

What conflicts have waged war and battled inside of you?

When have internal conflicts inside of you turned into external conflicts with others?

When have you wanted and coveted something that you could not have?

When has not getting what you wanted or expected caused conflict with others?

When has wanting and coveting something you can't have misguided your prayers?

When have you discovered that you were praying for something the Lord did not intend for you to have?

How will you know if you are asking the Lord for things that are according to His will and plan for your life?

Living It Out: ***(What action step is God guiding your heart to take?)***

Ask the Lord to give you the right motives and prayers to pray to Him.

Seeing It Happen: ***(What are you trusting God for in your heart?)***

Have faith that the Lord will give you the right motives and prayers to pray to Him

Get Ready To Share: ***(What can you share with others from your heart?)***

Share with another person or your small group how the Lord is giving you the right motives and prayers to pray to Him.

Close With Prayer:

Quiet Yourself Before The Lord

Pause And Offer Prayers Of...

With An Attitude Of Faith Listen To What The Lord Wants To Say To You

Adoration... _____

Thanksgiving... _____

Confession... _____

Intercession... _____

Petition... _____

Journal

As You Quiet Yourself Before The Lord

What Do You Want To Say To Me Lord?

What Prayers Are You Praying Today?

Prayer Of Blessing

(What Prayer Of Blessing Can You Pray For Another?)

May you allow the Lord to give you the right motives and prayers to pray to Him.

Prayer To Carry

(What Prayer Would You Like To Carry Throughout Your Day?)

Lord, give me the right motives and prayers to pray to you.

What Do You Want To Remember About Today?

A Question To Ask God

(What Would You Like To Ask God?)

Lord, what prayers do you want me to pray to you today?
