

CAN'T WE ALL JUST  
**GET ALONG?**



**“Who We Are In Conflict:  
What Is the Cause of Conflict?”**

**JAMES 4:1-6**

- I. Introduction to the Series
- II. Who God Is as a Reconciler
- III. Who We Are In Conflict
  - A. What Is the Cause of Conflict?**
  - B. What Should Motivate Us to Resolve Conflicts?
- IV. How We Must Respond – 5 Ways
  - A. Disarm Your Anger.
  - B. Be a Peacemaker.
  - C. Be Forgiving.
  - D. Manage the Criticism.
  - E. Learn the Righteous Way to Disagree.

*<sup>8</sup> Then Abram said to Lot, "Let there be no strife between you and me, and between your herdsmen and my herdsmen, for we are kinsmen.*

*<sup>9</sup> Is not the whole land before you?  
Separate yourself from me.*

*If you take the left hand, then I will go to the right, or if you take the right hand, then I will go to the left."*

**Genesis 13:8–9**

*It is an honor for a man to keep aloof from  
strife, but every fool will be quarreling.*

**Proverbs 20:3**



- a. Likened to Proverbs because of its wisdom and application
- b. A book about what it means to be a Christian
- c. One of the earliest books written in the New Testament
- d. Main point of the book: true faith will result in godly works

## Notes About James

## **KEY POINT:**

Resolving conflict begins at the **heart** level.

# I. The Question: Why? (vs. 1a)



*Now the full number of those who believed  
were of one heart and soul,  
and no one said that any of the things that  
belonged to him was his own,  
but they had everything in common.*

**Acts 4:32**

- “*Quarrels*” – from the Greek word where we get our English word “polemics,” which means “a strong verbal or written attack on something or someone.”
- “*Fights*” – refers to battles and public controversies (II Timothy 2:23; Titus 3:9)

## Quarrels and Fights

- The result of multiple parties who are willing to sin or have sinned to get what they want.

***“Conflict”***

I. The Question: Why? (vs. 1a)

II. The Answers (vs. 1b-6)

A. Conflict comes with misdirected desires (vs. 1b).

*<sup>3</sup> Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.<sup>4</sup> No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is TO PLEASE THE ONE WHO ENLISTED HIM.*

**II Timothy 2:3-4**

*For we ourselves were once foolish,  
disobedient, led astray,  
slaves to various passions and pleasures,  
passing our days in malice and envy,  
hated by others and hating one another.*

**Titus 3:3**



I. The Question: Why? (vs. 1a)

II. The Answers (vs. 1b-6)

A. Conflict comes with misdirected desires (vs. 1b).

B. Conflict comes with unfulfilled desires (vs. 2-3).

<sup>3</sup> *In the course of time Cain brought to the Lord an offering of the fruit of the ground,*  
<sup>4</sup> *and Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions. And the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering,*  
<sup>5</sup> *but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his face fell.*

**Genesis 4:3–5**

*“People who lust only for what gives them pleasure will fight and keep on fighting for satisfaction although they fail to get what they want. If they were to turn to God and to pray they would have to ask for something that...*



**R.C.H. Lenski**

*"...presupposes a far different desire. So, they do not ask for themselves at all and do have the high and blessed things which God would gladly give them."*



**R.C.H. Lenski**



I. The Question: Why? (vs. 1a)

II. The Answers (vs. 1b-6)

A. Conflict comes with misdirected desires (vs. 1b).

B. Conflict comes with unfulfilled desires (vs. 2-3).

C. Conflict comes when we are hostile to God (vs. 4).

*Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers.  
For what partnership has righteousness  
with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has  
light with darkness?*

**II Corinthians 6:14**

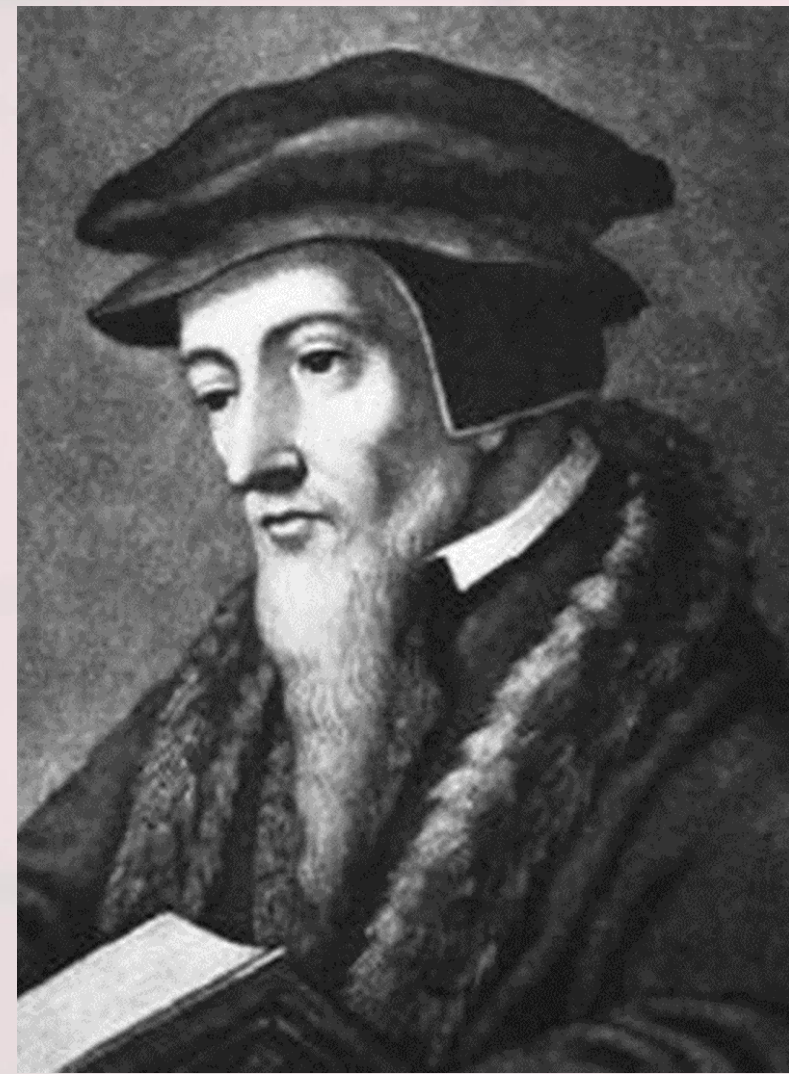


*<sup>15</sup> Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. <sup>16</sup> For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world.*

*<sup>17</sup> And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.*

**I John 2:15–17**

*"...When men surrender themselves to the corruptions of the world, they become slaves to them. For so great is the disagreement between the world and God, that as much as any one inclines to the world, so much he alienates himself from God."*



**John Calvin**

- The result of multiple parties who are willing to sin or have sinned to get what they want.

***“Conflict”***

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- II. The Answers (vs. 1b-6)
  - A. Conflict comes with misdirected desires (vs. 1b).
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  - C. Conflict comes when we are hostile to God (vs. 4).
  - D. Conflict comes when we disregard Scripture (vs. 5).

- a. Was James quoting the Apocrypha?
- b. Was James paraphrasing several Old Testament Scriptures or themes?
- c. Most likely – It's two sentences. Conflict comes as a result of those who are careless with what the Bible teaches (the 1st sentence) and that God is jealous (righteously jealous).

**What Is Going on in Verse 5?**



SENTENCE 1 – *Or do you suppose it is to no purpose that the Scripture speaks."*

SENTENCE 2 – *"He yearns (God) jealously over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us?"*

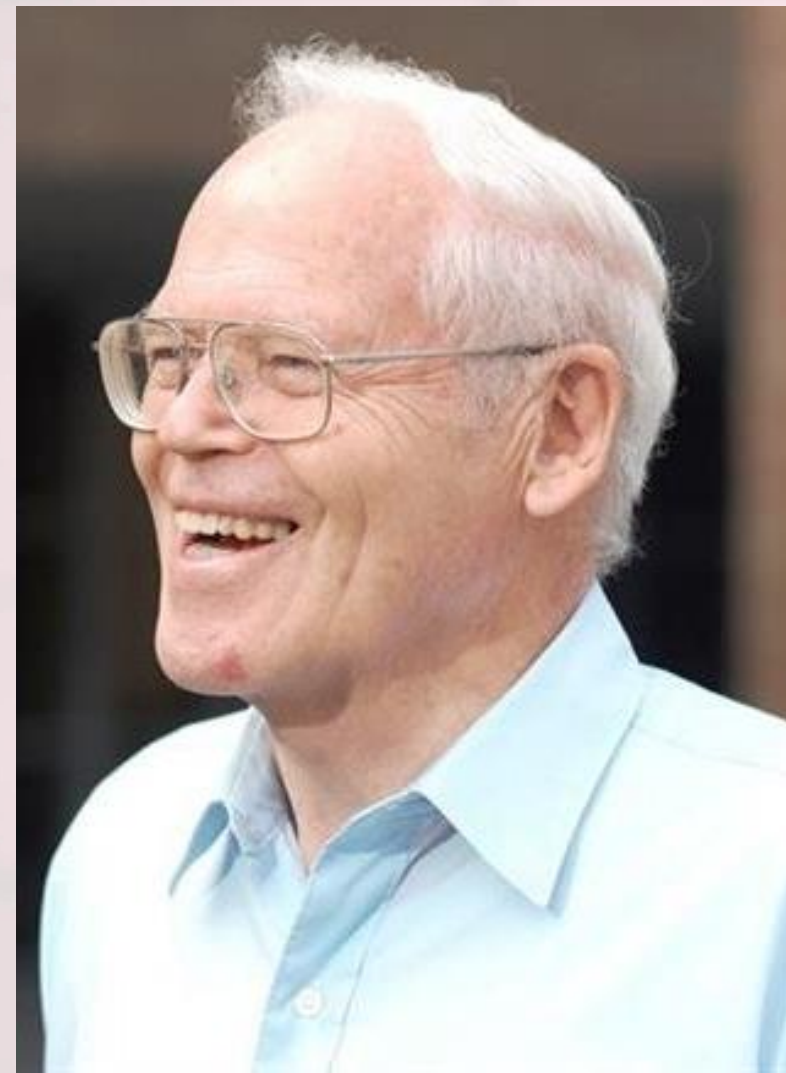
**What Is Going on in Verse 5?**



*Likewise, you who are younger,  
be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves,  
all of you, with humility toward one another,  
for “God opposes the proud but gives grace  
to the humble.”*

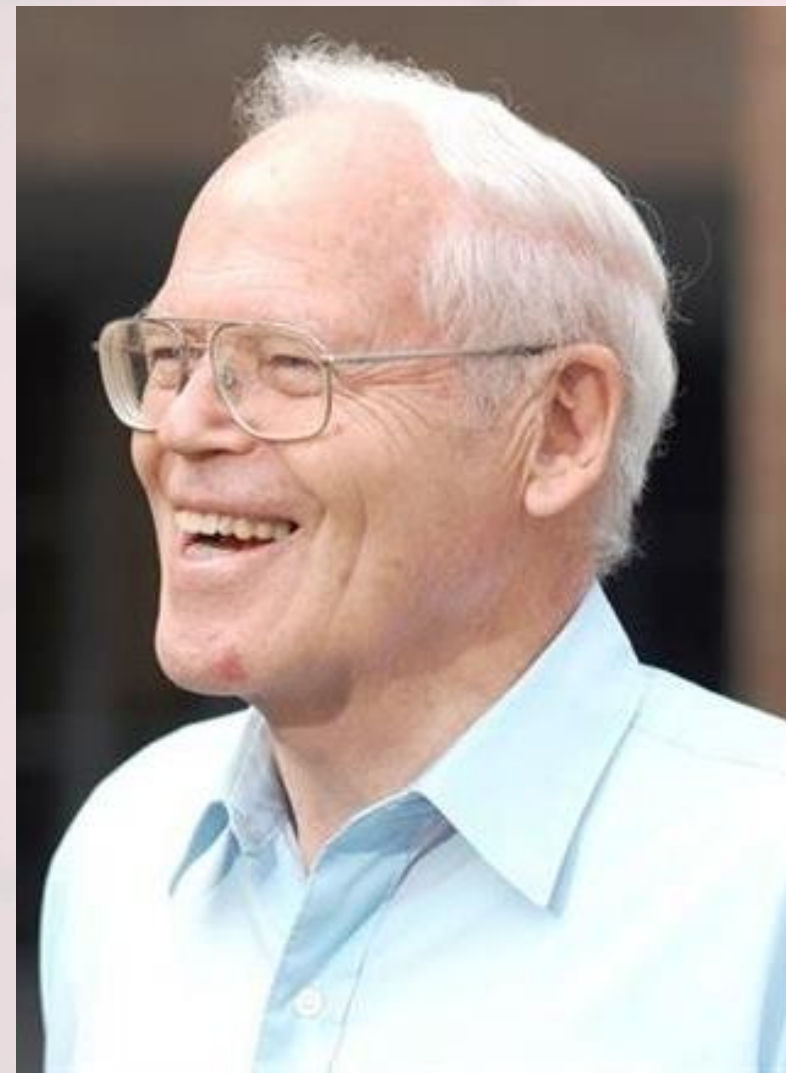
**1 Peter 5:5**

*“Proud people tend to be friends with the world, for they know that not God, but the world, satisfies their pride. By contrast, humble people realize that they are completely dependent upon God. They are thankful to him for the rich grace he...*



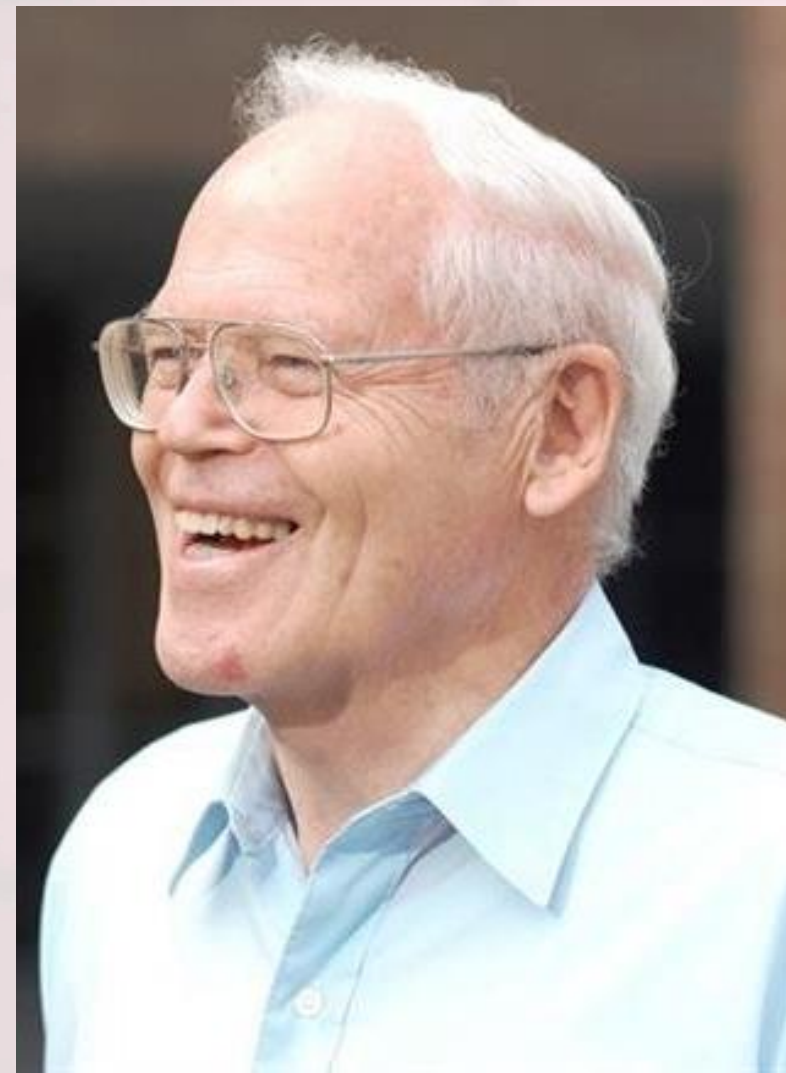
**Simon Kistemaker**

*"...provides to fill their lives to overflowing. Pride shuts out grace. If a patient refuses to take the medicine prescribed by the physician, he will never recover. If a son rejects the wise counsel of his parents, he can expect trouble. Pride enters the human heart...*



**Simon Kistemaker**

*“...because man measures himself by human standards, not God’s standards.*



**Simon Kistemaker**



- a. Divided allegiances
- b. Authority issues
- c. Unnecessary boundaries
- d. Misunderstandings resulting from poor communication
- e. Differences in values, goals, callings, priorities, interests, opinions

## **Other Reasons for Conflict**

- f. Competition
- g. Taking up offenses
- h. Not dealing with our own sin
- i. Failure to overlook minor offenses

**Other Reasons for Conflict**



## **KEY POINT:**

Resolving conflict begins at the heart level.

*23 Search me, O God, and know my heart!  
Try me and know my thoughts!  
24 And see if there be any grievous way in  
me, and lead me in the way everlasting!*

**Psalm 139:23–24**