

The Cure for Strife and Conflict

by Shane Idleman

The sermon emphasizes the importance of addressing our desires, pride, and the necessity of prayer to overcome strife and conflict in our lives.

Duration: 36:00

Scripture: Galatians 5:16, Ephesians 4:31-32, James 4:1-2, James 4:4, James 4:6-8, James 4:10, James 4:17

Topics: "Spiritual Conflict", "Humility"

Description

This sermon focuses on the cure for strife and conflict as outlined in James chapter 4. It emphasizes the default sinful nature of humans and the need to constantly rebuke and realign ourselves with God's Word to avoid conflict. The message highlights the importance of being open, teachable, and filled with the Holy Spirit to overcome the desires of the flesh that lead to spiritual adultery. The sermon concludes with a call to humility, acknowledging God's grace and favor as the solution to strife and conflict in various aspects of life.

Transcript

The message tonight, if you have your Bibles, you can turn to James chapter 4. We've been going through the book of James on Wednesday nights and the title is The Cure for Strife and Conflict. Wow, that's a little timely, isn't it? I was looking through the news today, I wouldn't recommend doing that, but I just saw a movement that they want to, I hope I get the term right, succession, they want to remove California from the United States and become part of Canada up there and that's not going to fly, but there's a lot of strife, there's a lot of conflict and, well let me just give you the introduction. He's writing, let's remember James is writing to Christians outside of Palestine.

These are Christians outside of the area and we, you know this because I've talked about it often, but as believers, even as believers, that our default mechanism, what I mean by default is if you don't do anything as far as worship and prayer and the word of God and try to draw closer to God, if you don't do anything, your default setting is set to sin. It's set to arguing and conflict. We don't have to do anything, it'll just take us in the wrong direction.

So what James is constantly doing is bringing us back and in order to do that, that default nature has to be rebuked often, doesn't it? We're going in a wrong direction, it needs to be rebuked and pulled back. We're going in a wrong direction, we need to be rebuked and pulled back. So I remind people, you're not just standing still, you're either going toward the Lord, you're either striving towards holiness and getting closer

to Him and or you're, by default, you're just moving away from God and bringing strife and conflict to your life.

So that's the setting he's writing in and many times people ask me, why is the Bible so this? Or in preaching, why is it always rebuking or this or that? Well, a majority of the Bible is on exhortation and on rebuking because of this reason, because we can drift away. So as much as we need encouragement, and we do, we're encouraged, we also need that sinful nature needs to be rebuked and to be repositioned into what God's Word says. Because unless we're challenged, we don't see the need to change.

And it's an interesting thing, three ways to fail in this life are blame, complaining, and not being grateful. When we blame our circumstances on others or we complain about what's going on and we're not grateful, you can be assured that you will fail in life. And I saw this in the picture, I think Susie has it up here, it reminded me actually today of this, that moment when you try to explain to Jesus how hard your life has been lately.

And doesn't that put it in perspective when we're complaining, and we're blaming, and we're not grateful for anything, that it can really add to strife and conflict. You can take it down. Thanks, Susie.

Here's what happens. When we're joyful, and when we're excited, and we're passionate about the things of God, and we're filled with the Spirit, conflict and strife isn't as prevalent. It doesn't exist as easily.

It's actually when we begin to blame, and complain, and not be grateful is when that strife and that conflict comes in. And we've become good as a church, not Leona Valley, just in general, in America, we've been very good at avoiding conflict and conviction. And if a person dares to challenge us, we make excuses.

So the first cure for strife and conflict is to be open and to be teachable. That's what James was...we covered a few weeks back, to be open, to be teachable, to recognize that there is a crack in the armor. So the first cure, if you don't want strife and conflict in your home, in your life, is to recognize and to be open and be teachable.

Lord, I need help in this area. And I was reminded of the verse that talks about pride puffs up. So the more knowledgeable we get, sometimes we can get puffed up, and it reminds me of a big balloon, but what's in the balloon? Nothing but air.

And that's what pride does. We get puffed up, and we think more highly of ourselves than we should, and there's really nothing in there, and it can actually foster strife and conflict. So with that said, let's begin James 4. Where do wars and fights come from among you? And I might actually have to look at my Bible, because when I printed it off, my printer is running out of ink.

And that means some words are missing. So it might sound funny if I just read what I have. So James 4, do you guys have your Bibles? And you can follow along and see if I'm there.

James 4, starting in verse 1. Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires? Your desire for pleasure that war in your members? So he's saying, they come from our desire for pleasure. Is that interesting? Because there are good God-given desires for pleasure. It's okay to desire food.

It's okay to desire intimacy with your spouse. It's okay to desire certain things in a good chocolate bar, and some people like a good cup of coffee or things. These desires can be good, but when we begin to focus

on them, and the desire for pleasure is all-consuming.

We think about it all day long. We think of comfort and not hard work. We think of relaxing, laziness, and not doing certain things.

We think of feeding our desires all day long, from what we drink, to what we eat, to what we watch. And as you feed those desires, those desires take us away from God, and that's where the conflict comes from in fighting. When the flesh controls your life, strife and conflict are inevitable.

Basically, our flesh is saying, feed me so I can destroy you. Feed me so I can destroy you. And as believers, I want to go over a few things when it comes to pride, because pride sparks the flame of strife and conflict.

Those who are, when there's strife and conflict, there's pride. And pride is a critical spirit, or it's fault-finding, it's defensiveness, it's self-focus. So as we're seeking all these things, our body says, feed me so I can destroy you.

Isn't that interesting? Your flesh is not your friend. Your flesh is not your friend. Feed me so I can destroy you.

Feed me these desires. Feed me all these things. So as we begin to feed on those desires and seek those desires, that's where the fights and the conflicts come from.

Because when I want desires, then I don't treat people right. I don't treat spouse right, or kids right, or different things. I want my desires, and then strife and conflict come in.

And that's what the enemy's using. And then verse two, yeah, verse two. I flipped over here.

You lust and you do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war, yet you do not have because you do not ask.

And I had to stop and say, wait a minute, is he writing to Christians? Did James shift his audience? You lust and you do not have. You murder and you covet and you 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 spend it on your pleasures. So what he's saying here, a diminished prayer life. Because he's saying, yet you do not have because you do not ask.

But then he says, you ask and you do not receive. So what is it, James? You just said they don't ask, and now you're saying they do ask. Well, probably both are true.

Number one, you do not ask, you do not have because you do not ask. They have a diminished prayer life. The prayer is not there.

The desire for pleasure diminishes the work of the Spirit and the desire for prayer. Anytime you are fulfilling the lust of the flesh, you're going after the lust of the flesh, your prayer life will take a back seat. So he's saying, you do not have because you do not ask, you don't pray.

You don't have a prayer life because of these desires. But when you do ask, you don't receive because you ask amiss that you may spend it on your pleasures. So people, have you ever prayed a prayer that

was kind of self-focused and self-centered? Or just me? Every hand in this room should go up twice.

My Lord. People, of course we do. But in and of itself, God can redirect us.

But this type of lifestyle is a person who, and it's, you see it on Facebook. They'll post a sign of the fish or they'll say a little prayer. You know, this prayer with God, but they just got drunk in Vegas the weekend before.

What is it? Their lifestyle doesn't, it's all spending all their desires. Lord, bless me at work. Give me a bonus.

Give me this. And they're gonna go spend it on the wrong things. Lord, open this door for this person or this relationship.

God says, no, that's an ungodly relationship. God, open this door. Allow me to do this.

And they're like, no, you're asking the wrong things. Your heart's not right. You want to spend it on your desires.

So there's two things here. People don't pray when they're living according to the flesh. When the flesh is dominating.

And we all struggle with it. But there's, when you give over to that struggle and the flesh just dominates and pulls you, the prayer life is absent. There's no prayer life.

But on the flip side, for those who are praying, they're praying and they see no results. They see, they're asking a miss because they're spending it on the wrong things. Actually, what you should do when you pray, the first thing you should pray is God, help me get my heart right this morning or this evening.

And you say, Lord, I need you to show me I want to get my heart right before you show me if there's anything in here that's not pleasing to you. And you spend that time getting your heart right. And what I've noticed is many of my prayer requests change from what I thought I wanted or what, to now my heart's changing and God, I just want what you want.

I want to minister to that person. I know I wanted you to remove them from my life, but now I'm feeling bad and I want you to, I want it, uh-oh. Did I say too much? Well, we all do that, don't we? Lord, just have them move to Texas.

Have them just go and then as you're praying, you're like, Lord, my heart's not right either. I haven't been nice to this person or I'm just giving examples. There's nothing, nobody I'm thinking of right now.

But God will actually change your heart. And when you start to pray according to what God wants in his heart, you'll see prayers answered many times over. When you start to pray for people and relationships to be restored and all the, and you don't even have to pray for your job or a bonus.

It just comes. God will open up the windows of blessing and pour out things that we're not even ready to receive because of our hearts are right. And anytime I get my heart right, God begins to answer in so many different ways.

So that's what James is talking about. You do not have because you do not ask. You don't have a prayer life.

You've allowed the pleasures of this world to take you over. But when you do ask, you don't receive because you ask amiss. It means you miss and you're asking that you may spend it on your pleasures.

And a lot of times I've counseled couples before, especially marriage counseling, when they're going through a lot of turmoil and strife. And you'll be amazed at what they pray for. Their prayers are not very nice.

You know, it's like, Lord, convict the other person and show them they're wrong and help me move on with my life and help the kids stay with me and like me more. And it's just this prayer that's not healthy. It's not good.

It's not God-directed. They're asking amiss. They're not asking according to God's will.

And I love prayer. And one of the reasons I love it is because it's probably one of the most boring topics in the church today, unless you can show people the power behind it. Because prayer moves the hand of God.

Prayer is the most important weapon we possess. That's why it's so difficult. Have you ever thought about that? Going to church, listening to Brant, listening to the message, going home.

We just spent an hour and a half at church on Sunday morning. That's easy for some. That was great.

But try spending an hour and a half in prayer. Is that hard? Yes, it's very hard. Why? Because that's where the strongholds are pulled down.

That's where your heart's changing. You cannot be a prideful Christian and spend a lot of time in prayer. You cannot be fulfilling the lust of the flesh and spend a lot of time in prayer.

Prayer will actually remove those things from your life. I've seen people overcome addiction by spending more time in prayer. I've seen marriages be healed and families restored just by prayer.

I've seen prodigal sons come home. I've seen this church be filled just because of prayer. We can't explain it.

We had 50 more people here this week than two weeks ago. And people are asking me, I have no idea who these people are. I don't know what's happening.

I don't know, but we haven't necessarily been praying, God, bring 50 more people. We've been praying, God, have your presence here. Bring people from north, south, east, and west.

We wanna glorify your name. We wanna praise you. If that means filling it twice or three times, whatever that means, God, you do it.

And then God begins to move. We can put signs everywhere. We can send out 5,000 postcards and nobody will come.

But when you seek the face of the Father, when you seek him, he'll bring, not only bring the people, but he brings the anointing. I went to lunch with the missionary from Mexico that we help this week, and he could

not believe his actual words were the spiritual life, that the church is just alive spiritually from the moment he walked in to listening to the worship. He felt just the presence of God.

How do you explain that? Where does that come from? Oh, Shane, that's just because everybody's clapping in a good mood. No, I've been in churches where you're clapping in a good mood and you don't feel anything. There's nothing about God.

But that's what praying does. It changes your heart. And when you align your heart with God's heart, that's where action takes place.

You look forward to prayer. You look forward to contending because you're seeing God answer prayer in many different ways. I read an article, it was about a year ago.

I found it online from David Wilkerson. I don't know if you know who he is. He had a church out in New York.

Was in a killed in a car accident a few years ago. But in one of his articles, he said Paul, the Apostle Paul, asked the church in Galatia, you ran well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth? This persuasion away from the truth does not come from him who called you.

A little leaven leavens the whole lump. And in the context, Paul is saying the church in Galatia, you've allowed some leaven to creep in. You've allowed sin to creep in to the church.

And a little bit begins to grow and grow and grow. What he's talking about, just a few examples. It doesn't apply here right now, so that's good.

But if we know that a person is separated from his wife and they bring, the man brings, or the woman brings, whatever, their boyfriend or girlfriend into the service, and we as a church are like, I don't know. I mean, maybe God will tug on their hearts. You know, I'm not gonna say anything.

I don't wanna do that. And we allow that. And then we know of another couple that's been coming, they wanna get baptized, they're living together.

And we're like, you know, the times are changing. And maybe after baptism, God will wake them up and maybe they'll get married next year. And I don't wanna say anything.

They're new here, and God, I don't wanna. Man, that's the last thing I wanna do. So you allow that.

And then you have other people who's gossiping and hurting the church and backbiting. I'm like, God, Lord, would you just convict them? I know you've called us to convict them and confront them, but would you just do it? And we're just gonna ignore it. And see how you allow those little things? And now those little things begin to infect the whole church.

That's why the church is immediately, Paul says, if you hear something, you don't go with a judgmental spirit, but you go, guys, we can't allow this in the church. I remember Lancaster, a few years back, we've had times where I've told people we can't allow what you're telling people and this false doctrine that you're saying about, well, yeah, this, and you're a false prophet. I'm like, no, I'm just telling you, you can't talk about this kind of stuff.

You're hurting people, they're confused. And you have to address things to keep that leaven out as much as you can. So Paul's talking about the leaven that the church allows, or individually, what about the leaven we allow into our own lives? Because all major, you see a Christian leader fall, right? You see it on the news, you're like, how did that happen? I can't believe that happened.

Well, that didn't happen that day. That happened months and months and months ago when the little leaven crept in, and the little leaven crept in, and the little leaven crept in, and then it gets a full-blown problem. And that's what happens.

We allow the little leaven to grow. I remember there's a, I won't go into a lot of details, but some of you probably know. There's a man who I used to look up to and follow him in ministry and read some books and different things.

But it ended up coming out that he had an affair, some type of affair with his, probably a nanny type or housekeeper. She's in her 20s and he was older. And people are like, oh, how'd that happen? That happened probably about a year and a half ago when you say, you know what, wife, I'm attracted to our housekeeper.

We're not gonna go this direction right then. That's what you, let's be real. That's how you end that problem.

You don't say, oh, gosh, this is gonna be hard. Let me see if I can fight this for the rest of my life. You say, no, we're not going into that situation.

We're not going to allow that. Now, that's one reason why we share Facebook messages. I mean, remember Morgan in 2012 got an email from somebody from high school.

It said, hey, it looks like you're married. If you're not happy, let's get lunch. So Morgan showed me it.

I'm like, okay, I'll respond to him. And we never got lunch. But that's what the leaven happens.

The leaven starts to creep in. So you go to somebody and say, hey, you know what? They prescribed this for my knee, this Vicodin. And I'm hooked on this now.

I need some help. I'm bringing this to the light. See, you get rid of that leaven.

Hey, I started doing this again, or whether it's alcohol or some type of abuse, or hey, I looked at pornography the last week or two, and it's captivated me, and I need to bring this to the light. See, you remove that leaven. That's how you do it.

But people that fall, you're like, oh, how did that happen? They didn't remove the leaven. They just left it. They put the leaven in the bread and put the bread in the oven and cooked it.

That's what happened. So he's asking the question. I'll make this relevant in a minute.

He's asking, what is in your life that keeps you from going on in the full blessing of Christ? You were doing so well at one time. I know you to be a praying people. You labor diligently to do good works, but something is wrong.

I don't see you growing anymore. Instead, you've gone back on relying on your flesh. I don't sense the sweet aroma of Christ you once had.

Something's hindering you. What could have persuaded you to settle in this condition? Whatever it is, I tell you, it's not of God. Something is clouding you.

Something you may be holding on to. What leaven has crept in? A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. And that fits right in to what James is saying.

You're spending it on your pleasures. And that's just actually an open invitation to this body too. If there's something that's in your life and you don't know where to go to, the church can be a safe spot.

We don't go and tell people. Because we all know we're all struggling with something. And this is a place where you can let people know that you gotta trust, you know who they are.

And you expose that leaven. The only way to really move cancer often is to surgery. And you get rid of it and you remove the cancer.

Lust, that he's talking about here, James diminishes the work of the Holy Spirit. When we give in to lusts, we diminish the work of the Holy Spirit. And I've got, there's a few pastors I know that are younger than me, and sometimes I Facebook them and different things.

And we don't agree on some things. And what I've noticed is, and I've said it before, is who those pastors are all week is who they are when they step to the pulpit. So that's why a lot of times the sermons are dead, or the churches are dying.

It's because the leadership is filling their mind with things that are not of God. And they're not filled with God's Spirit. So prayer is stifled when lust controls us.

And he goes on to say, in verse, I believe it's verse four. Verse four, yeah, chapter four, verse four. Adulterers and adulteresses.

Boy, James is not winning a popularity contest here. He said, you ask and you don't receive because you ask and miss that you may spend it on your pleasures. Adulterers and adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of this world makes himself an enemy with God.

See, there's no wiggle room. People like to give a lot of wiggle room. Yeah, but he didn't really mean that.

No, that's what he meant. If we love the world and the things of the world and everything about the world, I don't have to preach this too much because I do all the time, right? We don't have the love of the Father in us. Our flesh is at enmity, and that enmity is worse than an enemy.

Enmity, there's no reconciliation, there's no peace treaties. The carnal flesh inside of us is at enmity with God. It hates God.

And he just called some of these people adulterers and adulteress, the women. What is he talking about? Well, he's talking about spiritual adultery. Did you know you can cheat on God? People don't think that you can cheat on God by spiritual adultery.

Friendship with the world. Here's what spiritual adultery is. What is adultery usually? It's when we break the marriage covenant.

There's a covenant to love and cherish that person and to be one with that person. That's the one whole reason, one reason that God made them male and female, that act solidifies that relationship. And adultery breaks that covenant with God and basically says, I don't love you anymore.

Anybody that ever commits adultery usually says, I don't love you anymore. Or they'll throw in, I never did. I never did, and I don't love you anymore.

And they walk away from that relationship. And that's what spiritual adultery basically is saying. God, I don't love you anymore.

I don't want that relationship I had. I'm going to give my heart to idolatry and to the things of the world and love the things of the world. So I'm breaking my relationship with God, committing adultery, I don't love you anymore, and I'm fellowshiping and loving the things of the world.

And this is a big struggle for carnal Christians that Paul would talk about. Carnality just means you're living by the carnal nature. Your choices are guided by the carnal nature.

So as a result, you begin to love the things of the world. And he who loves the world doesn't have the love of the Father in him. And that's why it's spiritual adultery.

Because can you love two people? I said, Morgan, I love you and I also love Stacey. Is that okay? There's no Stacey here, so you guys are good, I don't think, right? Oh, there's one. Yeah, there's one, okay.

That's an example, example. How about Olga? It's a good German name. So I love Morgan, but I also love Olga.

How is that going to fly? Can I love both of them? Well, they used to, or Mormons used to, it doesn't matter. That's one or the other. And so that's what God is saying.

When you give to those pleasures and you begin to allow those pleasures to control you, you're committing spiritual adultery. You're cheating on God. You can't, how can a person love the things of the world? I love Jay-Z and I love all his rap lyrics at the Hillary thing.

And I love him just saying all these bad words and I love this and I can't get more of Miley Cyrus. And I love all these movies about death and destruction and horror. And I can't wait to go see this new Ouija movie.

And then put, I love God and I'm going to church. I'm filled with the spirit. I know you're not.

I'll tell you right now, you are not. You might be going to church, but the church is not in you. Isn't that true, though? That's what spiritual adultery is.

Now, so I don't let you leave here too discouraged. We all have a default nature that's gonna take us here. Even you, Shane? Yeah, my default, my flesh wants to go over here.

I don't want to watch Ouija, but it's just the flesh wants you. So you have to go, that's why you obey the word of God. He who is a hearer but not a doer lives in deception.

You gotta hear it and you gotta do it. So the whole point of this sermon is to say, God, I'm on the verge of cheating on you. I'm on the verge of cheating on you or I have been cheating on you.

I want to come back. And like a loving spouse, he just takes us back. And he takes us back and he takes us back.

It's funny on that movie, Ouija, we watched that Kirk Cameron came out with something a few weeks ago. And it was actually held in the Ouija Theater. Am I pronouncing it right? Ouija Board? Yeah, Ouija.

It was in the Ouija Theater, so we had to walk into a movie acting like we're seeing Ouija. But it's really where the Kirk Cameron movie was being played for one night at one time. It was just a weird feeling.

And then we come out and I heard some kids say, oh, is that the line for Ouija? And I'm being like, oh, how can you get excited about that? See, darkness should not entertain the Christian. There should be no pleasure in seeing these horror movies and these vampires and the occult and I can't wait to see it. Then something's wrong in your heart.

You can't love those things. Because when you love God, you hate those things. Even driving past Halloween decorations.

Golly, people are putting like skeletons coming out of their grass with a headstone and witches and warlocks. And I'm like, why is that entertaining? I don't want that in my front yard. I'm gonna have a hard time sleeping and I sure don't want my kids seeing it.

Why is that? Because the love of the world. Isn't that cool? Look at these dead things. No, that's not cool.

See, there's a heartbeat. There's a difference. And that's what you're seeing in the nation right now.

You're seeing two different biblical worldviews. You're seeing the polarization of two different worldviews. And that's what he's saying here.

Oh, so I forgot the second point. How did the cure for strife and conflict, ironically, is everything I've been talking about while in the book of Acts. Be filled with the Spirit of God.

Be filled with the Spirit of God. As you do these things, James is wanting his reader to repent and be refreshed and refilled with the Spirit of God. As I'm filled with the Spirit.

Do you think it's easy to have conflict in your home when both husband and wife are filled with the Spirit of God? No, good, thank you. One person. Can I take out the trash? No, let me take out the trash.

Can I wash the dishes? No, let me wash the dishes. Can I take the kids, do their homework? No, let me do it. Can I clean the shower? No, let me.

And people fill with the Spirit of God. Let's get on our face and pray and listen to worship. And that's why you come together.

But at home, they got this pleasure and I want this pleasure. And we fight because of the pleasures. Isn't that where most of the conflicts come from? Warring these pleasures, warring inside of us.

So that's the second cure for strife and conflict is to be filled mightily with the Holy Spirit and emptied of self. And the third reason, which I already talked about, is return to the marriage covenant. Return to the

marriage covenant.

Verse six. Well, actually, verse five. Let's talk about this.

First, James says, he gives us a strong rebuke. Do you not know that the friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever, therefore, wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain? In other words, he's being a little sarcastic here.

Do you think the Scripture just says in vain that the Spirit who dwells in us earnestly is jealous for us? So he's saying, is God just saying that? He's saying the Holy Spirit yearns for us. The Holy Spirit yearns jealousy. There's jealousy if God yearns for us.

I remember Oprah got mad and she left Christianity many years ago. She said, when I read in the Bible that God is a jealous God, I said, I'm done with that God. Really? Wouldn't a God want all of our affections? See, there's a good jealousy.

If God is jealous for us, if God is for us, and we cheat on God and go to the world, shouldn't He jealously yearn for us to come back? That's a good feeling that God wants our affections and wants our attention. The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously for God. So this Holy Spirit is in us.

He's yearning for more of God, but we have quenched and grieved the Spirit to such a degree that He's there yearning. I can picture this image I have, the Holy Spirit saying, come home, Shane, or come home, whoever, fill in the blank. Come home, I'm yearning, I'm jealous for you to have that relationship with God again.

I'm jealous for you to restore that commitment. So the Holy Spirit is yearning, then does God beat us up? No, verse six, but He gives more grace. He gives more grace.

Therefore, He says, God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble. See, we like to quote that scripture, but we forget in context, James is saying, God is resisting you if you're proud, if you're fulfilling the desires of the flesh, if you're cheating on God, He is resisting you. But when you turn back to God, you humble yourself, the grace of God floods in.

God loves us even though we've cheated on Him 1,000 times. What spouse in their right mind would take back another spouse that has cheated 1,000 times? I don't know about you, but after the first one, I'm like, I'm done. Thank you, I'm moving on.

Of course, that's not the heart of God, right? You work things out, but at some point, people ask me on this question a lot, and I say there's always hope for reconciliation or renewal, but if you've got a person, and I think what Jesus said, except for fornication, except for adultery, if there's a consistent pattern there of marital unfaithfulness, then the person has, according to Scripture, has the biblical okay, if you would, to divorce that spouse based on a consistent pattern of unfaithfulness. Not just one time, Jesus said except for adultery, except for fornication that breaks that marriage covenant. But God is constantly calling us back.

Come out of that lifestyle. Come out of it. Stop being with that lover of the world.

The world is that lover. Come out of that world. Come out of that mindset, and come back to Me.

I'm yearning for you. There's tons of grace. Would you just take that step? And what do we do? No.

No, I don't want to. I want to stay in this miserable world of the pleasures and have strife and conflict on a daily basis. So as we end tonight, let's think of that.

How much unmerited favor and grace has God given us? Because that's what the definition of grace is, unmerited favor and undeserved favor. It means God is favoring us and wanting us to come back. If you think of that for a minute, yes, Lord, I've been cheating on you spiritually.

I know it's maybe a funny concept, but that's what it is. That's what spiritual adultery is when you give your heart to idolatry, to an idol. Anything that you put before God and you love more than God is idolatry.

And God says, you've done that. I recognize that. Come back.

I give grace to the humble. So we have to end where we started. Be open, teachable, be humble.

Isn't that an amazing concept? We humble ourselves. God fills us with the Spirit and brings us back. We fall by the wayside.

We humble ourselves. God brings us back. We humble ourselves.

God brings us back. It's this process of God bringing and drawing us back. That's the cure for strife and conflict in your home.

That's the cure for strife and conflict in your life, in your workplace, is to humble yourself. And if you have strife and conflict in your workplace, humble yourself before God and say, God, you take care of this. I'm humbling myself.

And as you humble yourself, you become a person of love and joy and peace and goodness. And you change your work environment. You change your home environment because it's the Holy Spirit working through you.

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