

Epistle of James - Part 4

by John Hunter

The sermon emphasizes the importance of pleasing God and avoiding worldliness, highlighting the dangers of self-centeredness and the need for humility, submission, and purification.

Duration: 55:27

Scripture: John 4:20, John 13:17, James 4:1-3, James 4:5, James 4:11-17

Topics: "James"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on James chapter 4 and breaks it down into different sections. The sermon begins by discussing the conflicts and fights among people, attributing them to their own selfish desires. The preacher then emphasizes the importance of humility and warns against speaking against one another. Finally, the sermon concludes with a reflection on the brevity of life and the need to seek the will of the Lord in our plans and decisions. Throughout the sermon, the preacher references various scriptures, such as Job, to highlight the transient nature of life.

Transcript

Now James chapter 4. As usual we will break up the chapter. We break it up in reading so that we might more intelligently follow the flow of the writer's teaching as he moves from one thing to another. Chapter 4 verses 1 to 5, pleasing self or pleasing God or if you like worldliness, infidelity to God.

Then verses 6 to 10, the battle for humility, the battle for humility. Then verses 11 and 12, the sin of speaking against each other. Then finally verses 13 to 17, planning without permission, planning without permission.

Subtitle, the will of the Lord. Now back now please to verse 1. From whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence even of your own lust that war in your members? Ye lust and have not, ye kill and desire to have and cannot obtain. Ye fight and war and ye have not because ye ask not.

Ye ask and receive not because ye ask amiss that ye may consume it upon your lust. Ye adulteresses, critical translations leave out the word adulterer. Ye adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, the spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy? Pleasing self or pleasing God? Now verses 6 to 10, the battle for humility. But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith,

God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God and he will draw nigh to you.

Cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purify your hearts, ye double-minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness.

Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up. The battle for humility. Verses 11 and 12, the sin of speaking against each other, the sin of criticizing each other.

It reads like this. Speak not evil one of another brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law.

But if thou judgeth the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge. There is one lawgiver who is able to save and to destroy, who art thou that judgeth another. Now the final movement in the chapter, verses 13 to 17, planning without permission.

Go to now, ye that say, today or tomorrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy, and sell, and get gain. For as ye know not what shall be in the morrow, for what is your life? It is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, if the Lord will, we shall live, and do this or that.

But now ye rejoice in your boastings. All such rejoicing is evil. Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

Now back now, please, to the beginning. Pleasing self, or pleasing God. You will notice that he has before him infidelity to God, as you would turn to the world and that rejected Christ.

And we are going to see tonight that worldliness is an attitude of the soul. We finished last night in chapter 3. The harvest of righteousness is sown in conditions of peace by peacemakers. That of course links up with the wisdom that is from above is peaceable.

Blessed are the peacemakers. You see, brethren, when there is any trouble in your assembly, then you disqualify yourself to reconcile when you take sides. Once you take one side against another, you are disqualified from seeking to bring them together.

You make the situation worse for brethren who must ultimately handle it. That's why in Philippians 4 that Paul says, I beseech Jodeas and I beseech Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. He didn't take sides.

And wherever there's trouble, you're looking for a peacemaker. You're not looking for brethren who will create more trouble, who will make the distance greater and the separation worse. A peacemaker, because this is not peace at any price, it's wisdom from God.

The peacemaker will endeavor to maintain the unity of the assembly and not break it up. So as you close chapter 4, chapter 3, your minds are filled with peace. But when you enter chapter 4, it's war.

Now notice what he says, verse 1. From whence come wars and fighting among you? Now the war is the long protracted campaign. Against each other. The battle is the short skirmishes between each other.

He says, from whence come wars and fighting among you? The second question will answer the first in verse 1. It comes, it cometh not hence from the lusts, the desires that war in your members. In other words, all the troubles coming from inside. Now I've been speaking to you an odd time now and again.

I don't know whether you care for it or not, on Bible psychology. Now here you have good sound psychology. All the trouble came from inside.

If you're at war with yourself, you're at war with everybody else. If you're not at peace inside, you're not at peace outside. And we're going to see that this kind of inward condition will not only affect relations with the brethren, it'll affect your relations with God.

So take care, please, about your inward condition. Here they were. And when you come to chapter 2, it's all out in the open.

Notice what he says. You might think it's severe language. Ye lust, and have not.

Ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain. Ye fight, and ye war. Now he's not talking about literal killing.

He's talking about this, that if you hate your brother, you're a murderer. That's what he's talking about. Now just let it sink in.

And he's indicating this, that because of your inward condition, you're creating havoc all over the place. And here he sees the Christians at war with each other. Wars, battles, feuds, vendettas.

Collisions, explosions, confrontation. And all they're doing is ruining themselves without a peacemaker. And James takes us inside.

He said it's all coming because you're disturbed inside. Because you're not at peace with yourself. You're not at peace with anybody else.

And you're not even at peace with God. You're not enjoying it. You'll notice in verse 3 that it affects the prayer life.

It enters, so to speak, the sanctuary of God. You ask, you receive not. Because you ask wrongly to consume it upon your lusts, your pleasures.

You see, worldliness is self-centeredness. If you're self-centered, then you're worldly. If self reigns instead of Christ, you're worldly.

And all you'll do is create a lot of trouble. You see, this is it, isn't it? And even when you go into the sacred presence of the eternal, all you're wanting is things to minister to yourself. Like holy willy, it's only I and me and mine.

You think nothing else existed. Terrible condition, isn't it? You're either pleasing yourself or you're pleasing God. That's why in verse 4 he says ye adulteresses.

Now, an adulteress is one who breaks the sacred covenant. In the Old Testament, God talked about his people. As adulteress, because that they turned away from God to the world around them.

And so it is that as soon as you begin to go in for the things of the world, then you have turned away from God. It is the broken covenant. It's the broken vows.

It is broken harmony. It is broken fellowship. I want you to understand that very often in your New Testament, the world is the evil system that's all around us.

A system that was begun and is upheld by Satan. And of course, once you turn to the worldly thing, you're turning too to worldly people. For it's the people that sustain the system.

Now, this is very real. So that you find yourself in amongst those who are at enmity with God. You see, the world attracts.

Isn't that right? Say, listen, what you turn to when you're alone is your problem. Well, that's just the thing that will trip you up. Remember, what would trip you up would never trip me up.

What would trip me up would never trip you up. Clear? And it could be the most innocent of things that could begin it all. I think of a brother I once knew.

Very active in the assembly, big Bible class, did quite a bit of gospel preaching and was blessed. And suddenly, at least it came suddenly, the edge went off. He began to be irregular at the meetings.

Then he gave up the preaching. Then he surrendered his Bible class. And ultimately, he took his elder son with him.

They left the assembly. And ultimately, they both died away from God and the assembly. Do you know what the root of the trouble was? Fishing.

Fishing. There's nothing sinful in fishing. But that brother never learned that others could fish, but he couldn't.

It so mastered him. Isn't that right? You've known them and they've turned to the world. It could be gambling, drink, drugs, vice.

You listening? Sport. Well, I've been amazed ever since I came to Canada with younger brethren immersed in, what do you call it, baseball? These are the things that are gnawing at the very vitals of our Christianity. In embracing it, in becoming immersed in it, you've turned away from the God that loved you and the Christ that died and sacrificed his all for you.

You see, worldliness is an attitude of soul. Its gaze is horizontal, not vertical. Its motto is forward, not upward.

Its goal is success, not holiness. It becomes destitute of reverence. It never hears the mystic voice.

It never bows in rapt wonder in the sanctuary of God. It has ambitions, but no aspirations. Want, but no hunger.

Desires, but no supplications. And bit by bit, it will eat in. It will destroy you.

It will take away your love for the word of God. It will take away the time that you used to spend in prayer. It will retard your spiritual growth.

It will spoil your spiritual experience. It will ruin your spiritual influence. Oh, this is the tragedy amongst us, brethren.

The tragedy of what a man is. And what he might have been. Ye adulteresses, ye renegades to your vows.

Oh, what strong language, eh? As he depicts them turning away. Look, please, at verse five, will you? Now, I'm not going to go into all the difficulties about the text. It's one of the most difficult verses in the Epistle of James.

And you only need to look at the different translations to see the problems that the translators have had. I would prefer the rendering of the revised version, Darby, and some critical translations that make verse five two questions. Do you think that the scripture speaks in vain? That is, about worldliness and turning away from God and the ultimate price to be paid? Secondly, do you think that the spirit, capital S, that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy? As you've seen in the earlier verses, the answer is no.

So what he's saying is this. That worldliness is anti-God. That worldliness is against the scriptures.

That worldliness is contrary to the indwelling spirit. Have you got that? Now, one thing more. Listen to this.

Galatians chapter one, verse four. You remember that Paul tells us that yonder upon the cross, when the Lord Jesus died, it says that he gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of God our Father. Now, did you get that? That on the cross, he not only died for your sins, but he died to separate and deliver you from this present evil age.

Now, that's it. It's an evil world. There's evil men and women in it.

It's full of evil things. And when Christ died on the cross, he died to separate you from it forever. So that, so that.

When you turn and you begin to feel the appeal of the world, isn't that right? You younger converts, some of you older folks do, but you younger converts, you know there comes a time when the old world begins to appeal. It's very strong. Now, as you turn toward it, you'll face the cross.

To go back to the world, you'll need to pass the cross. You'll need to betray Christ. Every worldly, oh I know, I know it's a paradox.

It shouldn't be. Every worldly Christian, every backslider, is telling everyone that they are now prepared to live without God and Christ. You're telling them that the world satisfies you better than the Lord.

Like that. Now, now get it through. It's anti-God.

It's anti-Scripture. It's anti-Spirit. It's anti-Christ.

Now beware. It's possible to live in this world and walk through it as a stranger and pilgrim, and walk through it as if the whole world were the temple of God. Because you carry in your soul a sense of the presence of the Lord.

It's a big thing. You can always tell when you meet people. There's just that something about them that tells you that they walk with God.

The pleasing God and not self. Now verses six to ten, the battle for humility. See, isn't it remarkable how verse six opens? After all this, he says this, he giveth more grace.

Now listen, brethren and sisters, maybe you've been turning away. Isn't that right? Maybe the world's getting into your heart and into your life and into your home. Remember this, that there's always hope for God will give more grace.

And he'll give you grace if in the end that you submit yourselves to God. Now, please, those of you who read carefully will have noted that there are ten imperatives between verse six and ten. Ten imperatives between verse seven and ten.

Now watch now, please. Verse seven, submission. Got that? Verse eight, purification.

Verse nine, repentance. Verses six and ten, humility. I want to ask you something.

When last did you in a ministry meeting hear a call for purification and repentance? Oh, you say that's for sinners. No, it's not. It's for you.

Because the background is those who have turned away from God to the world. That's not sinners. Come again.

Listen, God will give grace. I want, listen, please, God's for you. You're breaking his heart if you're getting away.

God feels it. Wherefore, he saith, God resisteth the proud, but he giveth grace to the humble. Isn't that wonderful? God resisteth the proud, the proud person that does not realize their own sin.

The proud person that's not conscious of their own desire for personal glory. God resisteth the proud, but he giveth grace to the humble. But you'll need to humble yourself to receive the grace.

You'll need to get down. That's it. Oh, brethren, let me repeat it.

This will be about the third time. Since I've come. Remember this.

We'll need to learn that to be exalted, we'll need to be humble. To go up, we'll need to go down. To win, we'll need to lose.

To triumph, it's seeming defeat. That's Calvary. The greatest triumph in the universe.

Say, face up to the cross in all its practical implications and humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God. God's interested in you. Come again.

Verse seven. Submit yourselves to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Now, notice, please, how it's put. We're going to see that it's put in an unusual way down the passage. You must submit to God to have strength to resist the devil.

Now, notice God and the devil are placed together. Now, right? Now, you would believe in God, wouldn't you? Oh, you say, sure. You believe in the devil? Oh, yes.

Right, now. You've met with God, haven't you? That's right. Have you met the devil? Now, watch now.

You submit to God. That's right. You're down low.

Lord, you know my heart. You know that deep down I long to be better and bigger and greater. Long to please thee constantly is the cry of all our hearts.

I'm praying for you, making it personal, just so. Watch. You submit to God, but you resist the devil.

That means the devil comes to you, and you resist him. And he flees from you, for if he finds in you the elements of submission to God, he's baffled. That's contrary to human nature.

So you'll meet him. I don't know whether you would know much about it or not. I could take you to places where I've met the devil.

I don't know how real your experience is in this business. We parted as we met, sworn enemies. I don't like the devil, and he doesn't like me.

But if you submit to God, you'll get strength to resist, to find that you have victory and triumph over the devil. Now, I'm not trying to boast to you when I'm talking like that. I'm deeply conscious that the devil's listening, or one of his demons.

The devil's not omnipresent, as I was saying at one of the Bible readings. But he has a vast network in which everything is reported by his thousands of demons. It will be reported back.

There possibly will be an attack shortly, but don't you worry about that. So he says, resist the devil, and he will free from you. Now look at verse 8. Draw an eye to God, and he will draw an eye to you.

But you see, we think it should say, we think it should say, God, the Lord will draw an eye to us, so we'll be able to draw an eye to him. Oh, no. Oh, no.

In this business of preserving yourself, the onus lies with you. You must draw an eye to God to realize the presence of God, that he will draw an eye to you. Got that? Now stop for a moment, please.

Tell me about your prayer life, would you? Would you pray as much as you used to do? Oh, isn't this the danger? As we grow older and more experienced, we become more sophisticated. We can pass ourselves nearly in any company. Somehow we don't feel the drain upon our spiritual resources.

Now listen, draw an eye to God. Take time, take time to get alone with God, to find that the Lord will draw an eye to you. Listen now, purification.

Cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purify your hearts, ye double-minded. Now that's interesting, that that should come in in a context of drawing an eye to God, that you cleanse your hands and purify your hearts. Come on now, brother.

Come on now. Psalm 24. Who will ascend the hill of the Lord? Who will draw an eye to God? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart.

Cleanse your hands and purify your heart. Your hands are the outward thing. The things that you touch every day.

Your life outwardly. Your heart is the sanctuary of your being inwardly. So he says, cleanse your hands and purify your hearts.

Oh, for this cleansing process. You know, I've spoken about this cleansing purification. One day I heard that quite a good friend of mine had a terminal illness.

And on my way south, he lived in England. On my way south, I phoned and said I would look in a few hours. I went in and he was propped up in bed.

He was quite conscious that he had only a few days to live. So, well, you say, what do you say? I mean, he told me that it wouldn't be long now. It wouldn't be long now, Jackie said.

Well, I said, listen, I want to talk to you about heaven and meeting Christ. Meeting all the saints. I wanted to strengthen his faith.

I don't say it was weak, but I wanted to strengthen. After all, that's our business in life is to get alongside people who are dying, subject to Satan's temptations and seek to strengthen their faith. So for a time, I talked to him about the Lord.

Seeing Christ and heaven and all the saints. Then he said to me, you know, Jack, do you remember the occasion? And he mentioned a certain occasion when there was some trouble. I said, I do.

And he said, I left the assembly. That's right. He says, I made a mistake.

I said, I know you did. Now, he said, out of that, there were certain things outstanding. And he said this morning, I have had it out with the Lord.

I've made my confession to the Lord. I can't now make it to the brother concerned. But he says, I've had it out with Christ.

I've told him all about it. I've told him how completely wrong I was and everything. And then he said this.

I never had that before. He said, you know, Jack, I feel cleansed. Inside, purify your heart.

He double minded. I feel cleansed inside. That was a very sacred meeting.

I would seldom speak about it. It was very intimate to him. I wouldn't know if he even told his wife.

Verse nine, he calls for repentance, be afflicted and mourn and weep. Get down before God and tell him at all. Afflict your soul.

You're mourning because you've let the Lord down. You may be weeping. Tell me, tell me, do you carry a ministry of tears? Come on, brothers and sisters.

Are you that hard? Has there never been a time when, in the presence of the Lord, you have so felt things that you found the tears beginning to flow? You know, I can remember a wee early meetings at breaking of bread when brethren would be shedding tears at the table. That's right. Now, now, now, if a little touch comes into your voice, they're saying he's getting sentimental.

He's getting old. Have you ever wept before the Lord? He says here, it's in that context that he says, let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to heaviness. All that, all that superficial gaiety of the world that you've been going in for, turn away from it.

That's 10 humble yourselves, get down, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God and he shall lift you up. We kneel. I know there's different postures in prayer.

I like, I like the Eastern idea. You know, when you read of them that they prostrated themselves before the Lord. Have you ever lain in the ground before God? Well, I don't know if I should be talking about the intimate things of my prayer life.

Maybe I'm wrong. Have you ever lain before God? And allowed the light of the sanctuary to play upon you. Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God and he'll lift you up.

Brethren, there's a price to be paid for it all. This sacred communion, this holy intimacy with God. Come now, please, to verses 11 and 12.

Those of you who were present on Lord's Day afternoon at the ministry meeting at the conference will remember that I dealt with this passage. By the way, I saw our good brother up there putting a notice up about all the cassettes of the conference are available, the whole notice board there. But you will remember that when I was trying to bring before you the things that would damage the fellowship, I spoke to you in these verses.

Speak not against one another. Do you remember I drew your attention that it was a blanket statement? You don't do it. Oh, brethren, I'm happy.

I'm happy to know that I don't need to speak against my brother. I don't need to speak evil against him. I'm absolved from it.

You say, but what if it's true? I'm still absolved from it. Absolved from speaking against him. If I have anything against him, I can go and speak to him.

But I'm absolved from speaking against him. That's wonderful, isn't it? Speak. Speak not.

Brethren, it's incompatible with the brotherhood. It destroys the brotherhood when you start to talk against each other. And as I said to you, this is the backbiting that you read about in your Old Testament.

That's connected with whispering. When you gather in little companies and you talk to each other about somebody that's not there and you're pulling them down. I once went to an assembly.

Wasn't very long there till I became aware that the home that I was in and the folks that frequented it, they were constantly criticizing everybody else in the meeting. But what disturbed me more was this. They were quite unaware of it.

It was so normal that they had no conscience about it until I raised it. You're not getting like that, are you? There's no good in anybody or anything. And everybody else is wrong.

Oh, I'm thankful I'm cleared of that. Speak not evil. Brethren, he that speaketh evil of his brother and judgeth his brother speaketh against the law and judgeth the law.

He sets himself above it. But there's only one lawgiver who has a right to be above the law and modify it if he wishes. Who's that? God.

Oh, how devastating this is. Who art thou that judgest another? Who do you think you are? As if you were perfect. There's a day of account coming for brethren and sisters who insist on speaking their mind no matter who they injure, no matter who they wound.

God will have it out with you one day. You are judging the royal law. Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

We don't want to hear this because we don't want to love certain brethren. John says, if you hate them, you're not saved. So you can make your choice.

Now, take it to heart, brethren, won't you? Finally, please, come to 13 to 17. The most interesting passage. I called it planning without permission.

The will of the Lord. Now, look at it, will you please? Verse 13, the presumption of man. Today or tomorrow, we'll go to such and place, trade and get gain.

The presumption of man. Verse 14, the brevity of life. What is your life? It is even or year of vapour, if you like.

Verse 14, the brevity of life. Verse 15, the will of the Lord. You ought to say, if the Lord will.

Got that? Verse 13, go to now ye that say. Verse 15, for ye ought to say. Verse 15, the will of the Lord.

Verse 16, arrogant boasting. You rejoice in your boasting. Verse 17, the sin of omission.

Know to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin. Not the sin of commission, the sin of omission. So you have the presumption of man, the brevity of life, the will of the Lord, arrogant boasting, the sin of omission.

Or if you like, verse 13, the proposition. Verse 14, the definition. What is your life? It is a vapour.

Verse 15, the explanation ye ought to say. Verse 16, the observation. You are marked by arrogant boasting.

Verse 17, the conclusion, guilty of the sin of omission. Back now to verse 13. Interesting, isn't it? You have a company of business executives gathered around the table with a map in front of them.

And they are organising a coming business trip. Is that right? Now you will notice, please, won't you, that they have chosen the date very approximately today or tomorrow. You will notice that they have chosen the venue, the city, the destination.

We will go to such a city. You will notice that they have decided that the trade mission will last a year. Continue for a year.

You will notice that they have decided on the form of trading. They're going to buy and sell. And you will notice, please, that they have worked out the profit margin yet again.

That's quite up to date, isn't it? Quite up to date. Now, what I want to draw your attention now to is this presumption, this idea of the presumption of life, that they'll be alive tomorrow and for a year. I want you to notice, please, the inherent power of choice.

They'll choose today or this day or that day. They'll choose the city. They'll choose how long they'll stay.

Oh, yes. You see, you see, the position is that we don't know about tomorrow. Isn't that right? And we don't know about a year hence.

And it can happen so suddenly. Phone call this morning to tell me that a brother and sister that I stayed with in Aberdeen at the New Year, that the son and son-in-law, both married, went out on a motorbike and both killed. Just like that.

We heard tonight about some brother down in Langley, was it? Linden. Killed suddenly. I've forgotten the name.

Jim? Midsfelt. Jim Midsfelt may be known to some of you. You see, here it is, this presumption of man.

With us all. It's so easy, isn't it? Planning without permission. Whereas you ought to say.

Sorry, verse 14, whereas you know not. Now, Mark, please. Ignorance.

You know not what shall be on the morrow. What is your life? It's a vapour. Transient.

Just a little whiff and it'll be gone. The brevity of life. Isn't the Bible full of this? Now, please, just to show you.

Let me draw a number of scriptures together to show you just how the Bible views things. You take the book of Job, chapter 7, verse 6. My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle. Verse 7 of the same chapter, my life is wind.

Verse 9, as the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away. Job 7. Job 9, verse 25, my days are swifter than a post. Chapter 20, verse 8, he shall fly away as a dream.

The psalmist joins Job. The psalmist says, Psalm 39, verse 5, my days are a hand breath. Psalm 90, verse 9, we spend our days, our days as a tale that is told.

Psalm 102, verse 3, my days are consumed like smoke. Verse 11, my days are like a shadow that decline. Psalm 103, verse 15, as for man, his days are as grass.

Says Isaiah, remove like a shepherd's tent. One day, a farmer so successful says, the produce is greater than the granaries to hold it. I will pull down my barns and I will build greater.

And I will say to my soul, take thy knees, eat, drink, and be merry. Full, full, this night thy soul shall be required of thee. The brevity of life.

For that ye ought to say, if the Lord will. Now you're getting in perspective. There's nothing wrong in planning.

That's clear. Ask any businessman, he's got to plan. There's nothing wrong in planning.

It's when you begin to leave God out of the reckoning. Now, right. You're all right too, of course, on the whole.

If you in partnership with Christians as you ought to be, then surely in God's name, the fear of God will be on them all. And they'll make their plans if the Lord will. But if you're sitting down with a lot of ungodly men, and in partnership with them, an unequal yoke, then of course you don't expect them to take into

consideration the will of God.

If the Lord will, we shall live and do this or that. Come again. That's 16.

But now you rejoice in your boasting. All such rejoicing is evil. I'm interested in the word boasting.

You see, here they were. And they were talking about this mission as if it was all sealed and secure. Nothing could happen.

Go on its way successfully, says he. Oh, no. You are presuming to possess what you have not got.

The power to live. Beyond the decree of the eternal. The word boasting is taken from a word that has to do with a quack doctor.

A person who claims for his cure the qualities it doesn't possess. He's boasting. He's the con man.

All right. Maybe you've heard me tell this before. I didn't always reside in Kilmarnock.

I used to reside in a little town called Coatbridge, just two miles from Airdrie, where our brother Lackey comes from. I can remember when I was a little boy, I was going to say a little nipper, you know, a little boy. And right in the center of our town, there was a fountain.

And if you were going to meet anyone, they would say, I'll meet you at the fountain. Six o'clock, seven, eight or whatever it was. Well, you know.

Every Friday evening, there came to the fountain a colored gentleman. Now in those days, a colored person would stand out. We hadn't so many of them.

Not so many either. Still up that way. And this colored gentleman would arrive there, and the crowd was always there.

And he would stand there in the ring, and he would hold up a little bottle. He called it Blu-ray. Blu-ray.

And he would begin to tell us all the qualities of Blu-ray. It was quite unbelievable. It could cure anything from corns to cancer.

How the medical profession never got to know about it, I'll never know. And there he would stand, and he would say, I'm not here today and gone tomorrow. I'm gone the same night.

I'll be back next week. And sure enough, he was Blu-ray. Now, he was the first con man ever I met.

I didn't know he was a con man then, of course, just being a little fellow. But then you get it, don't you? The politician that tells you that his party alone can bring in the utopia, and he of all men, born of women, is fit to be a leader. The advertisements for beauty.

Just you take this lotion and something else, and well, before you know, nature will be reversed. You got it. What is it? Well, it's just claiming, claiming for their product or system what is on the whole not true.

This is it. And the writer says that when we begin to make our plans, don't forget the Lord. It's not that you casually say if the Lord will.

It means that you live your life. That whatever you're planning, you are conscious that it lies in the hands of God. That man proposes, God disposes.

Got the idea? Finally, please. To him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin. What's that? It's the sin of omission.

Wouldn't this be true? So many things we do do. So many things we omit to do. The sin of omission.

Let me say again what I've said a few times here, that James bases a great deal of his teaching on the Good Samaritan. Now tell me, now tell me, wherein lay the sin of the priest and Levi? It was a sin of omission. Is that right? Oh, brethren, the tragedy of religion.

These men, these men could have justified leaving the man to die. Now right, the sin of omission. Inasmuch as you did it not.

The rich man in Lazarus, the sin of omission. He used his wealth to shield himself from his less fortunate brother. Come with me.

You remember the assize we call the judgment of the living nations? Listen. To those who will ultimately be judged, the goats. What does he say? I was in hunger and you gave me no meat.

I was thirsty and you gave me no drink. I was a stranger and you took me not in. Naked and you clothed me.

Clothed me not. Sick and in prison and you visited me not. Lord, when did we see you hungry? Or naked? Or a stranger? Sick or in prison? Inasmuch as you did it not unto one of the least of these, my brethren, you did it not to me.

And in every situation that you meet in life, in that situation that you meet Christ. Is that what he's teaching? And you have the opportunity in Christ's name to do something. The sin of omission.

You did it not. Just as to the others he said. When they said, when did we see you a stranger and take you in? When did we see you sick or in prison and came to you? Inasmuch as you did it unto one of the least of these, my brethren.

Oh brethren, we're here. You're listening to me. We're here to minister to each other.

We're here to help each other. We're here in Christ's name to bless each other. Solemnly tonight in the presence of God.

I give you my word of honor. Brethren and sisters, I'll never damage you. I'll never wound you up.

I'll never damage the work of God in your soul. I promise you. I may hurt you at times.

I may wound you. As a friend. But I'll never damage the work of God in your soul.

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