
Sermon Series: Book of James 11/7/2015**Title: Facing The Enemy****Sermon Text: James 4:1-7**

Big Idea: It was a Sunday morning like every other Sunday morning gone by. People were getting ready for a day of relaxation, getting ready for church or just sleeping in. Then the unthinkable happen! At 7:55 A.M. December 7, 1941 the residents Honolulu Hawaii and particularly Pearl Harbor Naval base were awoken to the sites and sound of aircraft from the nation of Japan attacking Naval ships anchored in the bay of Pearl.

Japan had been engaged in peace talks with the United State while making and implementing plans to destroy this strategic military installation in in the Pacific Ocean. There have been many explication why this was allowed to happen but, it is my opinion that the failure of our leaders in the U.S. to recognize the potential danger presented by Japan.

This morning James writes in Chapter 4, points out three dangers we must recognize and protect ourselves from. In verses 1-3 James we must (1) "Face the Enemy of the Flesh", (2) We must "Face the Danger of the World" and (3) We must "Face the Devil". Our failure to can and will result in our destruction. A Christian must recognize, and face the lion that is trying to destroy us and resist him and James states that the enemy will flee from us.

Text Illustration: FACING DOWN A MOUNTAIN LION

Did you know that in the United States, mountain lions are the number one predator of human beings? So says author and naturalist, Craig Childs. On one occasion, he was doing research on the lions in Arizona's Blue Range Wilderness. As he approached a water hole from downwind, he spotted a mountain lion drinking water, but the lion did not know he was there. When it finished drinking, it walked slowly away into a cluster of junipers.

After a few minutes, Childs walked to the water hole to identify tracks in the mud and record notes. Just before he bent down to look closer, he scanned the perimeter, and there among the shadows of the junipers, 30 feet away, he saw a pair of eyes. He expected the lion to run away, but it walked into the sunlight toward him. Childs pulled his knife and stared into the eyes of the lion. He knew what he had to do. More importantly, he also knew what he must not do. He writes:

"Mountain lions are known to take down animals six, seven, and eight times their size. Their method: attack from behind, clamp onto the spine at the base of the prey's skull, and snap the spine. The top few vertebrae are the target, housing respiratory and motor skills that cease instantly when the cord is cut...Mountain lions have stalked people for

miles. One woman survived an attack and escaped by foot on a road. The lion shortcut the road several miles farther and killed her from behind..."

About the incident in Arizona's Blue Ranger Wilderness, Childs says, "I hold firm to my ground and do not even intimate that I will back off. If I run, it is certain. I will have a mountain lion all over me. If I give it my back, I will only briefly feel its weight on me against the ground. The canine teeth will open my vertebrae without breaking a single bone..."

"The mountain lion begins to move to my left, and I turn, keeping my face on it, my knife at my right side. It paces to my right, trying to get around on my other side, to get behind me. I turn right, staring at it...My stare is about the only defense I have." The amazing thing is Childs actually maintained that defense as the mountain lion continued to try to provoke him to run, turning left, then right, back and forth again and again, until it came to just ten feet away. Finally, the standoff ended. The lion turned and walked away – defeated by a man who knew what never to do in its presence.

(Craig Childs, *the Animal Dialogues*, New York: Little, Brown and Co., 2007. From a sermon by C. Philip Green, *The Way to Glory*, 8/13/2011)

Read Sermon Text

James 4:1-7 <Pride Promotes Strife>

4 Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? 2 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. 3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures. 4 Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. 5 Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, "The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously"?

6 But He gives more grace. Therefore He says:
"God resists the proud,
But gives grace to the humble."
Humility Cures Worldliness

7 Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. NKJV

1. "Face the Enemy of the Flesh" (vs. 1-3)

James 4:1-3 Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? 2 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. 3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures. NKJV

- a. James asked where do wars and fights originate and then he provides this answer. He points out that in James 3:15 that a Christian is in a spiritual warfare with Satan.

James 3:15 This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. NKJV

- b. He notes that these conflicts exist as a result of the flesh and desire to control our spiritual lives. Eph 2:1-3 identifies the source of the conflict when we were “sons of disobedience” (v.2). the time when we walked in the world and had but one purpose in our live and that was to attempt to satisfy the desires of the flesh and the mind. Therefore, Paul writes that we are dead I n our trespasses and sins.

Ephesians 2:1-3 And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, 2 in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, 3 among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. NKJV

- c. Conflict comes when we are in direct position to God and His Word. This is not say that all thing in the world are wrong or bad but mw must recognize the danger and failure to do so will lead to conflict. Keep in mind that the body is not sinful the body was created by God but it is the sinful nature that can take control of the flesh and lead us into destruction.
- d. Paul warns us not to let sin take control of our mortal body, the result will be that sin will dominate our lives and that dominion and the end result will lead us to destruction.

Rom 6:12-14 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. 13 And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. 14 For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace. NKJV

- e. Galatians describes what a canal Christian looks like and the results of living in the world. Warren Wiersbe writes: In v. 2 James describes these believers' sinful actions: they desire, they kill to obtain (see Gal 5:15), and

they do not stop to pray about their desires. And, when they do pray, they pray selfishly that they might enlarge their pleasures, not glorify God. The flesh' can even encourage a person to pray! Of course, when a believer is at war with himself, it is not likely that he can have peace with others.

(from Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the New Testament. Copyright © 1992 by Chariot Victor Publishing, an imprint of Cook Communication Ministries. All rights reserved.)

Galatians 5:15 But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!

- f. In verse 2 and 3 James points out the reason we are lacking in our lives. He states "...Yet you do not have because you do not ask. 3 You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures." The problem is that we are lacking because we don't ask and when we do ask we ask for the wrong things and we waste what we receive on our own selfish desires.

i. Consider the Prodigal son!

Luke 15:13 And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living. NKJV

Luke 16:1 The Parable of the Unjust Steward

16 He also said to His disciples: "There was a certain rich man who had a steward, and an accusation was brought to him that this man was wasting his goods. NKJV

g.

2. "Face the Danger of the World" (vs.4-5)

James 4:4-5 Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. 5 Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, "The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously"? NKJV

- a. In verse 4 James refers to Christians who are living lives of "Spiritual Adultery". Paul softens this term somewhat by stating that Christians who are living in the world as carnal. Or living in the flesh and identifying as a Christian. In the Old Testament God illustrated Israel's failure to live for God as "adultery". There are many in the world today who profess Christ but are denying Him with their lives. This denial makes us an enemy of God according to James. When the Spirit indwells our lives we will have a desire of a closer walk with Jesus and to do that we must avoid the darkness of this world.

- b. 1 John 1:7 states it this way “But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. “NKJV

Rom 7:14 For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin. NKJV

Rom 8:7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. NKJV

1 Cor 3:1 And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. NKJV

1 Cor 3:3 for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men? NKJV

1 Cor 3:3 for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men? NKJV

2 Cor 10:4 For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, NKJV

3. “Face the Devil” (vs. 6-7)

James 4:6-7 But He gives more grace. Therefore He says:

"God resists the proud,
But gives grace to the humble."

Humility Cures Worldliness

7 Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. NKJV

- a. In the television series “Star Trek” the Star Enterprise encounters and enemy called the “Borg” who’s primary objective is to make Enterprise crew one of them. They are told to stand down and prepare to be assimilated. The Borg then make this statement “resistance is futile”. That is exactly what the devil wants us to believe that resistance of futile and we can’t overcome so why attempt the impossible. But with God all things are possible. James gives us a plan for success. This plan goes like this!
Step 1 Resist Pride and God gives us the grace to take the next step.
Step 2 Humble ourselves and recognize we can’t win on our own we must turn to God for help.
Step 3 Resist the devil and Satan will flee from us.

When we take these steps God will enable us to effectively defend ourselves against the attacks of the devil. The person who is unwilling to turn to God cannot be helped by God. Pride does not foster humility, and with our humility we cannot resist Satan and if we cannot and do not resist him we will die in our sins. God's grace is for the lowly not the lofty, we must first submit and in submission we will win.

Text Illustration: "WHO LIVES HERE?"

Martin Luther was often very graphic in his description of the activities of the Devil. Asked one time how he overcame the Devil, he replied, "Well, when he comes knocking upon the door of my heart, and asks, 'Who lives here?' the dear Lord Jesus goes to the door and says, 'Martin Luther used to live here but he has moved out. Now I live here.' The Devil seeing the nail-prints in the hands and the pierced side, takes flight immediately."

It is surely good for every life and for every home to have Jesus as a permanent resident. This assured, heavenly blessing are sure to fall upon such bodies. (From a sermon by Bill Butsko, God's Infinite Love, 12/25/2010)