

TRUTH THAT STANDS THE TEST OF TIME

Part 2: Strife Creates Confusion

June 14, 2020

Discussion Question: How have you seen envy and strife destroy friendships/family? What wisdom do you need today to navigate this season of life?

INTRODUCTION:

Prov 12:19 – 20 *“Truth stands the test of time; lies are soon exposed. 20 Deceit fills hearts that are plotting for evil; joy fills hearts that are planning for good!”* [TLB]

Part 1: God is Faithful

2 Tim 2:11-13 *“The saying is trustworthy (faithful saying),... 13 if we are faithless, he remains faithful— for he cannot deny himself.”* [ESV]

TODAY: Strife Creates Confusion

James 3:10-16 *“Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. 11 Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter? 12 Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh. 13 Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. 14 But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. 15 This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. 16 For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.”* [KJV]

The first time we see strife in the Bible is the contention between Abraham & Lot’s family over what they own. Both are blessed abundantly, but they are contending over their herds that God has blessed them with.

Isn’t that amazing; contending over what God has blessed us with.

- Prov 15:18 *“A hot-tempered man stirs up strife...”* [ESV]
- Prov 16:28 *“A dishonest man spreads strife, and a whisperer separates close friends.”* [ESV]
- Prov 17:19 *“Whoever loves transgression loves strife...”* [ESV]

Strife & envy divide family & friends. All of this strife is not making us better but making us bitter! vs. 14 *“But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.”*

Note that James cuts thru all the discussion and goes right to the heart of the matter: vs. 15 *“This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish.”*

What we are seeing is not wisdom that proceeds from God but things that proceed from the Kingdom of Darkness!

- The police with his knee on George Floyd was not wisdom from God.
- The reaction in Seattle, taking over a community is not wisdom.

Look at two words:

Envy is the feeling of displeasure produced by witnessing or hearing of the advantage or prosperity of others

- Difference in envy & jealousy: envy desires to deprive another of what he has; jealousy desires to have the same sort of thing as another person has
- Envy here implies an envious and contentious rivalry; it denotes a fierce desire to promote one's own ideas and convictions to the exclusion of everyone else.
- Zealot comes from this word; describes a person who is so fixated, obsessed and fanatical about their own cause at the exclusion of any other opinion or cause. They are extremist and militant

Strife represents **a struggle; contention**

These two leads to confusion and every evil work.

Know the difference in striving for good verses strife as contention. MLK & Civil Rights Leaders lead a revolution striving for equal access. Their agenda was not to deprive others of what they had but simply ask that America live up to their statements of equality
Today we have thousands of agendas competing with each other creating chaos. These competing agendas are nothing more than selfish ambition, driven by envy for what someone else has and they create the desire to take it no matter what.
Eventually, envy and strife require us to hurt someone else to get what we desire.

In this season we are seeing different groups promoting their own ideas yet trying to cooperate for some unknown end game.

1 Cor 15:33 *"Do not be deceived: 'Bad company corrupts good morals.'"* [NASU] : [KJV states evil communications] : [Message, Don't fool yourselves. Don't let yourselves be poisoned.]

- People aligning themselves with groups that do not reflect Godly values

But the truth is that confusion and every evil work is there because they are all full of envy and strife. Truth: where there is envy and strife there is confusion and every evil work.

But there is another truth that offsets this confusion and evil work. Wisdom from above!

James 3:17-18 *"But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. 18 And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace."* [KJV]

1. The Value of Wisdom

More valuable than riches, education, popularity or ambitious. It is from above

2. The Verification of Wisdom

Verification is the process of establishing the truth, accuracy or validity of something.

The evidence that provides proof of an assertion. Confirmatory evidence

Here is the Confirmatory evidence: is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy

3. The Victory of Wisdom

It always produces peace