

8. TRUSTING GOD

REFLECTION

Begin your study by sharing thoughts on this question.

1. Would you change the way you are living if you could see your future? Why or why not?

BIBLE READING

Read James 4:1–10 from the NCV or the NKJV.

NCV

¹Do you know where your fights and arguments come from? They come from the selfish desires that war within you. ²You want things, but you do not have them. So you are ready to kill and are jealous of other people, but you still cannot get what you want. So you argue and fight. You do not get what you want, because you do not ask God. ³Or when you ask, you do not receive because the reason you ask is wrong. You want things so you can use them for your own pleasures.

⁴So, you are not loyal to God! You should know that loving the world is the same as hating God. Anyone who wants to be a friend of the world becomes God's enemy. ⁵Do you think the Scripture means nothing that says, "The Spirit that God made to live in us wants us for himself alone." ⁶But God gives us even more grace, as the Scripture says,

"God is against the proud,
but he gives grace to the humble."

⁷So give yourselves completely to God. Stand against the devil, and the devil will run from you. ⁸Come near to God, and God will come near to you. You sinners, clean sin

NKJV

¹Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? ²You 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. ³You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures. ⁴Adulterers 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. ⁵Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, "The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously"?

⁶But He gives more grace. Therefore He says:

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

⁷Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. ⁸Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. ⁹Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be

out of your lives. You who are trying to follow God and the world at the same time, make your thinking pure. ⁹Be sad, cry, and weep! Change your laughter into crying and your joy into sadness. ¹⁰Don't be too proud in the Lord's presence, and he will make you great.

DISCOVERY

Explore the Bible reading by discussing these questions.

2. What does the Bible mean when it says a war is waging inside of us?
3. What happens when we stand against the devil?
4. How can we stand against the devil?
5. What promise is given to those who draw near to God?
6. Why should people humble themselves before God?
7. Why can we trust God's will for our lives?
8. How can people know whether they are following God's will?
9. When have you been convinced that you knew God's will for you? What convinced you?

PRAYER

Father, help us renew our commitment to you—to release all that we have and all that we are to you. We long to give ourselves completely to you so that we might know the freedom available to us only through your grace.

JOURNALING

Take a few moments to record your personal insights from this lesson.

How am I living my life to demonstrate my trust in God?

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

10. List areas of your life that are difficult for you to turn over to God's control.

11. What truth in this lesson encourages you to trust God more fully?

12. What steps can you take to release every part of your life to God?

For more Bible passages on trusting God, see Psalms 62:8; 143:8; Proverbs 29:25; Isaiah 25:9; Nahum 1:7; Romans 10:11.