

Series: The Peril of Praying

YE ASK AMISS

JAMES 4

Text: James 4:3

James 4:3

³ Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.

Introduction:

The Christian life is one struggle after another it seems.

We struggle with our flesh, with this world, with the other believers sometimes, with Satan, and with the Lord Himself.

James addresses the issue of these struggles. He speaks about the causes of these struggles the results of these struggles and how to have victory over them.

Note:

Sermon Content:

1. THE SOURCE OF OUR STRUGGLES (VS. 1)

James 4:1

¹ From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?

James says, "Where do the conflicts and where do the quarrels among you come from?" These Christians faced the same type of conflicts that we face today. The word "**wars**" which means a fight, a battle, a dispute, strife or quarrel.

The word "**fightings**" is derived from the word which means "a fight or combat, a battle of individual conflicts or persons at variance, disputants."

The source of our fussing is our lust. Our passions that battle within us are the root of our problems. The Bible says our lusts "war" in us.

The word "**war**" means a military mission.

Remember that our lust is always on "active duty" in our body.

Our conflict with our flesh is a constant, continual battle.

When we are controlled by our flesh we become hard to get along with.

Our lust is the source of our external conflicts with others.

This word “**lust**” carries the idea of the gratification of sensual, natural, fleshly desires.

When this word is used in the New Testament it is always used in a negative, ungodly sense.

Paul warned men would be like this in the end times.

2 Timothy 3:2-4

² For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, ³ Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, ⁴ Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

The fighting was taking place among God's people.

James says, "among you." When Christians are fussing and fighting, the world watches and says, “Look how they hate one another.”

Nothing does more to hurt the cause of Christ than when Christians fight and argue with one another over petty, senseless things.

External conflicts are usually an indication of conflicts taking place within a person. James refers to this here.

The New Testament has addressed this problem of conflicts among believers in several places.

- **The Church at Corinth**

1 Corinthians 1:11

¹¹ For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them *which are of the house* of Chloe, that there are contentions among you.

- Christians were suing one another in the church

1 Corinthians 6:1-8

¹ *Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints?*

² *Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?* ³ *Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?* ⁴ *If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church.* ⁵ *I speak to your shame.*

Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren? ⁶ But brother goeth to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers. ⁷ Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded? ⁸ Nay, ye do wrong, and defraud, and that your brethren.

Paul was concerned that when he saw them again there would be strife in the church.

2 Corinthians 12:20

²⁰ For I fear, lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, and that I shall be found unto you such as ye would not: lest there be debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults:

- **The Church at Galatia**

Galatians 5:15

¹⁵ But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.

- **The Church at Ephesus**

Ephesians 4:31-32

³¹ Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: ³² And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

- **The Church at Philippi**

Philippians 4:1-2

¹ Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, *my* dearly beloved. ² I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord.

- **The Disciples**

Luke 9:46-48

⁴⁶ Then there arose a reasoning among them, which of them should be greatest. ⁴⁷ And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child, and set him by him, ⁴⁸ And said unto them, Whosoever shall receive this child in my name receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me receiveth him that sent me: for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great.

God is pleased and honored when we get along with one another.

Psalm 133:1

¹ Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!

God has given us all different gifts and abilities that can accomplish great things when we are working together.

Illustration:

There was trouble in the carpenter's workshop one day.

The tools were fussing and quarreling with one another.

One of them said, "The problem is with the hammer. He is much too noisy."

The hammer replied, "Nonsense! The blame should go to the saw.

He goes backwards and forwards all the time."

The saw said, "Wait a minute. I'm not to blame. I think the problem is with the plane. His work is so shallow. He does nothing but skim the surface."

The plane protested loudly, "I think the real problem lies with the screwdriver. He is always going around in circles."

The screwdriver shouted, "That's ridiculous, the whole trouble began with the ruler. He is always measuring other people by his own standards."

The ruler was rank and furious. He barked out and said, "What about the sandpaper? Surely he is always rubbing people the wrong way!"

"Why are you picking on me?" said the sandpaper. "I think you ought to blame the drill because he is so boring."

Just as the drill was about to protest, the carpenter came into the wood shop and began to work. Using every one of his tools, he eventually built a beautiful pulpit from which the Gospel was preached to thousands of people. There is no limit to what God can do when we are yielded to His control and working together for His glory.

Note not only The Source of Our Struggle but secondly:

2. OUR STRIFE AND STRUGGLES (VS. 2-3)

James 4:2-3

² Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. ³ Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.

What a picture of confusion.

Ye lust and have not, desire to have and cannot obtain.

The truth of the matter is our flesh is really never satisfied.

There are things we desire physically, mentally, and emotionally.

James says that we lust, kill, fight, war, and ask. We struggle with our flesh.

There are many frustrated Christians today that have the wrong priorities in their lives.

The war in their hearts creates war in their homes or churches.

Anger and hatred at God spills over in anger toward God's people.

This is the idea behind the word "to kill."

This expression means murderous hatred, destructive behavior.

When a lustful person cannot fulfill his desires, the result is often catastrophic to others and to oneself.

Illustrations:

When the men of Sodom were struck blind by the angels, they continued groping for the door in a vain attempt to gain entrance and satisfy their lust.

Genesis 19:11

¹¹ And they smote the men that were at the door of the house with blindness, both small and great: so that they wearied themselves to find the door.

Absalom was consumed with the thought of ruling the nation of Israel to the point that he was more than willing to murder his father.

Hatred is put on the same level as murder in the Bible.

1 John 3:15

¹⁵ Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.

People complain about blessings they don't have instead of the blessings they do have.

They become very selfish, hateful, and ungrateful.

Some folks don't know what they want, but feel sure they don't have it.

James gives the reasons for our strife and struggles:

A. Lust

The word "**lust**" means "to set your heart upon a thing or anxious self-seeking."

Remember:

If the focus of our life is wrong, our actions will be wrong.

B. Desire

The words "**desire to have**" means "to burn with zeal, to be heated or to boil with envy, hatred, anger."

This is where we get our English word "zealot or zealous."

Remember:

Jealousy and bitterness will leave you unfulfilled. It will create conflicts in your marriage, church, family, work, and school.

Not only are Lust and Desire reasons for strife and struggles but also note:

C. Ye Ask Not

Another reason for the strife and struggles in our lives is our lack of prayer.

Remember:

Daily prayers lessen daily cares.

Don't fall into the trap of prayerlessness.

Notice what the prophet Isaiah said about this problem:

Isaiah 64:7

⁷ And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee: for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities.

Note one other reason for strife and struggle:

D. Ye Ask Amiss

James 4:3

³ *Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.*

"**To ask amiss**" meant they were praying selfishly, with the wrong motives. They were asking for the wrong purpose and for selfish, evil motives.

They desired to fulfill their sensual desires. The word "**consume**" means "to spend or squander."

They were asking the Lord for something for the purpose of spending it on their lust.

This is what the prodigal son did with his possessions.

Remember:

God supplies our need not our greed.

The Bible makes it clear that we are to petition the Lord for things according to His will.

1 John 5:14

¹⁴ *And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us:*

When we are consumed with "things" we tend to get distracted.

Matthew 13:22

²² He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.

There are several examples in the Bible of those who struggled with lust:

1. Herod – Lust for Immoral Pleasures

He coveted his brother's wife. (Mark 6:14-29)

2. Judas – Lust for Money (Mark 14:10-11)

3. Hezekiah- Lust for "Showing Off"

He flaunted all of his precious things: silver, gold, armor, and other treasures to the visitors from Babylon. Isaiah warned him they would be taken away in the future, and his prophecy was fulfilled.

4. Adoni-bezek – Lust for Power (Judges 1:5-7)

5. Diotrophes – Lust for Pre-eminence (3 John 1:9-10)

3 John 1:9-10

⁹ *I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not.*

¹⁰ *Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church.*

3. OUR STRUGGLE WITH GOD (VS. 4-5)

James 4:4-5

⁴ *Ye adulterers and 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.* ⁵ *Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy?*

God makes it clear that the friendship of the world puts one at odds with God.

Such a person is guilty of spiritual adultery and is an enemy or hostile toward God.

This is true especially of a believer that turns his back on the Lord and becomes carnal or worldly.

The Christian's relationship with Christ is similar to a husband-wife relationship.

We are the bride of Christ. Isaiah spoke of this type of relationship with God.

Isaiah 54:5

⁵ For thy Maker is thine husband; the LORD of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called.

Jeremiah 3:20

²⁰ Surely as a wife treacherously departeth from her husband, so have ye dealt treacherously with me, O house of Israel, saith the LORD.

Jeremiah 31:32

³² Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD:

Understand:

- The lifestyle of this world is totally contrary and opposed to biblical living.

We are to live in this world, but not like this world.

Illustration:

It is like a vessel in the ocean. There is not a problem with that vessel being there; it becomes a problem when the ocean begin to come into the vessel. Eventually the vessel will sink.

The same is true in the believer's life.

The problem is not the believer having to dwell in this world, the problem is when the believer allows the world to dwell in them.

Eventually it will bring them down.

- God is a jealous God and commands that nothing else come before Him.

He jealously longs for our love and is angered when we love this world system above Him.
This world is not to be our master!

Unfortunately, some believers are mastered by this world, but try to follow Christ too.

Let me firmly say, "It's not going happen!" You can only have one master.

Remember what we read in Matthew 6:

Matthew 6:24

²⁴ No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

Involvement in a worldly lifestyle usually is a gradual process.

Note the stages of worldly involvement:

1. Stage 1 – Friendship (James 4:4)

James 4:4

*⁴ Ye adulterers and 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.*

The first stage is friendship the second is:

2. Stage 2 – Being Spotted (James 1:27)

James 1:27

²⁷ Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.

Note the next stage:

3. Stage 3 – Love for the World’s Lifestyle (1 John 2:15-17)

1 John 2:15-17

¹⁵ Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. ¹⁷ And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

2 Timothy 4:10

¹⁰ For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.

The next stage is:

4. Stage 4 – Conforming to the world (Romans 12:2)

Romans 12:2

² And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

When we conform to this world, we begin to pattern our life after this world.

The next stage is:

5. Stage 5 – Chastened to avoid condemnation with the world (1 Corinthians 11:29-32)

1 Corinthians 11:29-32

²⁹ For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. ³⁰ For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. ³¹ For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. ³² But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.

Understand:

We put ourselves into a very difficult situation when we are worldly.

Note the final stage:

6. Stage 6 – The individual is saved, but rewards are lost (1 Corinthians 3:11-15)

1 Corinthians 3:11-15

¹¹ For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹² Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; ¹³ Every man's work shall be made manifest:

for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. ¹⁴ If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. ¹⁵ If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

Understand:

The Christian is not ruined by living in the world, but by the world living in him. Our passion should be to be a godly Christian that glorifies Christ and live a holy life no matter what the cost.

Illustration:

I have talk about the little animal over in Europe and Asia called the ermine.

It is known for its snow white fur.

The ermine takes a peculiar pride in his white fur coat. At all hazards, he protects it against anything that would spoil it. It is said that the fur hunters take cruel advantage of the ermine's care to keep his coat clean.

They do not set a snare to catch him at some unwary moment, but instead, the hunters find his home, usually a cleft in the rock or the hollow of a decaying tree, and daub the entrance and interior with filth.

Then the hunting dogs start their chase. Frightened, the ermine flees toward his home, his only place of safety.

When he arrives, he finds it daubed with filth and he will not soil his pure white coat. Rather than go into this unclean place, he faces the yelping dogs and preserves the purity of his fur at the price of his life.

He would rather die than get dirty. What an example to us as Christians. We ought to have this attitude when it comes to our relationship with this world. God helps us to be unspotted from this world and not become an enemy of God.

We have considered “The Source of Our Struggles,” “Our Strife and Struggles,” “Our Struggle With God,” note also:

4. THE STRENGTH FOR OUR STRUGGLES (6)

James 4:6

⁶ But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

Notice:

A. The Strength – “But He giveth more grace”

Where would we be without the grace of God?

We would be miserable.

Quote:

The core of our creed, convictions, and character; the epicenter of our expectations, the root of our righteousness, the foundation of our faith, the zenith of our zeal, the pinnacle of our power and purity, and the bloom of the beliefs of the Christian faith is the GRACE of God.

Grace affects every area of our Christian life and without it we would be of men most miserable.

Grace affects our **PAST**...overcoming the guilt and gloom that our sins have produced.

Grace affects our **PRESENT**...overpowering our grief, the grind, and glitches of our life.

Grace also affects our **FUTURE**...overlooking our goals and our glimpse of the future, giving us hope.

To live the Christian life without the grace of God would be like trying to catch a feather in a hurricane. It would be impossible.

Because of the awe of God's grace, writers have shared their hearts in wonderful songs.

- It was John Newton who proclaimed, "Amazing grace how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me. I once was lost, now I'm found, was blind but now I see."

Haldor Lillenas wrote these words, "Wonderful grace of Jesus greater than all my sin. How shall my tongue describe it? Where shall its praise begin? Taking away my burden, setting my spirit free for the wonderful grace of Jesus reaches me."

James Gray expressed his heart with these words, "Only a sinner saved by grace, only a sinner saved by grace. This is my story, to God be the glory, I'm only a sinner, saved by grace!"

The word grace means to bend or to stoop in kindness to an inferior; to favor.

The Lord stooped to the human race, leaving the place of glory and the place of the adoration of angels to come to the place of the anger and apathy of men that He might suffer and die for our sins.

Quote:

Someone said, "Love that goes upward is **worship**. Love that goes out is **affection**. Love that stoops is **grace**."

That is what the Lord did for us. He stooped in order to save us from our sin.

Some men go through their lives degrading, devaluing, discrediting, disgracing, and dishonoring God.

Others make demands and expect God to do man's will.

They feel God owes them something and He better shape up or they will ship God out of their lives.

GOD OWES US NOTHING!!! In Grace He gives to us.

The grace of God is unearned, undeserved, and unmerited.

Notice not only the “Strength” but also:

B. The Stubborn – “God resisteth the proud”

Satan has a way of inflating the ego of individuals. When this happens, we tend to be unteachable and have no time for God or His truth.

When people get proud, arrogant, and cocky, God resists them. Their pride creates a power struggle with God.

The word “resisteth” is a military word which means “to launch an attack in battle.”

God hates the sin of pride and is in full battle array against the proud.

Proverbs 16:5

⁵ Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD: though hand join in hand, he shall not be unpunished.

Note how God resist the proud?

1. By refusing to speak

When Herod questioned the Lord, He did not answer.

Luke 23:8-9

⁸ And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he was desirous to see him of a long season, because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him. ⁹ Then he questioned with him in many words; but he answered him nothing.

God gives men up to their sinful passions when they arrogantly rebel against Him. He judges them by letting them have their own way.

Romans 1:24

²⁴ Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:

Romans 1:26

²⁶ For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:

Romans 1:28

²⁸ And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;

Not only does God deal with pride by Refusing to Speak but also:

2. By ridiculing their schemes

Psalm 2:1-4

¹ Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? ² The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, ³ Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. ⁴ He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.

Note thirdly:

3. By ruining their success

2 Chronicles 26:15-16

¹⁵ And he made in Jerusalem engines, invented by cunning men, to be on the towers and upon the bulwarks, to shoot arrows and great stones withal. And his name spread far abroad; for he was marvellously helped, till he was strong. ¹⁶ But when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction: for he transgressed against the LORD his God, and went into the temple of the LORD to burn incense upon the altar of incense.

Note also:

4. By removing their status

Daniel 5:20

²⁰ But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him:

Note not only The Strength, The Stubborn, not also:

C. The Submissive – “he giveth grace to the humble”

God gives His grace to those who are humble. What does it mean to have a humble attitude?

First of all, humility is the acceptance of your place appointed by God, whether in the front or in the rear.

Paul put it this way:

Philippians 4:11

¹¹ Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.

Secondly, true humility does not convince oneself that you are worthless, but recognizes God's working in your life.

Philippians 2:3

³ Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.

Thirdly, true humility revels in God's grace instead of one's own accomplishments and abilities.

Humility causes you to see yourself from God's viewpoint and acknowledges God's grace and work in your life despite the fact you are a sinner and have faults and weaknesses. Humility gives you an accurate view of yourself.

Note 1 Corinthians 15:9

1 Corinthians 15:9-10

⁹ For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. ¹⁰ But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.

Understand:

The smaller we become the more room God has to work in your life.

God will send no one away empty except those who are full of themselves.

This is one reason why people get critical, cranky, and selfish... they are full of themselves.

Pride fills you with selfishness and an inaccurate assessment of yourself.

We are cautioned about pride:

Romans 12:3

³ For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

Obadiah 1:4

⁴ Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the LORD.

Let me quickly close this message by considering:

5. STEPS FOR VICTORY IN OUR STRUGGLES (VS. 7-10)

James 4:7-10

⁷ Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸ Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. ⁹ Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. ¹⁰ Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

God gives us important elements for victory in our struggles.

In verses 7-10, James gives us a series of commands which call for an immediate response of obedience: submit, resist, draw nigh, cleanse, purify, be afflicted, mourn, weep, turn, and humble yourself.

A. Submission to the Lord (vs. 7)

Victory comes from surrendering to the Lord and getting under His authority in our lives and doing His will.

When a private acts like a general, there is going to be problems.

When the child of God rebels against his Heavenly Father, there will be trouble.

When we submit, however, there is blessing and victory because the Lord is able to mold and make us into His image and we are able to accomplish His will for our lives.

B. Shunning Satan (vs. 7)

If you want to have victory in your life, James says that we are not to resist the Lord's will, but we are to resist the devil.

This is a command, not a request. We are commanded to stand our ground against Satan. We are to resist evil influences, temptations, and evil people in our lives.

Ephesians 4:27

²⁷ *Neither give place to the devil.*

C. Seek Out the Lord and Draw Close to Him (vs. 8)

A third step in getting victory over your struggles is to seek out the Lord in your life and draw strength from Him.

We are to draw nigh to the Lord with the intention of staying close to Him.

We can draw near to the Lord by doing several things.

1. Confession of sin

1 John 1:9

⁹ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

2. Contrition or brokenness

2 Chronicles 7:14—If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

3. Concentration on the Word of God

2 Timothy 2:15

¹⁵ Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

The word "study" means "do your best."

Being the "best" we can be for Christ comes from meditating on His Word and putting it into practice in our lives.

Joshua 1:8

⁸ This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

4. A Concern for Being Close to the Lord each Day

Isaiah 55:6

⁶ Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:

5. Clear Your Conscience with God and Men

Acts 24:16

¹⁶ And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men.

If you want to be close to the Lord, make sure there is nothing between you and Him and you and others. This is important to the Lord.

Matthew 5:23-24

*²³ Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee;
²⁴ Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.*

Close: