

THE WRONG AMBITION

JAMES 3:14-16 | PHILIPPIANS 2:3-4 | ROMANS 2:8

JAMES 3:14-16

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.*

PHIL 2:3-4

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

4 *Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.*

ROMANS 2:8

But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath,

It has become the social norm



that we conform to the hustle and bustle of this world. Everyone is out for themselves, everyone has their own individual goals they set for themselves, whether they are to advance in your career, your finances, your physique, your neighborhood, or the car you drive. The world swarms us with advertisements and signs to consume, consume some more, and consume again, and if you really want to be seen as successful, consume more than your neighbor. Most of us deem ourselves successful based on a number- how much money we have in our accounts, how many followers do we have, or even, how many people are in our congregation- yes Pastors are guilty of these things too. (Job 15:16) Sometimes, it may not even be the tangible things that drive our self seeking ambition. It is, maybe even more-so, the intangible things that drive us. Our own thoughts, our own idea of what is right, legalizing our own opinions as if they were God's Law. It reminds me so much of Mark 7:7,13. It also reminds me of one of my favorite Greek words in the New Testament that is so relevant in today's world, that is, *Nomizo* (Strong's #3543) which essentially means to legalize one's own opinion. When we obey *ourselves*, and seek our own glory, it only leads to confusion and every evil work (James 3:16) The word we are specifically addressing is the word is *eritheia*. This word can be defined as self-seeking, self-willed, a party or a group that is contentious, seeking to win followers to fulfill their own



And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

- Colossians 3:23-23 KJV

agenda, which results in jealousy. In other words, you act for your own gain, regardless of the strife it causes. There is a great difference between self ambition, and Holy ambition. Does your ambition or what you are pursuing work for God or does it only benefit you? This is something we have to ask ourselves often and be honest about with ourselves. In Romans 2:8, we can see that through obeying self, meaning what YOU think is right, either via tradition, socially acceptable ideas, or your own opinions, rather than what Scripture says, leads us into a very destructive path. It is easier, and our natural design to obey ourselves rather than God. We must deny ourselves daily and put a death to the flesh (the outer man) in order to take up our cross and follow Jesus. This includes ridding oneself from pride. In Phil 2:3-4, the term “vain glory” is used. This is a term to describe when man thinks so highly of himself, being important, talented and capable. Living with this mindset is without a doubt, living outside the will of God.

Are You Obeying Your Thoughts and Desires, or God's?

Its something we all have to ask ourselves, more than once. Does this mean you can't have a career? That you cant have goals? That you can't want certain things in life? It absolutely does not mean those things, but it urges you to look at yourself, the lifestyle your living, and where

you are giving your priority. It may be time to change some things in your life around, cut off certain people or habits, and none of this, **none of this**, happens overnight. Prayers in line with the will of God are always answered, and praying for ways to better serve God, rather than ourselves, is like music to the Lord's ear. *Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? Romans 6:16 KJV.*

