

What is the War in Your Members?

What is the War in Your Members?

By Robert G. Theophilus

THIS BOOKLET IS NOT TO BE SOLD. The information provided is for the benefit of former members of the congregations of the Worldwide Church of God (WCG), and of current and prospective members of God's Church.

In the book of James we are told that there is wars and fightings among God's truly converted. That war is said to be from the lusts that war in truly converted Christians' members. What members is James talking about and how are they engaged in war amongst themselves? What is lust according to your Bible? Let's together examine what answers to these questions the Bible has for us.

Preamble

Please Note: All comments in brackets [] or in parentheses () as well as highlighted text (bolded and/or in blue) are from the author of this study. Bible quotations are in maroon.

I think it is essential to clarify the question of the “Holy Spirit” before we begin this study. If we say that who or what is the “Holy Spirit” is the question that needs to be answered, we are starting from the assumption that there exists such a being as the Holy Spirit and that it is a separate and distinct being from God and the Word. The question which should be asked is who are the beings the Bible tell us are holy, whose composition is spirit and who have existed eternally? Either the Bible plainly tells us who are the separate and distinct beings that existed from all eternity who created all things (spirit beings and the material universe) or we have no way of getting an answer to our question.

The Holy Spirits of the God Family

The Bible tells us in Gen 1:1 that:

Gen 1:1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

The Hebrew word translated “God” is “Eloheem” which is the plural form of “Eloah which means “God”. The word “Eloheem” refers to “gods.” It is a uniplural noun like family, group, team, etc. In the beginning, there was therefore more than one God being in existence but how many were there?

Joh 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Joh 1:2 The same was in the beginning with God.

Joh 1:3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

In the beginning when God created the heaven and the earth there was God and there was another being with God who was also God, the Word. How can these two beings both be God; isn't that impossible?

The word God indicates the kind of existence of these 2 beings: their nature is to be God in the same way that all human beings have the same human nature. However, having the same nature does not mean that all human beings constitute a single being; indeed, they are all separate and distinct beings with their own personalities. God and the Word have in common the same nature or, level and type of existence, but they are separate and distinct beings just like all human beings who have the same human nature are separate and distinct beings.

God the Father

We read in the Bible that God became a father when the Word became flesh (Phi 2:5-8) by being born of woman after having been conceived in the virgin Mary by the holy spirit being called God (Luke 1:35). God from that point on became God the Father and the Word, who was born as the flesh-and-blood Jesus of Nazareth became God's Son or the Son of God. He was both fully God (his father was God and fully human (his mother was the virgin Mary).

Jesus was God the Father's only begotten son at the time when He was conceived in Mary's womb but He was not to be the only one begotten of the Father. God the Father is the holy spirit being in the Godhead that calls men to salvation.

Joh 6:44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

Joh 6:65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

Joh 18:9 That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou [God the Father] gavest me have I lost none.

1Pe 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

God the Word and Spokesman

The Bible term for being called is to be spiritually begotten by God the Father (1Pe 1:3). When we are begotten, we become a spiritual embryo that can be born again as a glorified spirit being with eternal life. Those begotten of the holy spirit God the Father who follow their calling are then able to come to the holy spirit being called the Word and Spokesman (John 6:44; 65; 18:9) who then teaches them. The glorified Jesus-Christ as God the Father's Word and Spokesman is the holy spirit being that works in the minds of God the Father's called and chosen ones.

Joh 7:39 (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

Jesus had to first be glorified for it to be possible for Christians to have access to the holy spirit called the Word and Spokesman because the glorified Christ is the holy spirit being who works in the minds of God's saints (John 14:17) in the same way that Satan is the evil spirit that works in the minds of the children of disobedience (Eph2:2).

Joh 14:17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he [Christ] dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. [On the day of Pentecost, it would be in them and in all true Christians.]

Eph 2:2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, [Satan] the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:

The holy spirit God the Father calls men and those who follow their calling are then taught by the holy spirit called the Word and God the Father's Spokesman.

Joh 14:26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

The Holy Ghost

The expression “Holy Ghost” used in the Bible is in error as there are no ghosts in the Godhead but rather 2 beings that are holy (John 17:11; Isa 6:3) and spirit (John 4:24).

Joh 17:11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.

Isa 6:3 And one cried unto another, and said, **Holy, holy, holy**, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

Joh 4:24 **God is a Spirit:** and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

These 2 God beings who are holy and spirit are the holy spirit beings of the God family who existed in the beginning at the creation of all things.

Joh 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

Joh 1:2 The same was in the beginning with God.

Joh 1:3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

And, the Word who was with God is before all things i.e., *nothing* existed before He created them whether made of spirit or matter.

Col 1:15 [Christ] Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature:

Col 1:16 For by him [the Word who became Jesus-Christ] were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

Col 1:17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

In the beginning before anything either physical or spiritual was created, there was God and the Word who existed before all things and no other being is mentioned as having existed with them. There is no bib-

lical evidence that there ever existed a third, separate and distinct personage in the Godhead called the “Holy Spirit” who dwelt in eternity with God and the Word.

God is a Family

Throughout the Bible we can find many verses which clearly indicates the existence of family relations between God and the Word and God’s called, chosen and faithful.

Mat 11:27 All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

Mat 12:50 For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

Joh 20:17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.

God is clearly a family in which many can be ultimately born again by a resurrection from the dead to eternal, glorified spirit life in God’s Kingdom.

Rom 8:29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he [God’s Son] might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Col 1:18 And he [the glorified Christ] is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

Christ was the first to be born again by a resurrection from the dead to be followed by many brethren.

Bible Writing Convention

The practice in the Bible has been to simply use the expression “the Holy Spirit” without indicating which God personage in the Godhead the expression represents. Over time, because of this practice, just about everybody has come to believe that the Holy Spirit is a separate and distinct God being in the Godhead but, there is no single verse or group of verses in the Bible that prove the existence of such a third being in the Godhead. The words “holy” and “spirit” are adjectives that describe the nature of

God the Father and of God the Word i.e., they are holy beings made of spirit.

Whenever we encounter the expressions the “Holy Spirit” or simply the “Holy Spirit” in the Bible we must look at the context to determine of which holy spirit being of the Godhead the Bible is talking about: the holy spirit, God the Father or the holy spirit, the Word and Spokesman.

The Word is the holy spirit being in the Godhead who carries out the instructions and wishes of the holy spirit, God. He is the faithful son who seeks to do his father’s will in all things. He is the member of the God family that did the work of creating the heaven and the earth, who ruled over ancient Israel through Moses and his human successors, He is the one who became a man who suffered and died to be God the Father’s perfect sacrifice for sin and make the salvation of mankind possible, etc. and He came to reveal the Father to those who follow the Father’s calling.

Making Things Clearer

In this study, when referring to God’s spirit who, depending on the circumstances can be the holy spirit personage called God the Father or the holy spirit personage called God the Word and Spokesman, I will not capitalize either of the adjectives “holy” and “spirit”. This is in order to not perpetuate the false impression in the minds of readers that there is a 3rd being in the Godhead called the “Holy Spirit.” Instead, I will refer to either of the holy spirits in the God family as being God’s spirit without capitalizing the word “spirit” to make it plain that we are not referring to a third God being in the God family called the “Holy Spirit” but to one of the 2 God beings in the Godhead.

God’s family is presently made up of 2 holy spirit beings to which are to be added thousands and possibly millions of other holy spirit beings when God’s plan of salvation for mankind has reached its end. The saints that endure in the faith until the end of their natural human life, will be resurrected as individual holy spirit beings in God’s Kingdom when it is established.

There are two studies which you can read regarding what is the “Holy Spirit” and decide for yourself in light of the Bible-based evidence offered if such a being exists in the Godhead. These studies are: [What is the Holy Spirit? Cliff Notes Version](#) and [Who or What is the Holy Spirit?](#)

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There is a Scripture in the Book of James that the Worldwide Church of God (WCG) used to quote to explain why there is war in the world.

Jas 4:1 **From whence come wars and fightings among you?**
come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your
members?

But, the Bible does not talk to the world but only about the Old Testament (OT) physical and unconverted nation of Israel and the New Testament (NT) converted and spiritual nation of Israel. The nations of the world are only mentioned when for one reason or another they come into contact with Israel.

Would James then be talking to God's spiritual nation of Israel or God's Church about why there are wars in the world? What relevance do wars in the world have with how God is working out His master plan of salvation for mankind? And, how would that information be useful to truly converted Christians who have been called to come out of the world and be separate from it? Isn't the Bible the means used by God to teach God's called out and chosen ones the way to salvation? Let's do a detailed analysis of the Scriptures to determine what it was James was saying to the faithfuls.

Jas 4: 1 **From whence come wars [the term "wars" here
is used to mean "conflict, dispute" and not "armed conflict**

between the nations of this world”] and fightings **among** you? come they not hence [from], even of your lusts that war in your members?

The Greek word translated “among” in this verse is translated as the word “in” in the following verses: James 1:6,8,9,10, 11, 23, 25; James 2:2, 4, 5, 10, 16 and others of the book of James. Simply look it up in the King James version that has the definitions of the Greek words.

The fightings and wars that are translated as going on “**among**” you should be translated as going on “**in**” you which clarifies the intended meaning of James 4:1. Truly converted members are in a never ending battle or war with the lusts in their members.

Here, we need to clarify what members James is referring to. Is it other members in the congregations of God’s Church? Are truly converted Christians at war and fighting with other truly converted members?

Your Members

What are the members James is talking about here? In order to get our answer to this question we have to look at the following verses of 1Co 12

1Co 12:14 For the **[human]** body is not one member, but many. **[Our bodies are made of many different parts or members and this is made clear in the following verses.]**

1Co 12:15 If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

1Co 12:16 And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

1Co 12:17 If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?

1Co 12:18 But now hath God set the **members** every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. **[God has predetermined and established the role of each part or member of our bodies and where they are to be located in the body.]**

1Co 12:19 And if they were all one member, where were the body? **[If all the parts of our body or members of our body**

constituted a single body part like an eye or an ear, then there would be no body.]

1Co 12:20 But now are they many **members**, yet but one body. [The many members or parts of our bodies do not constitute a single body part but together constitute one body as designed by God.]

1Co 12:21 And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. [Every part of our bodies are needed.]

1Co 12:22 Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: [All parts are needed, even those that seem weak to us and are considered to be less necessary or needed.]

These verses make clear that our physical bodies are made up of different parts or members such as eyes, hands, ears, nose, etc. They are the members that James is talking about in James 4:1 quoted at the beginning of this study.

And these different parts of the body or members have various physical needs or appetites (eating, drinking, sex) and the mind also has desires for such things as power, fame, recognition, self-exaltation. Care must be taken in how we fulfill the needs or appetites of the different parts or members of our bodies so as not to be excessive in doing so which is lust.

John tells us that what we find in the unconverted world is people living according to their lusts.

1Jn 2:16 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.

The physical and mental needs and appetites in our members have to be kept under control to not become sin.

The members spoken of in James 4:1 are therefore the different parts of our bodies including our mind which have powerful needs crying out to be satisfied.

The Origin of Sin in a Christian

In James 1:13 -15 we are told what is the origin of sin in the life of Christians.

Jas 1:13 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:

Jas 1:14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his **own lust**, and enticed.

Jas 1:15 Then when **lust** hath conceived, it **bringeth forth sin**: and **sin**, when it is finished, **bringeth forth death**.

Sin in a Christian comes from the physical and mental lusts that arise from satisfying their physical and mental appetites in ways that are excessive and contrary to God's law. A constant effort must be made to control how we satisfy the needs of our physical bodies and of our minds. The lust for money, fame and power are found in just about every human beings as are the lust for food, drink and sex and they are not easily kept under control.

Paul who had a very strong desire to serve God and not let himself be driven by the lusts of his body and of his mind tells us just how difficult it was for him to do so and how much, despite his best efforts, he often wasn't able to restrain himself.

The War in Our Members

In Romans 7:22-25 Paul tells us about the lust of which men are capable. Men can lust because of the absolute freedom of choice (Deu 30:19) given man by God at the time of his creation. Paul tells us about "the law of sin" in his members which wars against the "law of his mind." What does he mean? Let's read through Rom 7:22-25.

Rom 7:22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: [Paul earnest desire is to obey God as perfectly as he can]

Rom 7:23 But I see another law in my members, **warring** against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

What Paul is saying here is that he would really like to be able to be perfect in his obedience to God (the law of his mind) but he says there

is a law in his members (his physical body parts and his mind) that cause him to sin because of his inability despite his best efforts to keep under control the satisfaction of his physical needs (food and drink) and of his mental/psychological needs (notoriety, fame, recognition, etc.).

Rom 7:24 O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

Paul plainly tells us that he cannot help at times being lustful in the satisfaction of his physical and mental needs and that as a consequence, he continues to be a sinner. No matter how much he would want to, he is unable to always resist the temptation to be lustful because of the infirmity or weakness of his flesh. This is why he calls his body, the body of death and it would be true but for Christ's perfect sacrifice for sin which makes the forgiveness of sin and salvation possible for those who have been called, chosen and are remaining faithful.

Rom 7:25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God [my sincere desire is to obey God] ; but with the flesh the law of sin. [I continue to be a sinner because of my inability to always resist being lustful in the satisfaction of the fleshly appetites of my physical body.]

This ongoing conflict between Christians' ability to lust and their desire to be perfect in their obedience to God is the fightings and wars going on among the members of their bodies.

Now, continuing with James 4 we read:

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.

This verse is talking about the conflict between the spiritual man and the old man which continues to want to affirm himself after conversion. In other words, James is saying:

You sin and you do not receive what you ask of God, you put to death the spiritual man in you and want to receive God's blessings. You do not receive what you ask from God because you are not asking for those things which are good for you but rather for those things that would fulfill your lusts as the next verse so clearly explains.

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

4 Ye adulterers and adulteresses, [this is speaking spiritually, having a relationship with the world and seeking its pleasures above obedience to God makes us adulterers and adulteresses as we then have another god before the true God.]

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.

This verse confirms that you cannot honor God and Mammon; truly converted members cannot live a life of compromise with the ways of the world; they are to remain separate from the world (its way of thinking and acting); if not, they become the enemy of God. You cannot serve God and Mammon; continuing to compromise with the world is enmity with God and leads to loss of salvation.

5 Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy? [The spirit that dwells in "us" truly converted Christians is the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman and it has a very strong desire or lust to envy i.e., the holy spirit God the Word and Spokesman in us does not want to have any of the ways of the world be part of the life of true Christians.]

6 But he [God] giveth more grace [God forgives us all our sins all the time if our attitude is to obey Him and not compromise with the world]. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud [those that oppose themselves to Him and think that they can compromise with the world and still not lose their salvation when God tells them they will], but giveth grace unto the humble. [He forgives the sins (grace) of those who submit to Him and do their best not to compromise with the world.]

7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. [In other words, be subject to the law of God, be trying to obey it all the time; have an attitude of obedience in all things.] 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 [in other words, come out of the world to the best of your abilities]; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. [Stop compromising with the world; be pure of heart i.e., following only one purpose, don't try to serve both your lusts and God]

9 Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. [Understand how you have been sinning through your compromising with the ways of the world which is the problem James was addressing in these verses.]

10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, [recognize God as the supreme authority in your life and seek to obey Him to the best of your abilities in all things] and he shall lift you up. [We will be lifted up i.e., in the resurrection we will rise up from the dead and become God as God is God as our reward for our obedience.]

Conclusion

So it should be clear or clearer to you that what James is talking about in the verses that we have reviewed has nothing to do with providing Christians with God's explanation as to why there are wars and fightings in the world. Rather, God is explaining to Christians through James that there is a war going on among the different parts of their physical bodies and their minds.

When they were unconverted, they led their lives according to the ways of the unconverted world where people are lustng for food, drink, power over others, fame, money, etc. Now, that they are converted, they know they have to restrain themselves as much as they can in how they deal with their physical and mental needs and desires.

James is urging members of the congregations of God under his authority to obey God by explaining to them that they cannot both follow their lusts and obey God i.e., be double-minded; they cannot compromise with the world and be saved. They must have a pure heart i.e., be determined to obey only God to the best of their abilities. In this way they will be humbling themselves before God i.e., allowing God to rule in their lives instead of themselves being the supreme authority in their lives and God will glorify them at Christ's Second Coming when He brings the reward of His saints with Him, immortal life in God's Kingdom.

