

Exposing **STRIFE**



Teaching by Joyce Meyer

Joyce Meyer Ministries
P.O. Box 655 • Fenton, MO 63026
636-349-0303 • 1-800-727-WORD (9673)
www.joycemeyer.org

EXPOSING STRIFE

Recognizing And Dealing With Strife

I. The Importance Of Unity And Harmony

- A. **Philippians 2:2-5** – Complete His joy by getting along. Live in unity and harmony.
- B. Put aside your own agenda. Pray and find God’s plan. Find **HIS** way.
 - 1. **Acts 4:24** – They were of one united mind and voice.
They had one purpose.
 - 2. **Acts 13:22** – God is looking for those who will carry out **HIS program** fully.
 - 3. **I Corinthians 3:3** – Who is spiritual?
- C. **Ephesians 4:1-3** – Avoid strife by striving to keep unity and oneness.
 - 1. **John 17:20-21** – Jesus prayed we might be one as He and His Father are one.

II. The Spirit Of Strife

- A. Peace and strife are both spirits.
 - 1. Atmosphere and attitudes are affected by them.
 - 2. Can be felt
- B. **Strife** (defined) – Bickering, arguing, heated disagreement, and **angry undercurrent.**

1. Example: Laura working for us – what strife was doing and how it affected the atmosphere
- C. The demon of strife shows what gets in the house.
(See Demon Of Strife insert on last page of teaching notes.)

III. The Danger Of Strife

- A. **I Corinthians 1:9-11** – God wants to bless, but we must get along.
- B. **Psalms 133:1-3** – Where there is unity, there is blessing and anointing.
 1. **Genesis 13:7** – Abraham and Lot

Abraham was **extremely** rich. He was blessed;
he knew to keep strife out.
- C. Example: A couple in Bible college loses all in a fire – warned in a dream but remained in strife. (See **Exposé on Strife** on page 25.)
- D. Example: Wife appears very spiritual – no blessings on household, many disasters, and husband loses job. **What is wrong?**
 1. Wife admits house is full of strife; God warned her, but she would not humble herself.
 2. **Proverbs 17:1** – A house full of sacrifices with strife is not pleasing to the Lord.

IV. Strife Destroys

- A. Church and strife
 1. **Hebrews 12:14-15** – Peace and love
 2. **Galatians 5:13-26** – Faith and love
 3. GOSSIP

- a. **Proverbs 16:28** – *A perverse man sows strife, and a whisperer separates close friends.*
 - b. **Proverbs 17:9** – *He who covers and forgives an offense seeks love, but he who repeats or harps on a matter separates even close friends.*
- B. **Psalm 133:1-3** – Affects anointing and flow of the Spirit
- 1. **Ephesians 4:30** (see surrounding verses) – Strife **GRIEVES** the Holy Spirit.
- C. I watched a church die because of strife.
- D. Strife undetected and not confronted destroys marriages, personal relationships on all levels, businesses, Christian schools, bookstores, churches, etc.
- 1. See **Exposé on Strife** on page 25.
 - 2. **Destroys health**

V. **Strife And Every Evil Work**

- A. **James 3:13-18** – Household strife causes rebellion in children.
 - 1. Also confusion
- B. **Verse 17** shares secrets on how to get along.

If Any Two Agree

I. The Power Of Agreement

Matthew 18:19

I Peter 3:10-11 – Three relationships that require peace

A. Peace with yourself

1. Philippians 3:12 – Paul knew his faults; he said he had not arrived, but he was not condemned.

Romans: Chapters 7 and 8

2. Jeremiah 1:5 – He knows us and approves of us.

Ephesians 6:11-18 (Living Bible) – Wear the breastplate of God’s approval for effective spiritual warfare.

3. Hebrews 12:6 – He corrects us, tells us our faults, but never rejects us. (See Revelation 3:19.)

B. How condemnation and a guilty conscience affect prayer

1. I John 3:21 – *And, beloved, if our consciences (our hearts) do not accuse us [if they do not make us feel guilty and condemn us], we have confidence (complete assurance and boldness) before God . . .*
2. James 5:16-17 – *Confess to one another therefore your faults (your slips, your false steps, your offenses, your sins) and pray [also] for one another, that you may be healed and restored [to a spiritual tone of mind and heart]. The earnest (heartfelt, continued) prayer of a righteous man makes tremendous power available [dynamic in its working]. Elijah was a human being with a nature such as we have [with feelings, affections, and a constitution like ours]; and he prayed earnestly for it not to rain, and no rain fell on the earth for three years and six months.*

3. **Hebrews 4:15-16** – *For we do not have a High Priest Who is unable to understand and sympathize and have a shared feeling with our weaknesses and infirmities and liability to the assaults of temptation, but One Who has been tempted in every respect as we are, yet without sinning. Let us then fearlessly and confidently and boldly draw near to the throne of grace (the throne of God’s unmerited favor to us sinners), that we may receive mercy [for our failures] and find grace to help in good time for every need [appropriate help and well-timed help, coming just when we need it].*

C. Peace with God

1. Are you mad at God due to disappointments?

I Corinthians 13:9 – We know in part. Trusting God brings peace.

2. Maybe you told God what you wanted rather than finding out what He wanted.
3. **I Corinthians 10:9** – A hidden rift with God causes complaining and opens the door for trouble.
4. **Job 13:15** – Job’s example: Even though He slay me, yet will I trust Him.
5. **Deuteronomy 8:2** – He sometimes leads us the hard way to expose impurities in us, in our attitudes, and deepest parts. (Be steady in the storm.)
6. **Hebrews 11:6** – His character – He is the rewarder of those who continue to seek Him.

D. Peace with others

1. **Romans 12:4-5** – We must respect one another’s rights to individuality.

2. We are different and do not think alike. We have a right to an opinion or idea without pressure to conform.
3. God-given personalities cause us to respond differently.
4. Share briefly on different personalities.

II. How To Disagree Agreeably

- A. **James 3:17** – Some secrets on how to get along with others
- B. **I Corinthians 13:5** – Don't be touchy and easily offended.
- C. Keep looking for a place you can agree on rather than arguing about what you cannot agree on.

III. Causes For Strife

- A. Voice tone and body language as well as ill-chosen words
 1. **Proverbs 15:1** – *A soft answer turns away wrath . . .*
 2. **I Peter 3:10** – The mouth brings much unhappiness.
 3. Use anointed silence.
- B. Wrong timing
 1. Seek God's timing and pray for favor.
- C. Selfishness
 1. **Mark 8:34-35** – Realize it isn't healthy to always get your way.
- D. Root of rejection can distort your perception in conversation.

IV. Review The Power Of Agreement.

- A. **Deuteronomy 32:30** – One puts a thousand to flight; and two, ten thousand.
 - 1. Multiplied out at this level, four puts one million to flight.
 - 2. We see the power of strife and the power of agreement.
- B. **Amos 3:3** – How can two walk together unless they agree?
- C. **Luke 10:1-6** – Jesus sends the seventy to do mighty works and tells them to find a house where peace can remain.
 - 1. Remember, we are His house now and should remain in peace.

V. Agreement And Forgiveness

- A. **II Corinthians 2:10-11** – Forgive to keep Satan from getting an advantage.
- B. **Ephesians 4:26-27** – Forgive so Satan does not get a foothold. He must get a foothold before he can get a stronghold.
 - 1. Most of the ground he gains in Christians' lives is due to unforgiveness.
- C. Forgive quickly.
 - 1. Offense – Displease, cause anger, irritate, be disagreeable, etc.
 - 2. “The Process” – Offense comes, then bitterness sets in, then resentment, and finally a full-blown case of unforgiveness which breaks unity and opens the door wide for . . .

STRIFE

VI. In Conclusion

- A. **John 14:27** – *Peace I leave with you; My [own] peace I now give and bequeath to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. [Stop allowing yourselves to be agitated and disturbed; and do not permit yourselves to be fearful and intimidated and cowardly and unsettled.]*
- B. **Ephesians 6:15** – Wear your shoes of peace.
1. Unless you **wear** your armor, you'll get killed in battle.
- C. **Exodus 14:13-15** – Learn to hold your peace.
1. Be adaptable.
 2. Oh well!
 3. Don't be **impressed** by the problem, and then you won't get **oppressed** and finally **depressed**.
- D. The devil sets you up to get you upset.
1. Allow the wisdom and power of God to come through you by ruling your own spirit so you don't end up in ruin.

Jealousy, Envy, And Greed

I. A Greedy Spirit

A. **Proverbs 28:25** – *He who is of a greedy spirit stirs up strife . . .*

1. They stir up strife for several reasons.
 - a. They are never permanently satisfied no matter what they have.
 - b. **James 4:1-2** – They are resentful, envious, and jealous of people who have what they want.
 - c. They often enter into judgment of those who have what they want and begin to slander them.
 - d. Slander (defined) – Finding fault with people and their conduct, and then spreading criticism to others. The Greek word translated slander is *diabolos*, which is also translated accuser or devil.

B. Greed (defined) – To covet, to have an intense desire for, to lust after. To envy, to be jealous.

1. I believe to lust after means to want anything so much that we cannot be happy without it.

C. Strife (defined) – Bickering, arguing, heated disagreement, an angry undercurrent. Upset, angry, bitter, resentful, etc.

D. **Ephesians 5:5-7** – Greed is a very serious offense.

1. Greedy people are considered to be idolaters.
2. These sins bring the wrath of God.
3. Don't even associate with someone that is greedy.

E. **I Corinthians 5:9-11; 6:9-11**

1. It sounds as if the sin of greed is a very serious one to God.
2. This does not mean a person will go to hell if they make a mistake, but it does mean that the basic character of one who calls himself a Christian must be purified of these things.

II. **Transference Of Spirits**

A. We absorb the spirit of who we spend time around.

1. Elijah and Elisha

II Kings 2:1-13 – Elisha ultimately received a double portion of Elijah’s spirit.

2. **Deuteronomy 34:9** – Moses and Joshua

B. **Psalms 1:1** – Don’t sit passively in the path where sinners walk, nor rest and relax where the scornful and the mockers gather.

1. Think of the lunch table at many companies during lunch hour.
2. **Proverbs 22:24-25** – Don’t associate with angry people.
3. **Proverbs 23:20-21**

C. **Proverbs 22:10** – *Drive out the scoffer, and contention will go out; yes, strife and abuse will cease.*

1. **Scornful and mockers** (defined) – To make fun of in gesture or word, insult the character of, to speak of or treat with contempt, have a bad attitude toward, to slander.

D. Spend time with people who sharpen you or make you better, not those who poison you.

1. Who we closely associate with is possibly one of the most important decisions we make in life.

III. Jealousy

- A. **Galatians 5:19-20** – Jealousy and strife are both listed as sins of the flesh.
 1. Jealousy is not a Fruit of the Spirit.
 2. **James 4:2** says we become jealous.
- B. **James 4:1-2** – Strife comes from unfulfilled desires that we have. We see people with what we want and become jealous of them.
 1. Pride says: “I should have what you have.”
- C. **Acts 7:9** – Joseph’s brothers were envious of him, and they hated him so much they sold him to slave traders.
- D. Jesus said in several places that it was because of envy that the religious leaders wanted Him crucified.
- E. **Acts 13:44-46** – The entire city gathered to hear the Gospel from Paul and Barnabas. When the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and envy and they slandered Paul.
 1. We see the same pattern – you have something I want; so if I can’t have it, I will be envious and have a bad attitude toward you.
- F. Jealousy and envy are the cause of judgment, strife, slander, and gossip.
 1. Insecure people get competitive when they see someone with things they don’t have.
 2. Confidence doesn’t compare.
 3. I have never had anyone judge me for driving a nice car if they had a car as nice as mine.

4. I have never had anyone judge me or gossip about me in any area if they had what I had in that area.

IV. Thou Shalt Not Covet.

A. **Exodus 20:17** – Do not want what others have.

1. I can desire to have one of my own, but I am not allowed to desire yours.

B. **I Timothy 6:6-10** – Be content. We brought nothing into the world, and we will take nothing out.

1. Discontentment stirs up strife in us and among us.

2. YOU CANNOT BE HAPPY WHEN YOU WANT WHAT SOMEONE ELSE HAS.

3. **We are individuals and must realize that God has an individual, personalized plan for each of our lives.**

4. **Try to live YOUR life, not someone else's.**

C. Two ways to get things:

1. **Matthew 6:33** – Seek first the kingdom and God will add things.

Psalms 37:4 – Delight yourself in the Lord, and let Him give you the desires of your heart.

2. Unjust, unrighteous ways:

- a. Jacob wanted what Esau had and he lied, cheated, and stole to get it. He reaped fear, running, hiding, and ultimately reaped from Laban the same type of treatment he had given Esau.

- b. **Joshua 7:13-25** (especially **Verse 21**) – Achan took and hid items that were devoted to destruction because of greed. It cost him his life.
- c. **I Samuel 15:3, 8-11** – Saul lost his kingdom due to greed. His greed caused disobedience.
- d. **II Kings 5:16-27** – Gehazi lost his position and became a leper due to greed.
- e. Ananias and Sapphira lost their lives due to greed.
- f. Greed causes people to oppress and mistreat one another.

V. Contentment

- A. **I Timothy 6:6** – Godliness accompanied with contentment is great and abundant gain.
 - 1. Contentment is more valuable than anything material or relational that we could possess or own.
 - 2. Content (defined) – Satisfied, satisfied with things as they are, fulfilled, free from doubt or question, sufficient, enough. At rest, peace, without strife.
- B. **Philippians 4:11-12** – Paul learned how to be content (satisfied to the point where he was not disturbed) whether he was abased or abounding.
- C. **Luke 3:14** – Jesus told the soldiers to be satisfied with their rations and wages.
 - 1. When one is thankful and satisfied, God can always get more to them.
 - 2. When one is never satisfied no matter what they have, they continually open a door for Satan to steal even what they have.

D. **Proverbs 1:19** – Greed takes away the life of its possessors.

Be grateful!

HAVE AN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE.

I Think I'm Right, But I May Be Wrong

I. Humility

A. **Proverbs 13:10** – Contention comes **only** by pride.

1. Contention – To be of a differing opinion and then to strive for the mastery (to be in a contest); to be combatant about a thing, to be intensive.
2. **James 3:17** – A wise man is willing to yield.
3. **Romans 12:16** – Adapt and adjust to others.
4. **Causes arguments**

B. **II Timothy 2:23-24** – The servant of the Lord must not strive.

1. Controversy over foolish questions
(UNIMPORTANT THINGS)
2. Examples:
 - a. Shortest distance to the hardware store
 - b. Directions to a certain place
 - c. An actor in a movie

C. **I Corinthians 13:5** – Love gives up its right to be right.

II. All Of A Man's Ways Are Right In His Own Eyes.

A. **Proverbs 16:2** – *All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes, but the Lord weighs the spirits (the thoughts and intents of the heart).*

- B. **Romans 12:3** – Do not think more highly of yourself than you should.
 - 1. **I Timothy 3:6** – STUPEFIED
- C. **Proverbs 3:7** – *Be not wise in your own eyes . . .*
- D. Pride causes judgment.
 - 1. **Matthew 7:1-5** – You see other people’s faults but not your own.
 - 2. We see ourselves through “rose-colored glasses.”
 - 3. Before God can use us, we must be “**humbled.**”
Humility comes through humiliation.
 - 4. **Peter** – In **Luke: Chapter 22**, he thought more highly of himself than he should have. (Also see **Matthew 16:13-23.**)

III. Knowledge And Pride

- A. “I THINK”
 - 1. **I Corinthians 8:1** – Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies.
 - 2. Love builds the other person up and encourages him/her.
 - 3. Knowledge alone tears the other down to make himself/herself look good.
- B. **I Corinthians 1:19** – God brings down our haughty ideas of ourselves.
- C. **I Corinthians 2:2** – Paul had a goal to know nothing but Christ.
 - 1. Curiosity and carnality go together.
- D. **Genesis 3:5** – The fall of man came from a desire to “KNOW.”

IV. Trust God To Be Your Vindicator.

A. God loves justice.

1. Isaiah 61:8

2. Isaiah 62:1-2

B. I Peter 2:23 – When insulted, He waited for God to vindicate Him.

I THINK I AM RIGHT, BUT I MAY BE WRONG.

EXPOSÉ ON STRIFE IN THE BODY OF CHRIST

COUPLE ATTENDING BIBLE COLLEGE LOSES ALL IN FIRE

Warned by God but tried
to rebuke warning.

CHRISTIAN BUSINESS- MAN CONFUSED OVER HAVING TO FILE BANKRUPTCY

When questioned about strife
among employees, he denied
any responsibility to deal with
the issue.

TEENAGE BELIEVER TURNS TO DRUGS

Says he can't see God in his
parents; all he sees is strife.

CHURCH DIES due to
strife among the leaders.

COUPLE NEVER RECEIVE INHERITANCE

Ignored repeated chastise-
ment from God about strife.

GROWING CHRISTIAN SCHOOL DESTROYED

Holy Spirit reports strife
among teaching staff.

100 CHRISTIAN MARRIAGES END IN DIVORCE

This month the spirit of
strife takes its toll again.

Spirit of Strife



For where envying and STRIFE is, there is CONFUSION and every evil work.

James 3:16 (KJV)