

November 22, 2020
The Bridge Bible Fellowship
Pastor Paul S. Brown
James 4:1-10

“Be a True Friend of God!” – Part 5

- IX. Be a true friend of God (4:1-10) – ARE YOU A TRUE FRIEND OF GOD?**
- A. The Earthly Problem (1-5)**
 - B. The Heavenly Solution (6-10)**
 - 1. God’s Provision (6)**
 - 2. Man’s Response (7-10) – Hortatory Peak (10 commands – cp. 1 Peter 5:5-9)**
 - a. Core command (7a) – “Submit therefore to God.”**

 - b. Complementary commands (7b-9) – Three Couplets**
 - 1) Association (7b-8a) – “Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.”**

 - 2) Sanctification (8b-c) – “Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.”**

 - 3) Emotion (9) – “Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy to gloom.”**
 - c. Core command & promise (10) – “Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.”**

So what?

Discussion & Application:

1. What comes to your mind when you think of the word ‘**humility**’? Why is humility critical for us to receive and experience God’s grace? Who would you say is a good biblical example of humility? Why?
2. What comes to your mind when you think of the word ‘**repentance**’? In what way(s) was Judas a bad example of repentance (**Mt. 27:1-10**)? Who would you say is a good biblical example of repentance? Why?
3. Why is **humility** essential for genuine repentance? Why is **repentance** an essential outgrowth of genuine humility? Read **Mt. 3:1-12**. What did John the Baptist say to the Pharisees and Sadducees? Why did he say that? How does this relate to the passage in James?
4. What is the connection between the commands to “**Submit** therefore to God” (v. 7a) and “**Humble yourselves** in the presence of the Lord...” (v. 10)? How are they similar? How do the other 8 commands in vv. 7b-9 relate to those two commands?
5. Read **1 Peter 5:5-9**. What are the similarities between that passage and James 5:6-10? Why does Pastor Paul believe the principles here are critical for believers to experience God’s greater grace, overcome sin, and truly draw near to God? Find other biblical passages that teach these same principles.
6. What did Pastor Paul mean when he said that “**submission is not passive**”? Why would some think that it is passive? In what sense is submission an active allegiance to God’s authority? What does that look like in practical terms? Where do we find our marching orders?
7. The first couplet of complementary commands is in vv. **7b-8a**. Why do we have to resist the devil in order to truly draw near to God? (See Mt. 6:22-24; Joshua 24:15) **Are there any specific worldly things in your life that are keeping you from truly drawing near to God (habits, temptations, business practices...)? Things that are offensive to God, but you have justified them as being “not that bad”?** This is reminiscent of what the devil said to Eve in Gen. 3 – “Did God really say?” What would it look like for you to resist the devil with that specific thought, attitude, word, or action in mind? How would this free you to truly draw near to God?
8. Look at the **promises** in James 4:8 and 4:10. How can focusing on those promises help you in the midst of temptation?
9. Why is it important to **FIRST** resist the devil and draw near to God, and **THEN** deal with sins on the outside and the inside (v. 8b-c)? What impact does drawing near to God have on our awareness of sin in our lives? (See Is. 6:1-7; 1 John 3:1-3)
10. Read **James 4:9**. Does this sound **strange** to you? How does this match with the **Prosperity Gospel** and the **Seeker Driven** messages that are preached in many churches today? Why should we have such extreme emotional responses to sin in our lives? How is this related to genuine humility and genuine repentance? (See Psalm 97:10; Joel 2:12-13) How would this help you overcome vexing sins that have plagued you for years?
11. Start allowing yourselves to be humbled in the presence of the Lord (**James 4:10**). In what ways is God working to humble you? How specifically could you participate more fully in this process?
12. If you haven’t already done so, **memorize James 4:1-10**. Start memorizing **James 4:11-12**.