

James 4:7-10

Gods Desire and Plan for Holiness

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James 4:7-10 (NASB)

7 Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. 8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. 9 Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy to gloom. 10 Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.

Finally, a list of commands

- Verses 7-10 consists of a list of 6 imperatives, 3 of which have a stated consequence
 - 1 Submit to God.
 - 2 Resist the devil → he will flee from you.
 - 3 Draw near to God → He will draw near to you.
 - 4 Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.
 - 5 Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy to gloom.
 - 6 Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord → He will exalt you.
- This is a very specific sequence
 - There are many points along this path on which we can falter
 - Our goal – look for the Grace and identification

Proceed in an orderly fashion

Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

- *Submit* [hypotassō] – to submit to one's control
 - *This word was a Greek military term meaning "to arrange [troop divisions] in a military fashion under the command of a leader". In non-military use, it was "a voluntary attitude of giving in, cooperating, assuming responsibility, and carrying a burden".¹*
 - Used by other authors – Ephesians 5:21-24; Hebrews 12:9; 1 Peter 3:1
 - Relation to Romans 6
- Why do we do this?
 - v.6 – *But [God] gives a greater grace...*
 - What is the source of our wisdom?

¹ from Blue Letter Bible

Ignore it and it will go away

Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

- *Resist* – to stand against, resist, whether in word or deed
 - Ephesians 6:13; 1 Peter 5:8-9 – same word and context
 - Context of the passage indicates this is a philosophical opposition
 - Colossians 2:6-8
- *Devil* – el diablo
 - Throughout the New Testament refers to the person of the devil
 - Represents the worldly machinations that would seek to distract us
 - 1 John 3:7-10
- *Flee* – to run away from
 - Matthew 14:50 – *And they all left [Christ] and fled.*
 - 1 John 4:2-4

Close to you

Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.

*Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts,
you double-minded.*

- *Draw near* – to draw or come near to, to approach
 - Both times it is the same word
 - Hebrews 7:18-19
 - This is all Grace
 - How much closer can God get to us?
- Is this reciprocity²?
 - Does “God help those who help themselves”?
 - Is God’s Grace contingent on our participation?
 - See James 4:6
 - Is it possible to frustrate the Grace of God?

² I scratch God’s back, and ...

Cleanliness is next to Godliness

*Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. **Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.***

- *Cleanse* [katharizō] – to purify from the pollution and guilt of sin³
 - Most commonly in New Testament used to reference to leprosy (Matthew 8:2-3; see also Leviticus 13)
 - Can mean "to cleanse in the sense of purification, legal or ceremonial (Hebrews 9:22-28)
- *Purify* [hagnizō] – to render pure in a moral sense
 - Adjective form used in James 3:17
 - related to *hágios* – holiness
 - 1 Peter 1:22; 1 John 3:3

3

Greek information on this slide comes from Zodhiates

Looking into holiness

- From Zodhiates: *Related to both **katharizō** and **hagnizō** is **hagiazō**, to sanctify, make clean, render pure, especially in its use in 1 Cor 7:14 in relation to 1 Thess 4:3 where **hagiasmós**, sanctification, refers to the abstaining from fornication. The intrinsic meaning of **hágios**, holy, is one who, as related to God, is absolutely separate from all evil. Therefore, **hágios** indicates one's position as consecrated to and by God, and thus summoned to be separate in godlikeness from all the defilements of heathenism (Lev 11:44; 19:2)*
- James is emphasizing that holiness is still highly important under Grace
 - The difference is how we obtain it
 - How shocking is that "submit" and "draw near" immediately precede "be holy"?

Be miserable and mourn and weep; let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy to gloom.

- *Miserable* – to toil heavily, to endure labours and hardships
 - Harkens back to James 1:2-4
- *Mourn* – to be sad, sorrowful
 - Matthew 5:4; 1 Corinthians 5:1-2
 - Relates to our attitude toward the lack of holiness
 - Related to the word for *weep* – see Luke 19:41
 - Think about how Jeremiah was the “weeping prophet”
- *Laughter* → *mourning*; *joy* [chará] → *gloom* ?
 - Context here is adultery and other worldly pleasures in contrast to purity and cleanliness
 - Our focus should be on heavenly wisdom and holiness, not on earthly, temporal frivolity (see Ecclesiastes)

The lower depths

Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you.

- *Humble yourself* – to make low, bring low
 - This is in the passive voice
 - Matthew 18:4; 1 Peter 5:6
 - To become the person in verse 6, to whom God's Grace is abundantly available
 - The connection with Philippians 2:8 is essential to understand
- *Presence* – lit. in the face of; before the eyes of God
 - Hebrews 4:13 and 13:20-12
 - Used extensively by Paul in 1 Timothy (2:3; 5:4; 5:20-21; 6:12-13) and 2 Timothy (2:14; 4:1)
 - This does not say, "Humble yourself before you enter the presence of God."

The heights of heights

*Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, **and He will exalt you.***

- *Exalt* – to exalt, to raise to dignity, honour and happiness
 - John 3:14; Acts 5:31
 - Another important connection to Philippians 2
 - Taken with verse previous verse, we are to expect our fulfillment in life from God alone
- This verse seems to anticipate our identification, and exultation, with Christ

Summing things up

- The righteous works, on which James spends most of his time, comes about when we submit control to God
- It is essential that we resist worldly thinking/philosophy, and draw close to God and His wisdom
- Holiness remains of utmost importance, even though we are no longer under the law
 - James' readers would have to wait for Paul for a explication of how we obtain/have obtained this holiness
- The bookends of righteous living are submission and humility
 - We submit to God so that He might give us humility

Wuest's version of James 4:7-10

7 Be subject with implicit obedience to God at once and once for all. Stand immovable against the onset of the devil and he will flee from you.

8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse hands, O sinners, and purify hearts, O double-minded. 9 Be sorrowful and distressed and grieve and weep audibly. Let your laughter be turned to sadness and your joy to gloominess. 10 Permit yourselves to be humbled in the Lord's presence and He will exalt you