**Jesus Will Lift You Up**

**By Pastor Fee Soliven**

**James 4:5-10**

**Wednesday Evening**

**July 14, 2021**

**James 4:5-10**

5 Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, "The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously"? 6 But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble." 7 Therefore submit 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 Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. 10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.

**5 Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, "The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously"?**

Saints, James is following an approach used elsewhere in the New Testament of summarizing Old Testament teaching rather than quoting directly.

The Greek text of the phrase, the Holy Spirit, whom God has placed within us, jealously longs for us to be faithful, offers several alternative renderings, so the context must help us determine what the writer meant.

Either James was saying that God, who caused his Spirit to dwell in the believers, is jealous for their friendship, or he was saying that the spirit that God put in man is one prone to jealousy—and therefore must be kept in check.

The point of the statement is to affirm the believers’ friendship with God over against the world. We may say that we will befriend both God and the world, but in practice, we can only choose one way. The more we give ourselves to the world, the stronger will be our allegiance to the world. The more we give ourselves to God, the stronger will be our bond with him.

**Matthew 6:21**

“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

**1 Corinthians 6:19**

Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; but bought with a price.

**2 Corinthians 6:16**

What agreement can exist between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be My people."

To those who make the wise choice, facing what may seem like a hopeless battle, James adds a wonderful word of hope.

**6 But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble."**

Saints, we will need to rely on God’s strength to stand against such evil desires. That strength is available. Quoting from:

**Proverbs 3:34**

“Surely He scorns the scornful, But gives grace to the humble.”

**Psalm 138:6**

For though the LORD is exalted, Yet He regards the lowly, But the haughty He knows from afar.

**Proverbs 3:34**

Though He scoffs at the scoffers, Yet He gives grace to the afflicted.

**Proverbs 29:23**

A man's pride will bring him low, But a humble spirit will obtain honor.

**Matthew 23:12**

For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.

**James 4:10**

Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will exalt you.

**1 Peter 5:5**

Young men, in the same way, submit yourselves to your elders. And all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

Saints, James offers hope to those who desire friendship with God. God sets himself against the proud because pride makes us self-centered and leads us to conclude that we deserve all we can see, touch, or imagine.

It creates greedy appetites for far more than we need. Pride can subtly cause us to no longer see our sins or our need for forgiveness.

But humility opens the way for God’s grace to flow into our lives; thus, God shows favor to the humble. Humility is not weakness; instead, it is the only place that believers gain courage to face all their temptations and sins with God’s strength.

Saints, as God gives us more grace, we realize that this world’s seductive attractions are only cheap substitutes for what God has to offer.

It is our choice—we can humble ourselves and receive God’s grace, or we can continue in our pride and self-sufficiency and experience his anger.

**1. How do we, so prone to pride at the very moments when we think we might be approaching humility, discover true humility?**

**2. How do we become the kind of humble people who find the overflowing grace that God promises?**

**7 Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.**

Saints, we humble ourselves before God by recognizing both his friendship and his authority. We enter a relationship with God, not as equals, but as trusting servants. Although he is not specifically defining the term, James is describing the life of faith.

True faith responds to God actively rather than passively. Although God initiates and facilitates all that occurs between us and him, our involvement is never entirely excluded. Personal humility before God is part of living faith.

Satan knows that as long as he can stimulate human pride, he can delay God’s plan, even if only temporarily. But as powerful as Satan is, his only power over believers is in his powerful temptations. We can resist the Devil, and he will flee from us.

Conversely, a lack of resistance will practically guarantee ongoing harassment by Satan…

**Ephesians 6:10-18**

10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

14 Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15 and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; 16 above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.

17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; 18 praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints…

**1 Peter 5:6-9**

6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, 7 casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you. 8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. 9 Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.

Once we have identified the Devil as our enemy, we need to understand who he is and how he operates in order to effectively resist him.

The Devil’s primary purpose is to separate man from God. Destined for destruction, he wants to take as much of creation with him as he possibly can. Among the reasons we so desperately need God’s grace is that we are locked in mortal combat with a superior enemy. We need God’s help to resist Satan’s separating schemes and instead draw near to God.

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

Saints, the idea of humility before God now includes the added benefit of God’s immediate response. We can draw close to God, and God will draw close to us. The command to wash your hands means to purify our actions and change our external behavior. The way we live matters to God.

As we draw near to God, we will become aware of habits and actions in our lives that are not pleasing to him. Washing our hands pictures the removal of these things from the way we live. We must distance ourselves from the sins that God points out.

Saints, deliberate unconfessed sin will keep us away from reading this book, but reading and obeying this book will keep us away from sin.

Similarly, the command to purify your hearts calls for purity of thoughts and motives—changes on the inside. The people could not remain hypocrites, trying to love both God and the world. Purity of heart, then, implies single-mindedness.

**1 Peter 5:6**

“Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, so that in due time He may exalt you.”

**1 Peter 5:8**

“Be sober-minded and alert. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.”

**1 Peter 5:9**

“Resist him, standing firm in your faith and in the knowledge that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kinds of suffering.”

**9 Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom.**

Saints, as God draws near to us, we ought to sense our unworthiness. After all, we are being allowed to approach the holy, perfect God.

Saints, James has described a long spiritual process in the last eight verses. He began by describing people in conflict with each other and within themselves.

Unmasking of such a life and calling believers to humility may not be a welcome message. Surrender may not come easily. Long-held desires may respond with defiance. Repentance may have to include remembering how far we have broken from God’s way before we have turned back.

These different terms, sorrow, deep grief, sadness, and gloom, capture the struggle of a soul drawing near to God. There is a dying which takes place. This is a call to deep and heartfelt repentance.

The people’s laughter (scornful laughter that refused to take sin seriously) and their joy in the world’s pleasures need to be completely changed—to mourning over their sins (see Luke 6:25).

**Luke 6:25**

“Woe to you who are full, For you shall hunger. Woe to you who laugh now, For you shall mourn and weep”.

Until this happens, there is no room for the laughter of real freedom and the joy of the Lord. The Christian life involves joy—but when we realize our sins, we must be mournful so that we can repent. Only after mourning can we move on to joy in the grace God gives us.

**10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up.**

Saints, to bow down before the Lord and to admit our dependence on him means recognizing that our worth comes from God alone. It is recognizing our desperate need for his help and submitting to his will for our lives. Although we do not deserve God’s favor, he reaches out to us in love and gives us worth and dignity, despite our human shortcomings.

When we do so, the promise is sure: he will lift us up and give us honor. One of the most touching biblical illustrations of this truth is found in Jesus’ parable of the forgiving father (Luke 15:11-32).

The son took his inheritance and set out to be the world’s best friend. It was not until he found himself bankrupt in every way that he repented. He returned home, grieving. The son confessed to his father that he was unworthy to be called a son.

But the father lifted him up and welcomed him back into the family. The act of returning required submission. The wayward son’s words of repentance required humility. The end result was great joy. Humility before God will be followed by his lifting us up.

Saints, Soon and Very soon, Jesus is about to appear, we are almost out of here!

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

13 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

**1 Corinthians 15:50-54**

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed-- 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

**Short Movie Slide>**

**Acts 2:38-39**

38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

**Let’s Pray!**

**Benediction**

**"May The LORD bless you and keep you, May The LORD make His face shine upon you, May The LORD be gracious to you, May The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you His (Shalom) peace.” In Jesus Name!**