

Personal Responsibility

1-23-22

James 4:10 (ESV)

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

“God will exalt us!” To receive this promise we have a personal responsibility, “Humble ourselves before God!” To be humble means, “To make low or put ourselves under God’s will.” To understand God’s promise and our responsibility more fully, we will look at the first 9 verses in Chapter 4.

James 4:1 (ESV)

What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you?

This is a powerful truth that cuts to our heart. The word “Passions” used here is the source of the English word “hedonism,” which is the designation of the philosophy that views pleasure as the chief goal of life. Therefore, if pleasure is the overriding desire of our lives, “nothing” will be allowed to stand in the way of its realization. A war within us!

James 4:2a (ESV)

You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel.

“We eagerly desire something, but we don’t get it.” So strong is the desire that, “We kill, covet, fight, and quarrel.” This is a hyperbole for hatred. Remember, Jesus said that hatred is equal to murder. The reason for our unmet desires is clear.

James 4:2b (ESV)

You do not have, because you do not ask.

Here is the same truth we have discussed for the last several weeks. Ask anything and God will give us what we ask. Our Christian truth continually tells us to ask God. It was Jesus Himself who said, “Ask, and you will receive.”

If God is not answering, truly not answering, there is a very good reason. We can quickly know when God is displeased.

James 4:3 (ESV)

You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.

We ask wrongly to spend it on our passions, our “hedonism,” where our pleasures are our chief goal of our life. Each promise God makes to us has the central assumption that our heart is in tune with God’s. Therefore, God says pray “in the name” of Jesus or have faith, hearing God and acting. God wants our heart and when we give our heart to the world, God is not pleased and says we are committing adultery.

James 4:4 (ESV)

You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore, whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

Not only are we committing adultery, but we also make ourselves an enemy of God. God's reasoning is very clear. The church, believers, are the bride of Christ. Thus, when a believer, God's bride, turns away from God, HE refers to them as an adulterous wife. This is a believer trying to serve the world as well as the Lord at the same time. **However, God never stops yearning for the heart of HIS people.**

James 4:5 (ESV)

Or do you suppose it is to no purpose that the Scripture says, "God yearns jealously over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us"?

God has a jealous longing for HIS people's love! God always holds out loving arms ready to give us power and exalt us.

James 4:6 (ESV)

But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."

God gives Grace (power) to his people. The humble are the people who willingly submit to God's desire. But God opposes the proud who insist on satisfying their own pleasures.

James 4:7-8a (ESV)

⁷ Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸ Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you.

Our personal responsibility: Submit to God; Resist the devil; Draw near to God. *The devil has no power over the Christian except the power of seduction.* When resisted—he flees. Come near to God, humble ourselves, and HE will come near to us.

James 4:10 (ESV)

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

That God exalts those who humble themselves is a consistent Biblical principle. Jesus, Paul, Peter, Luke, and James all say, “Humble yourselves before the Lord, and HE will exalt you.”

God clearly says that to have success we must humble ourselves which means “to make ourselves low by putting ourselves under God’s will.” **When we put ourselves under God’s will, God personally will exalt us. We have moved from the world’s power to God’s power.**

Humility: We received our salvation by dependence on God. We also live this life by the dependence on God.

Colossians 2:6 (ESV)

Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him.

God will exalt those who depend on HIM!