

CAUSES OF CONFLICT: ROUND TWO

JAMES SERMON SERIES

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JAMES 4:1-10



GOD OPPOSES THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.

Causes of Conflict and Steps to Restoration

- God is **serious** about His glory and your joy – 4:5
Or do you suppose it is to no purpose that the Scripture says, "He yearns jealously over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us"?

Why is God jealous?

- 1) It is altogether proper and right for God to have our utmost affections. It's not arrogant for God to desire first-place in our lives because he actually deserves it. Any other order creates chaos and devastation.
- 2) God loves us and knows the damaging effects of idolatry.
- 3) We become what we worship.

- **Mega**-grace is available – 4:6
But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

What sort of grace does God offer? Above average in quantity, above standard in intensity, superior in importance, unusual, surprising.¹

Proverbs 3:34
Toward the scornful he is scornful, but to the humble he gives favor.

1 Peter 5:5b
Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."

Psalms 138:6
For though the LORD is high, he regards the lowly, but the haughty he knows from afar.

Matt. 23:12
Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.

Q: Humble?

- A: 1) Doesn't mean you have a poor **self**-image... which may be a sure sign of pride. Why? Because it reveals a focus on oneself. C.S. Lewis says, "True humility is not thinking less of yourself; it is thinking of yourself less."
- 2) Doesn't mean you **deny** your strengths.
 - 3) Humility means you view yourself in the proper relationship to God and others.
 - a. You're not God. You're alive because God created you and allows you to stay alive and has a plan for your life.
 - b. Your life goal and your **joy** are tied to God's plan for your life; love God and make disciples of all nations.
 - c. Ultimately, you want people to be **impressed** by God, not by you.

Application

- Submission is the **ignition** – Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. – 4:7
 - *Submit to God:* He's the boss now.
 - *Resist the devil:* If we don't submit to God we are unable to resist the devil. We resist the devil by believing God even though our feelings or culture may say otherwise.
 - *He will flee from you:* Nothing can stop the power of the Gospel in a committed life.
 - *Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.* – 4:8
- Peter H. Davids writes, "The main part of repentance is to stop doing what one was doing and start obeying God."
- *Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom.* – 4:9
- The way **down** is the way up – *Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.* – 4:10

¹ W. Arndt, F.W. Danker, & W. Bauer, *A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 624.

² Peter H. Davids, "James," *New Bible Commentary, 4th ed.* D. A. Carson, R. T. France, J. A. Motyer, & G. J. Wenham eds., (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994), 1364.