



James 4:6 Let us Humble Ourselves

Nov 15, 2015

Text: James 4:6

- Over the last several weeks, we've mentioned this issue of pride, particularly as that sin connects with what James mentions in verses 4-5. I'd like to refer you to the following sermons on our website where we spent considerable time dealing with pride.
 - *James 4:1 - The Causes of Quarrels and Fights*
 - *James 4:2-3 - Murder, Covetousness, and Selfish Prayers*
- In this text, James meets pride head on, and frankly, chills the reader with a straightforward precept concerning God's feelings towards a prideful believer.
- Of course, there is an amazing promise as well: "He gives grace to the humble!" We also covered the doctrine of grace in some detail last week. Those notes can be found in this message:
 - *James 4:6a - But He Gives More Grace!*
- **Today, I'd like to consider this verse in light of the call to humble ourselves, which is obviously James' intent...to cause the reader/hearer to walk in a greater level of humility.**
- One of my favorite quotes on humility is from Andrew Murray:

And so pride, or the loss of this humility, is the root of every sin and evil. It was when the now fallen angels began to look upon themselves with self-complacency that they were led to disobedience, and were cast down from the light of heaven into outer darkness. Even so it was, when the serpent breathed the poison of his pride, the desire to be as God, into the hearts of our first parents, that they too fell from their high estate into all the wretchedness in which man is now sunk. In heaven and earth, pride, self-exaltation, is the gate and the birth, and the curse, of hell.

And so the life of the saved ones, of the saints, must needs bear this stamp of deliverance from sin, and full restoration to their original state; their whole relation to God and man marked by an all pervading humility. Without this there can be no true abiding in God's presence, or experience of His favor and the power of His Spirit; without this no abiding faith, or love or joy or strength. Humility is the only soil in which the graces root; the lack of humility is the sufficient explanation of every defect and failure. Humility is not so much a grace or virtue along with others; it is the root of all, because it alone takes the right attitude before God, and allows Him as God to do all.

In the life of earnest Christians, of those who pursue and profess holiness, humility ought to be the chief mark of their uprightness.

God Opposes the Proud

A few thoughts:

1. First, there is something about the phrase "God opposes" that should get our attention!
2. Remember who we are talking about here: the Creator of the Universe! The King of Kings! He who upholds the world by His power! The Lord of All! The King, Lawgiver, and Judge! He who holds the Seven Stars and walks among the Seven Lampstands!

3. If the LORD resists or opposes something or someone, oh dear friends, let us not indulge in that something or be that someone! 😊
4. Isaiah wrote, *“The haughty looks of man shall be brought low, and the lofty pride of men shall be humbled, and the LORD alone will be exalted in that day. For the LORD of hosts has a day against all that is proud and lofty, against all that is lifted up—and it shall be brought low. (Isa 2:11-12)*
5. On this part of the verse, Matthew Henry wrote:

The original word signifies, God's setting himself as in battle array against them; and can there be a greater disgrace than for God to proclaim a man a rebel, an enemy, a traitor to his crown and dignity, and to proceed against him as such? The proud resists God; in his understanding he resists the truths of God; in his will he resists the truths of God; in his will he resists the laws of God; in his passions he resists the providence of God; and therefore no wonder that God sets himself against the proud. Let proud spirits hear this and tremble - God resists them.

6. Proverbs 6 says...
 - Pro 6:16** *There are six things that the LORD hates, seven that are an abomination to him:*
 - Pro 6:17** *haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,*
 - Pro 6:18** *a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that make haste to run to evil,*
 - Pro 6:19** *a false witness who breathes out lies, and one who sows discord among brothers.*
7. Precious friends, let us strive to never place ourselves in opposition against our great God and King! Therefore:

Let us humble ourselves:

- **Humility** is recurring theme throughout the rest of this chapter.
- In fact, verse 10 says, *“Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.” (James 4:10 ESV)*
- **Friends, has there ever been a greater time where Christians could push back the devil’s kingdom with humble and submitted hearts? Has there ever been a more pressing need to mourn over our land, weep over our sin, and draw near to Him?**
- It is precisely the **attitude** that “we got this” that keeps us in SO much trouble! Again...
 - *Toward the scorers he is scornful, but to the humble he gives favor. (Proverbs 3:34)*
 - *Peter declares, “Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” (1 Peter 5:5)*
- In the context of the epistle, and by way of review, may we humble ourselves...
 - When our faith is tested and we are under trial (James 1:2-3, 12-15)
 - When we hear the Word, that we might **obey** (James 1:19-25)
 - When it’s time to visit orphans and widows, and remain unstained from the world (James 2:27)
 - When we are tempted to show **partiality** (James 2:1-9)
 - When our faith calls us to work (James 2:14-26)
 - When it is time to bridle our tongues (James 3:1-10)
 - When we discover friendliness with the world within us (James 4:1-5)

Some Applications

Again, God resists the proud. Pride essentially leaves the door wide open for the devil to steal, kill and destroy. One of the great keys of resisting the devil that he might flee is submitting to God. **It is impossible to consistently submit to God (or anyone or anything) without engaging in battle against our prideful impulses.**

This week:

1. Let us humble ourselves as we consider the biblical admonitions for contriteness and lowliness, that we might obtain more grace.
2. Let us humble ourselves as we approach the LORD in prayer and ask Him to show us areas disrupted and diseased by pride in our hearts.
3. Let us humble ourselves as we read Scripture, seeking to apply what we read.
4. Let us humble ourselves by seeking out those we know we have unjustly offended, and offer heartfelt repentance.
5. Let us humble ourselves when we observe those less fortunate, less knowledgeable, less well, or less wise, and declare, "if not for the grace of God, go I."
6. Let us humble ourselves by considering how we might serve better, give more, preach the Gospel with more fervor, and love harder.
7. Let us humble ourselves by praying for others...really stretching out before God on their behalf.
8. Let us humble ourselves by realizing our tendencies to elevate our offenses and minimize His grace, and adjusting accordingly.
9. Let us humble ourselves by engaging in the war for our children's minds, dying to pride and seeking help when needed.
10. Let us humble ourselves in worship, prostrating ourselves before Him alone.

Prayer:

LORD, forgive us for walking in pride, even when we think we aren't! Let us consider our desperate need to walking lovingly in your precepts, understanding the very nature of pride is the nature of the devil, which is why you resist it. Let us lift holy hands, bow humble heads, prostrate bodies filled with your Spirit, and constrain and direct our thoughts towards thee.

This week, before we get angry, before we decide not to forgive, before we disconnect, before we hold on to an attitude, before we yield to temptation, let us humble ourselves and receive your grace.

In Jesus' Name,

Amen